LEFT OUT UNTIL THEY DROP OUT: HOW YOUNG PEOPLE NEGOTIATE

SOCIAL VALUE IN SCHOOL

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By

Carol Jasper

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DECLARATION

This dissertation is the result of my own work. There has been no collaboration and it has not been previously submitted, in part or whole, to any university or institution for any degree, diploma or other qualification.

In accordance with the Division of Psychology guidelines, this thesis does not exceed 80,000 words and it contains less than 150 figures.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Mrs Carol Jasper MSc

Psychology

For my Papa, William Kerr Cowan. Si je puis.

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to examine how young people negotiate positive social value within an institution which continually stratifies them, and to consider the impact that category memberships such as social class and gender may have on the negotiation of value. Social value is negotiated by pupils in two key ways; amongst their peers and from the institution. The research took place within a Scottish comprehensive high school with a randomly assigned cohort of pupils. This setting was a particularly suitable one, because while the goal of modern secondary education in the UK is for all children to have an equal opportunity to learn (UK Government, 2018), 12.2% of pupils in the UK nevertheless leave school with no qualifications (OECD, 2018), and many others leave school feeling worthless (Whittaker 2008; 2010). Using a longitudinal, ethnographic method, the school careers of the pupils were closely observed for four years. A hybrid deductive and inductive data coding process was employed and the resulting analyses focussed upon four organising themes: institutional practices, socio-economic status, gender, and peer-on-peer recognition. The analysis within each theme integrates three levels of influence: the institution, the classroom, and individual pupil educational career trajectories. This range of analysis allows for the consideration of multi-layered perspectives, ranging from broad, institutionally-defined factors such as academic streaming, through classroom-level practices such as discipline, to fine-grained analyses of pupil experiences through detailed vignettes of observed behaviour. The research extends and informs current social

psychological theories by analysing dynamic pupil responses in a naturalistic setting over an extended time period, in a manner that complements existing research traditionally using more static methods such as experiments and surveys. Taken together, the analyses demonstrate the pivotal role of the institution in determining social value systems of recognition and, critically, the educational outcomes of some of the most vulnerable pupils.

Cause I Ain't Got a Pencil

I woke myself up

Because we ain't got an alarm clock

Dug in the dirty clothes basket,

Cause ain't nobody washed my uniform

Brushed my hair and teeth in the dark,

Cause the lights ain't on

even got my baby sister ready,

Cause my mama wasn't home.

Got us both to school on time,

To eat us a good breakfast.

Then when I got to class the teacher fussed

Cause I ain't got no pencil

Joshua T Dickerson

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

In order of appearance in the text

NEET (Not in employment, education or training)

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths)

SES (socio-economic status)

PLP (Pupil learning plan)

ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council)

PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups)

PSA (Pupil Support Assistant)

LSA (Learning Support Assistant)

SIT (Social identity theory)

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)

RDT (Relative deprivation theory)

SJT (system justification theory)

PE (physical education)

HSB (high status boys)

SG (Satellite girls)

fMRI (Functional magnetic resonance imaging)

ACC (Anterior cingulate cortex)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview

A major focus within the field of social psychology is how individuals maintain a positive sense of self in the face of negative social comparisons in stratified social systems (Kraus, Piff, Mendoza-Denton, Rheinschmidt & Keltner, 2012; Tablante & Fiske, 2015; Ellemers, 1993). Modern societies are ordered around a set of socially-accepted beliefs, norms, and practices which afford social value to some individuals over others, with hierarchies based around categories including social class, gender, age, and race (Cheng, Tracy, Foulsham, Kingstone & Henrich, 2013). Hierarchically-structured societies can offer opportunities for social mobility (Haveman & Smeeding, 2006), but overarching socio-structural hierarchies like social class systems can also place individuals into stratified positions that are rigid and difficult to escape (Tablante & Fiske, 2015). The aim of this thesis is to examine the varied strategies young people use to navigate social value and position amongst their peers and within an institution which continually stratifies individuals and groups across a number of dimensions. An institution is defined as a societal organisation which holds an esteemed position within our current culture and society and, for the purpose of this thesis, will refer to an educational establishment (Oxford Dictionary, 2018).

This thesis is comprised of four discrete empirical chapters each of which relates to specific, distinct but occasionally overlapping social psychological theories, literature and constructs. The chapter structure is as follows:

- Chapter 3: Institutional Practices and Behavioural Responses to Stratification

- Chapter 4: Institutional Practices and Social Class

- Chapter 5: Gender Inequality

- Chapter 6: Peer on Peer Recognition: The Dynamics of Social Exclusion

Each chapter will address the theoretical premises and various bodies of research in some depth within the chapter introduction rather than presenting a unified introduction or literature review within this chapter. The introduction instead will explain the context and background to the research presented and expands upon some of the research which initially inspired this project; namely that of Lisa Whittaker (2008, 2010) who investigated the experience of young people who left school without qualifications and thus experienced a sense of societal failure. Whilst this thesis is concerned specifically with the experiences of young people *within* a stratified[1] environment, this introduction will demonstrate that young people leaving school without achieving academic recognition has a wider societal impact which will be expounded in detail to provide a contextual backdrop to the individual subject matters within each separate chapter. Chapters 3-6 demonstrate how individual pupils negotiate their social position both amongst their peers and within the aforesaid stratifying institution.

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[1] Stratification in this context refers to social value conferred by the institution in a number of ways; academic streaming by performance, allocation to sports teams etc.

Social position matters because it provides some individuals with better access to resources which can improve their social mobility opportunities. Elevated social class, for example, can provide opportunities for education, social status, and employment that are often denied to those in lower social strata (Haveman & Smeeding, 2006). Bukodi, Erikson, and Goldthorpe's (2014) review of birth cohort data in Britain and Sweden demonstrates that even the highest-achieving individuals from the lowest socio-economic quintiles are often unable to escape their social origins in terms of their academic and educational outcomes (Bukodi et al., 2014). Likewise, gender inequalities are also highly persistent. Women have historically been subjected to hierarchical constraints relative to their male counterparts; the ability to vote, to work and to function autonomously are relatively recent developments for women in modern Britain (Crawford, 2003). Simply being female within a patriarchal social system can drive gender-based stratification and prejudice by means of hostile and benevolent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Stratification, by definition, means that some individuals are elevated over others, often by arbitrary characteristics (Nicholson & De Waal-Andrews, 2005). In addition, people also have to negotiate social inclusion at an individual level and social ostracism is a highly-detrimental experience (Bastian & Haslam, 2010; Williams, 2009; Zadro, Boland & Richardson, 2006). Social psychology has been concerned with how individuals navigate stratified societies, with differential access to resources and opportunities, whilst maintaining a positive sense of self (Kraus et al., 2012; Ellemers, 1993).

The research presented in this thesis was carried out within a comprehensive high school in Scotland. The project focussed upon a cohort of pupils as they progressed through their compulsory schooling from age 11 or 12 to age 16 (the age when compulsory

Scottish education legally ends). The resulting analyses address how young people negotiate positive social value within a stratifying institution and also examines how category membership such as social class and gender shape the negotiation of social value. Critically, the institution provides structures of recognition for pupils; offering reward and praise for achievement and censure and sanction for transgressing rules. Human behaviour is almost always performed within formalised settings, with laws, norms and socially-determined parameters of behaviour; yet, the interaction of individuals within these institutional settings is understudied. Importantly, this research examines how individuals interact with each other and within the institution in a manner that focuses a critical lens on some well-known theories and precepts within social psychological literature. The concepts of meritocracy, class, gender, and ostracism are widely studied, but the research in this thesis aims to extend our knowledge of how they function within a naturalistic, institutional setting (Bukodi & Goldthorpe, 2013).

In methodological terms, the research in this thesis can be viewed as a lengthy case study of an institutional social system. In adopting this approach, the aim of the research was to ask critical questions of current theory and research, and to consider how they might be extended. In other words, the research approach provided an opportunity to test theories critically, in an uncontrolled, real-life environment and to highlight areas for theoretical development and extension by highlighting phenomena that are *not* especially well accounted for by existing theory (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Gelman & Basbøll, 2014). For example theories of social identity management posit discrete strategies which can be used to counter devaluation in social settings and often in relation to specific, experimentally-manipulated cues (Ellemers, 1993; Brown, 2000). In complex social situations, however, it

is possible that individuals in everyday life may use a range of strategies in a flexible and dynamic manner in response to social cues which may be more varied or complicated (see Chapter 3). Similarly, the dynamics of and responses to social ostracism are well understood in response to given, specific cues in experimental settings (Williams, 2009); but the findings reported in Chapter 6 will demonstrate that ostracism can function differently over an extended period of time in an uncontrolled, natural setting, and that institutional factors also shape individuals' longer-term outcomes following chronic ostracism. By examining processes of recognition and the negotiation of social value in this unique way, it is hoped that the research presented in this thesis can inform and extend current theoretical models pertaining to identity management, social mobility theories and ostracism in particular, as well as social inequality based on social class and gender.

This thesis therefore sits at the intersection of several major themes in social psychology, including identity management, social status and social class relations, gender, and the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion. As such, the opportunity to appraise theoretical premises in applied settings offers key insights in terms of theoretical development, but also offers evidence which could be of use to policy makers

Context and Development of the Research

To address all of the above aims, the project took place within a comprehensive secondary school. Schools are critical institutional settings for young people, and like most institutions, schools stratify and organise individuals according to some institution-specific characteristics. Furthermore, institutions are imbued with structures of recognition: institution-specific criteria which afford value to some individuals over others. Hospitals,

universities, the military, Governmental Offices, and prisons, for example, all have clearly-demarcated ranks or grades which denote privilege and status.

A guiding principle for the research was that the self is formed within 'structures of recognition' (Holquist, 1990) such as grading systems, league tables, and systems of awards. The hierarchical nature of structures of recognition means that individuals' social position can have either affirming or stigmatising effects (Gaines, Duvall, Webster, & Smith, 2005). Structures of recognition vary in terms of (1) expectations, (2) the degree to which they are voluntary, (3) whether it is the individual or a group which is assessed, and (4) the extent to which success/failure is made public. The initial plans for the research were framed around these principles and contact was made with several schools to discuss the possibility of situating at least part of the research within their institution. One school consented to host the entire project and it was decided to proceed with one host school in lieu of comparisons between several schools.

Following extensive discussions with the host school management, a longitudinal, ethnographic project was proposed in which I would immerse myself into school culture for the duration of the project and investigate the impact of structures of recognition as a participant-observer (Baker, 2006). The focus of the data collection was recognition: who received recognition, from whom, why and, importantly who did not receive recognition and why. The study was unique in this study area as a longitudinal project with an ethnographic methodology. All data collected related to recognition, success, and failure. The research question was as open-ended as possible, and the entire project was open to data-driven outcomes as well as being guided by theory-based concerns relating to recognition and social value.

Over time, the research question also evolved as it became apparent that trying to infer motives, intentions etc. from a purely ethnographic perspective would involve psychologising the pupils' behaviours and assuming or making inferences about internal psychological states that would be difficult to justify (Moshman, 2004). Interviewing the pupils was not possible either as this could potentially jeopardise, or disrupt entirely, the participant-observer role which had been developed. To this end, the analysis focused on pupils' manifest, observable behaviours and the extent to which these functioned as strategies to negotiate social value within the hierarchical environment. At the culmination of the data collection process, but prior to the formal analysis process, the research question and its subthemes were again reviewed in order to focus on the reaction of pupils to evaluation and devaluation, alongside over-arching themes of social inequality based on socio-economic status and gender, and the role of the institution in perpetuating unequal power relations and hierarchical structures of recognition. The informal structures of peer recognition hierarchies were also examined, focusing on the dynamics of ostracism. The data consist of, and are reported in terms of, complex, contextualised vignettes, conversations and events that unfolded over the course of the observed school days.

Given these aims, the timing of the project was also apt because the Scottish education system revised their national qualification strategy during the study period, with the cohort studied being amongst the first pupils to be stratified according to this new examination system (Scottish Government, 2014). Additionally, the studied school was also in a state of demographic flux with the socio-economic composition of the school roll changing rapidly and undergoing a transition period with a new management team. The longitudinal nature of this project is entirely suited to observe the consequences of change

and to document how the changing social structure of the school developed over time and, crucially, investigate the impact upon the pupils.

Setting

School was an ideal location for this project because schools, as institutions, enshrine values of success and achievement. There is an inevitable focus upon academic performance in schools which provides an immediate hierarchy for its pupils. From the outset, pupils are stratified into differing ability levels providing a substantial structure of recognition which pupils can accept, positively identify with, or reject. Ostensibly, schools are opportunities for all to learn and succeed; however, low self-esteem and a lack of self-efficacy can present significant barriers to the pursuit of opportunities (Craig, 2003; Whittaker 2010). Craig (2003) states that the education system in Scotland – the setting for the present research – has an enduring focus upon academic attainment which, by definition, means a substantial swathe of the school population will not achieve success in those terms. This can create a sense of failure which Craig argues, drives issues of low self-esteem and prevents the development of a healthy, positive identity. Furthermore, Paterson (1983) writes that Scottish schools reflect the social conformity present within wider society and uphold the hierarchical stratification of that society by promoting "ruthless advancement" (Paterson, 1983, p.198). Locating the present research within the education system provided an important opportunity to examine how a stratifying environment, focussed upon overt success and failure, impacted upon the social experiences of the pupils and upon how they navigated between the dimensions of success and failure.

As mentioned, Whittaker (2008; 2010) examined the sense of failure experienced by some pupils leaving school without qualifications and categorised as Not in

Employment, Education or Training (NEET) by the Government. Whittaker used dialogical analyses to explore the identity construction of these young people and highlighted their desire for positive recognition which was rarely fulfilled during their schooling. Whittaker notes that the existing structure of recognition within the academic system fails those who lack either academic ability or the motivation to succeed in an academic sense. The repeated focus of the education system upon formal examination success, she argues, critically undermines the self-concept of adolescents who do not achieve but who still seek positive recognition to bolster their developing identities. The chronic lack of formal recognition from mainstream sources such as schools and employers for example, combined with the socially-stigmatised label 'NEET' can drive vulnerable young adults towards engaging in risky and anti-social behaviours (Whittaker, 2008). When amongst similarly-disenfranchised young people, riskier behaviours can afford positive peer recognition and reinforce the exclusion of many adolescents from positive sources of recognition afforded by further education and employment (Whittaker, 2008). These findings led Whittaker to suggest that looking at the structures of recognition within Scottish comprehensive schooling may help to understand how and why some pupils leave the education system with feelings of low self-esteem and a sense of failure. The research presented here fits with this recommendation by examining how social value is negotiated within an institutional setting: A Scottish comprehensive high school.

The school in which the present research was conducted has an unusually bi-modal wealth distribution (see Table 6) but otherwise it is a largely unremarkable school compared to others locally and within Scotland. The school provided full access to all classes and the pupils were studied from their first day in high school until the end of their

fourth year. Studying adolescents naturalistically using an ethnographic methodology over a longitudinal project is relatively rare but in order to capture previously under-explored phenomena (Kuppens, Spears, Manstead, Spruyt & Easterbrook, 2017), there is a specific need for focussed ethnographic research which can explore the daily dynamics of the adolescent as they negotiate the complex feedback they receive during their school life. Studying adolescent social relationships in school can provide a microcosm of wider society (Tanti, Stukas, Halloran, & Foddy, 2011) and understanding the experiences of those who do not succeed in school is perhaps best understood by observing events unfolding whilst they occur, rooted within a social context which also shapes and mediates outcomes for pupils.

There is also a more general absence of embedded, richly-detailed studies of how individuals negotiate social value in hierarchical institutions. The longitudinal, ethnographic approach is particularly well placed to consider nuanced and complex social dynamics. For example, Nagy, Trautwein, Baumert, Köller & Garrett (2006) studied the career choices of women in relation to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects and found that Mathematics and Science were overall more common school subject choices for boys, whereas advanced Biology courses attracted a significantly higher proportion of girls. Nagy et al. (2006) note that subject choice decisions were very context specific, and they recommend that a fuller understanding of pupil subject choices can be gained by shifting focus from decontextualized experimental research in favour of contextualised studies observing pupils over the duration of their school careers. The research presented in this thesis addresses this challenge, offering insight into how the experiences of girls within STEM subject classes may help to explain why some girls may,

in general, opt out of science subjects (Chapter 5). Likewise, the ethnographic methodology allows pupils' daily minutiae to be recorded in detail and compared over time to reveal how socio-structural inequalities such as social class and gender are enacted in everyday school life. Indeed, socio-economic status and the associated iniquities and challenges faced by pupils from poorer backgrounds form the back-bone of this thesis, forming the central theme of Chapter 4 and recurring in all of the other empirical chapters. The background to many of the social inequalities discussed is disparity between the socio-economic status (SES) of pupils from the highest and lowest echelons of society. Socio-economic inequality, in addition to poverty, can invoke a number of undesirable outcomes and social problems (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009).

Social Problems Associated with Inequality

The education system is a social class-laden environment (Manstead, 2018). Howieson and Iannelli (2007) argue that schools reproduce social inequalities by virtue of their structures and practices, and underprivileged pupils in school are "systematically disadvantaged" (2007 p.272). They highlight that family background is one of the primary determinants of pupil performance in their fourth year (S4). This thesis will examine the under-researched possibility that disadvantage can not only be reinforced by school policy, but that it can also be reproduced in classroom environments (Manstead, 2018; Goudeau and Croizet, 2017). Reinforcing disadvantage can impact upon a phenomenon referred to as The Great Gatsby Curve which posits that young people are hypothesised to internalise their immediate environments and are particularly inclined to base their perceptions upon existing and enduring inequalities (Kearney

& Levine, 2014). In a recent landmark article on the psychology of social class, Manstead (2018) concludes that individual self-concepts and identities are significantly influenced by individuals' perception of their own economic status, and their relative positions within the social class system. For more affluent pupils this may translate into a belief in the value of education and a meritocratic system in which they can flourish. For deprived pupils, the opposite can hold true. Pupils from-lower income families can feel alienated by middle-class values and ideals reproduced in schools and feel unable to benefit from a meritocratic system in which ability and endeavour supposedly shines through irrespective of social class or background (Manstead, 2018). Yet, education is often believed to be the route to self-improvement and success (Havemen & Smeeding, 2006; Hasan & Bagde, 2013). In their thorough review of the American higher education system, for example, Haveman and Smeeding (2006) note that the system is fraught with inequity, works against social mobility, and recapitulates both inter-generational privilege and disadvantage.

The present research is set in Scotland from 2011 to 2015; in 2015, the current Scottish Government announced "The Scottish Attainment Challenge" (Scottish Government, accessed 04/18), which aims to ensure that every child in Scotland has the same, equitable chance to succeed in their educational careers regardless of family income status. Moreover, the challenge cites closing the poverty-related attainment gap as fundamental to achieving this aim. To this end, the Scottish Government made available £750 million in a Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) to be distributed to schools with demonstrable pupil deprivation. Unusually, this fund was allocated to head teachers to allow them to target resources flexibly and in accordance with the specific needs of their deprived pupil cohort and their families in an effort to close the attainment gap. This flexible and targeted

PEF approach, which can assist families and pupils individually, is ongoing and data are not yet available for the impact of the intervention to be assessed. The intervention, however, is timely as The Joseph Rowntree Foundation report published in 2017 (Barnard, 2017) states that the current gap in attainment between pupils from lower and higher income families is extensive and increases as the child progresses through high school (Barnard, 2017). The attainment gap between the most and least deprived in high school in the period 2015/2016 decreased slightly with more pupils leaving school in 2016 with at least one National 5 qualification than in 2010. However, this encouraging trend must be viewed in context: the percentage of most-deprived Scottish pupils with no qualifications in 2015 was 92% and only decreased marginally (Barnard, 2017).

Scotland currently does have excellent results in higher education, but participation in secondary education in Scotland is also amongst the lowest in Europe (Howieson & Iannelli, 2008) with 43,000 pupils on average not attending school daily (Scottish Government, 2018). There are two types of unauthorised absence with some considerable overlap: attitudinal and socio-economic. Both types, however, are caused by disenfranchisement from the school to some extent. In the first case, problems with teachers are frequently cited. In the latter case, negative family attitudes towards the value of education and a lack of home support are amongst self-reported reasons for non-attendance (Attwood & Croll, 2006). The impact of truancy upon wider society can be considerable and is often linked to crime and increased disenfranchisement from society in general, and not just the education system (Pearce & Hillman, 1998). Frequent truancy often constitutes the first step towards petty crime and soft drug use and increases the likelihood that the truanting individual will develop a more serious hard drug habit and a

related increase in crime perpetration (Pudney, 2003). Additionally, a disadvantaged family background, living in deprivation, and having an absentee father are among the personal characteristics associated with a developing relationship with crime and drug use. Taking the various factors which contribute to anti-social behaviour, crime, and problematic drug use, Pudney (2003) concludes that a robust approach to reducing truancy would potentially be more effective than directing resources at drug prevention strategies. Ensuring that pupils stay in school, and reducing truancy rates, is thus of critical importance for the wellbeing, development, and life outcomes of individual pupils. The data presented in Chapter 4 examines the interplay between social class and the institution and demonstrates the impact this can have upon pupil outcomes and the duration of their school careers whilst Chapter 6 details the impact of SES status upon ostracism and school non-attendance.

Whilst social class is the focus of Chapter 4 specifically, social class provides an important backdrop throughout this thesis. Leaving school early (before the legal compulsory schooling age of 16) or with no or few qualifications (see Chapter 6) increases the individual's perception of their worthlessness to society, but also has material outcomes (Whittaker, 2008; 2010). Lacking educational qualifications makes finding work harder and increases the likelihood that the individual will continue to reside in poverty. Even when a young person with few educational qualifications finds work, it is likely to be low income and families with at least one person working now comprise 57% of all families in poverty. Low-income families are more likely to have poorer housing and an increased risk of social isolation (Barnard, 2017). In theory, the education system provides similar opportunities to lower-income pupils as to their better-off peers. However, there are

numerous barriers to learning; poor attendance and a lack of social acceptance can lead to cycles of disengagement and negative outcomes for the poorest pupils (Kuppens et al., 2017; Bukodi et al., 2014; Bukodi & Goldthorpe, 2013).

Inequality can also lead to pernicious health outcomes. Kraus, Piff, and Keltner (2011) make an important point that socio-economic status or class is a cultural identity which is comprised of two parts; objective material SES such as income, but also social behaviour and attitudes (Link & Phelan, 1995; Adler et al., 1994). Agency and control over socio-structural factors are considered by Marmot (2005) to be critical in determining the likelihood of disease, illness, and longevity (Lachman & Weaver, 1998). Link and Phelan (1995) emphasise the importance of understanding the relationship between social status and related social conditions to improve health outcomes for those experiencing social inequality.

As a general point, social inequalities can impact negatively upon health outcomes but during adolescence it can be of particular significance. In the teenage years, the foundations for future health outcomes are being laid and the health outcomes for the poorest in society are markedly worse than those in higher social echelons (Starfield, Riley, Witt & Robertson, 2002). According to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, those living in the most deprived quintile are far more likely to suffer poor mental health than those who are more affluent (Barnard, 2017). In school, poorer pupils are also more likely to experience health issues which can contribute to the increased absenteeism discussed above, contribute to feelings of disenfranchisement and can impact upon coursework completion (Attwood & Croll, 2006). The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (Barnard, 2017) state that the most significant driver for determining future poverty is the academic

attainment of pupils during their educational career justifying SES as an important focus throughout this thesis.

As previously stated, this thesis will address the possibility that disadvantage can be reproduced in classrooms and can be instantiated by institutions in a variety of ways. The following thesis overview will detail how each empirical chapter answers the overarching question of how young people negotiate social value within a stratifying environment and lay bare the institutional factors which can impact upon pupil educational experiences and outcomes.

Thesis Overview

Chapter 2: Methods

This chapter situates the research with details of the study site, participants and background information about the structure of the school and classes to provide important contextualisation to the data presented throughout. The methods employed are discussed in full with all super and sub codes presented in table form with a diagram highlighting the main areas of convergence between the discrete chapters 3-6. A summary of the ethical considerations of the project and the steps taken to ensure participant confidentiality are supplied together with a review of the coding concordance process is also presented.

Chapter 3: Institutional Practices and Behavioural Responses to Stratification

The first empirical chapter examines the implications for pupils of stratifying levels of expected achievement. It focuses on policies and practices instantiated by the school, including classroom-based factors such as discipline and the consolidating role teachers can play in reinforcing enduring structures of recognition amongst pupils. It draws on and critically examines identity management theories including social identity theory (Tajfel &

Turner, 1979), considering the extent to which these theories and existing research can account for the different strategies that pupils displayed in response to the stratifying practices employed by the school. The analysis in Chapter 3 thus moves from an institution-level focus to more intimate classroom-specific contexts and finally to individual-level pupil responses to these institutional practices.

The analysis in Chapter 3 was especially timely in view of the new Curriculum for Excellence framework (Scottish Government, 2008). According to this, exam outcomes are characterised in three main ways: National 3, 4 & 5. Pupils are designated to one of these outcomes at the end of their second year (S2). National 3 and 4 are coursework dominated and National 5 has a final exam in addition to coursework requirements. This new exam pathway programme brought together higher, and lower-achieving pupils, within the same class and made concrete the difference in ability levels and institutional expectations of success for each group of pupils. The analysis highlights that assignment to a specific expected outcome level (e.g., National 3 or 4) could be stigmatising and offers some challenges to current models of social mobility theory; specifically the conditions under which individuals chose individual mobility strategies (e.g. Ellemers, Spears, Doosje, 2002; 1999; Ellemers, 1993).

The analysis of classroom-level practices (e.g., how teachers manage pupils, including the application of disciplinary practices) in this chapter also addresses Reay's (2006) call to examine the extent to which teachers may unconsciously reinforce existing pupil-driven social hierarchies within the classroom. The analysis suggests that classroom discipline can also spontaneously echo and underscore the more formal aspects of

stratification; i.e., the streaming process and allocation to the three National qualification pathways.

In terms of theories of identity management, Chapter 3 also includes an in-depth analysis of the positive identity management strategies of two very different pupils. Their responses to stratification and the contextual complexity of these responses suggest that there are ways of meaningfully extending social identity theory's account of the different identity management strategies available in response to devaluation. These include that (1) an individual's responses to devaluation can be substantially more flexible and fluid than present evidence suggests (Brown, 2000), and (2) that individuals can adopt 'hybrid' identity management strategies that combine elements of different, supposedly alternative strategies (namely, individual mobility and social creativity) proposed by social identity theory.

Chapter 4: Institutional Practices and Social Class

Chapter 4 focuses upon the impact of socio-economic status on the trajectory of pupils through their schooling. Specifically, it tackles the under-researched psychology of social class and assesses the implications of class-related inequalities in the classroom (Manstead, 2018; Goudeau & Croizet, 2017; Croizet & Claire, 1998). The chapter is concerned primarily with outcomes relating to socio-economic inequality rather than poverty per se. Socio-economic status can be less well demarcated and more difficult to observe than other organising variables such as age or gender. The chapter thus begins by broadly delineating how socio-economic status and social class are displayed within school. The chapter then examines how institutional policies and practices are instantiated relative to – and reinforce the effects of – socio-economic status, before moving to a

classroom-level analysis examining both teacher and pupil reactions to socio-economic status, and finally an in-depth analysis of two pupils, both from similarly low SES backgrounds, focusing on their interaction with the institution and their educational outcomes.

In line with Chapter 3, Chapter 4 examines the implementation and implications of institutional policies such as the requirement to bring particular items to school to be adequately equipped for learning. Access to financial resources is directly linked to the provision of equipment, and material possessions are also analysed as indicators of wealth. Pupils perform their wealth status using material possessions and the analysis suggests that obvious markers of wealth provide heuristics for teachers and pupils alike, reinforcing (dis)advantages which are claimed by wealth signals (Manstead, 2018). Teachers, therefore, can recapitulate inequality in the classroom by echoing pupil-determined social value hierarchies. The relevance of socio-economic inequality to social inclusion amongst the pupils is also discussed, foreshadowing the analysis of inclusion/exclusion and ostracism presented in Chapter 6.

The analysis in Chapter 4 also suggests that there may be a moral as well as competence-based dimension to stereotypes held by staff towards pupils, as a function of pupils' social class. This is important in view of research on stereotype threat phenomena, which has recently been extended to focus on social class as a dimension that may produce stereotype threat effects (Croizet & Claire, 1998; Leyens, Desert, Croizet & Darcis, 2000; Croizet, Desert, Dutrevis & Leyens, 2001). Chapter 4 provides evidence to support the extension of the stereotype literature to encompass socio-economic status as a basis for

stereotype threat effects. It also highlights that pupils from poorer backgrounds could also face insidious stereotypes regarding their morality as well as their competence.

Chapter 4 then closes with a comparison between two specific pupils, both of whom came from low-income backgrounds, and charts their progress through school, their educational outcomes and their reactions to stratification by the institution. This part of the analysis addresses the disparate choices made by the two boys from similar backgrounds, highlighting the societal expectations placed upon young working-class boys and crucially, determines how their engagement with the institution factors in their outcomes at the end of their compulsory schooling (S4). The outcomes for each pupil are divergent and form an interesting and compelling comparison to highlight the interaction of institution and social class in practice.

Chapter 5: Gender Inequality

Chapter 5 moves on to analyse how hierarchies and social value were also organised around gender. Social value negotiations are often gender-biased, and boys and girls tended not only to present themselves differently in school, but also negotiated social value differently. Whilst differences between boys and girls are hardly unexpected, exactly how gender differences were expressed was often surprising.

Much of the obvious gendered behaviour analysed in Chapter 5 related to appearance and physical expressions of power and compliance. The chapter opens with some general discussion and examples of how gender is performed by pupils, including how they denoted belonging and group identities using gendered norms and power relations. The analysis moves onto gender experiences within the classroom and highlights occasions where gender was used to stratify pupils. Echoing the findings of Chapters 3 and

4, the role of the teacher was often to underscore and reinforce pupil norms and hierarchies, and this was also apparent when it came to sex-stereotypical beliefs.

A key contribution of Chapter 5 is in analysing how acute, negative experiences of highly-competent female pupils in STEM classes are linked to the wider, institutionally-sanctioned gendering of the school and its practices. Specifically, several detailed vignettes allow analysis of key moments in which female pupils were excluded or marginalised by male pupils in STEM class activities. This intersection of institution-level practices, teacher reinforcement of gender stereotypes, and specific classroom practices provides a novel insight into why even highly-competent girls may be reluctant to pursue STEM subjects at higher education levels or, if they do, why they are less likely to obtain employment within those fields (Smith, 2011). In common with the other empirical chapters, there is a complex interplay between the institution in a wider sense, the classroom environment more proximally and the interactions between pupils themselves. Taken together, these influences can create toxic environments where traditional sex-stereotypical views can prevail.

Chapter 6: Peer on Peer Recognition: The Dynamics of Social Exclusion

While Chapters 3-5 focus one way or another on institution-defined hierarchies, Chapter 6 focuses on peer-on-peer inclusion and exclusion. The analysis focuses upon the dynamics of social exclusion and ostracism, assessing how well current models of ostracism and responses to ostracism (e.g., the temporal need-threat model; Williams, 2009) account for how individuals respond to chronic ostracism in institutional settings. This is achieved through detailed analysis of the trajectories over several years of a number of pupils who were chronically ostracised. For most ostracised pupils, their impoverished

family background and their place in the social class structure resulted in predictably poor outcomes; however, some pupils are able to utilise the values of the institution to their own advantage and the analyses provide some surprisingly positive results of pupils who were able to reverse their isolation and navigate back to inclusion: a trajectory and outcome which is currently not considered in the ostracism literature. Another novel feature of the analysis is its focus upon how pupils sometimes used physical space in classrooms (e.g., through seating arrangements) to denote who was included or excluded.

The analysis of responses of ostracised individuals demonstrate that whilst the experimentally-explored categories of responses contained in Williams's (2009) model were all identifiable, the pupils' responses were also more varied. Recommendations are made to extend the temporal need-threat model to include the dynamic and nuanced responses by pupils to chronic ostracism, and how these may be enabled by institutional factors such as the value that it places on alternative dimensions of inclusion such as academic achievement.

CHAPTER 2

METHODS

The thesis addresses one overarching research question: How do young people negotiate social value in a continually stratifying environment? In order to gather data from young people in a naturalistic yet institutionally-structured environment, the project was located within a comprehensive high school. All data were collected ethnographically, from the same cohort, and over a period of four years.

Study Site

Several schools were approached for this study and the chosen school was the first to grant full researcher access for the duration of the project. The demographics within the school were of additional interest and the unusual bi-modal socio-economic distribution became particularly salient as the study progressed. The school is a small-to-medium comprehensive high school in Central Scotland. Positioned within a deprived area of the town, the school historically contained a significant number of children requiring free school meals, which is used as a rudimentary gauge of deprivation. Schools also use post code indicators to determine socio-economic status but since housing can vary substantially within a postcode, it is at best a guide. As the study commenced, the housing around the school changed and much of the adjacent run-down council housing was demolished and new social housing completed. To coincide with this redevelopment of social housing, a very large development of new, private housing was completed. The combination of these

factors meant that the school underwent sudden demographic change. The school had to adjust to a distribution of wealth and income which was unusually U-shaped, with notable extremes of wealth and poverty. The 2016 School Attainment report ("School Education", 2017) presents socio-economic status within the school roll as deciles and reports the number of pupils which reside within each decile. To preserve the confidentiality of that report I have expressed the number of pupils as a percentage of the school roll rather than as an absolute number and have disguised the specific local authority which supplied the information. The two most deprived deciles taken together comprise 13.37% of the school roll, whereas the two most affluent deciles comprise 54.20% of the school roll. The demographic is clearly skewed towards the most affluent. The median deciles 5 to 7 collectively represent less than 5% of the school population. The unusual demographic spread of socio-economic status, and the consequences of the bi-modal wealth distribution, will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

During the data collection period, the number of pupils at the School also rose sharply with the increased housing located within the school catchment area, and a new Rector was appointed to oversee the transition period. The Rector within a high school sets the standard for the school in terms of approach, discipline, and expectation. The newly-appointed Rector's approach reflected the change in the school demographic and focussed upon improving uniform standards and attainment levels. Within the duration of the project, in 2013, the school registered highly in national league tables for exam result improvement. This success was both sudden and unprecedented for the school and was based upon percentage increases in student attainment in the National 5, Scottish Higher and Advanced Highers results (School education, 2017).

The management team of the school were supportive of this project and the study was developed in collaboration with the Deputy Rector. The school gave me free range within their building, an identity pass and a staff entrance key fob. The management alerted staff and teachers that I would frequent school regularly and explained that the project was a long-term study of pupils and not an educational review or inspection. I always asked teachers for permission prior to entering their classes and, on occasion, the field notes taken during their class were made available to them at their request.

Participant Selection

In order to select an appropriate sample, discussions were held with the school management team. Ensuring that the cohort selected could be observed together over at least the first two years, it was decided to focus the selection upon one target class. On the first day of the 2011/2012 school year the Deputy Rector gave me a timetable of a particular pupil. I had no part in the selection of this specific pupil and nor was he known to me in any way. The pupil, Craig (pseudonyms are used throughout the research presented here and identifiability and confidentiality is thoroughly discussed later in this chapter), had two main classroom sets: social and practical. The pupil composition of these classes varied, but there was significant overlap. The practical set class comprised the initial cohort of the study and consisted of 18 pupils. To shift focus from one specific pupil, a second timetable was issued to me based on a member of the social class set; Alfie. Thereafter, my time was divided between the two targets' timetables. This provided a contained and specified set of classes and individuals for the study which was varied but allowed me to spend significant time with each class cohort and observe the different dynamics and, importantly, make comparisons of class behaviours in the same subject

classes. Furthermore, English and Mathematics classes were both 'streamed', meaning that pupils were allocated to classes by appraised ability and performance as initially recommended by their primary schools. Streaming by academic performance also provided a hierarchical element within the studied sample, allowing for assessment of differences in dynamics and interactions between high-performing and lower-performing pupils.

As class compositions varied, the exact number of pupils observed is impossible to determine. However, it quickly became evident that certain individuals presented more data than others. Some pupils within the core class quietly worked in most if not all classes, meaning that there were few or no data collected for those pupils. That is not to say that they were uninteresting; rather, the study relied upon observable behaviour which could be analysed. For that reason, several pupils began to feature in the collection process and it was decided to focus upon those individuals as the study developed. Once the pupils were separated into individual choice subjects in third year, it became increasingly difficult to track all pupils and it was decided to follow the key pupils, who had been presenting most data and whose trajectories were most likely to be relevant to the project. To achieve this, timetables were collected from eight key pupils and I varied my day in school to ensure regular and frequent observations by attending at least one class from each timetable on each school visit. The timetables selected were for Alfie, Charlie, Dylan, and Layla (all lowest classes where streamed) and Brian, Jacob, Jessica, and Noah (all highest classes where streamed). These timetables offered me access to a wide variety of pupils and ensured that all remaining pupils from the initial cohort could be observed in at least some of their subject classes daily. It was no longer possible to observe all pupils in all of their classes but the pupil timetables selected offered access to varied class compositions.

Following a variety of timetables also ensured sufficient overlap to observe pupils in the

highest- and lowest-streamed classes, but also wide access to mixed-ability classes which

were not streamed such as History, Biology, Modern Studies, or French.

<div align="center">**Data Collection**</div>

All data were collected in situ as field notes handwritten into notebooks and later

typed into a detailed transcript. The two-step process allowed for reflection upon the events

which occurred, and additional reflections, thoughts, and observations were added at the

typing-up stage. The writing-up method also functioned as an informal research diary

allowing for reflexivity throughout the data collection process (Noble & Smith, 2015). It

was not possible to record every exchange nor observe every interaction within each class,

so from the outset it was decided to focus on particular aspects of the phenomena observed.

Where possible, all interactions which involved success and failure or recognition were

recorded, including details of who sought, refused and offered recognition, and how this

was performed. The data had to be interpreted 'in the moment' to an extent, based on

accumulated knowledge of the individuals observed and an interpretation formed about the

encounter or conversation witnessed. At this point it is pertinent to note that I was always

aware that there are multiple realities within any given interaction. I could represent only

my own perspectives on these, although I did try to assess situations from alternative

perspectives where time allowed (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996). Ethnographic data collection

can be fast paced and there is not always adequate time to consider multiple realities

(Noble & Smith, 2015). As noted above, the typing-up process, after the day's field work,

offered an opportunity for reflection. Distance from the event sometimes offered an

alternative perspective, allowing for consideration of alternative perspectives or

interpretation of events. When this occurred, both the original interpretation and the reflected interpretation were included in the dataset. It is impossible to record verbatim every word said so all field notes are an approximation of the conversations held and events witnessed. Whilst facsimile copies of everything witnessed would be optimal, it would also render those conversations more recognizable to the individuals themselves (Hayes, 2000).

Whilst recognising the reliability issues inherent in making approximate notes versus transcripts of recordings, the field note method has some advantages in practical terms. A notebook and pen are always accessible, unobtrusive and portable. I was often perched precariously upon cupboards or situated immediately next to pupils in classrooms often with limited space. A recording device may have increased the accuracy of recorded conversations, but would have reduced the quantity of dialogue accessible. Data were sometimes collected in corridors and waiting outside classrooms and in numerous chance, fleeting encounters, all of which could be quickly noted in detail following the encounter. Additionally, given the long-time frame of data collection, my field notes recorded extraneous information when possible, such as seemingly idle discussions of what pupils wore, styles chosen, school uniform standards etc. At the time of collection, these notes kept me busy when classes were quietly working but, upon analysis, I realised how critical these side notes were for bringing the data 'to life', particularly in terms of providing additional layers of context to the behaviours recorded.

Data Unit Granularity

Data were recorded in line with the key premise of success and failure. Behaviours relating to recognition and social value were recorded alongside contextual details as noted

above, where time constraints permitted. As the research process developed, it became

apparent that boys in general presented more manifest behaviours relating to the themes of

success and failure than did girls. Thus, more data were recorded for boys because the

ethnographic method limited data collection to observable behaviours. I had an awareness

throughout the project that the internal world of girls was just as interesting and important

as that of the boys; however, it was not always apparent, recordable, or sufficiently

manifest to be recorded. Data were comprised of meaning-making units. With reference to

Appendix 1, deductive codes are denoted as underlined. Each discrete code is separated

with a /. Some data units comprise a paragraph as context is required, while others are

single utterances or brief observations. Each class period data was written up as one whole

piece of text and the time frame for each period was approximately 50 minutes. There

could be considerable time between each piece of recorded data or they could occur in

sequence. Behaviours which occurred daily and routinely were not recorded, such as pupils

filing into and out of classes, arranging school bags etc. If, for example, a pupil behaved

differently during a routine behaviour, typically it would be recorded as anomalous in the

context of the typical pattern of this behaviour.

The Value of Stories

The data presented in this thesis is largely a collection of incidents, vignettes,

episodes, conversations and observations. Collectively, these excerpts build a narrative

encapsulating, at least in part, the essence of my observations and experience within the

school and with the pupils. The pupils and teachers are the characters and their actions

form their 'story'. While this approach to data and analysis differs from conventional ways

of testing theories (e.g., through experimentation), stories are not only important tools for

communicating existing ideas but can also provide ways of critically testing the boundaries of our existing knowledge (Gelman & Basbøll, 2014). To be of scientific service, Gelman and Basbøll (2014) claim that stories must be both anomalous and immutable. An anomalous story should demonstrate aspects of everyday life which are not well understood or explained by current theoretical premise or modelling, while an immutable story should test the boundaries of a theory or model by being sufficiently detailed and context specific. The data presented in this thesis are both anomalous and immutable in these terms and, as such, have the potential to test and to extend the existing theories and models presented throughout.

The project can also be viewed as a large-scale case study (Flyvberg, 2006). In addition to having a rich narrative, this research is based in a single, albeit complex, site with a relatively narrow set of characters: a case study of how individuals negotiate their social value within just one institution. The level and depth of detail, the focus upon the minutiae of school life, and micro-observations of key moments and incidents provides as close a representation of naturally-occurring dynamics as possible, at least relative to other methods. This "proximity to reality" (Flyvberg, 2006 p. 236) allows for accurate representations of the "complexities and contradictions of real life" (Flyvberg, 2006 p. 237) and allows the case study to inform theory from a context specific, practical, enacted and richly-detailed perspective. The 'story' and the case study methodological approaches combine in an ethnographic project such as the research detailed here, and can present a valuable contribution to knowledge and theory.

Ethnographic Approach

Ethnography involves immersion into a culture and the disciplined representation of human experience (Willis & Trondman, 2000). I spent four years with the same pupils, observing their school lives and interactions on at least one day each week. Following their timetables with them helped to make me accessible to them as a researcher, to enable them to feel comfortable enough to ask me questions and also helped me to be accepted into the fabric of their everyday school life. It was decided prior to undertaking the ethnography that I would not intervene in the class. I did not interact with the pupils unless they talked to me first or asked for help. The use of my first name only and my non-disciplinary role helped to differentiate me from other adults in the school. My ethnographic strategy was to remain as unobtrusive a presence as possible and to fade into the background of each class, a regular presence who did not intentionally instigate behavioural changes or reactions amongst the pupils. My objective was to be an accepted, but largely ignored and benign presence.

The ethnographic approach requires some insight into the researcher standpoint. For the purposes of transparency about any inherent bias(es), I am 48 years old, female, married, and have teenage daughters. I attended a Scottish comprehensive school and had a moderately successful, largely uneventful and mostly happy experience of the education system. Coming from a comfortable, middle class background, however, I was always adequately prepared for school and equipped with all necessary materials, parental support and encouragement. My interest in success and failure in the education system was not particularly piqued by my own experiences. I had little to no contact with pupils from impoverished backgrounds, for example, as the classes in my school were streamed by

ability for every subject in my first two years and then subdivided by academic or practical

subject choices and then by ability levels in the years which followed. I was aware that

there were a number of different family backgrounds during my time at school but had no

personal experience of those who lacked financial or parental support, or the impact upon

their access to education. I was aware, however, by my sixth year that there were very few

pupils whose parents did not own their own house. Similarly, I was unaware (or cannot

recollect) gender bias, subjugation, misogyny or sexism during my own schooling. It is

only with hindsight that I realised, for example, that boys and girls were forbidden to take

subjects which were assumed to be the domain of the 'other'. I was timetabled to take

Home Economics where I learned cooking and sewing whilst the boys undertook technical

drawing and woodwork classes.

Politically, I have always been left of centre but my political beliefs have been significantly

shaped and sharpened by my research experience rather than bringing articulate and well-

defined political beliefs to bear upon the project undertaken. Witnessing poverty first hand

on a daily basis has inevitably underscored the resulting research output; however, it is

important to note that this project has been collaborative throughout with significant input

from all supervisors, with their own political beliefs. The extent to which my own

perspective, and the collaborative process, may have shaped the subsequent data collection

is elucidated upon in the general discussion (Chapter 7).

Objects of Study: Data sources

To understand the behaviour of pupils in any given setting, it is crucial to include

information regarding the peers with whom they interact, along with details of their

interactions (Noble & Smith, 2015). Additional information about the individuals in this

project has been gleaned from several sources, including a review of personal profiles and

learning plans (PLP) from primary schools, discussions with various class teachers, year

heads (Depute Rectors), observations, and field notes. The triangulation of data sources

does not necessarily inform the data collection strategy itself; rather, it informs the

understanding of the background of the pupils and offers some insight into events and

incidents which occurred when field observations were not being made.

Ethics

Prior to being granted permission to conduct this research the project was reviewed

and approved by the University of Stirling's Psychology Departmental Research Ethics

Committee concerning design, implementation, research, output, and conduct. It was also

reviewed again by the Ethics Committee, during the data collection period, to ensure

ongoing scrutiny given the length of the project. Furthermore as this work is funded by the

Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the project was also vetted by, and was

found to comply with the requirements of the ESRC Framework for Research.

As institutions, schools are frequented by a number of observers on a regular basis.

Young people and teachers are accustomed to the presence of interested others in their

classrooms. Pupil support assistants, learning and behavioural support assistants and

teachers, educational psychologists, and students from various disciplines were

commonplace, as were observers reporting upon the continuing professional development

of teachers and mentoring of early career and probationer teachers. Furthermore, the

present research focussed upon school procedures and processes as they would have

occurred without the presence of a researcher. There was no intervention, manipulation or

deception involved whatsoever. For these reasons, my research site was not only

comfortable with but they were also enthusiastic about and supportive of my observation of the pupils and the potential of the ensuing research output.

As noted above, the project was entirely observational and non-intrusive. According to the current BPS Code of Human Research Ethics:

> *"In relation to the gaining of consent from children and young people in school or other institutional settings, where the research procedures are judged by a senior member of staff or other appropriate professional within the institution to fall within the range of usual curriculum or other institutional activities, and where a risk assessment has identified no significant risks, consent from the participants and the granting of approval and access from a senior member of school staff legally responsible for such approval can be considered sufficient." (BPS Code of Human Research Ethics: 17)*

The Depute Rector for the school issued informed consent for the project on behalf of the pupils, and assumed responsibility for ensuring that the pupils' safety and wellbeing were protected. This informed consent was reissued for each of the four years on the project. I completed a full Disclosure Scotland check before commencing the observations and have subsequently obtained Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) status as the requirements for disclosure were updated. Furthermore, I attended the school for 6 months as a behavioural support worker during my Masters placement, prior to commencing the project reported here. This allowed the school to assess my standards of practice, conduct and suitability for observational research prior to the commencement of the project.

In terms of parental consent, the school issue a statement to parents every year which informs parents that their child will be observed by several professionals for a variety of reasons and research purposes. At this point, parents and young people may decide to opt out of observations. In this case, three pupils were requested by their parents to be removed from the research. Those pupils were not in the core cohort and form no part of the data collected. Furthermore, to ensure their privacy was respected as wished, the researcher did not attend any of their classes despite some restriction to the ability to observe target individuals in key classes.

Pupils could also ask me anything about the project during my stay in their class. At no point did any pupil ask me not to write anything or protest at my presence. On the contrary, many requested my assistance with various tasks, to help them, to ask for directions if they were lost or if there was an issue requiring arbitration or adult guidance. Several pupils also introduced me to their parents both within school and externally in social environments.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

At no point will the name nor location of the school be disclosed. There is nothing distinctive about the school which could identify it to a naïve reader of published material. It is portrayed as a comprehensive school in Scotland with a varied and dynamic demographic.

The data were collected over four years and data collection commenced in 2011. Most incidents recorded also happened in other contexts over several disparate situations with different individuals. Events which are so specific or unique that they would identify an individual have not been included. All pupil names have been changed and bear no

resemblance to the original pupil's name. Indicators of ethnicity have not been reported for individuals, but gender-specific names have been preserved as the study is partially concerned with issues pertaining to gender. Where an individual achievement, hobby or interest is mentioned, an anomalous interest has been substituted to reduce recognisability. In situations where individuals could be identified by distinct characteristics, such as hair colour or dress style, references to these have not been included. In some cases, another style or distinction has been substituted so that the thrust of the dialogue makes sense but the potentially identifying details are removed. Furthermore, individuals leaving the cohort are of particular importance in some of the chapters that follow. Many pupils changed schools, dropped out of school or moved from the area over four years, therefore, those who did leave should not be identifiable simply by virtue of having left the target school.

Specific classes are described where necessary. Pupil behaviour was often specific to that particular class. For example, pupil behaviour in the Maths classes tended to be markedly different to behaviour in a Modern Language class. In those instances the academic subject of the class is salient and is noted in the relevant chapters. On the other hand, class subject is often irrelevant to the observed behaviour, and was thus has only been noted when and if it was relevant to the analysis and added important detail. The fact that the majority of vignettes used throughout the analysis do not specify class subject further obscures the identities of the pupils and teachers concerned. The classes observed were varied, with innumerable pupil combinations, which also served to hide the focus on the core cohort from that cohort itself. Similarly, a large number of teachers were observed: in Maths, for example, there were 14 teachers whose class I attended over four years. Given promotions, retirements and staff transfer, most of those teachers are no longer

associated with the school and, therefore, it would be difficult to ascertain which teacher was being referred to even if the subject taught was specifically noted. In no subject was there only one teacher, and where PSA (pupil support assistant) or LSA (learning support assistant) individuals are mentioned, these roles are shared among many individuals, so no one person would be identifiable from this information.

In short, while staff and pupils may recall my presence, they should not be able to determine which pupil in which class is being referred to, nor which one of the class configurations have been described. I am thus confident that all identities have been protected and that recognisability is improbable.

Analysis

During the data collection period, the data were reviewed as they were obtained, and during the final year of collection, several theoretically-informed themes were decided upon (detailed below). The original research question of identity development in adolescence, relative to success and failure, was reformulated in light of the iterative process of data collection. It became apparent that the data spoke more to the maintenance of social value than positive identity in a stratified environment (Marks & Yardley, 2004). It became problematic to envisage how identity development amongst the young people could be measured accurately without obtaining subjective accounts from pupils themselves, which would have severely compromised the ethnographic aspect of the project. Originally it had been planned to exploit the longitudinal aspect of the project by considering each school year individually and plotting pupil trajectories. However, the dispersal of pupils into separate subjects and classes in third year rendered this plan impossible. It then became necessary to consider how else to effectively divide the data.

For the above reasons, thematic analysis was chosen as the preferred method of analysis

(Braun & Clarke, 2006; Boyatzis, 1998). Due to the extensive nature of the data collected

(145,275 words of field notes collected over four years), the data corpus was divided into

more manageable discrete data sets prior to systematic thematic analyses. The data,

therefore, were organised by deductive themes before more fine-grained and systematic

inductive analyses took place. To ensure that the deductive themes chosen were indeed

robust and relevant, a second coder was enlisted to complete a coding concordance

procedure (Elliott, Fisher & Rennie, 1999; Smith, Bekker, & Cheater, 2011; Noble &

Smith, 2015). A hybrid coding scheme was employed whereby deductive codes were

initially applied to organise the data. These codes were developed iteratively throughout

the last year of data collection (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The data corpus, therefore, was

initially divided in accordance with the themes which form the basis of Chapters 3-6:

- Institutional inequality

- Socio-economic inequality

- Gender inequality

- Peer recognition and social ostracism

These major organising themes map on to existing concerns in social psychology

literature, and became increasingly salient as data were collected. I was always fully aware

of the presence and relevance of such over-arching themes, if not how their specific impact

upon the young people being observed would function. During the analysis, the themes of

inequality were refined and developed to further address the research question, and the

interaction of the pupils with the institution became the focus of each chapter rather than

inequality only between pupils. The coding process is described in closer detail in the following sections.

The Hybrid Coding Process

Hybrid coding refers to the approach of combining both bottom up (inductive) and top down (deductive) coding strategies. The combination of deductive and inductive coding, or the potential for combining inductive and deductive coding, is a key strength of thematic analysis and can be ideal as an approach for studies of this magnitude and complexity. The hybrid deductive/inductive coding approach within thematic analyses specifically allows theoretically-informed deductive themes to shape the data whilst also incorporating data-driven inductive themes (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

The data were initially divided into deductive categories and from there an agentic inductive thematic coding process was carried out within each of the themes (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The data were then analysed using a latent coding method from a contextual-constructionist perspective (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Madhill, Jordan & Shirley, 2000). Latent coding refers to the process of developing themes and can be contrasted with a manifest coding process which analyses concrete occurrences (Boyatzis, 1998). In practice, this means that meaning can be suggested from manifest behaviours rather than analysis of the specific behaviour itself. For example, pupil A suddenly tucking in his shirt to his trousers is a manifest behaviour but not particularly informative unless the context is made salient. Meaning can be supposed or constructed when pupil A has suddenly tucked in his shirt only when pupil B, who is disrupting the class with challenging behaviour, stands beside him with a fully untucked shirt. The contextual constructionist approach involves constructing meaning within a particular social and cultural context as opposed to

an empiricist approach which determines knowledge based upon experience and formalised in scientific hypotheses testing. The latent coding method works in conjunction with a social constructionist approach when attempting to generate socially-produced and reproduced meaning from complex social interactions which are defined by socio-structural and institutional parameters (Durrheim,1996; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Noble & Smith, 2015).

The stages of the coding process are outlined in Figure 1 below:

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│  Open-ended, assumption free │
│  research question developed │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Long list of possible themes │
│  derived from prevalent      │
│  literature                  │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│      Data Collection         │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Occurrence of key events     │
│ signalling importance of     │
│ themes                       │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Testing the reliability of   │
│ deductive themes             │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Informed selection of key    │
│ organising deductive themes  │
│ driven by data events        │
└─────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Inductive thematic analysis  │
│ of deductively organised     │
│ data sets                    │
└─────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 1. The hybrid coding process

Stages of Coding

Whilst the process in *Figure 1* appears largely linear, it was also dynamic, iterative,

and cyclical throughout the data collection process (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The

initial long list of possible themes was refined over time as redundant themes were

discarded. Examples of discarded themes include self-esteem, identity, and wellbeing. These themes were discarded as it became apparent that they were difficult to measure appropriately through ethnographic observation alone and would have involved 'psychologising' observed behaviours by assuming different psychological and motivational states on the part of those performing the behaviours without direct empirical evidence.

The data collection process was also reflexive and responsive throughout, allowing for adaptation depending upon which themes were salient and which were not. Over the course of the data collection process, several key events occurred. For example, seven out of the initial cohort of eighteen pupils left the school during the data collection period and one changed class. Several of these pupils cited bullying as their reason for moving away. In addition, misogyny and gender stereotypes became more pronounced over time. The data, therefore, suggested that the themes of social ostracism and gender, for example, became increasingly salient over time and, subsequently, were excellent organising themes. As such, the deductive themes are also inductive in that whilst they were pre-existing as theoretical themes in the literature, their active selection and form in this project has also been data driven and emergent.

The data were not formally analysed when the organising, deductive themes were chosen. Manifest behaviours, however, were often clearly structured around particular themes. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) suggest that one of the strengths of the hybrid approach is that the coding process allows for significant 'moments' to be informative prior to any substantive analysis. They propose that organising codes and themes around such 'moments' encapsulates the richness of the observed behaviours (Fereday & Muir-

Cochrane, 2006; Boyatzis, 1998). The terminology of codes and themes are considered

equivalent in this project and are used interchangeably. It is important to note that the

application of the deductive thematic process is not in itself an in-depth analysis; that is, the

data are thematically organized, rather than analysed, in terms of the deductive codes. The

sorting of data into the deductive codes involved only surface coding by relevance to the

theme. The analysis commenced once the data were organised and separated into discrete,

thematically-structured data sets. The value of this hybridized methodology is that the

analysis has been both theoretically informed but also sensitive, reflexive and driven by the

realities of the data collected, including changes over time. Most importantly, pupil

outcomes, such as their departure from the school or their increasing isolation amongst

their peers have shaped the analytical process throughout.

The deductive data sets were all coded in accordance with the themes identified in

Table 1. Additionally, nine pupil trajectories were coded across the four-year data

collection period. The inductive coding commenced using NVivo 11 software (QSR,

2017). Following significant data immersion, and a review of the entire data corpus, the

super codes were then reviewed to determine the key themes which best captured concepts

essential to the research question. In accordance with Braun and Clarke (2006), key themes

were developed not in terms of frequency or magnitude but by their goodness of fit and

their explanatory value relevant to the research question. For example, researcher

interaction with pupils was coded and represented a substantial portion of the completed

coding with significant frequency (341 codes). However, despite its prevalence, it was

neither informative nor sufficiently instructive to include in this analysis and lacked

relevance to this overarching research question. For these reasons, the researcher

interaction codes have been excluded from the analysis entirely. In contrast, many

mundane, daily behaviours were recorded multiple times but lacked sufficient focus and

relevance to this research question to be included in the final analysis. They are

nevertheless listed for completeness in the frequency table at the start of each chapter.

Whilst codes are included in the tables of frequency in terms of the focus of analysis in the

chapters, they added little to answer the research question. For example, there are 125

codes relating to 'competitive strategies' within the peer-on-peer recognition analysis in

Chapter 6, but these codes added little additional information or insight to the stratification

and positioning codes examined in Chapter 3 and there was significant overlap between

each sub code. Both sub codes contained the performance of competitive and positioning

behaviours, but the focus in Chapter 3 was the interaction with the institution whereas

those in Chapter 6, whilst containing similar data, lacked comparable explanatory power in

terms of peer-on-peer recognition and were thus largely redundant. Decisions on

prevalence and the identification of key themes developed during review of and

submergence in the data sets, and were critical to inform which themes best addressed the

research question. Table 1 below details the super codes and a sample of their sub codes

together with a few examples. Each chapter is structured around a different theme. Each

theme is split into a number of super codes which are further subdivided into numerous sub

codes. Although the codes are discretely organised, they are not exclusive and there are

substantial linkages and overlaps within each code in terms of both theoretical premise and

applicable data. Figure 2 in turn illustrates some of the code linkages whilst the organizing

narrative of each chapter is elucidated further in each separate chapter.

Table 1

Inductive Coding Frame

Chapter Theme	Super Codes	Sub Codes	Example
Institutional Interaction and Stratification	Policy and Practice	Stratification & positioning School implementing procedures Achievements and pupil responses	Grades Uniform and free school meals Achievement ties, award ceremonies
	Classroom Environment	Reward and Punishment Classroom factors which co-occur with student dynamics Behaviour change as a function of classroom context	 Classroom seating, choosing teams Identity management strategies
	Student Appropriation	*Policy and practices appropriated to negotiate value*	
Institutional Interaction: Socio-Economic Status	Markers of Affluence	Clothing choices Overt displays of wealth	
	Kits and Tubs	Who has and who has not	P.E. kit and cooking tubs
	Ascertaining Social Class	Querying the status of others Ascertaining status through interactions and non-interactions	
	Family Reputation	*Protective factors*	
Gender Interaction	*Teacher Driven*	*Prevalence of gender compared to race for example* *Dichotomy by gender* *Structuring competition in terms of gender*	 Consider non-binary gender
	Pupil Driven	*Social implications for girls who 'show up' boys* *Devaluation of girls' contributions where male achievement is expected* *Boys elevate themselves rather than devaluing other boys*	 Vertical hierarchy formations
	Gender Power Relations	Belonging Dominance and Submission Misogyny/ Overt Sexism	
	Teachers Allow Gender Difference	Sex stereotypical beliefs Allowing overtly sexist comments Patronising sexism 'Banter' allowing horizontal positioning	 Unnecessarily gendered comments Rugby coach 'helping' girls Miss Leppard
Peer on Peer Recognition and Ostracism	Multiple Sources of Recognition	Dimensions of success/popularity Competitive strategies Audience seeking	
	Positioning	Dynamic versus static Self-esteem positioning strategies Spatial positioning	

Social Inclusion/Exclusion	Drop outs	
	Charting the progress of drop outs as a function of social interactions	Dropping out of school as the ultimate outcome measure

Whilst Table 1 details the coding frame used during the initial analysis period, there are some divergences from the codes presented here and those expanded upon in greater detail within each empirical chapter. Following revision of each code, the chapters were formulated and some of the above codes were not analysed as the diversity of data collected was beyond the scope of this thesis. Examples of codes which do not feature in the following chapters are in italics in the table above. Similarly, during coding some labels were split or expanded.

Institutional

Policy and Practice

Classroom Environment

Student Appropriation

Gender

Teacher Driven

Pupil Driven

Gender Power Relations

Teachers Accomodating Gender Difference

Socio-Economic

Marker of Affluence

Kits and Tubs

Ascertaining Social Class

Family Reputation

Peer on Peer

Sources of Recognition

Aspects of Recognition

Positioning

Social Inclusion/Exclusion

———— Institutional : Gender
— · — · Institutional : Socio-Economic
·········· Institutional : Peer on Peer
══════ Socio-Ecomonic : Peer on Peer
· — — · Gender : Peer on Peer

Figure 2. The interconnectedness of the discrete super codes

Inter-rater reliability

The application of theory-driven and data-driven deductive codes at the outset of

the analytical process was subjected to an inter-rater reliability analysis. Due to the large

corpus of data it was not feasible to have a second rater code the entire body of data.

Following the recommendations of Marks and Yardley (2004), it was decided that the

deductive codes should be tested for reliability by asking a second coder to determine the

same emergent themes using only a portion of data and entirely blind to codes already determined by the researcher. The codes were developed through data immersion by the researcher. However, as they are overarching socio-structural themes it was hoped that the second coder would also identify them in the data excerpt provided and that there would be considerable agreement in the findings of each coder (Noble & Smith, 2015).

According to Marks and Yardley (2004), the initial period of an observational project is when the researcher is perhaps least critical in their observations. In the present project, for example, I was not considering the themes of inequality or pupils interacting with the institution specifically from the outset. In order to avoid bias in the data excerpt provided to the second coder, a segment was selected from the beginning of the data collection process. By choosing this time frame, prior to the awareness of emerging and developing thematic content, the second coder was as far as possible experiencing the data as naively as the original researcher did in the first instance.

The second coder was provided with a data excerpt comprising 4707 words. Some extraneous details were excluded from the excerpts to prevent distraction by irrelevant material. Examples include observations made about uniform standards or reflective comments. These were useful to the researcher but not pertinent to the inter-rater reliability process. The time frame was from 14/09/11 until 07/10/11. It was decided not to offer the initial month of data collection as the blind coding excerpt, as I was unfamiliar with the project, pupils and classes and there is a certain, and understandable, lack of clarity surrounding some pupil names and interactions which may render those data less accessible.

The second coder, herself a researcher focusing upon adolescents within learning environments, was asked to blind code the data for overarching themes which might constitute chapter structure for a thesis. For clarity, she was not provided with any codes, themes or details of the intended thesis structure. She was requested to code by incidence and the unit of coding was agreed to comprise as much detail as would allow the data units to make objective sense if considered in isolation. In some cases this would be a fragment of a sentence, in others a paragraph. The second coder then coded the material provided and both coders met to discuss the extent of concordance achieved. The initial meeting between coders highlighted a number of key issues which are discussed as follows (Hruschka, Schwartz, Picone-Decaro, Jenkins & Carey, 2004):

- Initial codes were too wide and required refinement

- Coding process restarted independently by second coder for more informative coding

- The second coder produced four themes which map indirectly onto those determined by the researcher (see below)

- Some of the extraneous material should have been left in the data excerpt for clarity

- Some of the vignettes were understood differently without the benefit of researcher familiarity with the sample and research site etc.

- The second coder used reflexive codes which had not been coded by the researcher (this comprised all incidences where pupils interacted with the researcher and were often non-verbal behaviours)

- The researcher tended to code full sentences whereas the second coder coded specifically only the meaning-making portion of each piece of data.

Once these matters were fully discussed, both coders returned to the data excerpt and refined their coding procedures. I then tried to position myself as a naïve observer to try to understand the difficulty of interpreting data in the absence of contextual detail.

Following the refined coding process, we met again to determine the outcomes and discussed again the entire data excerpt in full detail. The summary below is a reflection of the second coding process. An inter-rater reliability analysis using Cohen's Kappa statistic was then performed to determine agreement between both raters. The interrater reliability between raters was found to be Kappa = .817, *p* < .001. Following Fleiss' (1971) recommendations, a k value in excess of .8 is considered a 'very good' measure of agreement between raters. A high Kappa score denotes reliable coding between both coders and ensures that whilst coding is a subjective process, that there is substantial agreement between both coders. Finally, for the purposes of this chapter the terms 'code' and 'theme' are used interchangeably and are intended to convey the same meaning. In the following table (2), Rater A is the researcher and the second coder is referred to as Rater B.

Table 2

Inter-Rater Reliability: Code Frequency by Rater

Code	Rater A	Rater B
Institutional Inequality	5	5
Socio-economic Inequality	5	5
Gender Inequality	12	13
Peer on Peer Recognition	30	30
Social Ostracism	30	31
Attitudes to Authority	0	7

Following the coding concordance process, the analyses were conducted with the existence of deductive and inductive codes which were mutually defining. In other words, prior-yet-general concerns such as gender, academic structuring and positioning had ensured that the data collection in the field was manageable. In turn, whilst these prior concerns guided the data collection, the data collection also iteratively shaped developing concerns. The intensive and extended coding process took place over two years during which the dimensions and boundary markers of each code were defined and redefined. Having clear theoretical concerns informing the deductive coding structure from the outset shaped the best way to thematically organise the inductive codes subsequently linking the analyses back to relevant social psychological literature. Thus, themes which were most relevant and best placed to answer the research question formed the analyses featured in each empirical chapter.

CHAPTER 3

INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES AND BEHAVIOURAL RESPONSES TO

STRATIFICATION

The focus of this chapter is how pupils negotiate social value within an institution

which continually stratifies pupils upon a number of dimensions. The policies and practices

of the school will be analysed to examine how institutional and classroom-level factors

shape social value and create formal (institution-defined) hierarchies of success and

performance. Formal (institution-defined) hierarchies will also be contrasted with informal,

pupil-constructed hierarchies. Importantly, the analysis focuses on how institutional

policies and practices interact with and reinforce emergent pupil hierarchies. The

longitudinal ethnographic method also allows for in-depth analyses of how fluid and

responsive pupil behaviour can be in response to changing opportunities in different school

classes.

Social valuations occur at both an individual and a group level (Adler & Adler,

1995; Tarrant 2002). For the purposes of this chapter, social value relates to the reward and

recognition structures formalised by the institution; classes streamed by performance for

example, which stratify the individual and the class as a whole, in contrast with informal

valuations which pupils make through social comparisons with their peers. The literature

relating to group and individual responses to social (de-)valuation will be discussed with a

particular focus upon critical reviews of each field. The research presented here provides a

unique opportunity to critically evaluate existing theories which are concerned with how individuals negotiate social value (Crocker & Major, 1989: Brown, 2000). There is a lack of research specifically investigating social evaluation processes within institutional settings (Crocker & Major, 1989; Adler & Adler, 1995; Brown, 2000), and Daddis (2010) recommends a longitudinal research paradigm which would address this gap in the literature. Daddis also suggests examining complex adolescent social interactions by tracking individual trajectories over time. The present study is ideally placed to address the concerns raised by Daddis (2010) by focussing on the development of key individuals within the chosen cohort over an extended period of time and, importantly, within an institutional setting which is the source of much of the social valuation process.

The first part of the analysis will focus upon pupil responses to institutionally-defined value systems such as National 4 and National 5 qualification pathways. The analysis then focusses upon classroom environment and the role teachers can play in pupil hierarchies. Finally, the latter part of the analysis will present specific case studies to highlight different pupil behavioural responses to valuation and devaluation as a function of institutional practices. Adolescent responses to stratification will be introduced thoroughly in the following introduction. Theories of identity management in response to social evaluation will be reviewed and related to adolescence and the stratifying influences institutions can bring to bear upon pupils.

Determining Social Value in School

Most adolescent group-based social interactions take place in school (Tarrant, 2002) and hierarchies can be formed by the institution or by pupils themselves. Institutions such as schools stratify pupils in terms of academic merit through practices such as

academic streaming, by selection for school sports teams, and by promoting individual pupils to elevated positions. For example, pupils are selected to become prefects, house captains and head boy and girl. Co-existing with the institutional hierarchies are pupil-driven hierarchies defined by popularity and social status. Holding specific positions within either hierarchy implies a corresponding level of social value.

As such, schools as institutions shape opportunities for success and the parameters within which pupils can achieve it. Adolescent participation in high school is a transitional phase in development, where a sense of failure can be felt most keenly (Chen & Yao, 2010; Pombeni, Kirchler & Palmonari, 1990). Moreover, success and failure are performed socially in school settings. Grades, reports, and class tests all provide specific information about academic performance, and in any achievement-based system, hierarchies develop which can reinforce inequalities and disparities between pupils in terms of both academic performance and social inclusion (Mussweiler, Gabriel & Bodenhausen, 2000; Hasan & Bagde, 2013). Social value in this context thus relates to and encapsulates several phenomena and concepts highlighted in contemporary theory, including social capital[2], human capital, cultural capital, and social mobility.

Social capital is defined by Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch (1995) as the social relationship between the pupil and the institution by which the pupil can glean both assistance and direction whereas cultural capital develops informally through peer group friendships with shared emergent norms (DiMaggio & Mohr, 1985). Existing within the formal, achievement-based hierarchy of the School, informal pupil social hierarchies are

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[2] The use of the term 'capital' is not an endorsement of seeing human value in terms of commodity. It is simply an acknowledgement of the use of these terms in the literature to denote cognitive concepts.

both complex and varied with peer interactions providing informal feedback along

dimensions of popularity, friendship, and acceptance (Berzonsky & Neimeyer, 1994; Chen

& Yao, 2010). Cultural capital refers to the negotiation process whereby groups define

what attributes or abilities deserve social prestige (Klein, 2006). Social value can be

accrued by possessing or affiliating with those who possess the desired attributes (Adler,

Kless & Adler, 1992; Adler & Adler, 1995). Unlike the institutionally-defined hierarchies

which are specifically achievement based; informal social hierarchies are contextually

defined by emergent norms and values within each group. For example, the most popular

boys in the observed cohort were also those whom the school valued as sports team

members. Social value is thus negotiated by the pupils themselves in relation to different

attributes that can vary in importance from time to time. Friendship or affiliation with those

who have acquired social capital can also provide a positive, albeit vicarious, sense of self-

esteem and worth, simply by association (DiMaggio & Mohr, 1985; Cialdini, Borden,

Thorne, Walker, Freeman & Sloan, 1976).

Institutional Hierarchies in School Settings

Academic Streaming

'Streaming' pupils by academic performance involves grouping pupils of similar

performance – and anticipated future performance – together, allowing teachers and school

management to 'set' the class material to a particular standard. The streamed classes tended

to be colloquially referred to as 'top' set or 'lower' set. Rarely were the 'middle' set

referred to or discussed during observations by either educational professionals or pupils.

The overt comparison based on achievement between these polarised 'sets' had clear

potential to create a hierarchy of success and failure at the expense of the lower set classes

(Woessmann, 2016; see also Mummendey, Kessler, Klink & Mielke, 1999; Reay, 2006; Ellemers, Doosje, van Knippenberg & Wilke, 1992).

Formal Exam Structure

As the pupils moved into their exam choice classes at the end of their second year (S2), there was a further 'streaming' process in which pupils were allocated to different groups based on the level they were expected to attain at the end of S4, in turn based upon their performance in S2 class tests. The National Qualifications were introduced in Scotland in 2014 to replace Standard Grades and ostensibly offer a wider range of outcomes for pupils. In the new framework, pupils are selected into one of three levels: National 3, 4, or 5. National 3 is an access qualification, designed to lead onto National 4. National 4 is currently coursework based, and National 5 is a combination of National 4 coursework and a final examination ("National Qualifications", 2014).

Thus, only the National 5-streamed pupils were deemed 'good' enough to sit formal exams. Other pupils can attain National 3 or 4 qualifications, based upon coursework, which employers will recognise. The system is designed to look at qualifications attained by the end of the school career rather than focussing upon attainment at each level. Whilst this policy is intended to be more inclusive of lower-performance pupils, the analysis presented in this chapter critically examines whether the social result was actually divisive with National 3 and 4 qualification pupils experiencing stigmatisation (Klein, 2006).

The analysis also focuses on how, in addition to instantiating the formal, academic performance-based hierarchy, teachers also echoed and ultimately reinforced pupil-driven social hierarchies. There is a huge literature on classroom management (e.g. Sutton &

Wheatley, 2003; Reynolds, 1992); however, the purpose of this chapter is not to focus upon

how teachers manage their classes per se, but to examine specifically how inconsistencies

and differential treatment by teachers echoed the pupil-constructed hierarchies.

Theoretical Background: Strategies and Responses to Social (De-)valuation

The formal structure of school can thus lead to the stratification of pupils in ways

which can have consequences for social valuation and devaluation. The social aspect of

academic hierarchies constitutes the majority of the analysis in this chapter, focusing on the

importance of group processes and an exploration of some of the strategies pupils may

employ to maintain a positive sense of self when belonging to a devalued group. Social

identity theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) proposes that our

identity is composed, at least in part, by our membership of different social groups – our

social identity. In turn, membership of specific groups can have implications for positive

self-evaluation, depending on the status of or social value placed upon the group following

social comparison (Erikson, 1968; Tarrant, 2002; Doosje, Ellemers & Spears, 1995). SIT

has typically focused upon the variety of responses group members exhibit towards either

higher- or lower-status outgroups (Brown, 2000; Ellemers, 1993). When a social group

compares unfavourably to another group, a number of options are hypothesised to exist for

group members to achieve or re-establish a positive social identity. Brown (2000)

summarises the most common strategies as: social competition (directly challenging an

outgroup's higher-status position); social creativity; and social mobility or "jumping ship"

(Brown, 2000, p.760) which is sub-divided into actually separating from the group to move

to a higher status group or a more abstract psychological distancing (Becker & Tausch,

2014; Mummendey et al., 1999; Ellemers, Wilke & van Knippenberg, 1993; Doosje et al.,

1995). Social creativity in this context could involve redefining the relevance of particular comparators, asserting 'alternative' dimensions of comparison as being important, or sub-dividing the devalued group to create a subgroup (excluding the individual self) more deserving of the devaluation than the group as a whole (Blanz, Mummendey, Mielke, & Klink 1998). Social mobility in the present research refers to the individual's ability to move between peer groups, their mobility within the pupil constructed social hierarchy, and their responses to institutional hierarchical structures such as class streaming by academic performance (Kearney & Levine, 2014). Of the three strategies reviewed by Brown (2000), he suggests that only social mobility is currently well predicted. However, within the educational context, it may not feasible for a pupil to choose to physically leave the classroom, or to assert a meaningful challenge to the dominant group. Instead, psychologically disidentifying with the group (Becker & Tausch, 2014; Brown, 2000) or redefining relevant comparisons are more feasible strategies in the face of devaluation (Doosje, Spears, & Koomen, 1995).

Social mobility is theorised to be an individual-level strategy which involves leaving a socially-undesirable or stigmatised group in favour of moving to a group with higher status (Jackson, Sullivan, Harnish & Hodge, 1996; Lalonde & Silverman, 1994; Ellmers, 1993). Typically, SIT is read as predicting that individuals will choose to move to a higher-status group when group boundaries are perceived as permeable; i.e., where it is feasible to change group memberships. However, if boundaries are impermeable, then individuals are predicted to favour group-based strategies that involve improving the social value of one's current group (e.g., Jackson et al., 1996; Ellemers, 1993; Ellemers et al.,1993). The relative salience of group membership, and the level of identification with

their own group an individual has, will factor in their chosen strategy (Doosje et al., 1995). For example, when testing for responses to social injustice, Lalonde and Silverman (1994) found that making salient an individual's disadvantaged status made collective group responses more likely. The allocation of pupils into clearly-defined, institutionally-determined and academically-streamed groups with differential social status is thus likely to encourage group-based responses to devaluation, according to social identity theory.

Dynamic Behavioural Responses to a Stratifying Environment

Against this theoretical background, the present research critically examines the variety of responses pupils choose in the value of devaluation and the specific contexts within which these responses are selected. Informed by research on social identity management strategies, the latter part of this chapter will focus upon detailed analyses of individual-level behavioural strategies by two boys: Brian and Charlie. A key protective strategy which individuals in both inter-personal and group contexts use to counter negative feedback and devaluation involves social comparison. Urberg, Deg˘irmenciog˘lu, Tolson, and Halliday-Scher (2000) suggest that individuals are very aware of their particular position within school social hierarchies and amongst their chosen peer groups. Moreover, they found that pupils were strikingly accurate at nominating their own positions relative to others, when compared to ratings by their classmates. Being aware of one's position to others factors in healthy self-concept management and has been well documented in experimental research (Tesser & Campbell, 1983; Bachman & O'Malley, 1986). Studies in naturalistic environments highlight the importance of social context and interaction in providing feedback information that individuals use to evaluate themselves compared to their peers. Davis (1966) uses 'the frog pond' analogy to argue that

individuals favour social cues to determine their positions relative to others instead of more objective criteria like specific scores in a test. Thus, pupils can use the strategy of comparison with a less popular pupil to enhance their own relative position. This is particularly relevant and protective to a positive sense of self when the "ability dimension" (Crocker & Major, 1989, p.615) has objective social value, such as Maths performance, or is important to the individual, such as a skill or sport.

A second possible strategy is to selectively devalue dimensions which provide negative feedback, and is linked to the social creativity component within social identity theory. William James (1890, cited in Crocker & Major, 1989) proposed that individuals would determine the value of negative performance information on the basis of how central that information was to their own self-concept. The praise and censure an individual receives, combined with the values which dominant societal structures enshrine, will moderate which domains will be valued and which will be disregarded (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Rosenberg, 1979). Building from the concept of socially-determined value systems, the individual is likely to ascertain value relative to both group and individual performance which, in this context, is likely to mean their class performance as a whole in addition to their personal achievements or failures (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). A complicating factor in the present research is that in many cases, discrete feedback on performance may not be available or offered; for example, test scores are not always publicly announced. Crocker and Major (1989) argue that in the absence of feedback, such as grades, scores or other performance indicators, individuals will rely upon their group's performance to gauge the relative importance of the general feedback received. Furthermore, if an individual is part of a group which excels, that individual is likely to

place more value on their own performance within that field of excellence (Peterson,

Major, Cozzarelli & Crocker, 1988; Rosenberg & Simmons, 1972).

A third possible strategy is related to the fact that negative feedback will only be

aversive if it is in a domain which the individual values. Harter (1986) found that young

people were particularly adept at maintaining self-esteem by discounting negative

feedback. Tesser and colleagues (Tesser, Millar & Moore, 1988) explored this idea by

evaluating the impact on self-esteem of being out-performed by a significant other. They

found that when out-performed in an area which was not valued, the participant tended to

rate their self-esteem as having increased. Not surprisingly, this phenomenon has been

characterised as "basking in reflected glory" (Crocker & Major, 1989, p.618) and serves a

self-protective function to buffer against negative affect.

SIT-based research has tended to focus upon the responses that group members

employ in reaction to evaluation and devaluation by other groups. Some reviews, such as

that by Brown (2000), suggest that there is nevertheless a lack of theoretical precision

about which response is most likely to be used, when, and by whom. The micro analysis of

behavioural responses to social devaluation in this chapter is particularly well placed to

address some of the concerns raised by Brown (2000). At least part of the issue is that

social identity most often operates in complex social environments (Ellemers, 1993). The

variety of social contexts afforded by a day in school offers numerous, shifting frames of

social reference, the immediacy of which can impact upon the strategies selected. This

dynamism provides an excellent opportunity to observe identity management processes as

they occur in everyday life (Tanti, Stukas, Halloran & Foddy, 2011). Indeed, Schwartz et

al. (2011) note there is a need to study the dynamics of behavioural responses at a micro

level, and on a daily basis, to fully assess the degree of flux an individual can experience

even in a single day (see also Meeus, van de Schoot, Keijsers, Schwartz & Branje, 2010).

Furthermore, as previously mentioned, it is important to address the lack of understanding

about how identity management strategies interact with the institutional practices that

shape social valuations in the first place. Research into institutions tends to focus upon the

individual's identification with the institution but rarely examines how the institution

shapes the identity management processes of the individual (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Overview of the Analysis

The analysis presented in this chapter addresses the strategies young people select

in the face of social (de)valuation, highlighting that these strategies can be multi-faceted

and reflect the dynamics of their typical school day. This will be contrasted with the more

'static' (in terms of both time and context) analyses of responses to devaluation within the

literature reviewed above. Studying young people in school enables a rich analysis of day-

to-day (and even hour-to-hour) strategies relating to social value, including important

micro behaviours (i.e., individual, 'one-off' behaviours) of a few individuals that would

otherwise be missed by alternative research methods. This provides a unique insight into

the strategies employed by young people in the face of near-continual stratification by an

institution, including how institutional and classroom-level factors can interact to shape

these strategies.

As a corollary, this chapter adopts the position that complex behaviours are often

best understood by observing behaviour as it occurred within a naturalistic environment.

As others have argued (e.g., Reicher, 2004), there is a need to conceptualise the negotiation

of social value as fluid and adaptive, to observe and record data as they naturally occur, and

to allow for data to in turn inform more nuanced theoretical understanding – especially when those data do not readily fit prevailing assumptions.

Two aspects of the current method allow us to address these concerns: the ethnographic method allows an examination of behavioural responses to stratification as they occurred minute-to-minute, while the longitudinal nature of the study permits a nuanced study of individual-level behavioural responses to a stratifying environment over a four-year period. The method can provide insight into which strategies people use, how they are shaped by institutional practices, and permit analysis of fluidity and variation particularly as a function of changing opportunities within the institution.

Analysis and Results

The analysis consists of three parts: institution-level, classroom-level, and pupil-level analyses. The analysis initially presents examples of young people foregoing individual mobility opportunities when boundaries are made permeable. The institution–level analysis focuses upon pupil responses to the institutional practice of streaming by academic merit and how institutional hierarchies can be stigmatising in a manner that pupils acquiesce to, but also that pupil-led social hierarchies can be reinforced by teachers' classroom management strategies. The dynamic nature of the parallel institutional and social hierarchies will be discussed before the third aspect of the analysis moves to specific case studies of two pupils; Brian and Charlie, and their respective strategies relating to social value. Both case studies present behaviours which can be understood as value negotiations but with strikingly different strategies, both of which suggest the need for greater flexibility in theories of (de)valuation and social identity. Whilst the case studies are specific to the pupils focussed upon, the detail and complexity of the analysis has

individual narrative strength and each can be considered critical cases (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The codes which form the basis of the analysis are detailed below together with the relative

frequencies of each code:

Table 3

Institutional Code Frequency

Code and Example Location	Frequency
Policy and Practice	
Achievements and pupil response (p. 94)	26
School implementing procedures which create de facto segregation (p. 66)	32
Stratification and position by ability or performance (p. 80)	62
Total	**120**
Classroom Environment	
Behaviour change as a function of classroom context (p.85)	42
Classroom factors which co-occur with student dynamics (p.69)	5
Discipline e.g. reprimands (p.77)	56
[3]Reward and punishment e.g. being sent out of class, given lines or detention (p. 71)	41
Total	**144**

Policies and Practice: Institution-level Analysis

Stratification in school is based on academic performance (streaming) and objective

expected outcomes (National 3, 4, or 5 qualification pathways). The stratification process is

overt, and there were clear inferences about social value and position amongst the pupils.

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[3] *Discipline* is defined here as being without material consequences whereas *punishment* involved

specific consequences, sanctions or 'cost' to the pupil with examples as above. The original code of *reward*

and punishment was split to incorporate this distinction.

Observations indicated that pupils were also highly aware of the differences in implied value across the stratified groups, and were conscious of objective school-level streaming practices.

Pupils were overtly concerned about their relative positions in the institutionally-defined academic merit hierarchies. Specific references to National 3, 4, and 5 outcomes were most common (17 codes but only in S3 and S4, which makes the frequency more striking), followed by academic performance (16 codes), reports or parents' night comments (9 codes), specific discussions about overt performance (e.g., who was best/worst in class; 8 codes) and finally, general class streaming (7 codes).

National 3

The policies of streaming and exam outcome distinctions may have been intended to be inclusive to pupils with lower abilities and to offer them a choice of formal qualification outcomes and opportunities, but they did not appear to be perceived in these terms by pupils. There were clear differences in implied value between the National 4 and National 5 groups in particular. Typically, National 3 classes were separate and thus the comparison between higher and lower abilities was not made salient by proximity and was not overtly referred to or observed in National 3 classes. The following vignette, however, indicates the level of segregation which could be experienced by pupils in the lowest-set classes. The vignette is from a conversation in the corridor as the pupils moved from class to class. Dan was in a National 3 class for Maths, the lowest class in the academic hierarchy and Jake was in one of the higher-level National 5 classes:

Conversation heard on way to Maths about the forthcoming trip to

Disneyland Paris:

Jake: We deserved it, we work really hard

Dan: It's not fair, just 'cos I'm not in a top class, I can't go? It's really not fair

Jake: Yeah but we do deserve it, we work really, really hard

Dan: and I don't? Just 'cos I have dyslexia doesn't mean I don't deserve to go

Jake: well what I mean is, the work is really hard.

Dan: it's totally not fair

Jake: that's just how it is. (02/2014, S3)

By virtue only of their position in the Maths class hierarchy, pupils were permitted or not permitted to attend a Maths department trip to Disneyland Paris. Dan makes a point about how hard he works and the difficulties he experiences due to his learning disability but this meets with a fairly unsympathetic response from his friend. Jake makes references here to inherent characteristics of the group to which Dan belongs based upon competence in a particular domain and not about deservingness in general (Doosje et al., 1995). Jake makes a claim for meritocratic entitlement (Lalonde & Silverman, 1994) which is based upon hard work but then restructures his argument by blaming an uncontrollable system issue, something which Jake cannot influence and which they both must accept. Jake acknowledges the system from which he benefits even though the system stigmatises and excludes his friend upon an arbitrary dimension. This vignette is striking because, as noted earlier, National 3 groups were kept separate from National 4 and 5 groups and did not

regularly feature in the observations. National 4/5 distinctions were more frequently

observed and are discussed in more detail in the next section.

Reactions to National 4/National 5 Distinctions

The analysis in this section comprises two parts: first, analysis of how pupils began

to organise themselves according to National 4 or National 5 categories; and second, a

specific analysis of social (individual) mobility opportunities offered to National 4 pupils.

National 4 pupils were usually in a minority within a majority National 5 class.

Membership of a stigmatised group has been argued to be protective of individual self-

identity (Crocker & Major, 1989), but National 4 was not a group membership which

pupils appeared to relish or even claim. Observations suggest that it was instead more akin

to stigma. In one example, the music teacher was busy preparing for a concert and the

music class was led by two senior girls (S6) who were practising in the department. These

girls were openly disparaging about the performance of the class despite setting them

questions more suited to Higher level (S5 & S6) than National 5 (S3 & S4), which class

members would be more equipped to answer. The senior girls asked the pupils about their

respective exam paths, but the question was largely avoided by the pupils:

> *Whether pupils are Nat 4 or Nat 5 is discussed. I notice that pupils are*
>
> *really not willing to claim being Nat 4. The senior girls regularly make*
>
> *reference to the fact that the class, in general, is stupid and suggest*
>
> *they'd all be more suited to Nat 3 (access level) style questions.(12/14,*
>
> *S4)*

Overall, codes regarding academic performance, as defined by exam path (National

4 or 5), developed most clearly during third (S3) and fourth (S4) year. Pupils began to

aggregate themselves in terms of seating arrangement along the lines of academic performance when their performance was made salient (for further discussion of pupil positioning by performance, see Chapter 6). even in expressive classes (art, music, or drama for example) pupils tended to choose proximity to others of similar performance, although this was less apparent in their generic, non-academic, social education classes for example. As a general point, there was increasing physical distance in terms of seating arrangements between those of higher academic performance and those of lower performance over third (S3) and fourth year (S4). English and Maths, as key curricular subjects, were rarely composed of mixed-performance groups whereas most other subject areas did feature mixed-performance classes. Importantly, of the classes which were comprised of both National 4 and 5 pupils, the different levels were often demarcated either by spontaneous pupil seating choice or by teacher-led seating plans:

Class sit grouped by achievement although not in assigned seating, thus:
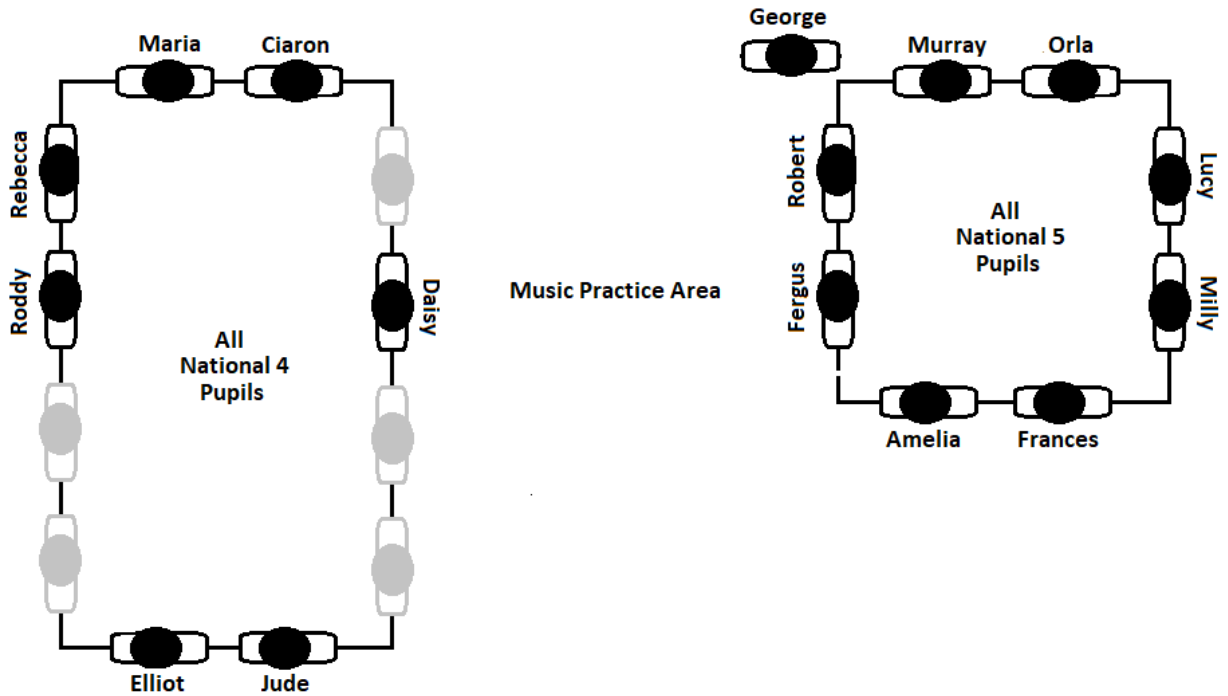
Figure 3. Seating Plan: George's Reaction to National 4/National 5 Distinctions

> *Despite there being two free seats beside Jude/Elliot and one spare*
>
> *beside Ciaron, George comes in later, takes the chair from beside Ciaron*
>
> *and places himself ~ even although he has no desk to lean on and no*
>
> *music stand so he has to write on his knee. He's a tall lad, this doesn't*
>
> *look the most comfortable way to spend the period. (03/15, S4)*

The pupils on the left half of the class were predominantly National 4 and on the right all were National 5. Music was a subject choice which many pupils considered an 'easier' subject and, therefore, music tended to be more evenly distributed with both groups than other subjects. In this class, there were seven National 4 pupils and eight National 5 pupils. The seating choices according to institutionally-defined performance level suggests that the labels of National 4 and National 5 were salient and meaningful to pupils, although the observational method here cannot provide direct evidence of subjective importance. As

the extract above indicates, one pupil – George – spent a writing period balancing his jotter upon his knee rather than take one of five available desk spaces. This was an extraordinary observation as the only other spatial arrangement by membership of a specific category I witnessed was according to gender (see Chapter 5 for an expansion of this topic). In most observations, a pupil would sit at an available desk if they came in late and their usual seat was occupied, irrespective of who they would be sitting beside. In this case the seating arrangement is made more striking by considering that Roddy plays in the school band alongside the National 5 pupils and seems well integrated into the group in the band context. George appears friendly with Roddy, so his choice to sit uncomfortably and without a desk but, crucially, adjacent to his National 5 peers rather than beside Roddy is striking. From observation, it seems that to be 'National 4' is to be part of a stigmatised group to the extent that other pupils avoided association in terms of spatial location.

Individual Mobility Opportunities

Given that membership of the National 4 group could be stigmatising, it might be expected according to SIT that the National 4 pupils would make the most of an opportunity to move into the higher-status National 5 classes (e.g., Wright, Taylor & Moghaddam, 1990). Specifically, the potential to move from National 4 to a higher-status class in National 5 – i.e., permeable group boundaries – would be predicted to motivate the lower-status group members to choose individual mobility where opportunities were presented. For some National 4 pupils, the opportunity to move was offered as the formal examinations drew close in their fourth year (S4). National 5 pupils sat preliminary exams in preparation for their formal exams in May, a few months later. National 4 pupils do not sit exams but could be offered the opportunity to try the preliminary exam if teachers

thought they had improved sufficiently. However, this mobility opportunity was foregone as often as it was taken up:

> *Ollie, however, progresses well and keeps on track. The teacher tells*
> *him that his programme is really good… He is offered the chance to*
> *move up to Nat 5, doesn't take it. Only 4 people in the class are destined*
> *for Nat 4, of those, only 2 opt to even try the prelim.(12/14, S4)*

Layla was also encouraged to try her History prelim by her teacher and whilst she agreed to try it, she did not attend the exam and subsequently did not return to school at all:

> *After class, I talk to Miss Leppard about the Nat4/Nat5 split and she*
> *explains that…she's going to allow the Nat 4's to sit the exam. I ask her*
> *about Layla and she says that while attendance and confidence continue*
> *to be issues for Layla she is really keen on History and wants to try to sit*
> *the exam. She is described as a lovely girl who is very unlikely to pass*
> *but it is an achievement for her to actually sit the exam. I wonder though,*
> *how will she react to failure? (01/15, S4)*

Thus, rather than there being a clear preference for individual mobility where it was a possibility, there were just as many instances where the opportunity to move up to National 5 was offered, but rejected entirely – and in some cases was followed by an even greater degree of withdrawal. What was intended as an encouragement to aim higher and, in effect, for the institution to value the pupils' efforts by offering to increase their status, did not have the effect intended by school staff. One interpretation of this rests on the possibility that National 4 status became an emergent, but stigmatised social identity, as

signalled both by the emergent physical grouping and interactions, and reluctance to 'claim' the lower-level National 4 status in settings where value judgements about competence were being made. One possible consequence of this emergent social identity is that it also came to function as a protective frame (Crocker & Major, 1989; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002) within which National 4 pupils were able to feel competent and with which they subjectively identified.

This apparent reluctance for upward social mobility echoes the stereotype threat literature (Steele & Aronson, 1985; Croizet et al., 2001; Croizet et al., 2004) in which a body of evidence highlights the undermined performance of those with a stereotypical reputation for being less capable, regardless of actual ability. In other words, being classed in a lower-performance group can itself reduce subsequent performance (for a more detailed discussion of stereotype threat, see Chapter 4 and 5). When stigmatised or devalued, seeing one's stigmatised status as part of a wider social group membership can also be protective (Crocker & Major, 1989), and stigma can in turn foster greater identification with that group (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). When offered the opportunity of leaving that group membership behind, stigmatised group members may reject it for many reasons, such as identity loss, a sense of being taken out of their comfort zone and facing higher-level expectations, and also moving out of the protective frame that the group identity may have become. There may also be a belief that moderate success at a National 4 level is preferable to chancing possible failure at an advanced level. This echoes Crocker and Major's (1989) suggestion that however desirable a goal may be, if an individual believes they have no likelihood of attaining the goal, they may devalue the opportunity offered in order to protect their self-esteem.

The practice of offering some low-status group members the opportunity to enter a higher-status group (National 5) to which most low-status group members (National 4) are denied has been referred to in other research as tokenism (e.g., Wright et al., 1990), and has been found to be a powerful motivator for individual mobility over alternative, group-based strategies for achieving value. However, this was not apparent when rare opportunities to move to National 5 were offered in the present study. While this does not in turn suggest a preference for group-based strategies per se, it does indicate that individual mobility opportunities under tokenism may not be as readily seized as other research has suggested (cf. Wright & Taylor, 1998). More generally, the present findings are not consistent with typical readings of social identity theory (e.g. Ellemers, van Knippenberg & Wilke, 1990) in which permeability in intergroup boundaries steers low-status group members towards individual mobility strategies.

In summary, the above analyses suggest that pupils to some degree appeared to internalise their academic status as defined by the institution, as indicated by physical arrangement in classrooms, and the extent to which individual mobility opportunities were rejected by eligible individuals within the National 4 group. Taken together, the results indicate that the institutional practice of streaming pupils had a powerful effect upon them, offering as much of a barrier to inclusion and achievement as it did to facilitate these outcomes.

Classroom Environment: Discipline

The preceding section detailed how institutional practice can interact with pupil self-categorisation and social comparison to facilitate the segregation and stigmatisation of pupils according to their place in the academic hierarchy. As acutely aware as pupils are of

their own position relative to others in academic terms, they are also invested in complex social hierarchies defined by other socially-salient characteristics. The following analysis addresses the interplay between the institutionally-defined academic performance hierarchy and the pupil-driven social hierarchy of popularity and social acceptance, focusing on how teachers can, and often do, echo pupil-driven social hierarchies.

It was apparent from the outset that teachers could respond differently to pupils according to how well-presented the pupils were in terms of appearance (7 codes). The following examples were observed within the first few weeks of first year (S1):

> *I notice that teachers are often reluctant to chastise Brian. Unsure why this is. He is a very capable, clever, smartly dressed and good-looking child. Maybe they think he poses no threat? He is, however, becoming more and more cheeky and confident each time I see him (09/11, S1)*

> *Finlay is clever enough to combine being smart in front of his friends but just under the teacher's radar. He is very well presented and rarely ever gets picked up as a behaviour issue. I am beginning to be aware that uniform and presentation generally are very correlated to teacher expectation and that there is often more leniency towards a well-presented child versus one who looks less kempt or neatly/expensively dressed. Teachers perhaps just expect that well-dressed pupils will probably be well behaved (09/11, S1)*

While teachers' disciplinary decisions could appear to be associated with appearance, which usually maps closely on to social class (addressed more directly in

Chapter 4), the most high-performing and the better-dressed pupils also displayed dominant and disruptive behaviour (11 codes). The disruptive behaviour was most apparent in classes with mixed-performance pupils such as the social and practical subjects during S1 and S2. The differential application of discipline by teachers mapped on to pupils' own social hierarchies of popularity and social acceptance with, for example, socially-dominant pupils, all boys, escaping censure for their actions whilst less dominant and usually less well-attired pupils were disciplined instead. This process was particularly noticeable when it came to 'hands up' policies during the first two years. On three occasions, Brian was observed being permitted to speak out in class or ask a question without raising his hand, whereas another pupil was chastised:

> *Brian asks if he can start the quick questions. Despite the teacher insisting that the class put their hands up if they want to speak she doesn't correct Brian. He then asks (no hand up) if he can go on to do the poster... Charlie asks for guidance about the extension task and is criticised for not putting his hand up. Teacher actually says that "it has to be the same for everyone." (09/11, S1)*

Note that Charlie was asking for additional work in this instance and the teacher is verbalising a rule which she is breaking to favour Brian. When teachers permitted rule-breaking by certain pupils in these examples, it tended to map on to either popularity hierarchies or performance hierarchies such that pupils who were socially dominant and/or popular, or pupils who displayed high levels of academic performance, were more likely not to be chastised whereas unpopular and/or lower-performance pupils are more likely to receive the blame instead.

A particularly striking feature of this pattern was that, on 14 recorded occasions, teachers appeared to displace discipline onto the wrong pupil, despite the offending behaviour being performed in front of them. Table 4 displays the frequency with which particular pupils avoided discipline, and the pupils who received discipline following misbehaviour by another pupil.

Table 4

Discipline Displacement Code Frequency

Pupil	Discipline displaced away from pupil	Discipline displaced onto pupil
Brian	6	3
Alfie	3	3
Charlie	2	1
Riley	3	2
Thomas	0	2

When displaced discipline occurred, teachers tended to displace discipline onto the next most disruptive pupil (14 codes) even if the pupil receiving the discipline had not been disruptive in that instance. The displacement onto the next most disruptive pupil was witnessed several times over different classes and from different teachers. Discipline was displaced from Riley onto Alfie on three occasions; on three separate occasions discipline was displaced from Alfie to Brian; and from Brian twice onto Thomas and once onto Charlie. Several examples follow to illustrate the discipline displacement in practice.

Riley was one of the most vocal and comedic members of the year group. He caused a lot of disruption, albeit generally in a good-natured manner. Instead of

disciplining him, the teacher in the following example disciplines Alfie, who was the next most disruptive pupil in the class:

> *Riley hums and drums. Alfie asks him over and over to stop. Asks teacher to ask him to stop…Alfie is asked to stay behind for shouting out which seems wholly unfair since it is Riley who is causing most of the disruption.(12/12 S2)*

On three other separate occasions, discipline was displaced onto Brian when Alfie misbehaved. Brian was often disruptive in class but Alfie was far more outspoken and tended to perform more poorly than Brian generally. Alfie was also less academically capable than Brian, very socially dominant and a forceful character. The teacher in this example had tenuous control over the class and Alfie appeared to purposefully annoy the teacher:

> *Alfie winds Miss McInnes up; Brian then puts his hand up and is told to be quiet even though it was Alfie who was speaking. She tells Brian to stay quiet until she asks him to talk, which she says she won't do, she says, because she doesn't want him to speak.(06/12, S1)*

Brian was disruptive but he was also clever, and when he misbehaved, discipline was displaced onto pupils who were less disruptive than him. Thomas – who was never recorded as misbehaving – was reprimanded twice in place of Brian:

> *Brian acts up a lot in this class, cheeky and vocal. Thomas turns and says "Brian overdoing it again". Teacher asks Thomas to turn round but*

ignores the behaviour by Brian that necessitated the turning round in the

first place (09/11, S1)

As noted above, the pattern of discipline displacement tended to follow pupils' own popularity hierarchy, with teachers favouring more popular and successful pupils like Brian. In contrast, Thomas was on the margins of social acceptance within the group and the butt of many jokes about his appearance and unusual clothing. Displacing discipline on to Thomas underscored his unpopularity and reinforced his position at the bottom of the social hierarchy. At the same time, displacing discipline largely involved avoiding direct confrontation with socially-dominant pupils in a manner that functions to reinforce the dominant and disruptive behaviours that socially-confident pupils can display (Reay, 2006). Inconsistencies in classroom discipline thus not only reflected, but had the potential to reinforce pupil-driven social hierarchies.

Individual-level Responses to (De)valuation

The analysis so far has highlighted the role of institution- and classroom-level practices that create and reinforce not only institution-driven hierarchies relating to academic achievement, but also informal, pupil-driven hierarchies relating to popularity and social status. The analysis turns now to focus upon how individual pupils respond to this stratifying environment in terms of day-to-day strategies of achieving or maintaining social value (Jackson et al., 1996). In particular, the analysis focuses upon two pupils – Brian and Charlie – as they interacted in changing classroom environments. Overall, they responded to the stratifying environment of the school in a fluid and creative manner, displaying strategies that were somewhat consistent with self-concept and identity management theories, but in critically different ways that provide novel insight into how

strategies are deployed in naturalistic, day-to-day settings. On the one hand, Brian's varied strategies highlight a dynamic approach to the negotiation of social value which has not yet been well explored in empirical or theoretical terms. Conversely, Charlie demonstrated a more stable and consistent strategy which can be characterised as a hybrid of individual mobility and social creativity in SIT terms, enhancing both his own position and claiming value for his relatively-devalued group.

Brian was an academically-capable boy who was intensely competitive in some subjects whilst being relatively passive in others. He could be focussed and attentive in one period and highly disruptive in the next. His changing behaviour patterns cannot be easily explained in terms of simple differences between subject classes, such as teaching style. In one morning, Brian could present all of the identity management responses described in the introduction to this chapter. Whilst some individuals, such as Brian, are varied and flexible in their responses, others were more consistent over time. As the institution applies social value based on academic performance, those who do not have the academic performance to achieve can find other routes to achieving social value. One such individual, Charlie, adopted a strategy of being helpful and pro-social in his lower-streamed class. The analysis will show that Charlie adopted a creative response to devaluation from the institution that combined elements of individual mobility and social creativity. Specifically, he ingratiated himself with the teachers, whilst at the same time also regulating the class in a manner that elicited value at a group level (e.g., in terms of encouraging good behaviour, compliance, or pro-sociality). Indeed, the class as a whole were valued by the teacher for good and compliant behaviour, achieving recognition within the system via an alternative to academic performance.

Social comparison of performance and ability. Social comparisons in relation to performance are of particular importance when considering the streaming of classes. In streamed classes, pupils are not surrounded by others with substantially lower or higher performance levels. In first year (S1), only Maths and English were streamed. Brian was in the top set class for both subjects and thus made social comparisons primarily with pupils of a broadly-similar performance level. In Maths, Brian regularly indicated to his classmates that he achieves highly:

> *Maths: At the end of the starter question marking, the class are asked for*
> *a thumbs up survey. Brian uses two hands, one with a thumb up and the*
> *other thumb horizontal as if to denote halfway. "I got that" he says*
> *nodding at his hands, the teacher is confused "what does that mean?"*
> *"I'm the same, I get them all right" (10/11, S1)*

Note that in the second statement Brian uses 'get' and not 'got'. The halfway thumb is assumed to indicate that he always achieves full marks. As a whole, the interaction serves to communicate to others present not only that he did well in this instance, but that his perfect score today is a norm and not an isolated success. This is consistent with evidence that in a high-performing group, individuals are more likely to draw attention to their own success (Peterson, Major, Cozzarelli & Crocker, 1988; Rosenberg & Simmons, 1972). Scores and test results here offer objective indicators of success and can be publicly announced. Often, many pupils receive the same high scores. In order to demonstrate the perceived importance of relative performance, or how well pupils can achieve compared to others, Brian often drew others' attention to how quickly he could work (31 codes):

Brian, as usual, finishes his work very quickly and checks with Noah

about one of the last questions which he is probably very certain Noah

hasn't yet reached. Suspect this is deliberate and an attempt to reinforce

his supremacy in this class. Brian, at the back of the class, shouts "Ross,

are you done?" Ross replies "yes" without turning round. Brian then

asks Ethan and Jack if they are also finished (09/11, S1)

In this example, the correctness of the answers is not compared, but rather the speed with which the task is completed. All of the boys noted above were very capable and were likely to have answered the majority of questions correctly. By using a different comparative dimension, such interactions allowed Brian to communicate his performance in a manner that still implied superiority relative to others.

By contrast, Brian displayed a very different set of behaviours in the English class with the same cohort of academically-able pupils:

English: Library class: George finishes the first task quickly and sits still,

the teacher notices and asks "are you finished?" A moment later Brian

loudly announces "Done". No one else feels the need to announce that

they have finished or the desire to express this as part of a competitive or

success seeking recognition exercise.(09/11, S1)

In the whole of first year, this is one of only two examples (the second is also detailed below) of Brian announcing any sort of success, completion, or attempting to overtly compete with the other pupils during a normal English class activity. Note that this occurred in a library-based class where the pupils had previously been instructed to find certain books and offered a rare opportunity to 'win' by returning to the Librarian first with

the completed task. It is possible that such a competitive strategy is more prominent – and indeed, only possible – when there is a defined and visible hierarchy of success: a specific opportunity to win or achieve relative to others. The format of the Maths class, but not the English class, thus offers a structure within which pupils can compete and ultimately establish a hierarchy among their peers. Being successful and having opportunities to 'win' in streamed classes where performance and ability are valued both by the institution and, apparently, by many of the pupils, offered Brian the opportunity to positively negotiate his position relative to his peers.

By contrast, although French was, like English, a language-based class, the pupils were of mixed performance levels (i.e., not streamed). The French class included some of the same cohort of high-performing pupils from the Maths and English classes, but mixed with a group of boys who were behaviourally disruptive and did not perform as well academically. The girls in the class tended to be very quiet and compliant and their abilities ranged widely (as indicated by actual class results). French at this level (S1) was like Maths in that there was often only one right answer and only one person could be right first. However, despite the similarity to the Maths class in terms of structural opportunities to claim value, Brian's behaviour was markedly different:

> *French: Class swap jotters for a vocabulary test. Charlie reaches behind Alfie's back to swap with Brian for marking. Brian is delighted as Charlie has clearly selected a higher comparison compared to his own work. Brian compliments Charlie on his handwriting. Brian is really demotivated in this seating configuration. Volunteers no answers, seems reluctant to work compared to his usual energetic behaviour in this class.*

He makes a rudimentary masculine/feminine error for sister/brother

when it is obvious which is which. He is more capable than this. Noah

shakes his head. (02/12, S1)

Brian was partnered with a pupil who was markedly less academically-able than himself in this context, and social comparison theory (e.g., Festinger, 1954) suggests that, by comparing himself to a less able pupil, Brian can achieve a positive social comparison even if he subsequently makes an error. However, this specific comparison strategy can only be effective if he avoids contact with the higher-performing boys in this class. The teacher had previously moved Brian away from his own seating choice beside his friends, to the front of the class among the boys who are more disruptive and over whom the teacher keeps close watch. The move to the front, to be watched over and less trusted to behave well, was intended as a punishment for Brian for his repeated misbehaviour. The reconfigured seating arrangement limited opportunities for Brian to have eye contact or discussion with any of his academically-comparable friends at the rear of the class. In this setting, Brian adopted a range of strategies including overt recognition-seeking behaviour from the boys at the front of the class whilst also communicating his performance relative to others yet, when seated alongside his academic friends he criticised boys like Alfie:

French: "I think we all know at least five questions and answers in

French" says Mr Maxwell. "Is there anyone who thinks they can't do

it?" "Me" says Alfie, "I'm rubbish". Matt says "ask Brian" who smiles

at this. "Nut, I'll never do it, I'm rubbish" says Alfie. "Believe in

yourself, Alfie" says Harvey. Teacher asks the class to vote, half think he

can do it, half not. Only Brian says "No, you're a failure". Charlie turns

to me and says "that's harsh" (09/11, S1)

Whilst denigrating Alfie while he sat remotely from him, Brian was still observed behaving in a manner that seemed designed to impress Charlie (4 codes), often to the point of being sycophantic:

Charlie sings his name and Brian fist pumps in response but Charlie sits

at the front and Brian can't be seen by him.(09/11, S1)

Charlie offers a very laboured answer and Brian says "well done

Charlie" Charlie ignores him (01/12, S1)

These exchanges demonstrate that in this class, Brian at times appeared to portray himself as less academically capable and to ingratiate himself with the more disruptive boys, but would also denigrate their abilities when success criteria were made obvious and he aligned himself more with the higher-performing individuals. In line with the social identity literature, Brian also behaved in the French class in a manner that differentiated him from the underperformance of another section of the class (Blanz et al., 1998). However, the overall pattern in French is marked by strong variation in the use of different strategies, much more so than in Maths or English.

Selective devaluation. Overall, Brian's competitive social comparisons were thus found predominantly in Maths and French, and not in the English class. The exceptions in the English class occurred only when there was, unusually, a clear-cut 'success' opportunity, the first of which cited above. Often, selective devaluation occurs at a group

level whereby the individual constructs the relative value of particular domains on the basis of how successful they perceive their group to be (Crocker & Major, 1989).

In Maths, the class are highly capable, and rarely receive negative feedback: it is a positive and success-focused environment. In English, however, the class rarely receive any performance feedback, and this ambiguity about relative performance provides the context for Brian's different behaviour in this class:

> *English: Brian is much less engaged in this class, although he behaves*
> *beautifully; he seems less eager to answer questions or make himself*
> *known. Maybe he lacks confidence in this particular subject or maybe he*
> *places less value upon it. He is definitely much more 'chilled' in this*
> *class (04/12, S1)*

This pattern occurred despite Brian having ostensibly the same audience and the same institutional recognition from the streaming outcomes; yet he does not behave in a manner that claims superiority or invokes overt social comparisons. Brian's compliance in both subjects is nevertheless largely equal: he works hard, mostly avoids censure and has a positive relationship with each teacher. This contrasts with his compliance levels in French:

> *French: Brian receives a very tricky question from Mr Maxwell rather*
> *than answer, or attempt to answer, he angrily throws the bean bag at Mr*
> *Maxwell but to the floor in front of him so it cannot be caught and Mr*
> *Maxwell has to retrieve it from the floor.(09/11, S1)*

Only in the French class is Brian ever overtly rude to the teacher. Aside from factors such as interpersonal disliking of the teacher – for which there is no direct evidence

– one possible and straightforward explanation may be Brian's selective devaluation of the subject. Brian is not institutionally recognised as being capable in French, as it is an un-streamed class. It is evident that he can often appear to 'dumb down' in this class whereas in other subjects, and with similar peer comparisons, he is overtly competitive and tries to perform as well as possible. He could also be rude at times, and he could appear ingratiating to behaviourally-disruptive boys whilst also portraying himself as less able academically. The group (the class) were not objectively valued by streaming and some members of the group performed to a markedly lower level compared to Brian and his similarly-capable friends. The underperformance of the class also led to frequent criticism from the teacher. Brian did not appear to exhibit one specific strategy to devaluation; rather, he exhibited a range of strategies. When seated amongst the academic high achievers, Brian displayed his comparably high performance and demeaned the efforts of pupils who were markedly less able but when offered opportunities to align with the less able but more popular boys, he demeaned his own performance. This suggests that Brian's responses to devaluation appear to be socially determined and flexible according to available or desirable peer groups. The oscillation between strategies indicates that Brian does not devalue the subject per se; rather, he uses the devaluation of the class to achieve social value between two very different peer groups; popular but less academically-able boys, and/or less popular but very capable boys.

Overall, the behaviour patterns Brian exhibited were strikingly varied. Brian appears to be able to select particular strategies to manage different settings as demonstrated above, and it is possible that Brian was occasionally caught between strategies as he emphasises and deemphasises different domains in the face of shifting or

competing audiences (Klein, Spears & Reicher, 2007). The following analysis provides

strong evidence of Brian's ability to use identity management strategies flexibly and

creatively in the face of negative feedback or being outperformed by a significant other.

Relevance of valued dimensions to negative feedback. Individuals tend to value

most the domains in which they are particularly successful or their group is viewed as

being successful or proficient (Crocker & Major, 1989). Taylor and Brown (1988)

conducted a review of common positive illusions which are protective of self-esteem and

concluded that the majority of mentally-healthy individuals actually positively distort

reality to favour their own abilities in a variety of domains. They argue that this process is

protective of self-esteem, fosters a sense of self efficacy and provides optimism for the

future. Simply valuing or devaluing a particular subject, however, is insufficient to explain

the variation in Brian's behaviour patterns. As evidenced above, when an opportunity is

provided in the English class, his behavioural strategy changes. Brian varies his behaviour

markedly depending upon a number of factors and the type of class he is in tends to

broadly predict his behaviour patterns, but this isn't just relative to the academic subject

per se. There is a lack of feedback in the English class and, therefore, a performance

marker ambiguity: pupils rarely know how the others are achieving. There are thus less

clearly-defined hierarchies of success, in the absence of criteria with which to make

performance-based social comparisons. Further to the example above in the Library, Brian

again changes his behaviour pattern substantially in response to a clearly-defined

opportunity for English class 'success':

> *English: The teacher decided to hold a spelling bee. The group are*
>
> *requested to stand to spell. Brian says "whoop" and jumps up to a*

standing position. Finally it is whittled down to Brian, Shona and Noah.

Brian thumps the desk after correctly spelling, says to Noah "beat that!

Third place Noah" he says triumphantly. Brian subsequently spells

incorrectly and Brian himself is awarded third place. Noah goes on to

win the Spelling Bee. As he sits down Brian shouts: "YASSS! WE did it

Ross. We came first!" Finlay challenges this: "No, YOU didn't!" Brian

simply says "we won". He may be referring to their shared primary

school or some other vicarious reason for him sharing Noah's victory. As

Brian goes out to collect his bronze certificate, he says "YASS!" and

celebrates as if he has won (06/12, S1)

Brian appears to grasp an opportunity to demonstrate his performance and possibly his academic dominance in general rather than acknowledging his performance in spelling specifically, given he didn't win. This example also reflects a trend whereby if Brian cannot 'win' or otherwise communicate his own positive position relative to others, he tends to either claim a vicarious victory, blame others or ensure he doesn't fail alone. There were no recorded incidents of failure or being beaten where Brian quietly accepted it, in any class setting. There was always some effort to retain his position in class, to thwart others' success or to denigrate his opponent or the topic in question. Brian's vicarious claims fit with the findings of Tesser and Campbell (1980, 1982a, 1982b) who predicted that, if an individual is beaten by a significant other in a lesser-valued domain the beaten individual can reclaim and protect their self-worth by "basking in reflected glory" (Crocker & Major, 1989:618).

This 'reflected glory' strategy was also evident in the French class:

French: Alfie gives a correct answer. Inexplicably Brian says "we're

amazing." (04/12, S1)

To summarise, the data provide evidence that Brian deployed social comparison strategies, social creativity including the devaluation of specific domains, and 'basking in reflected glory' as strategies for negotiating social value. Brian utilised all of these strategies but often in complex, variable and interesting combinations. Brian's use of social comparison interacted with the extent to which the institution ostensibly 'valued' Brian's abilities by virtue both of streaming and feedback. Brian's strategy selection, however, also fluctuated depending upon whether the teaching practices provided material opportunities for success from which social value could be claimed, and the physical proximity of different audiences. Importantly, the data indicate highly-dynamic variation in strategies presented by one pupil, in ostensibly similar social settings, over very short periods of time. The dynamic, creative, and flexible manner in which Brian, in his first year at high school (S1) provides a novel contribution to the current body of evidence regarding identity management strategies, which tends to indicate strategy selections as discrete and fixed as opposed to fluid and changing rapidly according to context. Most identity management research, however, is not conducted within the frame of a specific institution and is rarely the focus of an ethnographic study.

Individual responses to low-status group membership. In contrast to Brian, Charlie instead developed a 'hybrid' strategy comprising both individual mobility and social creativity approaches (Jackson et al., 1996; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). From the very first day of high school, Charlie made it clear that he wanted to do well in school:

Charlie was quite vehement that he "wanted to succeed" (08/11, S1)

However, Charlie struggled to achieve in a number of subjects:

Teacher picks Charlie to answer a volume question. Charlie is very reluctant to answer and is visibly uncomfortable. He makes mistakes twice but eventually gets the right answer. (09/11, S1)

Despite his literacy difficulties, Charlie was keen to read aloud when teachers asked for volunteers. Given that Charlie was surrounded by high-achieving pupils in many of the classes, his lack of performance never seemed to cause him any outward discomfort:

> *Charlie immediately offers to read, Craig also then puts his hand up.*
> *They are the only two to offer…Charlie is first to read, he struggles with*
> *it and it surprises me that he was so keen to volunteer. Teacher has to*
> *help him with lots of words (01/12, S1)*

Charlie's difficulties were also evident in expressive, skill-based subjects like Art and Music:

> *He struggles with the task but I'm not convinced he really tried to get it*
> *right. Similar to art, Charlie seemed to approach both tasks as though he*
> *was defeated before he started. He is good natured about his mistakes*
> *and often doesn't play at all (08/11, S1)*

In contrast, Charlie was very capable in Drama:

> *Charlie is highlighted as someone working superbly on his task but he is*
> *so absorbed he misses the compliment (09/11, S1)*

Charlie also excelled at P.E. but was humble and modest about his abilities. Streamed into the lower English and Maths classes, Charlie was surrounded by pupils with

whom he had been at primary school and who lived in the same area, and with whom he was therefore very familiar. These pupils typically did not work hard and could be disruptive and derail the teacher's attempts to encourage the class to achieve; Charlie would instead often positively distinguish himself from the rest of the class by demonstrating how hard he was working:

> *As their jotters are distributed Charlie volunteers "I'm a really hard worker Miss", teacher replies that she's impressed (09/11, S1)*

> *Class is given a row[4] for talking too much and Charlie adds "I never said a word" which is actually true (11/11, S1)*

Charlie was also often picked to carry our tasks for the teachers:

> *Charlie is also picked for an errand. Again, he is often chosen, which is surprising as his family have had many members in the school before and often have presented with quite significant behavioural issues and problems with authority acceptance. Nonetheless Charlie is very helpful and carries out errands expeditiously (09/11, S1)*

> *Mr Gordon starts to explain where they are and Charlie immediately says "shall I show him?" "Yes please" the teacher seems relieved. Charlie continues to be helpful and pro-social. His behaviour is really excellent at all times. He comes straight back (11/11, S1)*

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[4]A Scottish colloquial term for being disciplined.

Charlie's desire to help teachers and build positive relationships meant that he sometimes inhabited a position of pseudo-authority within some classes:

> *In Paula's talk there is a gay couple who have adopted a baby. Mason has a really exaggerated reaction to the fact that they are gay. Tells Max and Charlie that Paula supports "Arse – nal" but Charlie turns to me and says "what really? How cool is that?" He almost bounces out of his seat (03/12, S1)*

Charlie deflates Mason's homophobic comments and backs up Paula. He creates an atmosphere which discourages negative comments. Charlie also displayed a unique (among his peers) ability to control classes, often to support the teacher:

> *Ms Riley is running late, literally. She arrives about 5 minutes into the period and her class, despite their extremely high behaviour tariff, sit quietly and get organised…she thanks her class for their responsible behaviour. She tells them how much she appreciates their co-operation (06/14, S3)*

Surprisingly, teachers often used his extraordinary popularity and presence to foreshadow their own positions:

> *Mrs Burns has included a section called 'what you need.' Charlie has previously told her how helpful he thinks this is and the teacher wisely uses this to highlight to the class how important this section is by doing a wee impression of Charlie saying so. Charlie is delighted, smiles, affirms "it IS really helpful." (12/12, S2)*

> *Charlie compliments him on using increasing eye contact throughout his*
>
> *talk, Brian G looks delighted with this and says "thank you." Charlie*
>
> *then says "well done" and leads applause after each talk making a point*
>
> *of saying "well done" to everyone. Unsure if this is because he*
>
> *genuinely means it or if he is assuming a dominant sub teacher type role*
>
> *in the class? (01/13, S2)*

As highlighted earlier in this chapter, teachers' class management strategies can echo the pupil-constructed hierarchies of popularity and social acceptance. In Charlie's case, teachers were able on occasion to use his social status to augment their own position – a strategy openly acknowledged by some teachers:

> *She tells me that she encourages Charlie and Elliot to compete and, if not*
>
> *careful, Charlie can 'police' a class. She discourages this mostly but says*
>
> *that, if there is an incident, he usually backs her up (03/15, S4)*

The power dynamic between Charlie and his teachers thus augments both the teacher's and Charlie's respective positions relative to the rest of the class. Charlie's overtly pro-social behaviours of helping and assisting teachers communicate a positive engagement with the institution which would not necessarily be predicted given his background, academic performance, or popularity. At the same time, Charlie adhered intensely to certain school rules and policies – a level of overt compliance which is likely to have been met with derision if it had been displayed by a pupil with less social capital or popularity:

The teacher says that the tidiest and quietest row can go first. Charlie says "I'm tidy Miss, look a neat tie AND look at my badge?" pointing to his achievement badge (08/12, S2)

Teacher tells Alfie his work is very neat "Is mine not?" asks Charlie. "Yes, it is very neat too" the teacher replies, smiling (11/12, S2)

Charlie asks if he can put people who don't wear school uniform into Room 101. Mrs Burns says "yes" and adds "I'd like to invite Mr O'Reilly[5] along to hear that! (12/12, S2)

Unlike Brian, Charlie was unable to achieve value in the institutionally-recognised academic manner, and instead created a unique niche for himself as a model for positive pupil behaviour by adopting a pro-social, non-judgmental, and facilitatory position towards others. Whilst there is no direct access to Charlie's perception of the illegitimacy of his low-status position in academic terms, his strategy choices can be seen as a hybrid strategy of individual self-enhancement along the lines of individual mobility, but also group-based status enhancement via social creativity (Jackson et al., 1996). By encouraging social norms of compliance and adherence to school rules, Charlie's strategy helped to establish value for his academically lower-status class as a whole, as well as his own position relative to the class.

The 'hybrid' approach Charlie adopted was unusual. In addition to elevating the status of his group, he also ingratiated himself with the teachers and carved himself an individual niche as a trustworthy, reliable pupil. From his elevated position, he encourages

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[5] The School Rector

the group to emulate him, providing a framework through which the group as a whole can claim social value by being prosocial and considerate. Charlie did not have opportunities to move across academic status boundaries to a higher-performance class, and in the context of this 'fixed' category membership, he can (and does) create an alternative dimension of comparison (Doosje et al., 1995). Furthermore, he excelled at it. Importantly, despite his individual standing, his strategy was also irreducibly a group process which required the collaboration of his fellow pupils and their teachers. This is a novel point from a theoretical perspective, in that SIT is typically read as predicting that individual mobility and social creativity (as a group-based strategy) are mutually-exclusive, or at least alternative strategies, such that where one is increased, the other is less likely (Hogg, 2016; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; 1986; van Knippenberg, & Ellemers, 2003). In contrast, Charlie's unique and highly-successful strategy involved elevating himself whilst also raising the standing of the group on an alternative, but important dimension of comparison of 'good', moral behaviour (Leach, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2007) that receives recognition and value from the institution.

Discussion

The focus of analysis of this chapter was on the extent to which different behavioural strategies for responding to social (de)valuation are evident within the institutional setting of a school. There was evidence for the use of all three cited strategies: social comparison (Jackson et al., 1996; Ellemers, 1993; Ellemers et al., 1993), selective devaluation (Crocker & Major, 1989) and the relevance of valued dimensions to negative feedback (Crocker & Major, 1989; Tesser et al., 1988). Critically, though, there was evidence of these strategies being enacted in ways that have not yet been demonstrated in empirical work, or indeed considered at all in theoretical terms. On the one hand, Brian

demonstrated a wide range of behaviours that could function to claim social value, whereas

Charlie, in contrast, developed a more consistent, hybrid strategy which carried over

several differing classroom contexts. Both analyses thus highlight a dynamism, flexibility

and creativity to the way in which value can be sought by pupils embedded in the

constantly-stratifying environment of the school.

Placing the findings in a wider theoretical context, influential reviews of how

people respond to social (de)valuation have highlighted an important gap in our

understanding of when the different behavioural strategies for resisting devaluation will be

deployed (e.g., Brown, 2000; Crocker & Major, 1989). The present data provide a unique

insight into this issue, suggesting that strategies can be deployed flexibly by a given

individual in a particular institutional context. In so doing, the data problematise any

simplistic notion that individuals necessarily make exclusive or predominant use of one

such strategy in a given institutional setting. Although this may often be the case, a further

layer of dynamism and flexibility is possible that has not featured in prior analyses of

identity management strategies. Moreover, the material opportunities provided by

institutions (including, but not limited to schools), help to explain the forms that strategies

for negotiating social value may take. As others have argued, young people in school face

significant challenges to maintain positive affect and the school day is one of constant

change and reconfiguration (Meeus, et al., 2010; Meus, Ledema & Helsen, 1999). In the

case of Brian, he fluctuates in one class – French – between attempts to achieve, in line

with peers and with his academic reputation within the school, and misbehaviour, rudeness,

and disruptiveness, including appearing to deliberately answer questions incorrectly. These

behavioural inconsistencies are difficult to explain without considering the material context

and the nature of the institution – for example, as one takes into account where Brian sits, and with whom, the potential functions of his behaviour differences becomes clearer. When immediately located beside a peer group where success is salient, Brian conforms, achieves and denigrates his less-able classmates. When performance is made less salient, by sitting in a position at the front with the other disruptive boys, Brian significantly underperforms. Both of these different behaviours occur in the same class and with ostensibly the same audience.

Brian's behavioural variations within the French class echo other research in the social identity literature regarding sub-divisions within groups (Brown, 2000; Leach et al., 2008), whereby individuals will construct a more stigmatised group which provides a downward social comparison that ameliorates negative effects for the remainder of the group (Blanz et al., 1988). In the French class, Brian selectively aligns with or eschews the boys who achieve most poorly dependent upon proximal distance factors. The literal proximity of differing audiences is critical. If adjacent to the devalued group of boys, he tempered his performance level and his class participation to align with theirs, but if he is remotely located from them, he castigates them as discretely responsible for underperforming as demonstrated when he referred to Alfie as a "failure" (Blanz, Mummedly, Mielke & Klink, 2000).

Charlie on the other hand is ostensibly part of the stigmatised group of poorly-performing pupils, yet manages to achieve a valued position through compliance with rules and the ethos of the school; a strategy that arguably functions by communicating morality rather than competence. Leach et al. (2007) suggest that morality is a more valued group-defining dimension than warmth or competence. In an institutional context this may

translate into a desire to demonstrate appropriate behaviour in lieu of academic

performance. The pupils behaved in accordance with their teacher's wishes, for example,

even when she was absent from the class for the first five or ten minutes. Typically, pupils

took advantage of absent teachers and misbehaved. For this low set and high behaviour

tariff [6] class to sit compliantly was quite remarkable and their co-operative behaviour

seemed to signal a surprising emergent norm of compliance. Charlie was the exemplar for

his class in terms of positive behaviour. His popularity and high social status ensured that

his peers sought to emulate him. In addition, Charlie was also the only pupil observed able

to transgress the boundary of pupil behaviour and status and move into a hybrid

teacher/pupil status. His encouraging pseudo-teacher role was remarkable and coupled with

his ability to 'police' classes to behave appropriately, Charlie managed to obtain

recognition for his classes as prosocial and rule compliant, which functioned to

communicate moral worth (Leach et al., 2007) in the absence of competence-based

recognition (see also Lemaine, 1974). Charlie's skilful combination of identity

management strategies seems extraordinarily complex and subtle for a pupil in his first

year (S1). He effectively combines individual and group level strategies in a cohesive and

productive manner, even though those strategies are usually characterised as oppositional.

Theories of identity management such as SIT should, therefore, be open to considering

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[6] Disruptive or challenging behaviour was referred to as high-tariff by the school and pupils labelled
as very high tariff could be accompanied by behaviour support workers who attempted to keep the pupils on
task with their work and minimise their disruption. Similarly, a class of several less high-tariff pupils may
also qualify for more generalised behavioural support assistance if available. The class referred to above did
not have any support despite being comprised of several high and very high tariff pupils.

creative synergies between strategies in addition to predicting the conditions which render one strategy more likely than another.

Conclusion

This chapter provides a richly-detailed and unique analysis of daily school life which offers particular insight into negotiations of social value, group memberships and identity management strategy selection occurring in real time. How individuals seek to maintain a positive sense of social value[7] when they are being continually evaluated is a complex and important issue, both for theory and for the social functioning of institutions. The analysis in this chapter indicates that stratifying institutional policies and practices, such as academic streaming, have unintended social outcomes for pupils. Specifically, categorisation in terms of achievement-based outcomes such as National 3 or 4 can become an organising category that signals social value, and stigmatises those in the 'lower' category. There was evidence that this in turn limits the stigmatised pupils' inclination to accept opportunities to progress individually when offered.

At a classroom level, twin hierarchies of academic success and popularity were observed. These institution-driven and pupil-driven hierarchies were mutually reinforced in surprising ways with disciplinary practices favouring more academic and more popular pupils at the expense of their less able or less popular peers. These findings demonstrate the importance of bringing the institution into the frame of analysis. The structural conditions

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[7] It is important to note that the observational nature of this data is a limitation of this chapter and immediately limits the analysis to a purely functional account of the behaviours observed. Underlying psychological processes concerning self-esteem management or identity management strategies cannot be presumed, therefore, the analyses rest upon manifest behaviours.

provided by institutions and the stratification institutions encourage allow hierarchies to flourish by shaping opportunities for social value to be claimed. The institution sets out the dimensions for social valuation but teachers can enact the valuation processes in their classrooms in ways which are often detrimental to pupils already experiencing stigmatisation and/or alienation from their peers.

The present data show that while school pupils' strategies to manage devaluation do in part echo those outlined by theories such as SIT, they are deployed in a more flexible, dynamic and creative manner than existing research might suggest. Importantly, they are also highly responsive to the opportunity structures of the institution: each strategy selection is made possible and shaped by institutional policies and practices. Building upon this theme, Chapter 4 examines in greater details the interaction between the institution and social class, particularly in terms of expectations regarding pupils who present with very different socio-economic backgrounds.

CHAPTER 4

INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES AND SOCIAL CLASS

The findings reported in Chapter 3 indicate that institutional policy and practices can have the unintended consequence of reinforcing inequality in the classroom. With a specific focus upon socio-economic status (SES), this chapter will examine the role of social class in the classroom, including how status related to wealth is performed by pupils, how teachers respond, and how key individuals from lower SES backgrounds compare in terms of outcomes such as participation in school and qualifications achieved. This chapter will examine the extent to which the policies and practices of the school impact upon the development of class-based hierarchies by observing day-to-day interactions between the institution and pupils from low SES backgrounds. Uniquely, this chapter will also demonstrate that as institutions, schools function to recapitulate class differences in specific ways that go beyond those discussed in the Chapter 3. Furthermore, this chapter will detail some important aspects of the "fundamental clash" (Emler & Reicher, 1995 p. 213) which can occur between the predominantly middle class education system and pupils from low SES backgrounds.

The key strength of the method employed in this study is in how it enabled us to tease out the minutiae of how social class can function in schools and its implications for pupils. Furthermore, the project has been situated in Scotland, a society which is characterised by sharp class and income disparity. The evidence in this chapter thus has

situational relevance not only within the specific local context but also within wider society.

This introduction will focus first upon the impact of socio-economic inequality in society and sketch out some barriers to education and employment success relative to class before discussing broad theoretical perspectives such as the psychology of social class and the stereotype threat literature relative to the underperformance of poorer pupils. The concept of social class within classrooms will then be discussed alongside contextual information about the school to situate the subsequent analysis and results.

Inequality in Society

Society in the United Kingdom has become less egalitarian and more unequal. From the 1980s, social-economic inequality has deepened with the disposable income of the highest earning families growing twice as quickly as the disposable incomes of the lowest earning families (Manstead, 2018; Goodman & Shephard, 2002). Turning to Scotland specifically, the Scottish Government uses two measures to ascertain levels of income inequality: the Palma Ratio and the Gini Coefficient. Determined by the Palma Ratio, those earning in the top 10% in Scotland have almost 40% more income than the lowest earning 40% of the population combined. The Gini Coefficient is a single number which indicates the level of inequality between values of 0 and 100. A Gini Coefficient of 0 would mean a flat distribution with perfect equality of income. The most recent Gini Coefficient for Scotland is 34. Both measures record the same trend: income inequality is rising quickly after a slight decrease following the recession of 2010/2011 (Scottish Government, 2017).

Educational Attainment in Scotland

Barro and Lee (2001) cite the importance of education in enabling lower-income pupils to accumulate sufficient 'human capital' to enable them to improve their socio-economic status. The authors define human capital as the ability to contribute economically to their society: to accumulate the skills, knowledge, and education to enable them to compete in the labour market. To quantify this relationship, Barro and Lee (2001) report data demonstrating that educational attainment functions as a barometer of human capital in a number of countries worldwide. Using a range of measures, the authors note that whilst pupils worldwide are remaining in education for longer, the UK average of nine years does not compare favourably to similarly developed countries such as Canada (11.2), Norway (11.8) or the United States (12.2). Similarly, the UK performed substantially below several Northern European countries in the adult literacy test designed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Scandinavian nations specifically significantly outperformed UK students. Traditionally Scotland has performed slightly better than the UK averages. However, the Scottish Government (2017) note that the performance of Scottish pupils on the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) test has fallen since 2000 when Scotland was 27 points ahead of the OECD average. Scotland's position has since fallen further and in 2015 was only 2 points ahead of the OECD average (Scottish Government, 2017). Taken together, the statistics relating to rising income inequality and falling educational attainment indicate that they are co-occurring phenomena.

Social Mobility: Damned if you Do; Damned if you Don't

The extent to which education enhances human capital, thus creating more egalitarian societies, is complex. In Scotland at present, there is in theory a 'freedom of opportunity' to attend university regardless of socio-economic background. However, according to Iannelli (2011), the focus of the Scottish Government on reducing inequality by increasing the numbers of working class pupils who attain highly or go on to succeed in further education is somewhat flawed. Whilst these are positive goals, the evidence reveals that the improvements made have not resulted in significantly more candidates with lower SES being accepted for high-status employment roles (Iannelli, 2011). Social class structures pervade society and can potentially limit the aspirations of young people (Jackson & Segal, 2004). Kearney and Levine (2014) comment that pupils from low SES backgrounds, faced with high levels of income inequality, may simply view the potential return from their educational career less than their more affluent peers (Kearney & Levine, 2014). Furthermore, they may value their own human capital more negatively based upon the social class-laden structures of their environment which are emphasised more sharply by the direct contrast of very wealthy pupils. Thus, as Dalton writes, "wealth opens the gates of freedom and opportunity and poverty closes them" (1935, p.320).

There may therefore be a double bind for pupils from low SES backgrounds in that if they are successful at school, they may devalue their own human capital in the economic marketplace; but if they do *not* achieve at school, their outcomes are likely to be poorer than an equivalently-qualified pupil from a better-off background (Kendall, Straw, Jones, Springate & Grayson, 2008; Howieson & Iannelli, 2007). In a relatively stagnant labour market, opportunities for poorer candidates involve displacing middle-class candidates who

have the added benefit of family support and potential financial assistance (Iannelli, 2011;

Iyer, Jetten, Tsivrikos, Postmes & Haslam, 2009). Furthermore, research by Kearney and

Levine (2014) posit that the reasons for dropping out of school and missing educational

opportunities are often not due to academic difficulty but to socio-structural issues such as

being responsible for family care provision which is more prevalent in areas of high

income inequality. The position is reversed in areas of lower income disparity, where just

over half the reasons for early drop outs (prior to legal compulsory education age of 16) are

related to academic difficulty (Kearney & Levine, 2014).

The Social Impact of Income Inequality

In this chapter, the focus is on income inequality amongst school pupils rather than

levels of absolute or relative poverty. Schools experiencing high levels of income

inequality can foster pernicious consequences for pupils with low SES. Kearney and

Levine (2014) tested their hypothesis that high levels of income inequality would lead to an

"economic despair" (2014, p.335) with poorer pupils feeling increased levels of isolation,

resulting in pupils investing less in the education system. They report that boys from low

income families are more likely to drop out of school when income inequality is highest.

Girls who experience high levels of income inequality are also more likely to drop out of

school due to becoming young mothers than girls from equivalently deprived socio-

economic backgrounds but experiencing less income inequality (Kearney & Levine, 2014).

Further evidence of the negative impact of income inequality on pupils of lower

SES backgrounds relates to educational performance. Crossouard (2012) studied children

in two Scottish primary schools and found that the most deprived children had less

confidence when presenting work or performing creatively and often reproduced their

social class through informal peer hierarchies (Crossouard, 2012). Elgar, Craig, Boyce,

Morgan & Vella-Zarb (2009) studied the impact of income inequality upon levels of

bullying in schools across 37 different countries and found SES was a key determinant of

the likelihood of being bullied at school. Further, they posit that pupils who are raised in

poorer communities in unequal societies may be more likely to live in competitive

hierarchical environments than those who live in more equal societies. Elgar et al. (2009)

argue that this leads to an increased awareness of status differences, highlights

discrimination and fosters bullying, as the shame attached to not possessing markers of

status 'bicycles' downwards (Wilkinson, 2005, in Elgar et al., 2009). The bicycling

analogy refers to pupils "bowing to superiors while at the same time kicking downwards"

(Elgar et al., 2009 p.357). Those at the bottom of the social class hierarchy are those most

affected as they are likely also to be those who 'have' fewer of the status markers as

determined by prevalent adolescent peer culture.

The finding that income inequality negatively impacts upon bullying is supported

by Klein's (2006) investigation of male peer hierarchies. The bullied pupils tended to be

labelled as non-normative and subsequently excluded from the social mainstream. The

ostracism of pupils as a result of their SES may reflect parental attitudes, societal norms or

spontaneous class divisions but whatever the specific process involved, the end result is

largely similar: those who compare negatively in terms of SES tend to fare worse in

numerous ways, including possessing less confidence or being more likely to fall victim to

bullying (Croussard, 2012: Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995). Conversely, being

observably middle class can also be burdensome at school. Reay (2006) presents data on

how two comparatively well-off girls were marginalised in a predominantly deprived

primary school class specifically due to their organised and studious approach to their work. Despite performing very well academically, the girls were consistently not recognised as "the clever children" by their peers (Reay, 2006, p.179). Social class and SES is thus clearly prevalent in classrooms from primary school onwards and being part of a stigmatised group can become a "badge of distinction rather than a mark of shame" (Brewer, 1991, p. 481). Whilst the load of SES may be borne by several groups in different ways, being poor in school does carry ramifications beyond social acceptance. Low SES can predict academic failure, school absenteeism (Kearney & Bensaheb, 2006), difficulty in securing employment and impair the ability to adjust to the transition to high school in the first place (Iyer et al., 2009).

The Psychology of Social Class

Deprivation and inequality are well researched in social psychological literature. Relative deprivation theory (RDT; Runciman, 1966) posits that people feel discontent if they perceive they have less than they believe they deserve or desire based on comparison with others. The discrepancy in perceived entitlement and reality can drive a range of negative emotions including resentment, anger, and feelings of grievance (Crosby, 1982). In social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), unequal status positions can lead to negative social identities and, as discussed in Chapter 3, instigate a range of reactions to redress the negative social identity. Importantly, beliefs that the differences between groups are unstable and that the boundaries between groups of unequal status are impermeable, predicts that individuals will bolster their own group status and increase in-group identification (Ellemers, 1993). In a thorough review of system justification theory (SJT), Jost, Banaji, and Nosek (2004) note that SJT develops an understanding of social

hierarchies by making use of both objective and subjective measures of rank. SJT's central

hypothesis is that disadvantaged individuals are actually more likely to justify and

rationalise the system than individuals who are less disadvantaged by the same system.

Although this appears counter-intuitive, it rests upon the premise that impermeable social

group boundaries offer the disadvantaged individual minimal personal control. This tacit

acceptance of seemingly fixed socio-structural hierarchies leads individuals to rationalise

the oppressive systems as just and legitimate (Jost et al., 2004; Lind & Tyler, 1988).

RDT, SIT and SJT are all concerned with unequal social relations, yet social class

and the specific impact of income inequality is under researched in the above fields which

tend to focus upon more clearly-demarcated groups with objective, clearly observable

differences such as age, gender, or race amongst others. Yet, social class and income

inequality pervade and arguably structure our social lives as much as other categorising or

hierarchical dimensions, and assessing the impact of SES as it functions in everyday life

would add considerably to our understanding of social groups and their interactions.

At least part of the issue concerning the study of social class is achieving

satisfactory and specific objective indicators of class (Bukodi & Goldthorpe, 2013; Kraus,

Piff, & Keltner, 2009; 2011). As mentioned above, SJT researchers often use both

objective and subjective measures. Objective measures of class are concerned with access

to resources; income, education, housing, employment and often demographics such as

postcode indicators. Subjective measures include the MacArthur Scale of Subjective SES

(Goodman, Adler, Kawachi, Huang, & Colditz 2001) on which participants rank

themselves using a ten-rung ladder of social status. The contribution of this chapter is to

emphasise how socio-economic status functions in an everyday sense for pupils in high

school and how its effects are shaped by institutional contexts. Despite the measures listed above, the boundaries of socio-economic class or status are not as clearly drawn as other socio-structural components like age, gender, or race.

Stereotype Threat and Social Class

Lower-status, stigmatised groups tend to perform more poorly in academic domains, yet the underlying mechanisms of the phenomena are not fully understood within social psychological literature (Goudeau & Croizet, 2017; Lauen & Gaddis, 2013). Given the preceding discussions about enduring SES-related differences in terms of social outcomes and also in terms of access to high-status employment, it is pertinent to explore if stigmatisation associated with lower SES predicts underperformance by deprived pupils in school. Such stigmatisation underlies stereotype threat (Leyens, Désert, Croizet & Darcis, 2000) and occurs when stigmatised groups underperform when presented with tasks which they consider to be diagnostic of dimensions upon which their group is negatively stereotyped. In contrast, they do not perform differently to a non-stigmatised group when the status of the group is not made salient (Croizet, Despres, Gauzins, Huguet, Leyens & Meot, 2004). In other words, if low SES is made salient by the proximity of peers with high SES, stereotype threat theory would predict the lower SES group would underperform academically if the task relates to one which carries a threat of a historical and/or social stigma of underperformance for their group (Leyens, Desert, Croizet & Darcis, 2000; Croizet, Desert, Dutrevis & Leyens, 2001). For example, African American students performed worse than white students on a Maths test in which they were advised was diagnostic of their academic performance, but on a par with the other students when there

was no emphasis upon the test being diagnostic of their intelligence (Aronson, Lustina, Good, Keough, Steele & Brown, 1999).

Aronson and colleagues (1999) have replicated this paradigm many times and, when stereotypes of poor performance exist, the stigmatised groups fare worse when the historical referents are made salient. Further research, however, has indicated that stereotype threat also negatively impacts upon performance in the absence of historical stigmatisation but the presence of situational factors. To test this premise Aronson et al., (1999) selected participants who were less likely to feel stigmatised: white male participants with high Maths ability. When participants were advised of the superior Maths performance of Asian students, their performance suffered in comparison to those in the control group leading to the assumption that stereotype threat can be invoked in historically non-stigmatised groups who, critically, shared a motivation to succeed in the domain (Aronson et al., 1999).

Given the above findings that stereotype threat can be created situationally, Goudeau and Croizet (2017) investigated whether institutions can be complicit in maintaining an SES attainment gap using a social comparison paradigm. Institutions are not class neutral environments and, as shown in the previous chapter (Chapter 3), institutional practices can impact upon those with lower SES. To test if social comparisons had a negative impact upon lower SES pupils, Goudeau and Croizet (2017) devised a simple hand raising paradigm. Pupils raised their hands when they completed each section of a difficult comprehension task compared to controls who did not raise their hands. As predicted, the act of hand raising following a difficult task reduced the performance of the poorer pupils. In other words, the stereotype load of social class was evident in the hand

raising condition but not the control group with no hand raising. The authors suggested that institutional practices can amplify SES differences with practices such as hand raising to demonstrate achievement or completion of a task is more normative for pupils from middle class backgrounds. They argue that middle class families tend to have higher investment and engagement with the educational system which facilitates their learning and participation in class. Conversely it also replicates inequality by making class differences visible incurring a debilitating, stigmatising effect upon lower SES pupils (Goudeau & Croizet, 2017).

Pupils who perform poorly can become alienated from the education system to cope with their poor performance (Steele, 1988). However, some pupils from stigmatised backgrounds remain heavily invested in the system despite performing poorly. Steele (1988) posits that whilst their strategy is different, these pupils are still victims of stereotype threat by underperforming in situations in which they are aware of the stigma of their group, and being considered as an exemplar of their stigmatised status instead of as an individual (Leyens et al., 2000) Moreover, in addition to feeling threatened by associations of lower competence, as noted above, many low SES girls become young mothers, contributing to a social stigma that girls from low income families may be less 'moral' than their better off peers (Kearney & Levine, 2014). Similarly, young low-SES boys are much more likely to be associated with or contributory to the social problem of delinquency (Emler & Reicher, 1995; Barry, 2006). This develops a stereotypical perception that there is also relationship between low income and low standards of morality and social decency (Emler & Reicher, 1995), and between income and levels of attainment.

Stereotype threat thus reinforces socio-economic inequalities in a variety of ways. The stereotype threats experienced are created situationally, in the moment and in context. This indicates that for stereotype threat to function as a barrier to academic achievement in pupils, or as an evaluative dimension for pupils to be judged upon, it must be enacted and performed daily and as part of the school environment (Emler & Reicher, 1995).

Classed Classrooms

The evidence above suggests that part of the reproduction of socio-economic inequality occurs within the classroom with teachers implicitly setting up expectations based upon SES but also perpetuating privilege in the classroom to reflect the classrooms within which they themselves found success (Killpack & Melon, 2016). Teachers and institutional practices are also implicated in aligning SES and academic performance, creating differential experiences for pupils of lower SES which subsequently impact upon their participation levels. Put simply, poorer children are expected to do less well at school. Teachers using peer-defined status to form behavioural expectation were discussed in Chapter 3, and evidence will be presented in this chapter of teachers also using SES to determine performance expectations, framing success in terms of wealth.

Moreover, given that currently the role of SES and social class is not thoroughly explored within social psychological literature, the longitudinal aspect of this method can detail specifically how social class operates within an institutional setting and the impact of social class and SES upon pupils over time. This chapter will examine the interplay between institution and pupils with respect to SES and discuss the outcomes for pupils from the lowest socio-economic cohort.

Context of the Study

The observed school had a very unusual bi-modal distribution of income which intensified the difference of SES (Tablante & Fiske, 2015; Croizet & Claire, 1998). In determining catchment areas, local authorities usually try to undermine the effects of income inequality by attempting to achieve a balance between poorer and better-off pupils; ensuring schools have a reasonable distribution of wealth. The unusual bi-modal wealth distribution of the target school brings into sharp relief the economic differences between the pupils (See associated discussion in Chapters 1 and 2). In the same class, I observed a pupil with a Louis Vuitton school bag and another pupil who regularly wore the same mud-stained trousers and rarely wore socks, irrespective of the temperature outside. In short, inequality matters and the particular SES distribution of the observed school resulted in extreme differences between pupils suffering multiple deprivations and those with affluent lifestyles. There was a substantial gap between rich and poor with a relatively small 'buffer' zone of middle-income pupils to ameliorate the contrast effects (Stanton-Salazar & Dornbusch, 1995).

Institutional Policy and Practice

As an institution, schools enact policies and practices which are designed to assist pupils from low-income families, such as free school meal provision. The provision of free school meals and subsidising the cost of practical classes on the basis of free school meal distribution is intended as a positive policy to ameliorate financial stress in families. However, until recently this policy was also used as an indicator of deprivation which instantly ties the provision of the free meal to a stigmatised status (Scottish Government, 2016). Free school meals are distributed to pupils whose families receive Government

financial assistance including tax credits, disability allowances, and income support. This is a nationwide policy and different to the policies and practices which are decided at an individual school level and are intended to shape the ethos of the school, such as the extent to which the uniform policy is enforced.

In practice, the school's uniform policy was enforced but loosely interpreted, providing an opportunity for individuals to adapt their clothing styles. This often advertised the difference in SES and pupils could, therefore, be demarcated according to their status as evidenced in Chapter 3. As the following analysis will demonstrate, many policies enacted by the school have unintended consequences for pupils who are often already disadvantaged. For example, sanction-type discipline was frequently enforced, whereby pupils were sent out of the class for minor offences and internally excluded for major transgressions. Institutional policy also effectively excludes pupils who are often already amongst the most marginalised socially within school (Williams & Govan, 2005). Exclusion from class per 1000 pupils is 6 times higher for those the lowest 20% of the socio-economic demographic (Scottish Government, 2015). Kohn (1993) argues that exclusion punishments are based upon unequal power relations and are inherently negative (Martinez, 2009).

Pupil socio-economic status can be framed by the school by how teachers perceive and act towards the pupils and can shape how pupils then react and interact with the institution. The following analyses will unpick the dynamic nature of the relationship between pupils and the institution. Finally, close observations of pupils from similar socio-economic backgrounds will demonstrate that SES is not necessarily a hindrance to achieving success and social value. The analysis will show that the behaviour and self-

presentation of the individuals differed significantly demonstrating that low socio-economic background was not necessarily deterministic by mapping the objective outcomes of the pupils onto their observational data.

Analysis and Results

The analysis presented here demonstrates that social class and SES were referred to overtly throughout the observational period. As Table 5 below demonstrates, the analysis covers overt statements about social class and status and also presents manifest behaviours by pupils and teachers including pupil displays of wealth.

Table 5

Socio-Economic Code Frequency

Code and Example Location	Frequency
Ascertaining Social Class	
Ascertaining status non-directly through interactions and non-interactions (p. 120)	23
Querying the status of others (p.122)	8
	31
Kits and Tubs (required equipment for practical classes)	
Policy and Practice as a function of social class (p. 119)	12
Who has and who has not relative to school requirement for provision, uniform for example (p. 123)	28
	40
Markers of Affluence	
Clothing choices and how these relate to wealth status (p.123)	32
Overt displays of wealth (p. 124)	14
	46

Table 6 also highlights how the SES of key pupils mapped onto their educational attainment at the conclusion of their high school careers.

Table 6

Academic attainment by socio-economic status band

Pupil	Quintile	Vigintile	Nat 3	Nat 4	Nat 5	Higher	Adv Higher
Layla	1	3	3	3	0	0	0
Charlie	1	3	0	6	2	1	0
Dylan	1	3	2	0	0	0	0
Alfie	2	5	1	3	2	0	0
Lucas	4	13	0	0	6	4	3
Finlay	5	18	0	0	6	5	0
Brian	5	19	0	0	6	8	2
Ava	5	19	0	0	6	7	1
Jacob	5	20	0	0	7	6	2
Noah	5	20	0	0	6	5	3

Key: **Vigintile:** *All 6976 data zones are grouped into 20 bands (vigintile), each containing 5% of the data zones. Vigintile 1 contains the 5% most deprived data zones in Scotland.*

Quintile: *All 6976 data zones are grouped into 5 bands (quintiles), each containing 20% of the data zones. Quintile 1 contains the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.*

Three of the pupils were in the most impoverished quintiles whilst six were in quintile 5, the most affluent zone, demonstrating the marked income inequality and the unusual bi-modal distribution of the school catchment areas. Examining the vigintile data, Layla, Charlie, and Dylan reside in vigintile 3 which means that their SES status is in the

lowest 15% in Scotland whereas Noah and Jacob are in the highest vigintile and Charlotte, Brian, and Ava are only slightly lower, in vigintile 19. This means that the SES of five pupils in the cohort is in the top 10% in Scotland. These are stark differences in income status and the table clearly shows that wealth status is polarised to each extreme. It should be noted here that this table is incomplete as Mason, Lily, and Craig all left the cohort prior to the installation of a new computer system to record key demographic data and, as such, their position cannot be retrieved nor specified.

Various practical classes require pupils to supply equipment from home: PE (Physical Education) kit, containers (tubs) to take home food prepared in class, and basic stationery provisions. Some classes require calculators and encourage the use of coloured pens and pencils, often to be supplied from home. The self-provision of equipment is a school policy which impacts most upon the pupils from lower SES backgrounds and directly shapes inclusion and participation opportunities. A depute Rector advised me that the PE and Home Economics departments registered more negative referrals than any other subject, primarily for 'forgetting' or 'ill-equipped' offences.

The failure to bring specific equipment to school was often observed as a function of social class with the poorest pupils being, unsurprisingly, the least prepared. The pupil most frequently observed being unprepared for class was Dylan (14 codes). Lily and Layla were also noted for lacking 'kit' like gym kit or 'tubs' for Home Economics practical classes. On three occasions, Lily was unprepared for Home Economics and Layla rarely brought her PE kit. The Home Economics Department were very strict about enforcing their equipment policy. Pupils were required to have their coursework folder and their tub

if they are cooking. Dylan rarely had anything required and their punishment policy was

enacted when he brought the wrong items:

> *Dylan comes without a folder but with a tub (they are not cooking). He is*
>
> *sent to Miss Steen for repeated forgetting offences. He returns and is*
>
> *discussed in front of the entire class and it is pointed out that he has to*
>
> *pay for the new folder… He still has to secure a pencil and is being*
>
> *humiliated for not having the correct equipment, he rocks from foot to*
>
> *foot, stares at the floor (09/12, S2)*

By contrast, Brian and Finlay are both noted for 'getting away with it': they are

both well dressed and this seems to mediate in their favour despite their occasional

disruptive behaviour or 'forgetting' to be adequately prepared for class. For a stark

demonstration of the differential treatment meted to pupils from different backgrounds for

the same 'offence', this vignette was recorded in the same class but on another day:

> *Finlay has brought last year's Home Economics folder instead of the*
>
> *current one. Usually, failure to bring a jotter results in a punishment but*
>
> *he does have a Home Ec folder, albeit the wrong one. Teacher says*
>
> *"oooh tough one!" (11/12, S2)*

The incidence rate of both boys not having the correct materials is admittedly

different, with Dylan rarely having anything he requires and Finlay usually being prepared.

However, it was also the case that Dylan is unlikely to be provided with what he needs at

home whereas Finlay is well dressed and adequately provided for, but has forgotten. The

responses were strikingly different: Dylan is publicly shamed yet Finlay's forgetfulness is treated lightly and a joke is made of the situation.

A few weeks later I noticed that Dylan seemed to be even less prepared than usual yet he had been given a new folder with no punishment or comment:

> *Dylan has no (badged) school uniform, no bag, pencil, folder or tub. Mrs*
> *Thompson gives him a folder, unsure if he is keeping it in class or it is a*
> *new one (11/12, S2)*

Intrigued about the change in policy:

> *I ask about Dylan and she said that they have arranged that he can keep*
> *a tub, folder and pencil in class for him to prevent continuing*
> *punishment. She points out that he has never "back chatted" him. (11/12,*
> *S2)*

Whilst this is obviously a preferable outcome for Dylan and proactive on behalf of the department, I noted the caveat that he was being helped because he was compliant. This brings a morally judgemental aspect to the 'benevolence' of helping a struggling and underprivileged pupil (Brambilla & Leach, 2014). The moral associations observed with social status and social class stereotyping are analysed further later in this chapter.

Free School Meals and Stigmatisation

As a function of household income, certain pupils received free school meals. While I did not observe the pupils directly during their lunch hours or free time, many pupils left the school grounds at lunch time on a regular basis as soon as it was permitted during their first year (S1). Pupils frequented the local shops and fast food takeaways with

their friends and socialised in the shopping area. This was gleaned from various discussions I overheard about who was going where at lunch. While it was never directly expressed nor referred to, it became apparent that free school meal provision is only provided within school. The implication is that pupils with the free school meal entitlement cannot leave school at the same time as their peers and cannot spend their free time as they wish if they are to receive the meal provided. This, again, is an unintended social consequence of a policy designed to assist. Pupils who receive free school meals could be subject to stigmatisation, in addition to the restriction placed upon lunch time socialising, as the following example demonstrates:

> *Teacher distributes letter explaining that £10 is due to cover cost of cooking but if you receive free school meals, this is free. Layla makes a face, smiles and shrugs and effectively communicates to Charlotte that this applies to her. Layla sees this as a good thing but Charlotte evidently doesn't and frowns… Then both Layla and Charlotte, who are sitting facing each other decide to retie their ties. Layla wears hers in a large knot, loose and with her top blouse buttons undone. Charlotte, in contrast, buttons her blouse right up and ties a little neat knot in a formal style.(08/11, S1)*

Both pupils started with loosely knotted ties and their blouses unbuttoned at the neck. Layla redid her tie to look broadly similar to how it had looked previously but Charlotte changed hers entirely. To attribute the specific cause of Charlotte's behaviour would be speculative, but re-tying her tie to look markedly different to Layla's and the

timing of the behaviour, immediately following the declaration of socio-economic status, is striking.

Performance of SES

Pupils 'performed' their SES and communicated their wealth status or possessions in numerous verbal ways, examples of which are reported below (14 codes). Pupils typically only drew attention to their 'stuff' if it was very expensive:

> *Lucas is very distracted and takes a long time to register when the*
> *teacher talks to him. He keeps referring to his £300 laptop which he has*
> *with him today. (10/11, S1)*

> *Lucas stops writing down, fiddles with his golf umbrella. It occurs to me*
> *that Lucas dresses more like a city gent than a high school pupil. He*
> *wears a waistcoat with a watch chain. (01/15, S4)*

> *As a reward for good behaviour through the week, they are allowed*
> *computer time on a Friday. They are allowed to 'play' on the computers*
> *if they have been 'good' all week, Max trawls the net looking at luxury*
> *goods; watches, trainers etc. everyone else plays games but Emma and*
> *Ted comment on what Max is looking at. (02/15, S4)*

SES was often communicated subtly and non-verbally (Adler et al., 1992). After the Christmas break, pupils with new, branded or designer coats tended to display the labels overtly, by folding their jacket over the chair so that the inside of the jacket (containing the label) was prominent to those sitting behind whereas other pupils would remove their jackets completely and hang them on the chairs but with the label facing inwards:

It is noticeable that a lot of the class have new clothing, presumably for Christmas. Alfie has a new Superdry bag, Charlotte has a Jack Wills bag, Angus has a Superdry coat as do Noah and Brian. Ava has a Superdry hoodie and Noah also wears a Hollister school jumper. The branded labels are mostly huge and the lining of the Superdry jackets is really bright; orange or lime, drawing attention to the labels. Those with the branded coats tend to fold them over the chair as they take them off; therefore, the label is clearly visible. (01/13, S2)

SES was also sometimes overtly ascertained by asking pointed questions:

Eve questions Layla about her house, is it nice? How many people? Does it have stairs? Is it a flat? I think I hear Layla say "it's horrible" (09/11, S1)

The Consequences of Income Inequality

Affluence tended to be associated with acceptance and the ability to 'fit in' more easily:

Charlotte received the latest iPhone, iPad and a Louis Vuitton school bag at Christmas. She does use this to create a financially-related dominance. By having 'the stuff' that others want. (01/14, S3)

Charlotte tended to advertise her possessions and drew attention to them despite knowing that other pupils lacked the same items. Rather than single her out as different, however, it appeared to improve her popularity, especially amongst the girls with whom she would often share her gadgets etc. Conversely, not being affluent was often associated

with not being socially accepted (for a detailed discussion of social exclusion see Chapter 6):

> *Dylan is isolated from the boys; arrived late and not wearing any*
>
> *uniform (06/12, S2)*

The pupils advertised their status through their clothing and style choices. This was heavily gendered and often divided along socio-economic lines. There were a group of highly fashionably-styled girls whom one Deputy Rector referred to as the 'Satellite Girls', because she observed them 'orbiting' around the popular, high-status boy group (Charlie, Finlay etc.). I refer to this group of girls in the remainder of the analysis using this collective pseudonym, abbreviated to SG. In addition to standing out because of their very expensive items, their uniforms were also stylised in particular ways. The SG used branding to denote group membership and featuring high cost items and accessories like school bags and mobile phones. The SG promoted their own status and group identity by their clothing:

> *There is a row of five girls. Molly C, Meg, Lily, eve and Kerry. They are*
>
> *all very 'styled' and very fashionably dressed. On the other side is*
>
> *Amelia, Lucy, Katy, Kelly and Sophie, Phoebe and Kelly K. The boys I*
>
> *have noticed so far do not group together in terms of attractiveness*
>
> *particularly. They tend to coagulate around activities or popularity but*
>
> *not how they look. I expect that the girls 'compete' more in this way. The*
>
> *girls on 'the other side' either cannot or choose not to compete, they*
>
> *wear little make up and immaculate school uniform. The 'pretty' girls*

wear jewellery, styled uniforms like lace tops over blouses, leggings and

converse boots. Four of the five have identical hairstyles in buns (06/12,

S2)

Overt displays of wealth were performed regularly, and girls seemed to bond over branding or used branding to signal their social identity by adapting uniforms in collective ways, whereas affluent boys tended to wear branded clothing which was synonymous with school uniform, like a plain black V-neck with a Hollister or Super Dry logo. Whilst the SG displayed their branded items, the less wealthy girls bought fakes and copies of the same items:

I notice that the three 'high value' girls; Charlotte and Emma and

Catriona to a lesser extent, all have bags which are really expensive.

Lily also has one but I suspect hers is a fake. Between the girls, I get the

impression that there are many markers of belonging such as the bags

and accessories, this precludes the girls whose backgrounds are less

affluent or whose parents are not prepared to buy such high value items

(09/11, S1)

It is dress down day today for comic relief and the 'popular' girls all sit

in one row all wearing almost identical checked shirts and either

Converse or Vans shoes or boots (03/13, S2)

Interestingly, some weeks later, Lily then wears Converse trainers to school but they are not consistent with the uniform colour, and she doesn't wear a uniform that day at all:

As the class assemble round the room on the computers I notice that they

are all really smartly dressed except Lily who wears a burgundy hoodie

and pink Converse trainers (04/13, S2)

Two girls who are in the lowest SES banding unsurprisingly had fewer of the 'markers of affluence' and adapted their uniform in a range of ways, but often similar to one another:

Lily and Layla who have adopted very short skirts, dyed hair and lots of

heavy makeup. The other girls have a much more natural look. (01/13,

S2)

In one instance, some of the girls were literally 'branded' with intricate temporary 'tattoos'. This separated those who attended a party held by a class member from those who did not. The two girls from the lowest income families were not invited:

Layla seems really sad and withdrawn and again complains of a sore

stomach…I notice that Lily has copied the tattoo design onto the back of

her hand with a green felt tipped pen (09/11, S1)

Classroom Practices and the Recapitulation of SES-related Inequalities

Teachers played a key role in reinforcing income-related inequality. Some provided 'frames' for the pupils to fit into or aspire to achieve. Social class was often explicitly raised in the classroom. In the following examples, teachers (perhaps inadvertently) framed success in monetary terms:

"Why work hard? So you can succeed, have a nice car, house, holidays,

eat in nice restaurants, have a good life. If you don't and you end up

working in a shop or a factory you'll think, I should have worked harder

then I wouldn't be stuck in this job" Then quickly adds "of course there's

nothing wrong with those jobs, but you can do better, you are clever

people" (08/11, S1)

Max asks "when will sig figs help in life?" Teacher says "sensible

answers in exams but probably never" then says "exams get you to

university, get you a job, get you money, holidays" then adds hastily

"money isn't everything though" class then mostly chorus "oh yes it is"

(01/12, S1)

Class-related stigma could also be perpetuated by teachers who attached value and success to SES, reinforcing the perception that the better-off pupils are likely to be the highest achieving and contributing to the stigmatisation of those from lower-SES backgrounds. Teachers did occasionally express concern about poorer pupils but in this example it served only to highlight that Dylan was, once again, lacking something critical:

Dylan takes his seat, chooses one removed from Charlie in the back row.

"No jacket?" asks Mr Oscars "but its freezing?" he shakes his head and

shrugs (11/12, S2)

Some teachers did also offer a more inclusive perspective:

They are ranking occupations. Catriona chooses 'stylist' ...eve chooses

'business woman' 'TV presenter' and 'stylist' eve suggests Aidan for a

plumber. I think this is meant to be disparaging but Ms Cowan says "ohh

you will be rich then Aidan, everyone needs a plumber" (01/15, S4)

The class then have a discussion about cleaning and the relative value of

all school staff and that all team members are valued (01/14, S3)

Topics on the curriculum also brought up SES-related inequalities in various ways. Discussions of poverty, children in care, obesity, diet, and (lack of) material possessions were all topics observed being discussed with pupils who were adversely affected by these conditions. The following example followed a discussion with a Home Economics teacher about Dylan:

I ask about the food diaries they are completing and comment on the

socio-economic spread within the class. She agrees it could almost be

cruel in this context." (11/12, S2)

The concept of valued items was a topic for debate in a Modern Studies class:

The teacher is talking about materialistic societies, asks who has a

rubbish phone. Molly puts her hand up and Mrs Whitton says that she

knew Molly would because she saw Charlotte turn round and smile at

Molly (01/14, S3)

The 'smile' Charlotte gave to Molly was perhaps more of a smug grin. Charlotte had the very latest iPhone and was one of the first to have the latest version. Molly had a fairly old-fashioned model but defends her phone nevertheless:

Molly says her phone does have internet and stuff but it's just not an

iPhone (01/14, S3)

The Moral Aspect of SES Stereotyping

As evidenced above, pupils 'performed' their SES both to peers and teachers, and SES was in turn associated with teachers' framing of success and achievement. This also echoes some of the findings of Chapter 3 concerning classroom discipline. One driver of this dynamic is that when faced with a large class, teachers need to understand the dynamics of the class very quickly in order to keep control. Since the highest behavioural tariff pupils tended to also be boys whose clothing deviated from the uniform policy, teachers were more wary of pupils whose clothes were inappropriate for school relative to pupils who were immaculately turned out in full uniform. However, the disparity in teacher perception of pupils as a function of pupil clothing also recurred frequently. Informal, SES-laden judgements by teachers served to entrench social inequality and potentially legitimised existing pupil hierarchies with pernicious outcomes for those with lower SES.

Thus far, the analysis has hinged upon academic competency and the perceived link between lower SES and poorer academic performance. However, SES-related stereotypes were also observed related to morality. Institutional practices are not intended to be discriminatory to SES pupils, and where stigmatisation or discriminatory outcomes were observed, I assumed these to be unintended. Pupils of lower-SES are faced with a dilemma: fulfil the stereotyped negative archetype or reject it and engage with the institutional practices. Institutions map out the boundaries of 'good' or moral behaviour by specifying norms and standards (e.g, around uniform and behaviour in the case of a school). This creates a moral dimension to negative SES stereotypes as many of the poorer pupils were also those who were less well-equipped for school (for a full discussion see Chapter 3), and thus also transgressed against standards of 'good' behaviour. The moral

aspect of the stereotyping was subtly evident in teacher perceptions of boys: the smartest dressed were those chosen to be trusted with tasks, left alone in class etc. For girls, morality was linked to appearance but openly questioned by a guidance teacher during a conversation about pupil welfare:

> *Lily (who Mrs Brown - along with Layla - described as 'slutty') (09/12, S2)*

To refer to thirteen-year-old girls as 'slutty' was astonishing, especially for a guidance teacher tasked with pupil pastoral care. The presence of stereotype threat can negatively impact upon the ability of pupils to transcend their SES status expectations and perform highly (Croizet & Claire, 1998). The stereotype faced in this example, however, is not just a competence-based one focusing on academic performance: it involves questioning moral value. In addition to being considered less likely to do well, these girls were categorised as lacking 'decency', at least as defined in terms of sexual behaviour. As previous research has indicated, this impression allows archetypes to be created and roles offered for pupils to fill (Kearney & Levine, 2016). If there are existing negative or immoral stereotypes associated with low SES, it is perhaps surprising that pupils consistently fulfil the prevailing stereotypical attitudes (Emler & Reicher). That said, some pupils were able to exert agency over their outcomes irrespective of their SES or prevailing institutional stereotyping and the following case studies will demonstrate the different choices made by two pupils from similar SES backgrounds.

Social Class and Negotiating Social Value

To demonstrate that pupils from ostensibly the same underprivileged background could have differential outcomes, the following analysis will track the trajectory of two of

the pupils residing in the lower SES brackets: Charlie and Alfie. Both attended the same primary school and lived close to each other. They have older siblings and were the youngest of their families. Their families were also known to school staff, and the family history is less than positive in terms of school attendance, behaviour, and attainment. Furthermore, they had family members with a variety of issues and/or involvement with the police and social services. The analysis will demonstrate that despite these background commonalities, the outcomes for the boys were markedly different on several dimensions. Alfie transgressed expectations regarding 'good' behaviour at the school, and in doing so potentially confirmed stereotypes regarding outcomes for pupils from his background. In contrast, Charlie used creative social strategies to negotiate his way around his low SES background and his relatively low academic attainment, performing pro-social behaviours which brought social capital, accrued value and enabled him to 'fit in.'

Case Study 1 – Alfie. Alfie navigated the first few years of high school relatively successfully. He was known to present a significant behaviour challenge but always stopped short of being excluded for misbehaving.

> *Craig and Alfie continually insubordinate the teacher in minor ways and reinforce each other. The actively annoy and wind her up (01/12, S1)*

> *Alfie gets shouted at again "too much" but he only smiles and looks at me (01/12, S1)*

As highlighted in Chapter 3, Alfie was often involved in displacement of discipline. In this case, he was the most dominant boy in the class and Luke and Brian were chastised in lieu of Alfie:

Alfie still talks out but is often not chastised by the teacher who comes down hard on Luke and Brian for less. Next to nothing in fact (06/12, S2)

Alfie enjoyed a position of some notoriety and often was cheerful when being disciplined:

Eventually Alfie is thrown out, gives a thumbs up to Brian, Luke and Ethan as he leaves (06/12, S2)

Furthermore, and in stark contrast to Charlie's more compliant approach, Alfie enjoyed encouraging others to misbehave alongside him:

Craig, Alfie and Logan really play up and compared to the previous class, the difference is marked. Neither Craig nor Logan really spoke out or disrespected the previous teacher albeit Alfie wasn't in the class and he may be the source of a large part of the disruption" (01/12, S1)

Alfie and Craig throw pieces of rubber at each other. Craig relishes Alfie's attention, every outburst, singing, smart answers are all directed to Alfie and apparently for his benefit. Craig is constantly seeking approval from Alfie as the 'coolest' boy in class…He behaved markedly differently in Craft and Design when there was no approving audience for his misbehaviour (10/11, S1)

Charlie often tried to intervene in the face of Alfie's disruptive behaviour:

Tables are arranged so that some of the class sit with their back to Mr Francis. He asks Alfie to move to the end of the desk so that he doesn't have to turn his back. Rather than move his seat he turns around. Mr

Francis asks quietly to turn around and move the chair. Alfie says "I'm facing you," he is asked to move his chair again and Charlie says "Alfie – move your chair!" Alfie says nothing further and moves around quietly. Alfie continues to disrupt so is asked to leave the room. On his return he looks at Charlie and Craig for support perhaps. Neither recognise this nor acknowledge him at all. (01/12, S1)

Interestingly, Craig's behaviour towards Alfie changed when Charlie was present. Instead of abetting Alfie's disruption and apparently vicariously enjoying his notoriety, he was markedly more subdued and adopted a similarly compliant role when Charlie was present, given Charlie's consistent lack of recognition for misbehaviour. The positive, pro-social influence Charlie created is described in detail in Chapter 3, and this vignette provides further evidence of Charlie's socially creative approach to improve the status of his entire group. In this example, Charlie tries to derail Alfie's defiant behaviour and urge compliance, possibly because of how Alfie's behaviour could undermine a positive evaluation of the class as a whole.

Charlie also occasionally intervened as an intermediary when Alfie needed validation:

Alfie tells Mr Sullivan that Amber has taken his blutac. Asks him to help get it back. Tells Mr Sullivan that he needs it, it helps him to focus again. Charlie interjects again, positioning himself as an intermediary between pupils and teachers "he actual does need it Mr Sullivan" at this, Amber returns the blutac. Alfie says "it's ok, got it now" (11/14, S4)

Despite his poor behaviour at times, Alfie was intelligent and capable at English, Music and Drama in particular:

> *They then discuss the correct usage of 'their, there and they're' Alfie*
> *explains the distinction between all three. Brian challenges Ethan to spell*
> *a word… Ethan returns with 'toward' Alfie then spells*
> *"supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" I note how he enters into this*
> *competitive, achievement based discussion at his table. (03/13, S2)*

As he became a senior, Alfie became more disruptive and was socially dominant and forceful:

> *Teacher tells Alfie "take your hat off" "it's cauld" "it's not that cold"*
> *takes his hat off and Oscar throws it on the floor. Alfie throws Oscar's*
> *pencil on the floor then faces up to Oscar in a challenging sort of way.*
> *Oscar submits as I would expect and goes to pick up his pencil. "Don't*
> *you dare stand on my hat!" threatens Alfie (12/14, S4)*

In the following example, Alfie uses his dominant position to organise the class but does so in an opposing manner to Charlie's prosocial encouragements. Alfie relies upon intimidation and threat to manipulate others into doing his bidding and takes upon himself a role the teacher did not request, thereby actually undermining her rather than assisting her:

> *Alfie assumes an organisational role within the class and starts*
> *organising who should go to which practice room if they're not already*
> *settled. He then rounds up all the pupils from the practice rooms to*

attend the main class for register. This is not what he was asked to do,

the teacher simply wanted him to tell her who was present and who was

absent. She sends them back to where they were and he takes this

opportunity to dictate who should go where. His dominance and

potentially threatening presence is such that no one complains or

disagrees. Completely compliant and submissive to him (09/13, S3)

By fourth year (S4), Alfie also made obvious his drug use and referred to his paraphernalia and frequently references his experiences as a drug taker:

"Hey Murray – I'll come share a bong with you one day?" Murray

ignores him (01/12, S4)

Alfie asks Aaron if he can borrow Aaron's parka. Aaron refuses. Alfie

says "ok, well you can hold my tin" hands Aaron a tobacco tin and this

seems to persuade Aaron. Alfie puts the parka on and says "how much of

a drug dealer does this make me look?" asks for a photo to be taken to

check how it looks. "Aye, total" agrees Aaron "still cannae find ma

skins" he says. (11/14, S4)

Alfie talks about rolling joints and shouts "jabba" loudly over and over.

Surprisingly he settles to work quickly says "thought tunnel?" "What is

that?" looks at me and says "fuck" Oscar helps him. When he's on topic

he drops the 'persona' and he's intelligent and engaged but he seems to

need to project this 'gangsta' type Alfie. Perhaps acting really is his

strength? (01/15, S4)

Alfie's development over his school career seemed to fulfil the negative stereotypes which were associated with someone of his background. Drug use was not limited to Alfie; several pupils were caught in possession or under the influence of substances during my time in school. However, Alfie was the only pupil I witnessed who increasingly defined himself by his drug use over time. Leaving school with 2 National 5 qualifications was well below Alfie's potential but was consistent with a pupil from his SES background.

Outcomes: Alfie. Alfie fulfilled the negative stereotypes of a boy from a low SES background and failed to achieve academically to his earlier potential. If considered as a group, deprived pupils rarely achieve highly, and Alfie fell victim perhaps to the associations of his stigmatised group. Alfie did, however, take an individually creative approach by self-defining as a drug user and, potentially, an exemplar of the stereotype associated with his SES. Emler and Reicher (1995) categorise delinquent behaviour, like illegal drug use, as a "coherent choice" (1995, 9. 141) with a clearly-communicated and widely-understood function amongst peers. Alfie's apparent self-identification with a typical delinquent subtype of a drug taker was intentionally visible, signalling to those around him an identity which would have shared meaning for his intended audiences, including myself, that he was actively pursuing a behaviour which transgressed the moral standards of the school, positioning himself as one of the 'bad' pupils (Emler & Reicher, 1995).

Case Study 2 – Charlie. Charlie accumulated social capital throughout his school career, played for a school sports team, and was praised for his sporting attitude:

> *He tells Mrs Riley that he was named the most disciplined player but that*
> *he didn't really know what that meant? (01/15, S4)*

Charlie was always impeccably attired:

As ever, he is very smartly dressed. (08/12, S2)

Charlie wears his achievement tie and a cardigan. He's always really

smartly dressed. (06/13, S3)

Charlie's immaculate appearance for school was commented upon by teachers, particularly his elaborate hairstyle:

Teacher has a slightly surreal conversation with Charlie about his new

hairstyle. (09/12, S2)

Charlie sticks his pencil into his quiff "you'll no be getting a haircut"

she tells him, then tells me that the class are measuring the height of

Charlie's hair. "It's sitting at 4cm, we're measuring it." (01/14, S4)

Charlie's appearance served a specific social purpose. Firstly, Charlie is able to transcend negative expectations based upon his background and his social class by dressing as neatly as any of the most affluent pupils. Charlie lacked obvious designer labels and ostentation but his appearance allowed Charlie to present himself in a manner that fitted with the school's ethos of discipline and uniformity of appearance. Secondly, Charlie could positively distinguish himself from his peers; Alfie, for example, who was scruffily and very casually dressed for most of his school career.

In addition to his appearance and his sporting ability, Charlie had social skills which were highly developed from the outset of high school career and he was able to utilise those skills to gain leverage in lieu of academic performance:

Charlie sits at the front in this class next to Logan. I ask if he has been

naughty but Eve tells me that it is because he offered to help Logan as he

doesn't behave very well. (11/11, S1)

Miss Lucas explains "he's such a likeable boy" (11/12, S2)

At the end of the class I chat to the teacher, she tells me that she really

likes Charlie and finds him very capable (12/12, S2)

Charlie ingratiated himself with teachers, worked hard and deliberately sought to present himself smartly and in accordance with the school authority and discipline. His behaviour becomes more marked when it is considered that his parents did not attend parents evenings nor appeared to be particularly engaged with his schooling, something which Charlie himself highlights and jokes about, making light of the fact his parents did not attend the parent's evening the previous night:

Miss Lucas says how nice it was to meet "whoever is at home" for her

class. Charlie responds to this by commenting "my dog," "it's my dog

that's at home." everyone laughs. (03/13, S2)

Outcomes: Charlie. As the analysis in Chapter 3 highlighted, Charlie achieved remarkable success in school compared to his peers and demonstrated an ability to transcend the negative expectations associated with his low SES. These expectations relate both to academic competence, and to morality and the expectation of more 'bad' behaviour from low-SES pupils. Charlie, however, appears to escape these negative expectations by presenting himself as adhering to the school moral standards of 'good' behaviour whilst upholding institutional values such as uniform and co-operation. Charlie's success was in

part due to his motivation to present 'good' behaviour as defined by the school in the absence of competence as defined by academic ability and achievement. Instead, Charlie performed in a way which allowed him to claim social value and 'fit in' to the social class laden structure of the school institution.

Case Study Comparison: The Socio-Economic Game

Building upon the analysis of Chapter 3, both Alfie and Charlie demonstrate hybrid strategies. Alfie sought respect by portraying himself as edgy and tough. In contrast, Charlie pursued institution-defined values of respectability and 'good' behaviour. What both strategies had in common was to claim social value on alternative dimensions to academic achievement. The disparity was the extent to which each pupil identified with the opportunities presented by the institution. Charlie claimed positive social value by following school norms of behaviour and Alfie rejected the school norms in favour of peer recognition from a specific and similarly non-normative audience. Charlie's impeccable appearance and willingness to help characterised him as a model pupil and set him apart from many of the other pupils in the lower SES group whilst comparing favourably to pupils in the higher SES groups. Alfie, on the other hand, appeared to identify more strongly with his low SES group membership and created distinctiveness for himself compared to others *within* the group.

Relating specifically to their SES, the comparison between Alfie and Charlie is not only about their individual responses to the stratification of the institution or their creative claims for social value, but also lays bare a dilemma which is likely to be faced by other pupils from lower-SES backgrounds. If institutions uphold negative expectations about lower SES pupils in terms of their morality and their intention to behave 'well', these

pupils are faced with a choice between fulfilling those expectations by displaying visible delinquent traits (as Alfie demonstrated) or to subvert those expectations as Charlie did, utilising them instead to lay claim to social value and positive recognition for 'good' behaviour and institutionally-recognised moral standards (Emler & Reicher, 1995). Crucially, the intersection of the institution and social class or SES creates this dilemma which is enacted through specific policies and practices which target the less well off; the provision of materials and uniform policy to name but two.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the extent to which institutional practices can interact with social class to shape school life for pupils. In this cohort, the sharp differences in SES were associated with differing outcomes for pupils, to the extent that each of the lowest SES pupils left the cohort early, except Charlie. The particular demographic within the school for this cohort is likely to have negatively impacted upon their educational attainments by creating opportunities for negative social comparisons which highlight the differences in SES, parental education levels and educational engagement (Goudeau and Croizet, 2017). Institutions can collaboratively reinforce inequality and entrench many of the most vulnerable pupils into fulfilling negative stereotyped outcomes not only in terms of competency but also in terms of morality and institutionally defined 'good' behaviour such as the characterisation of the lowest SES girls as 'slutty' for example.

The stigmatising effect policies and practices such as confining those who have free school meals to school grounds, and disciplining those who were unprepared for school, are all most likely to affect the pupils who are least well off. Institutions can and do unintentionally penalise pupils who are already underprivileged.

The inequality of low income pupils is relatively under-researched. Prominent social psychological theories tend to focus upon group divisions which are more readily definable; gender and race in particular. In addition to bearing a stereotype load concerning a lack of competence, low SES pupils were also subjected to a morality-based stereotype load, related to their appearance, their behaviour and their assumed sense of decency. This is important in view of recent findings that groups prefer to be considered moral as opposed to warm or competent (Brambilla & Leach, 2014). In the present case, pupils from low-income families could be precluded from claims to group-based morality if teachers made value judgments which indicate that those pupils lacked decency, were not to be trusted with errands, were more likely to behave badly, and were more deserving of punishment.

For those lacking affluence, school can be a hostile environment, but SES is not necessarily deterministic and social mobility is possible for those with relevant, culturally-defined social capital. By presenting himself as smartly dressed and pro social, however, Charlie manged to abjure the negative expectations determined by SES and family reputation, and carved a niche for himself within the school gaining favour and popularity with pupils and staff alike. Alfie by contrast embodied archetypally low expectations for his social class and adopted a gangster-type persona in classes, including signalling frequent drug use.

In terms of limitations, this chapter has been limited to behavioural observations which have been analysed in functional terms. As noted in Chapter 3, pupil beliefs about class status and group memberships are thus inferred from detailed observations and not from direct access to self-reported psychological processes. Similarly, observations about

social class and SES are gleaned from postcode indicators and not from detailed

information about specific household incomes.

The analysis could be extended in future research by modifying the stereotype

threat experiments to include moral dimensions analogous to the experiments examining

the stereotype load of social class based competence. For example, making salient the

class-based moral judgements relative to gender. Thus, for girls, reference to the likelihood

for teenage pregnancy in lower SES cohorts could be highlighted whereas for boys, their

increased tendency to delinquent or criminal acts could be emphasised.

Finally, in common with Chapter 3, the majority of the analysis has focussed upon

boys. This bias is simply due to the fact that boys typically presented far more data in terms

of observable behaviour than girls. The following chapter will address this bias by bringing

gender into the analysis, focusing on how gender can be a stratifying category creating

further inequality and highlighting the role of the institution in creating gender based

expectations in certain subjects such as Maths and Science.

CHAPTER 5

GENDER INEQUALITY

This chapter will focus upon gender as an organising category in the school. Gender in this chapter is de facto treated as binary, based on how it was expressed and acted upon by pupils and teachers. Whilst remaining sensitive to the distinct differences between gender and sex, both terms will be used interchangeably throughout the chapter to denote the outward expression of gender by pupils and the binary distinctions of male and female which are referred to by teachers.

This chapter will examine the manner in which gender was performed by students, the behavioural differences between genders and, importantly, the interplay between gender and the institution. Critically, this chapter will demonstrate that school can be a highly-gendered environment with ramifications for both sexes, and that teachers and classroom practices can underscore societal prejudices towards women in technical, scientific and mathematical subjects in particular. In doing so, this chapter will present a unique contribution to our understanding of the current under-representation of girls within STEM subjects, indicating the complicity of the institution in the persistence of systemic sexist attitudes and how this can create difficult and potentially demeaning experiences for highly-competent girls.

This introduction will briefly highlight global gender inequality and examine the representation of women pursuing Scientific and Mathematic subjects in Higher education

before moving to consider gender based expectations in secondary education and the

limitations boys and girls can experience due to these expectations. Theoretically, this

chapter will consider stereotype threat (see also stereotype threat discussions in Chapters 3

& 4) and the phenomenon of Queen Bee Syndrome to demonstrate how gender based

expectations can be institutionally recapitulated.

Background: Gender Inequality, Education, and Achievement

Gender inequality worldwide is encapsulated within the comprehensive Global

Gender Gap Report (Schwab et al., 2016), which opens with the observation that the Fourth

Industrial Revolution is based upon technology and talent; yet women, who comprise half

of the world's talent, are not nearly fully assimilated into economic development or

technological advances. Furthermore, women are still not equally accessing opportunities

for health and education and they are critically underrepresented in the spheres of business

and industry (Ryan & Haslam, 2007; Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2010) and politics

worldwide (Schwab et al., 2016). Although access to education has improved for women

globally, the improvement has not translated to comparable increases in salary potential

and the gender pay gap remains resistant to closure (Jacobs, 1996; Schwab et al., 2016). If

current trends continue, closing the gender equality gap in Western European countries is

estimated to take 47 years (Schwab et al., 2016). The estimated average annual income of

women in the United Kingdom is £21,898 which is just over half of the male estimated

income of £40, 769 (Schwab et al., 2016). Social prejudice towards the ability and

suitability of women to hold high-level careers results in both the glass ceiling

phenomenon, and the glass cliff phenomenon which describes the promotion of women to

precarious positions of power and responsibility in failing companies (Ryan & Haslam,

2005; Haslam & Ryan, 2008). Each phenomenon results in educated and qualified women experiencing employment-related gender discrimination.

Referring again to the Global Gender Gap report (Schwab et al., 2016), the United Kingdom ranks 20th out of 144 countries for gender equality overall but only 53rd for female economic participation and 34th for female educational attainment. The results of the report are important in highlighting that gender disparity is impacting directly on the abilities of girls to access the same opportunities as their male peers. Specifically, in the context of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths, the industries which are driving technological advances and shaping the future, female graduates are outnumbered by men with 37% of male graduates qualifying with STEM degrees compared to 16% of female graduates (Schwab et al., 2016). This disparity is despite 64 female undergraduate candidates for every 49 male candidates. Given that STEM subject skills are likely to be those most in demand, and commanding the highest salaries, it is important to understand why women are more likely to go to university yet less likely to graduate with a STEM degree.

Gendered Institutions

One arena which may influence pupils' choice of university degree and career is their earlier learning environments. During their high school years, pupils develop their sexual and gender identities (Adler et al., 1992; Udry, Talbert & Morris, 1986; Feltey, Ainslie & Gibb, 1991). Part of learning how to be male or female is conducted within the institutional setting of school, which can often be a stereotypically gendered environment with many teachers fitting gender stereotype-consistent roles (Kehler, 2007). There were no male Home Economics teachers in the school that was the site for this research, for

example, and only one female Technology teacher (see also Adler et al., 1992; Crocco, 2001; Anderman, 2010). Studies of high school life in the US by Feltey et al. (1991) demonstrate that schools can also be an environment of male dominance which can lead to intimidation and harassment of girls, fostering a propensity for sexual aggression and gender violence (Klein, 2016; Murnen, Wright & Kaluzny, 2002). Masculine environments can be equally toxic for adolescent boys, with aggression, defiance, and physical strength being socially accepted and desirable traits (Pellegrini & Long, 2002; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Klein, 2016).

Expectations about gender-appropriate roles can be detrimental to both boys and girls, with the potential to negatively impact upon their psychological development (Kettley, 2006). For girls, identifying strongly with accepted norms of femininity can lead to the development of passivity and preoccupation with their attractiveness, and to eschewing independence and autonomy (Crocco, 2001; See also Chan, Tufte, Cappello & Williams, 2011 for further gender identity discussion). Ringrose, Harvey, Gill, and Livingstone (2013) note that engagement with readily-available, socially-constructed roles can have further deleterious effects when they are sexualised. For example, sexual iniquities and double standards are evident in increasing 'sexting' amongst teens: Boys elicit (sometimes coercively) naked pictures of girls to bolster their own social value, while girls tend to subsequently absorb the shame and blame for the existence of the image, and their own social value reduces alongside insults such as 'slut' or 'slag' (Ringrose et al., 2013).

Schmalz and Kerstetter (2006) found that sports in school also echo gender stereotypes of "girlie girls and manly men" (p. 536), with children as young as eight having

rigid ideas about which sports boys and girls are 'supposed' to play. Encouragingly, the study did also note that the number of sports ascribed by the children as being gender specific had reduced from previous work on sport and dance as significant forms of human behaviour by Metheny (1965). Nevertheless, sex-stereotypical beliefs prevailed. Most boys refused to acknowledge male participation in 'feminine' pursuits such as ballet whilst favouring 'masculine' activities such as football or wrestling (Schmalz & Kerstetter, 2006). The patterning was more diverse for gender-neutral sports such as volleyball or bicycling, but sports and leisure pursuits elicited clear gender-biased attitudes from the children (see also Blakemore, 2003), and can lead to reduced peer acceptance and negative self-evaluations for pupils who 'transgress' accepted social norms (Daniels & Leaper, 2006). Additionally, there were significant stigmas associated with transgressing sex-specific sport beliefs. Boys who participated in sports perceived as 'female' were characterised as "gay" while girls participating in traditionally masculine sports were stigmatised as "lesbians" (Schmalz & Kerstetter, 2006, p. 552).

Adolescents' gender identity thus develops within the institutional structure of school which can be saturated with peer-driven, socially-performed sex-stereotypical beliefs, roles, and stigma among pupils (Feltey et al., 1991). In turn, school as an institution can itself also be imbued with persistent sexist ideologies and inequalities. Unconscious bias and unchallenged gender stereotypes were cited, for example, by the Institute for Physics' recent Gender Balance Report as areas which must be addressed to increase the critically-low representation of girls studying physics (Institute of Physics, 2017; Daniels & Leaper, 2006).

Classroom-level dynamics are likely to be important in shaping gender relations too. Chapters 3 and 4 have highlighted pervasive classroom hierarchies based on academic performance and social class respectively. Other research has shown gender to be a similarly pernicious organising category, with male power hierarchies evident in research conducted at primary school level (Pellegrini & Long, 2002; Reay, 2006). Boys, throughout their schooling, tend to be more noticeable in the classroom, more voluble, and interact more with their teachers, which increases their likelihood of receiving more positive or negative evaluations. Girls tend to be quieter and more passive, despite also being often more capable, as evidenced by girls' achievement levels rising faster than those of boys in the UK over the last 20 years (Sukhnandan, 1999). Girls typically score highly in STEM subjects, but many girls also express lower levels of perceived mathematical competence and motivation than their male peers (Frome, Alfeld, Eccles & Barber, 2006; Preckel, Goetz, Pekrun & Kleine, 2008). Current research does not determine exactly why this phenomenon exists, nor are there compelling or definitive reasons why there is an educational 'leaky pipeline' (Oakes, 1990, p.161; Frome, Alfeld et al., 2006) from STEM subjects up to and including higher education institutions. Girls are consistently 'leaking' from STEM subjects despite girls performing at least as well as boys within traditionally 'male' subjects such as Engineering when they do choose those subjects.

Stereotype Threat and Girls' Maths Performance

The conundrum of the 'leaky pipeline' from higher education has led researchers to investigate the reasons why women are not pursuing the STEM careers to which they appear academically suited. Preckel and colleagues (2008) explored boys' and girls' attitudes towards their learning and self-efficacy within STEM subjects. They found that

whilst girls typically held lower levels of academic self-concept, interest, and motivation than boys, the effect was more marked if both genders of pupils were classed as gifted as opposed to ordinary scholars. In other words, the more intelligent and academically-gifted the pupils were, the more likely it was that girls held increased self-doubt about their performance in comparison to their similar-ability male peers. Whilst schools may attempt or intend to create gender neutral education, boys and girls do not necessarily have the same classroom experiences, and this can be more pronounced within STEM subject classrooms (Oakes, 1990; Spencer, Steele & Quinn, 1999). As noted above, boys typically present more dominant behaviours in classrooms. However, it is also likely that prominent gender stereotypes surround STEM subjects in particular and gender expectations about performance relative to gender prevail (Spencer et al., 1999). Girls still risk being negatively judged in certain domains only because negative stereotypes exist which are associated with their gender category (Croizet & Claire, 1998; Krueger, Hasman, Acevedo & Villano, 2003).

Girls in high school pursuing STEM subjects face similar negative stereotypes which do not have to be enacted to be pervasive (Jost & Kay, 2005). In terms of how negative stereotypes shape performance, research on stereotype threat theory (as previously shown in Chapters 3 and 4), has shown that making salient a marginalised group identity can lead to decreased performance on tasks that are seen as diagnostic of ability on the stereotyped domain (Steele, 1997). Spencer, Steele, and Quinn (1999) tested their hypothesis that stereotype threat for women would increase as the complexity and/or difficulty of the test increases. Their findings suggest that when gender is made salient, and the test is advanced in difficulty, women do experience greater levels of stereotype threat

than if the test is simpler, which impacts negatively upon their performance in the harder test (Spencer et al., 1999).

If stereotype threat combined with reduced belief in efficacy impacts negatively upon a capable girls' ability to perform well in class, the pupil is likely also to reduce their evaluation of the importance of the subject in order to protect their self-esteem (See Chapter 3 for a full discussion of this identity protecting strategy). Adopting a social identity approach to stereotype threat, Schmader (2002) also found that the more highly a woman identified with her gender, the worse their performance became on a Maths test when their gender was made salient compared to women with lower levels of gender identity who performed analogously to men on the same Maths test. Johns, Schmader, and Martens (2005) then tested if knowledge of stereotype threat could mitigate against its effects in a standard stereotype threat paradigm as discussed above. They found that knowledge of the phenomenon could eradicate the negative effect entirely. In other words, undermining the stereotype that women are not good at maths is sufficient to restore women's confidence in their own ability and produce results equable to those produced in controls with no gender salience or stereotype threat condition (Johns et al., 2005). It is also the case that girls who do persist in STEM subjects despite the socio-structural stereotype barriers described above do tend to achieve highly ("Mainstreaming Equalities", 2016). The analysis contained in this chapter will demonstrate vividly how gender stereotyping occurs in classrooms and will provide detailed examples of gender based barriers girls can face in STEM subjects.

'Queen Bee' Syndrome and the Role of Women in High-Status Positions

The gender stereotypes which surround adolescent girls reproduce constructs of women as fulfilling traditional female roles within society and avoiding male dominated subjects such as Maths (Krueger et al., 2003). The existence of positive female role models, however, may conceivably ameliorate the pernicious effects of gender stereotyping. Female STEM teachers could be argued to epitomise positive and successful role models contradicting negative or stigmatised gender-based identities (see Ellemers, van den Heuvel, de Gilder, Maass & Bonvini, 2004). Female teachers who have succeeded in the 'male' domain to teach Science or Maths could be perceived to be positive role models for girls aspiring to pursue STEM subjects during their further education careers. STEM departments, however, are often run by men, and head teachers in Scotland are five times more likely to be male than female ("Gender balance of the teaching workforce in Scotland", 2005). According to Derks, Ellemers, van Laar, and de Groot (2011), this can create a masculinised social structure where typically male characteristics can be valued over those typically ascribed to women (see also Derks, van Laar, & Ellemers, 2016). Women who succeed within these masculine-orientated organisational structures are more likely to identify with a masculine style of working (Ryan & Haslam, 2005) and are also more likely to actively discriminate against women in junior positions (Camussi & Leccardi, 2005). The phenomenon of female-on-female misogyny in this context is referred to as 'Queen Bee' syndrome or behaviour (Ellemers et al., 2004). The analysis below will, therefore, address the possibility that female STEM teachers can either help to challenge stereotypes by becoming powerful and positive role models or they could reinforce STEM subject gender stereotypes indicating Queen Bee Syndrome.

Chapter Aims

While sexism and gender-based stereotypes are well documented in research in several different fields, what is missing is an in-depth account of gender inequality played out over time within a structured institution such as a school. Very little is known about how gender inequality specifically functions in the classroom, and the present study's ethnographic approach offers a unique insight into the daily interactions in which gender is made salient. It provides a holistic account of dynamic gender relations within a naturalistic social setting, unfolding over time. The method also highlights micro interactions within which extremely capable female pupils can be humiliated and devalued by both peers and, on occasion, by their female teacher. These key moments in the experience of girls within STEM subjects potentially offers a unique contribution to understanding the conundrum of the 'leaky pipeline'.

The analysis will commence by focusing upon the pervasiveness of gender-based dynamics in daily school life. The performance of gender and gender-based hierarches will be discussed and the analysis will highlight key differences in the ways that boys and girls demonstrate inclusivity and belonging. The analysis will then move on to examine the costs to some girls of belonging to high-status group memberships based on popularity, before considering the prevalence of male dominance behaviours and physical power imbalances between boys and girls in the classroom to the detriment of female pupils.

Whilst pupils spontaneously behaved in terms of gender categories, they also did so within the parameters set proximally in their classrooms and also distally by the school as an institution. The role of teachers in 'gendering' their classrooms by providing frames within which gender stereotyping can persist will be followed by an analysis of teacher-led

gender expectations. The final aspect of the analysis will weave together the previous analyses and present specific examples of micro-interactions within STEM classrooms to offer a unique illustration of the social difficulties faced by clever, aspirational young women who are successful in the STEM field.

Analysis and Results

The analysis for this chapter focussed upon two levels of gender-based interactions: power relations encompassing relations between pupils and the interaction between pupils and the institution. Specifically the extent to which teachers contributed to and sustained gender-based differences between pupils such as gendering classroom activities or failing to address misogyny as it occurred. Table 7 below provides the codes which were identified and form the basis for this chapter. Gender power relations are peer on peer codes and the second coding category is concerned with teacher/pupil dynamics and dialogue. Misogyny and sexism feature in both categories, however, blatant sexism by teachers was rare whereas sex-stereotypical beliefs were more common.

Table 7

Gender Code Frequency

Code and Example Location	Frequency
Gender Power Relations[8]	
Belonging relating to gendered group-based behaviour (p. 155)	24
Non- physical dominance and submission (p. 176)	44
Misogyny defined as a dislike of, contempt for, or discriminatory behaviour against women. (p. 177)	13
Overt Sexism, sexism defined as classifying pupils or stereotyping by their gender or displaying gender-based prejudice (p. 169)	15
Physical dominance (p. 162)	10
Silent, collaborative gender structuring such as spontaneous organisation by gender (p. 164)	12
Spatial arrangements denoted by physical positioning (p. 168)	30
	148
Teachers Accommodating Gender Difference	
Allowing overtly sexist comments to pass unaddressed (p. 174)	17
Banter defined as jocular behaviour intended to be informal (p. 173)	8
Gender based competition (p.171)	11
Patronising sexism (p. 173)	5
Positioning (p. 164)	6
Sex stereotypical beliefs (p. 172)	19
	66

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[8] The code of *gender power relations* depicted in Table 1 was sub divided into the codes detailed above*; physical dominance, silent collaborative gender structuring* and *spatial arrangements*. Similarly, *teachers accommodating gender difference* was expanded to include *gender- based competition*. Expanding and dividing these codes during the analysis phase allowed for more nuanced analyses of the social dynamics of gender.

It is important to reiterate that while sex is commonly referred to as biological and gender as a social construct, both terms will be used interchangeably in this chapter (Gilbert, 2002; Schmalz & Kerstetter). Whilst many colloquial reports reached me of pupils identifying with a variety of different sexual identities, I was never made aware of any pupils in this cohort who openly identified with a gender different to their birth-assigned gender; however, it is entirely possible that this was the case.

Gender Hierarchies and Group Memberships

Throughout the analysis, boys feature much more prominently than girls. Reay (2006) notes that girls tend to be diligent and relatively passive in class with a generally compliant approach to learning. Whilst there are fewer direct observations of girls, they were far from silent. Girls used body language and their appearance communicatively. Their gendering, competitiveness and inclusion habits were often non-verbal and very subtle, and therefore more difficult to observe (a detailed description of girls' use of clothing and appearance for example, is reported in Chapter 4).

Gender hierarchies were observed with boys and girls placing social value upon different organising dimensions such as sports played for boys or accessories displayed for girls. 'Belonging' in this context is defined by associating with or appearing to be accepted or to seek acceptance with a particular group or identifying with a particular style of dress (Ellemers, et al., 2002). There were 23 codes associated with belonging to a specific group with significant differences surrounding how boys and girls 'do belonging' within a given group. For example, on the first day at school, many teachers asked pupils for their interests:

> *Asked kids about hobbies and only football got a cheer. First four boys*
>
> *then copied 'football' but cheers weren't forthcoming. (08/11, S1)*

Interestingly, it was Charlie who received the initial cheer, his popularity evident from their first day. The girls responded differently and were less likely to claim the same interests as each other:

> *Girls were more varied and received less recognition from their peers.*
>
> *(08/11, S1)*

> *First four boys said they played football but girls again were more*
>
> *independent (08/11, S1)*

This pattern continued throughout their first day with changing class compositions and environments. Girls were rarely recognised by their peers for their interests but boys typically received recognition. The same pattern of boys' general consensus of choice and girls' variety of choice was observed when there was a free choice of drawing materials in an Art class:

> *The first four boys all pick the same shade of green but the girls are more*
>
> *varied and pick different colours. (08/11, S1)*

> *Lucas picks red and points out that all the other boys at his table have*
>
> *picked the same colour and ends the statement with "awkward" (08/11,*
>
> *S1)*

Girls did not demonstrate many similar preferences but seemed to pick items which they either liked or possibly chose indiscriminately. Girls did discuss ideas more, or shared ideas in a way that boys weren't observed doing:

> *Class work quietly on their own individual evaluations of the morning's*
> *debates. I notice…that girls are far more likely to collaborate their*
> *answers with each other than the boys. I wonder if this is reassurance, if*
> *they perhaps lack confidence or if they prefer to talk over their thoughts*
> *to arrive at consensual outcomes. Perhaps they value their own opinion*
> *less than the boys do? (03/13, S2)*

Upon reflection, however, it struck me that the girls were typically co-operative and consensus-based in interaction with each other, whereas boys tended to lack these positive, pro-social behaviours or were perhaps yet to fully develop them. This exemplifies the benefit of 'in the moment' observations compared with subsequent reflections. At the time I wondered if girls lacked confidence but, with reflection, it is perhaps more likely to be indicative of girls' attitude to co-operation and mutual benefit than the boys more individualistic approaches. Girls tended to have a diligent approach to their work and often sought co-operation from each other, the latter point of which is analysed in the following 'paradox of popularity' section.

Girls appeared to use physical intimacy more often in the first few weeks of school than they did subsequently:

> *Mia, Sophie and Layla carry on a low level chat throughout the entire*
> *class. The girls seem to bond very quickly and intensely. They giggle*

gossip and hug each other a lot. They draw on each other and write their

names and love hearts on each other's hands (09/11, S1)

In contrast, boys tended to group together around mutual interests like gaming or shared preferences like football whereas girls tended to group together by appearance. The act of dressing the same as another person or wearing identical hairstyles does not necessarily denote belonging but the girls who tended to look similar also grouped together very closely:

I notice as I take note of the appearance of the girls that Catriona has

grown her hair, dyed it a bit darker and is wearing it identically to

Charlotte. Same bun, same colour, same position, same grips and slides

(01/13, S2)

Over time, I became increasingly aware of how pupils achieved social value amongst their peers. As already noted in Chapter 3, sporting ability, particularly football, was often indicative of popularity amongst boys but not generally amongst girls despite many girls being highly skilled at sports and some playing football at an accomplished, and even national, level:

It occurs to me when thinking about achievement badges and ties and

that social popularity is possibly considered an achievement in itself. The

'pretty/popular' girls like Charlotte and Emma don't attend any clubs

and have no achievement badges or ties. Most clubs meet at lunch time

and it occurs to me that their popularity is maintained at social meeting

times like break and lunch when the clubs meet. The 'popular' boys like

Charlie and Finlay do play sport and attend clubs…Football is much

higher in value than say netball and it doesn't carry the same cachet or

importance as football. Finlay also plays rugby for the school but his

football badge is always worn at the top of his tie with the rugby badge

right underneath, this could of course, be completely coincidental. The

'misfit' boys like Jacob, William and Lucas don't attend sports clubs

although Lucas does do a fitness club. They all attend the Science club

but there are no badges for that club. (02/12, S1)

The institution echoed the value of sport by awarding achievement ties and badges for certain sporting success and for participation, but not all activities were recognised equally. There are other extra-curricular clubs within the school; Science, chess and Rubik's Cube clubs to name a few, but these were not institutionally recognised in the same way as football or athletics, for example. Thus, the school demarcates the activities which will be rewarded and recognised and creates a hierarchy of social value for various activities, favouring sport which is more likely to create rewards for boys given that boys were more likely to be involved in sport than girls.

Often echoing the institutional reward system for achievement, pupils self-divided into various hierarchies and social groups. I realised that, as an observer, I was doing the same thing: categorising the girls by appearance and the boys by interest or ability. The following example was during an English class where I noted the groups that pupils had organised themselves into:

The class splits into self-chosen groups. I try to categorise them:

Alternative girls: Aimee, Amelia, Rebecca,

Pretty, popular girls: Emma, Charlotte

Geeky boys: Lucas U, Jacob & Thomas

Clever/sporty: Angus, Luke, George & Callum

Dominant: Max, Brian, Finlay, Steven, Oscar & Leo

Misfit: Dylan, Ciaron, Lucas C, Toby

Noah prefers to work alone (02/12, S1)

According to objectification theory (Frederickson & Roberts, 1997), women are more likely to be socially valued for their appearance than men, facilitating objectification. Furthermore, appearance focus can reduce expectations of the objectified woman's competence, warmth, and morality (Heflick, Goldenberg, Cooper, & Puvia, 2011). The same does not hold true for men who can be perceived as being both competent and attractive (Heflick & Goldenberg, 2009). Perceiving girls in terms of their appearance and boys in terms of their abilities is such a pervasive frame that I was myself guilty of recording it during my observations. However, this realisation does not negate the fact that the categories I identified were also the most salient organising categories which each group shared, rather than simply being an artefact of my own assumptions. It was my readiness to use those categories, rather than the use of the categories per se, that I reviewed in retrospect. It was still the case that pupils aggregated around different shared characteristics so that the salient commonalities for girls were in how they presented

themselves, while boys, who were more homogenous in appearance in general, were differentiated by ability and activity.

The Paradox of Popularity for Girls

Whilst belonging to a group is often protective (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Crocker & Major, 1989), for girls in the present study these groupings also sometimes carried costs. In the cohort studied there was a group of particularly high-status boys (HSB) and an associated group of girls referred to in Chapter 4 as the 'satellite girls' (SG). These girls allowed the boys in their group significant control over how they spent their social time. Most of the socialising between the two groups was carried out in free time; however, an interview with a Depute Rector highlighted how the groups functioned socially from her perspective. The following is a summary of our discussion:

> *Interview with Ms Bute: She was unaware of any expressed interests of the girls, of any shared hobbies or activities. As the pupils have matured, the group of very fashionable and styled high-status girls tended to attach themselves to the high-status group of boys but this was a very unequal partnership with the girl group functioning as 'satellites' of the boy group. The girls would wait for the boys at lunch and home times and they would leave together but if the boy group was complete, they would leave irrespective of whether the girl group was ready to leave or not. The identity of this girl group was defined by their adherence and association with the boy group and not by any distinguishing features other than their highly similar appearance, clothing and accessories. (02/14, S3)*

Furthermore, there were distinct costs to belonging to this group. The SG were occasionally very badly treated by some of the boy group, and there are various examples of physical dominance in the following analyses, see 'gender power relations' below for example. I was also occasionally aware of discussions of sexual activity at weekend parties as the pupils matured. Typically this involved boys' depictions of sexual acts with girls and various references to photographs or videos which boys shared. During these discussions the girls concerned were sometimes commodified or objectified as recipients of an act rather than as active participants. It is entirely possible, however, that much of this was the boys' bravado, potentially for my benefit as some sort of 'shock value' and not necessarily a true reflection of the events. Nevertheless, the manner of the discussions was inherently sexist and demeaning despite any doubts about the veracity of the accounts. Despite various interventions by parents, the school, and other authorities, one girl, however, chose belonging as an adjunct to the HSB group despite abusive behaviour towards her which the adult factions mentioned above wished to be pursued further with various authorities.

This pattern of behaviour, of belonging and the particular costs of being in a popular group of girls, was only witnessed in the very high status (i.e., popular) pupils. The elevated status of the SG and HSB groups is only relevant as a relative comparison with the wider school body.   There was a male-centric power dynamic observed between these high status groups which seemed to be a function of their popularity. Other groups functioned much more consensually and equally and girls in other groups were not observed being as apparently accepting of negative behaviour from boys, nor were boys in general either abusive or misogynistic towards girls. Further incidents of misogyny and physicality towards the SG will be included in the following analysis of gendered power relations.

Gendered Power Relations

There were 44 codes relating to gendered power imbalances between pupils. Most classes were dominated by the boys who were typically louder, more disruptive, and more controlling of class dynamics than were the girls. Often, the gendered power imbalances were manifested verbally but sometimes also physically in ways which were difficult to watch as an observer. The physical assertion of power became more noticeable as the pupils grew older. By fourth year, many of the boys resembled men in their stature and used this to their advantage by dominating girls who were typically much smaller. The following examples are between members of the HSB and the SG:

> *I notice Cameron and Aiden 'manhandle' Sophie a great deal. Cameron*
>
> *puts his hand on the back of her neck pushing her onto the table and*
>
> *Aiden tries to pull her out of her seat, shakes her arm etc. They squeeze*
>
> *and pull at her I count at least seven times, tickling her etc. she solicits*
>
> *no attention from them. Aiden shakes her arm again, trying to lever her*
>
> *out of her seat, she is very slightly built and cries out twice. They do stop,*
>
> *but start again almost right away. She asks them to leave her alone. They*
>
> *don't. The period draws to a close and they have to return to their seats.*
>
> *(03/14, S3)*

On another day in the same class:

> *Aiden is wearing Sophie W's necklace. He reached behind her neck,*
>
> *unfastened it, put it on and resisted her trying to get it back. He goes*

round the class with it on making gangster rap type poses and signs,

swaggering. (03/14, S3)

Sophie does try to retaliate as her necklace is taken but Aiden is too tall and she can't reach. The girls are relatively helpless in these interactions. The boys are considerably larger and recourse to the teacher to intervene would risk their status within the group.

Boys occasionally displaced power imbalances with other boys onto girls. Aiden is again featured in the following example where he is physically 'beaten' by a stronger boy and subsequently physically intimidates a girl:

Kerr challenges Aiden McB to an arm wrestle. Kerr beats him easily.

"ahhh but I was joking" Aiden says so they do it again, with the same

result. "ahhh but I wasn't ready." So Kerr checks he's ready and they

wrestle and again, Kerr beats him very easily. He wrenches Aiden's arm

to the desk. Aiden smiles wryly and rubs his arm. Misha and Sammi are

watching the boys wrestling but are fairly disinterested and turn back to

their computers disinterestedly. As they turn, Aiden grabs Sammi's

ponytail, yanks her head back and holds it there. No one says anything.

He holds her still and then lets her go. He then hits Kerr sort of playfully

with his folder before getting back to his task. Aiden then pulls Sammi's

hair bobble out and pings it across the class. A good five minutes later

and Sammi is still re arranging her hair (05/14, S3)

Girls do assert themselves against the unwanted attention of the boys but these occasions were rare:

> *Angus and Brian compete for Molly's attention. She is scathing in*
>
> *response. Assumes a superior attitude to them (09/13, S3)*

Girls could also adopt a submissive role and strategically play up to stereotypical weakness:

> *George E and Casey pair up at the very back of the class, Riley joins*
>
> *them, tries to get Sophie McI's attention, Sophie joins them, claims she*
>
> *can't lift her chair over the table to take the space at the back beside*
>
> *George. George and Casey shake their heads; George says "how can*
>
> *you not?" George lifts it over for her, she plays with her hair. (01/14, S3)*

A subtle but nonetheless striking example of how pervasive gender power imbalances were was exemplified by an episode in a mixed performance (i.e., non-streamed) Biology class. The demonstration started with the pupils standing in a semi-circle facing the microscope which was at the back of the classroom, but the pupils then organised access to a microscope along strictly gendered lines, without any obvious attempt to do so:

> *Mr Lock gives a demo of how to obtain cheek cells. The group are then*
>
> *invited to look at the cells under the microscope. Charlie is closest and*
>
> *goes first, then George E who is situated half way along the arc having*
>
> *been separated from Charlie previously. All the boys then go to the*
>
> *microscope except Connor who goes back to his seat. Once all the boys*
>
> *but Dylan have been only then do the girls filter forward. Dylan is*
>
> *friends with Amelia and once it's her turn, he goes in front of her. Once*

the girls have finished, Connor then approaches and has his look. A

powerful demonstration of power, status, dominance and hierarchy. Why

did all the girls let all the boys go first? They were not standing in that

order. (06/13, S3)

This was an extraordinary episode to witness. The girls were entirely compliant and allowed the boys to take their turns first. It would have been expected that the pupils would simply file to look at the slide starting with those closest and then moving in sequence. This did not happen; instead, there appeared to be a laboured and strictly gender-based process behind the order in which pupils looked at the microscope slide. This episode demonstrates that gender-based hierarchies were sometimes silently collaborative. It was relatively rare to have a scenario in which pupils had to take turns to do something one at a time, but the order of which was spontaneous. Partly for this reason, the above example was the only one of its type observed. Interestingly, two of the lowest-status and least popular boys opted out of taking a turn with Connor sitting down and opting out of the sequence entirely. This vignette provides a powerful example of how gender hierarchies could be at play within STEM classes but without any apparent, explicit encouragement. There was no impetus within the class itself for the behaviour witnessed, and the pupils did not restrict themselves to friendship groups either. Instead, the only organising principles that I could determine at play were popularity status and gender.

This episode occurred during one of the first classes of National 5 Biology. There was insufficient time for pupils to have developed a performance hierarchy within the class as detailed in Chapter 3. The pupils had two years of Science teaching prior to their specific Science subject selections and perhaps social norms were developed throughout

that time period, although it was not evident in the data. It was therefore especially striking that, in one of the first science classes of the new exam structured subjects, pupils behaved in this strikingly gender-organised manner.

In the previous example the girls allowed the boys to go to the microscope first without challenge. No words were spoken throughout the episode. In other instances, the overruling of girls by boys was much more overt. In the following example in a low set French class, Sammi was the only girl among a group of boys, and initially interacted with the boys on an equal footing:

> *Aiden gets almost all the answers for his team until Sammi thinks she has the right answer for one. She is over ruled by the group in favour of Aiden and they are wrong. She was right, she is indignant, Aiden laughs good-naturedly as if to say 'oh well, doesn't matter' but no one else bothers to apologise to her…Sammi gets another answer right; the word for beard. Again she is over ruled in favour of Aiden and then it transpires that yet again she was right. (01/14, S4)*

Following her correct answers:

> *Murray tells Sammi she is smart. She denies this "no I'm not. I'm not smart" she says and coyly plays with her earrings which are shoulder length, brightly-coloured feathers. She doesn't answer again. I'm unsure if this is to avoid being called clever (does this preclude being pretty?) or whether she is fed up being overruled (01/14, S4)*

This example resonates with Reay's (2006) argument that in terms of social acceptance, girls being constructed as both clever and pretty can be fraught with social difficulty. As previously discussed, a focus on attractiveness can reduce perceptions of girls' competence which is potentially harmful for girls' self-concept in school. For boys there were no observed instances of tension between attractiveness and intelligence (Heflick & Goldenberg, 2009). Classroom practices permit such interactions to occur. Typically, gendered power relations, proliferated during group work where girls were most likely to be overruled (although it was uncommon outside of the STEM classes). Teachers typically remained at the front of the class as pupil discussions were held and, in my observations, never once noticed or intervened when girls were subjugated, silenced or subdued. It is indeed likely that teachers are entirely unaware that there were potentially pernicious gender power relations playing out in their classrooms.

In addition to peer on peer gendered power relations occurring spontaneously at a classroom level, the institution was also complicit in creating gender based structures within the classroom; the following analyses will detail the relationship between the institution and gender.

Gendered Structuring of Classrooms

The following analysis demonstrates that gender is multi-faceted and prevalent within classrooms. It was spontaneously used as an organising principle by pupils, and was also reinforced by institutional values and by individual teacher behaviours. As noted in Chapter 3, boys in top-set classes competed to be the best and the first to finish their work. Competitive behaviour was thus frequently gender specific, with the majority of overtly-competitive behaviour observed amongst the most academic boys. In classes such as

Maths, where there is only one right answer and only one person could claim it first, the competition between boys was fierce and was sustained over several years. Teachers were acutely aware of the behavioural differences between boys and girls as this Maths teacher explains:

I comment to the teacher that it is a fascinating class with the overt competition between the boys… I ask her if the girls are as capable as they are very quiet in class. She says that some are struggling a little but there are some very capable girls. (09/11, S1)

Gender differences were also structured by teachers who gave boys more opportunities to perform, participate, and demonstrate their knowledge:

Mr Francis picks Neil and Phoebe points out "Mr Francis, you have picked all the boys and not one girl" "ohh you should have volunteered" he replies. "I did, I've had my hand up five times" replies Phoebe (09/12, S2)

The institution could be complicit in structuring gender hierarchies in a number of ways. Most obvious was the physical organisation of classrooms by gender, without clear pedagogical reason:

The class were asked to line up along one wall to be allocated a seat by their sex, 5 girls here, 5 boys there etc (08/11, S1)

The reasons for organising classrooms by gender were unclear to me. Girls tended to chat more if grouped together and boys were more likely to be disruptive in a group. It therefore made little practical sense, in terms of classroom management, to organise a class by gender than it would by any other arbitrary dimension such as race or by age.

Teachers' structuring of activities by gender, including competition between boys and girls, could be even more overt. In the examples below, one female Maths teacher made a point of berating all of the girls at once in relation to the achievement of boys in general in the first example and an individual boy in the second:

> *Teacher makes no positive response to the other boys finishing and*
>
> *comments "how come it is only the boys? Not good girls, not good at*
>
> *all!"(01/13, S3)*

Noah grasps a difficult concept first yet the teacher uses this to again criticise the efforts of the girls despite the fact that the rest of the boys also do not yet understand:

> *She asks if only Noah understands? Says 'come on girls.' Fraser B pulls*
>
> *a wry face at this and Brian looks aghast or maybe scornful at the*
>
> *prospect of girls getting it correct.(02/13, S3)*

The comments criticise the girls in her class as a whole, with explicit reference to gender as a category, and in doing so elevates the entire boy group by virtue of the success of a few individuals who grasped the concepts quickly. The teacher's comments thus function to legitimise the negative stereotype of girls' abilities within the Maths domain, and structure classroom activities by gender. It is worth recalling that Maths was a 'streamed' subject, so all pupils in the class were there precisely because they had comparable levels of performance in the subject.

A noteworthy feature of these examples is that the teacher was female. Her comments thus seem to echo so-called Queen Bee behaviour, in that she appears to discriminate against her own sex within the domain in which she holds expertise. While her

reasons for this are unclear, her actions nevertheless had consequences for the girls in her classes. For example, the data indicated that girls could become increasingly stereotypically 'girly' in traditionally masculine contexts. In the Technical Department in particular, the girls tended to enact more stereotypical female roles:

> *I discuss with Mr Smart how different the girls are in here. How 'girly'*
> *and loud. Is it due to the masculinity of the topic/setting? Does it*
> *reinforce gender roles? Boys do more 'fighting' girls do more preening*
> *and posturing. Individually they are very capable particularly Lily (Layla*
> *struggles) he points out that they are very quiet when in the graphics*
> *class. Same subject but computer oriented and not benches, tools and the*
> *invocation of 'maleness' which may pervade the practical classes?*
> *(03/13, S2)*

Such contexts may thus place girls – and especially very academically-capable girls – in a bind, offering a choice between being 'girly' or practical and competent, reducing the extent to which these can be aligned (Heflick & Goldenberg, 2009).

Teacher-led Gender Expectations and Overt Sexism

The extent to which gender was an organising feature for some teachers went further still. Teachers themselves were observed making overtly sexist comments on seven occasions and sexism was most prevalent during the P.E. periods in which physical prowess was made salient:

> *Finlay is markedly determined to do it properly and is singled out for a*
>
> *demonstration with two of the other boys. Teacher distinguishes the boys*
>
> *as being able to do it properly (05/12, S1)*

> *Teacher continually highlights how well the boys are doing at hurdling.*
>
> *(052/12, S1)*

This was a female P.E. teacher and her behaviour echoes that of the Maths teacher described above. Both teachers elevate the entire boy group over the girl group by singling out one high-performing male pupil and crediting the other boys with similar prowess, in a subject that is traditionally male-dominated. Elsewhere, teachers made explicit reference to positive expectations for boys in terms of physical pursuits. The following example was prior to an adventure day with various outdoor challenges including a muddy assault course:

> *Before we leave, Mrs Brown, Guidance Teacher, gives the pupils a talk*
>
> *about behaviour expectations etc. Comments that she hopes they all*
>
> *enjoy the day and try to participate in the activities. She then points to*
>
> *two groups consisting solely of boys and notes that they, in particular,*
>
> *will do really well and manage the challenges (09/11, S1)*

The groups she singles out contain all the sporty, high-status boys. Although their status was at this stage not fully established, their physical ability was being highlighted and valued by the staff from the outset, which positively reinforced their burgeoning social status amongst their peers.

More directly still, teachers occasionally also used gender stereotypes to belittle a pupil:

> *Mason then pipes up again "how come he doesn't get a row?" Teacher*
> *"you come in a huff like a wee lassie", Mason "you shame me every*
> *week in front of everyone (09/11, S1)*

Using 'girl' ('lassie') as the descriptor for someone who is 'huffy' allows boys to enact tropes whereby irrational, moody behaviour is attributable to girls whilst the inference remains that the reverse holds true for boys who can be relied upon to be rational and evenly tempered. This incident occurred within a Science class where differing, socially-constructed roles for boys and girls already exist. Throwaway comments such as the one above thus risk reinforcing gendered patterns of participation in these subjects by invoking and legitimising gender-based stereotypes.

Teachers also invoked sexist attitudes in framing pupils' work, for example in the assumptions made about pupils' interests:

> *Teacher dichotomises boys and girls. Asks for their favourite goods or*
> *services. "Boys – yours might be football boots or your Xbox." "Girls –*
> *it might be bags, clothes or make-up" I'm astonished. This feeds directly*
> *into boys being valued for what they do and girls for what they look like.*
> *It's subtle but it feeds into so many stereotypes. (03/12, S1)*

The comment above is especially striking because it was made in first year (S1), when few of the girls even wore make up (to school at least). These examples all share sex-

stereotypical beliefs about boys being sporty and capable and 'girl' either being used as an insult to a boy or being associated with appearance and attractiveness.

In contrast, some teachers did attempt to undermine the dominance of the boys' position in classes and humour was often deployed as a strategy to weaken the boys' position:

> *Miss Leppard's technique is to belittle and humour the disruptive boys in*
>
> *the class. This is generally effective but has the side effect of elevating*
>
> *their status and confirming their position in the class as dominant.*
> *(02/14, S4)*

This strategy tended to have the opposite effect to its intended purpose. Miss Leppard was vocal about bringing the boys down 'a peg or two', yet this cemented a firm affection for her with the targeted HSB who called by her class at lunch and break times and often referred to her as "Miss Leppard ya lege" ('lege' being a short colloquial reference for 'legend').

These examples echo the broader pattern highlighted in Chapter 3 of teachers recapitulating pupil assumptions and beliefs in a manner that functions to reinforce pupil-led hierarchies. It is important to note that male and female teachers were complicit in enacting these tropes. In the preceding example, Miss Leppard enacts the pupil's own popularity hierarchy for behaviour control purposes yet still manages to accentuate the social status of the HSB.

The ways in which pupils and teachers used gender functioned to maintain an institutional environment in which girls were quieter, more compliant and subjected to dominant male behaviour. The institution was thus complicit by using gender as an

appropriate organising principle, accompanied by teachers' overtly sexist comments and the invocation of sex-stereotypical beliefs. This recapitulation of gender stereotyping by the teachers creates a space where heavily-gendered expectations and beliefs can proliferate, or are at the very least unchallenged amongst pupils. The most marked gender-specific inequality, however, was observed in STEM subjects and the following analysis will describe the (toxic, for girls) micro-contexts which arose in some STEM classes.

STEM Micro-contexts

There were 13 codes of boys displaying openly misogynistic behaviour in STEM classes. Taken together with the sexism detailed above, it is pertinent to note that whilst teachers themselves could be occasionally sexist, not once was a sexist comment made by a pupil corrected, censured, or otherwise acknowledged by a teacher. Moreover, sexist behaviour in the form of derogatory comments about performance in STEM subjects was observed solely directed from boys towards girls, and never the reverse. As highlighted in Chapter 3, boys could be particularly competitive in Maths classes. The following example is also an example of dominance in a first year STEM class but was expressed to the whole class and seemed to function as direct contempt for the efforts of a girl:

> *First starter question is algebra which the class haven't covered*
>
> *yet…Jessica offers to solve it on the board and Brian says "but how does*
>
> *SHE know that", "why?", "how?" I wonder if it had been one of the*
>
> *boys who had braved the board to answer that tricky question if there*
>
> *might have been more competition (03/12, S1)*

There were several examples of boys asserting superiority over girls in Maths, particularly as the pupils were in their senior years:

Angus calls to Steven at the front "can you be bothered?" "nah, not really" "I've done the first one" offers Kelly, offering for Angus to copy her? "I did that ages ago" he shoots her down in flames. She hangs her head but since they only just got the exercise, this seems to be unlikely and untrue but Kelly doesn't challenge him. (01/14, S3)

*Orla and Steven then finish their task. Orla tells the teacher and asks her to check it. Angus says "whit? Finished? Naw!" he and Katy have hardly started, despite Katy's best efforts. Steven replies "aye we are" Angus responds indignantly "she says **she** is finished" with the emphasis on the 'she. '"aye, **she** is" replies Steven. Orla says nothing but flushes darkly. Steven continues "**we** did it" he copies Angus's emphasis on the she and then stresses the 'we.' "Nut, not her, you did it" Angus continues somewhat nastily. Orla hangs her head. Does not protest or resist as Angus completely negates her part in the joint activity and discredits her work. He refuses to give her any recognition whatsoever for the work she has done (09/13, S3)*

The dominance of the boys goes uncontested. The girls tended to adopt what came across as resigned, submissive behaviour in response to their abilities being questioned. They did not answer back, argue or question the boys' assumed superiority. The boys' behaviour was not limited to Maths classes but also featured in scientific subjects such as the following example in a National 5 Physics class. In this example, Millie is one of the most intelligent pupils of the whole year group. Her male fellow team member delivers the following in a light, jokey manner:

Declan then says "Declan AKA Team Leader here" "ehh?" says Max.

'Declan' jokes "eh naw – team leader here" then "I'm team leader" he

replies to Millie as she asks what to do with the task (06/14, S4)

Millie did not reply at all to this. The group continue to solve the problem and to exclude Millie, despite her being the most capable of the three and typically a 'straight A' student taking a number of STEM subjects:

Max and Declan make no effort to involve Millie, she picks up some

string and Declan says "oi! I'm Team Captain" she puts it back down,

makes lots of suggestions, they ignore her (06/14, S4)

Millie persists with the task despite being excluded throughout; and I found this interaction particularly uncomfortable to observe. It echoed other occasions when girls 'went along' with the conceit that boys were academically superior or did not openly display their own abilities, specifically in STEM subjects:

Joel talks through the working of a geometry question. Misha, next to

him, is asked to give the answer. She says she has not done it yet. Jake is

asked to answer, says "eh? I got the same as Misha" there is confusion

until Jake explains he thought Misha had given an answer and that they

had the same answer. This means she had an answer all along and chose

to pretend that she didn't (02/14, S3)

Not all boys were complicit in the subjugation of girls, and some boys seemed at pains to distance themselves from such domineering behaviour:

It occurs to me, watching Aiden P conversing easily with Declan and the

girls that he may simply 'opt-out' of the male dominance hierarchy and

chat more with the girls to avoid confrontation (12/14, S4)

Incidences of misogyny were sometimes called out by pupils but there were no observations of teachers calling out misogyny:

Angus B pulls a wry face at this and Brian looks aghast or maybe

scornful at the prospect of girls getting it correct. Eve volunteers an

answer, not quite right but the teacher helps her to work it through.

Jessica also offers an answer, not correctly. Brian says "Pffft, as if a

LASSIE would know!" Angus B tells him to "SHUT UP!" Angus looks to

me, rolls his eyes (01/13, S2)

Brian's previous challenge of Jessica's algebra knowledge was in first year (S1) and went uncontested by pupil or teacher, but in this case in third year (S3) Angus does challenge Brian's assertion. However, it was also the case that Angus himself could be disparaging of the abilities of girls, such as in the instance noted above when he quashed Kelly's offer of help.

While openly sexist comments were somewhat less common in later years, they were still observed, such as this incident occurred in their fourth year (S4):

Class are asked what another word for slang is, Molly offers

"colloquial" Jake and Johnny turn to stare at her. Jake says "how does

she know that?" in a derisory tone "I dunno" shrugs Johnny (03/14, S2)

In a Physics experiment in fourth year (S4), the only all-girl group solved the problem first:

> *The girls group have sellotaped their coins to the cup. Angus watches*
>
> *Max's test parachute, informs his group "theirs's is as slow as ours" but*
>
> *doesn't recognise that the girls group have found the solution first*
>
> *(06/14, S4)*

Strikingly, eight of these nine examples occurred in a STEM subject. This may be a self-protective strategy by boys as the girls regularly outperform the boys, but it clearly draws on socially-available stereotypes that women don't do difficult, technical or scientific subjects as well as boys.

The STEM subjects are arguably the highest value, perceived to be of the highest difficulty and also associated with male success (Camussi & Leccardi, 2005). High-performing girls such as Jessica and Millie violate gender-based expectations by being the highest-performing pupils in several of the domains. As the analysis has shown, gender is made salient throughout the educational process which allows toxic micro-climates to proliferate where boys are given the opportunity to devalue capable girls in a manner which is sometimes subtle, sometimes overt and direct, but overall pervasive. Being routinely excluded from group decisions and group participation was observed several times within STEM classes. In particular, in Science classes, pupils are allowed to freely form experimentation groups for lab work. These group-based micro environments often created a power imbalance where highly-intelligent girls were forbidden to participate in the group's work, their suggestions ridiculed and their contributions ignored. Such problem-based learning activities are not inherently biased or pernicious, but combined with the

other factors detailed throughout the analysis it becomes clear that spaces are created in which sexism and sex-specific stereotypical attitudes could flourish, creating micro-contexts in which highly-capable girls can be humiliated by boys who were ostensibly less capable, but who could assume and enact superiority based on their gender.

These specific examples of misogyny in practice highlight the difficulty girls face in STEM subjects which are often considered arenas of male dominance and excellence. If sexism and gender stereotypes were evident throughout the school, they were most prevalent within the STEM classes. Importantly, the data reported in this chapter also highlight that these toxic micro-contexts are not solely the result of individual-level misogynistic attitudes. Rather, the institution was complicit in legitimising and enabling the power-based expression of such attitudes. Teachers structured their classes by gender, occasionally made sexist comments themselves, and failed to censure comments which were inappropriate and occasionally offensively misogynistic. Teachers also used gender to structure expectations, for example by using the invocation of 'girl' as an insult to a boy. This then creates an institutional setting within which boys are legitimised to act out negative gender-based beliefs.

<div align="center">**Discussion**</div>

The unique contribution of this chapter is in presenting an analysis of sexism and gender inequality that follows the same group of boys and girls over the course of several years, while also capturing the minutiae of behaviours and examining micro-interactions between pupils, and between pupils and teaching staff. This permitted an examination of the interplay between gender-based dynamics among pupils and the environments created by teachers and the institution. In particular, the methodological approach permitted an

analysis of how sexism and gender stereotypes were expressed and used to structure classroom environments in a manner that legitimised and enabled the expression of male dominance. This was especially so in STEM subjects, in which the interplay of pupil- and institution-expressed gender stereotypes with specific forms of classroom activity created toxic micro-contexts in which highly-capable female students could be marginalised and humiliated by male peers.

Society abounds with gendered stereotypes and the analyses presented here have indicated how these are recapitulated in institutions such as schools. Classrooms are gendered and sex-stereotypical norms are enacted by pupils and by teachers alike. The objectification of girls as appearance-focussed and lacking competence, for example, was not only witnessed in peer interaction amongst pupils but also communicated and endorsed in teacher comments, and by teachers allowing sexist and misogynistic comments to pass unchallenged. It is important to note that this was evident among both male and female teachers, with female teachers in male-dominated domains observed berating the efforts of girls and elevating the achievements of boys in a manner that echoes 'Queen bee' behaviour (Derks et al., 2016). The complicity of teachers in creating gendered classrooms legitimises pupils to enact gender-stereotypical behaviours which function to disempower and disenfranchise girls, specifically within traditionally male-dominated arenas such as STEM subjects.

One of the most striking results from the analysis is that academic performance or excellence can make you vulnerable if you are a girl. The toxic micro-contexts created in STEM classes demonstrated that extremely capable girls can be undermined, humiliated, and devalued when boys assert perceived gender-based ascendency over them, despite

objective performance indicators. Being female and capable and successful in a STEM subject thus made the girls in these contexts vulnerable to specific, toxic experiences due to the complicity of pupils and the institution in perpetuating gender stereotypes. This finding in particular represents an important and unique contribution to the literature concerning the 'leaky pipeline' of girls from STEM subjects across their academic careers. The two prevailing theories explaining why women tend to ' disappear' from STEM education and employment opportunities according to Frome, Alfield, Eccles and Barber (2007) are women's attitudes to STEM subjects and a desire to choose a career which can accommodate motherhood. It is clear from the evidence presented that women's attitudes to STEM subjects are likely to be substantially altered if faced with chronic gender stereotyping which undermines female ability in male-dominated fields. Furthermore, the interaction of stereotypical attitudes and institutional practices can create key moments, such as the laboratory examples detailed above which could be damaging not only to girls' performance, but conceivably also to their self-concept or beliefs about their self-efficacy in specific STEM domains. The key findings of the analysis are that the attitudes and decisions of girls regarding STEM careers could perhaps be shaped as much by key defining moments, such as laboratory class subjugations, as by chronic psychological factors or endemic or systemic prejudices or biases.

In order for these toxic micro-contexts to emerge, there must exist the complicity of institutional gender-based stereotypes (as expressed by teachers, for example) that align with and legitimise the expression of (male) pupils' gender-based stereotypes. Equally classroom-based practices such as free-form team-based activities can create micro power structures in which male pupils have the ability to *enact* these gender stereotypes by

marginalising more capable female pupils. Crucially, this critical confluence of factors to create toxic 'key moments' for female students in STEM subjects is potentially less visible using many research methods, but is identifiable through the ethnographic method employed here. It thus represents a potentially important, but under-researched aspect of why capable girls do not choose STEM careers when their classroom experiences, legitimised by the institution, can be so disempowering and humiliating.

CHAPTER 6

PEER ON PEER RECOGNITION: THE DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Chapters 3-5 addressed the interaction between pupils and the structured and

stratifying environment of the school. In contrast, this chapter will focus upon the most

informal and social aspect of schooling: the interaction of peers, analysing the dynamics of

social exclusion (Abrams, Hogg & Marques, 2005), and providing a detailed analysis of

how several key pupils responded to the ostracism they experienced over the duration of

the study. The analysis of responses to ostracism in particular poses important theoretical

questions for current models of ostracism, and suggestions are made for how these models

can be developed.

In school, young people are continually navigating the value systems around them.

The recognition sought and offered by peers is the focus of this chapter; however, this

interacts with the more structured value systems within the school based on awards and

academic achievement. McFarland and colleagues (2014) note that institutions which value

academic achievement create environments in which social value can be predicated

alongside achievement. In other words, as pupils progress through their school careers,

achievements become more visible with examinations, streaming and results, and,

therefore, their individual attributes and characteristics can become less significant for

belonging and social status whilst their academic performance becomes more significant

(McFarland et al., 2014). Thus, schools can create stratified environments which place

emphasis upon achievement and ability, rendering less able and less academic pupils at higher risk of ostracism. Ostracism, in this sense, could be moderated by procedures instantiated by institutions which in turn may reinforce inequalities between groups (see preceding chapters 3 & 4 for detailed discussions of institutional inequality). The school as an institution then forms the setting for dynamic social inclusion and exclusion. Young people spend the majority of their time in school, and the peers with whom they have the greatest interaction are those they are placed beside in classes. In the high school involved in this research, pupils from varied backgrounds were placed together into classes for the first two years of their school life. The initial class cohort studied was small; only 18 children in total. As described in Chapter 3, the pupils were split into two 'sets' (practical and social) and these were fixed in terms of pupils allocated to each 'set'. Streamed classes for Maths and English were more flexible with pupils moving up and down by merit. The majority of the pupils' school day was thus spent with people they would not necessarily count as friends; nevertheless, strong bonds were formed amongst some pupils and groups. However, not all pupils formed stable friendship bonds.

Stable friendship bonds are critical because, according to Baumeister and Leary (1995), belonging to a social group and feeling accepted within that group is the cornerstone of wellbeing and security. Popularity is arguably the ultimate form of social inclusion and belonging and in this chapter, inclusion is often presented as a counterpoint to understand and contrast with experiences of exclusion rather than being analysed specifically. Having a wide network of available peers to socialise with can protect individuals from loneliness and rejection. Furthermore, peer groups can form and their membership can provide a substantial 'buffer' against negativity and disharmony outside

the group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Achieving popularity and elevated social status can be challenging but there is a lack of consensus about which behaviours reliably provide a basis for popularity within social groups (de Waal-Andrews, Gregg & Lammers, 2015). Cheng et al. (2013) note that certain desirable social characteristics can become favoured over others by virtue of the expertise of the individual and that sporting prowess is likely to be favoured over academic success by young men but the reverse holds true for career scholars.

The dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion in school are complex and straddle two prominent hierarchies: popularity and academic performance. As they move from spending most of their time with their parents to more extensive peer relationships, a young person's position relative to their peers becomes increasingly important, and most adolescents continually make status comparisons with each other (McFarland, Moody, Diehl, Smith & Thomas, 2014). McFarland et al. (2014) note an increase in homophily as adolescents move through their school careers: as they mature, teenagers tend to seek out relationships with those with whom they share similar attributes. These attributes may include gender, age, and background, but the tendency to form homophilous groups can be finer grained too, and groups can aggregate around shared abilities and skills.

The longitudinal, ethnographic method employed in this study has been uniquely suited to examine the changing relationships amongst the pupils and their social groupings over time and, specifically to examine the social implications of peer ostracism. This addresses a key limitation of earlier, much shorter-term research by McFarland et al. (2014), in which they predicted that, as pupils moved through school, their affiliations may change and that group compositions would alter. They also highlighted that it is likely that

the changes in the affiliations made by the pupils would be in response to institutional

values. Specifically, they found that where academic ability is prized, and high

achievements rewarded, group affiliations are more likely to form around achievement than

previous preferences for peers with the same SES or other previously associative factors. In

other words, friendship groups can alter over time as academic ability becomes

increasingly salient and status becomes linked to success academically (McFarland et al.,

2014). Thus, pupils whose academic achievements are less notable can be excluded from

academically-homopilous groups and are at risk of being socially isolated.

Ostracism

A major touchstone for the analysis in this chapter is the literature on ostracism and

social exclusion (Major & Eccleston, 2005). The terms 'ostracism' and 'exclusion' are used

with substantial overlaps in meaning throughout this literature; indeed, Williams (2007)

advocates seeing these as interchangeable terms. This is the approach I adopt in this

chapter. Ostracism, however, can also be very subtle in naturalistic social interactions and

can include a range of behaviours which Dixon (2007) classifies into a "hierarchy of

sanctions" (p. 6). The sanction hierarchy ranges from cold tone of voice or avoiding eye

contact through ridicule and overt criticism to blatant exclusions such as refusal to admit an

individual to join a group, allow them to sit down with a group or to otherwise banish them

entirely.

The impact of the form of ostracism will depend upon the person being ostracised

and, to an extent, the relationship they usually experience with the person initiating the

ostracism (Williams, 1997). In certain group situations some people are deemed to

'deserve' to be left out according to principles of bias (Nesdale, Maass, Durkin & Griffiths,

2005), fairness, and justice (van Prooijen, van den Bos, & Wilke (2004). While Barner-Barry (1986) suggests that ostracism can sometimes be a tool used to socialise an errant individual back into group membership and re-establish group norms, ostracism is generally considered to be a negative experience.

To examine the impact of ostracism experimentally, and measure any negative experiences, Williams and Jarvis (2006) devised a computer-based procedure to produce the experience of not being included in an event in which you expect share turns with others (Williams, Cheung & Choi 2000). Cyberball is an online disk-tossing game which can be manipulated so that individuals can be left out of the 'game' by unknown others (participants were portrayed by on-screen animated icons). Despite the artificial nature of the paradigm and the physical detachment from the others playing the game, participants have been found to report lowered scores on four key dimensions following ostracism in the cyberball procedure: belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaningful existence (Williams & Jarvis, 2006). Wirth and Williams (2009) also investigated recovery from ostracism as a factor of group memberships in another variation of the Cyberball paradigm. They found that being ostracised for an enduring identity trait, such as being academic, was harder to recover from than a more fleeting group membership, such as one's team's colour in the Cyberball game. The colour of the Cyberball was the temporary group membership indicator. Certainly the latter group membership lacks real world validity as the multi-faceted social world operates in much more complex and fragmented interactions.

While experimental paradigms such as Cyberball have offered real insight in to the mechanisms of ostracism and a range of responses have been clearly indicated, it is limited to artificial and acutely experienced ostracism 'events' rather than ostracism as an enduring

social experience. Chronic, real world ostracism is under researched and less well understood as its experimental equivalent. The research presented here offers to expand the ostracism literature by uniquely demonstrating how individuals respond to chronic ostracism over time and, importantly, documenting changes and outcomes as a factor of ostracism.

Consequences of Ostracism

However the ostracism is experienced, not belonging to a group, feeling left out, excluded and socially ostracised can be highly aversive (Gerber & Wheeler, 2013; Williams, 2007). Suffering chronic ostracism means that individuals are left out of social interactions and can consequently suffer feelings of loneliness, defined here as perceived social isolation. Loneliness in adolescents is also a significant risk factor for a range of negative psychological and physiological health outcomes. In his extensive review of the ostracism literature, Williams (2007) highlights that the process of being left out of a social situation increases self-reported distress, negative affect, and anger levels. Whilst increased risk of depressive episodes and suicide are, at least to some extent, predictable in a lonely or excluded individual (Leary & Baumeister, 1995) with adolescents particularly vulnerable (Lasgaard, Goossens & Elklit, 2011), physiological outcomes can also be predicted. In particular, loneliness in adolescence has implications for their cardiovascular health for example (Hawkley & Cacioppo, 2010).

To examine the extent to which ostracism can be experienced in a manner similar to physical pain, Eisenberger, Lieberman and Williams (2003) used an fMRI (Functional magnetic resonance imaging) variation of the Cyber Ball paradigm to measure brain activity following eventual exclusion from the ball-tossing game. They found that the

anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) was more active during exclusion than inclusion and this coincided with self-report measures of the distress experienced, suggesting that the pain often ascribed to being left out does have an analogous neural basis to physical pain (Eisenberger et al., 2003). Other research has found that ostracised individuals were more sensitive to facial cues such as distinguishing between a 'fake' and a genuine (Duchenne) smile. Unsurprisingly, those who had been subjected to ostracism displayed an enhanced sensitivity to facial cues, leading the authors to suggest that perhaps this is an adaptive response to avoid further ostracism and, importantly, to recognise opportunities where genuine belonging may be reinstated (Bernstein, Young, Brown, Sacco & Claypool, 2008).

Overall, Williams (2007) concludes that, by any measure, at any age, ostracism causes some level of self-reported distress. Furthermore, the distress experienced by the ostracised individual is not moderated by either situational factors or individual differences (van Beest & Williams, 2006). Ostracism-induced distress is not dependent on levels of self-esteem, for example, nor is it reduced if players in a Cyberball paradigm are advised they were playing a computer game and not being excluded by a human being (Zadro, Williams, & Richardson, 2004).

Responses to Ostracism

Responses to ostracism are varied and tactical (Jones, Manstead, & Livingstone, 2011), and Williams (1997; 2001) reviews how ostracised individuals respond to their social exclusion in a temporal framework. The individual suffers an immediate and painful response to the ostracism which threatens basic needs (belonging, self-esteem, perceived control, and/or belief in a meaningful existence). The individual may also experience feelings of anger and an increase in sadness. This is followed by a reflective phase in which

the ostracised individual seeks to process the ostracism, including why, how, and from where it arose. They then consider how to respond.

The temporal need-threat model proposes that if relational needs such as the need to belong and self-esteem are considered to be under threat, then the individual is more likely to react pro-socially. If the needs which are felt to be threatened are instead related to personal efficacy and meaningful existence, the individual is more likely to respond to protect those needs in an anti-social manner. Finally, those suffering from chronic ostracism may develop response fatigue and display a flattened affect, becoming increasingly isolated. During the reflective phase, responses to ostracism are proposed to form into four types: fight, flight, freeze, and tend and befriend, and these responses will inform the analysis in this chapter.

Ostracism in Adolescents

Building upon the gender-focused analysis in Chapter 5 of this thesis, the experience of being left out may also be felt more keenly by girls than boys according to Sebastian, Viding, Williams and Blakemore (2010). They posit that girls may experience a keener sense of social rejection than their male schoolmates and Kloep (1999) found this anxiety was highest around age 15-16. Sebastian et al. (2010) replicated adolescent sensitivity to ostracism using the Cyberball paradigm and found that teenage girls expressed lower affect following ostracism than did older females, and that female adolescents in general also experienced higher anxiety than adults but also higher anxiety following the non-exclusion condition. This indicated to the researchers that for teenagers, all social interactions can be anxiety producing. However, there are relatively few Cyberball studies presenting data from older samples with the average age of Cyberball

participants being 20.5 years (Hartgerink, van Beest, Wicherts & Williams, 2015).

Sebastian et al. (2010) conclude that teenagers are perhaps more sensitive to exclusion than adults or younger participants, and that this may also be attributable to the development of emotional processing. It could also be that the occurrence of exclusion is a more regular feature of mid-adolescent life and thus the phenomenon of being in a participatory, turn-taking game like Cyberball makes salient the idea of being rejected whether the participant is allocated to the inclusion or exclusion conditions. Nevertheless, ostracism appears to consistently lower mood and induce anxiety amongst adolescents when manipulated experimentally. All of this signals the importance of examining ostracism in day-to-day interactions amongst adolescents, including different forms of and reactions to social exclusion.

It is important to note that adolescents may experience feelings of being left out, or more subtle cold shouldering or snubbing, but may not necessarily describe these as 'ostracism'. Such experiences may instead be understood by ostracised individuals in other terms, such as bullying. Bullying can be defined in many ways but it is generally accepted to be a chronic negative experience and as involving hostile intent towards the victim (Olweus, 1993). Both ostracism and bullying research literatures, whilst distinct, have substantial areas of concurrence (Cassidy, 2009). For example, much of the literature referring to bullying specifically incorporates some behaviour associated with ostracism.

According to the World Health Organisation, bullying – and the ostracism it typically involves – is widespread across the world with one in ten children experiencing bullying of some sort (Currie, Zanotti, Morgan & Currie, 2012). Bullying is not limited to a dyadic unequal power relationship between aggressor and victim, and happens within

social contexts (Jones, Manstead & Livingstone, 2011). Particularly within a school environment, belonging to specific peer groups and being part of a stratifying institutional environment can contribute to the dynamics of bullying (Jones, Manstead & Livingstone, 2014; Jones, Bombieri, Livingstone & Manstead, 2001). Victims of bullying can suffer from a range of negative outcomes including increased prevalence of negative health behaviours and a decreased sense of involvement in friendship groups. In addition, many young people experiencing bullying or isolation can become withdrawn and silent which can be misinterpreted as uncooperative behaviour, leading to increased teacher frustration and reduced engagement between teacher and pupil (Cassidy, 2009). Specifically, with regard to the ostracism literature, young people who do not have reliable peer group friends or positive interactions are more susceptible to bullying, suggesting that even mild ostracism can render the ostracised individual more likely to be bullied in addition to their social exclusion (Cassidy, 2009).

Chapter Aims

Part of the difficulty of studying ostracism is that it is very difficult to create experimentally without causing participants some discomfort or potential distress. The experimental methods, therefore, have to be carefully calibrated to reduce any psychological suffering and, as such, the extent to which these methods reflect ostracism as it occurs in day-to-day life is often compromised. For example, while the Cyberball paradigm successfully invokes feelings of ostracism in participants in a relatively safe and controlled manner, extrapolating from specific experimental paradigms to long-term ostracism in naturalistic social settings is risky. This is especially so given that many instances of ostracism occur within institutional settings which, as the analyses in Chapters

3-5 have shown, have their own powerful influence on social relations. In routine daily life in institutional settings, attributing status and prestige to individuals is rather more complex and situationally dependent. As with many laboratory studies, the ability to manipulate contextual variables is limited and examining status change longitudinally is also problematic. In their analysis of social status, Cheng, Tracy, Foulsham, Kingstone, and Henrich (2010) concede that status dynamics would be best studied "in real-world, long-term social hierarchies" (Cheng et al, 2010: 120). The study of ostracism in this chapter is uniquely placed to examine naturally-occurring ostracism as it unfolds over several years, its impact upon and the responses of ostracised individuals, and the role of the institutional setting in shaping these dynamics.

Previous work particularly that of Kip Williams, provides valuable and detailed knowledge about the responses to ostracism; fight, flight, freeze and tend and befriend (Williams, 1997; 2001). A key part of the analysis in this chapter focuses on whether and how these responses manifest in the context of chronic, naturally-occurring ostracism. Whilst comprehensive, the list of responses is not exhaustive, and the ethnographic method adopted in this research offers an opportunity to critically appraise Williams' model by observing change over time. This allows unexpected and hitherto unconsidered strategic responses to be observed, as well as confirming those identified in Williams' model.

This chapter will also include an analysis of physical and spatial positioning, depicting inclusion as a counterpoint to instances of exclusion. Positioning will be presented pictorially to illustrate the routine physical experience of the excluded individual. Using a retrospective analysis, the chapter will then hone in upon the extent to which individuals responded to ostracism and the response components of the temporal need

threat model; flight, flight, freeze, tend and befriend. A number of pupils were identified as

ostracised from an early stage in their school careers, and it will be demonstrated that many

were ostracised during their first orientation weeks of high school (S1). From their early

experiences of ostracism, these pupils' entire trajectories are analysed using Williams'

response model. The analysis offers an intensive and thorough real-world test of a theory

that has largely been tested only in short-term and experimental settings.

In addition to testing the temporal need-threat model, this chapter also analyses how

the value system set by the school sets the parameters for the range of possible reactions

and, importantly, provides pupils with a structure which in certain cases can actually

provide opportunities for ostracised individuals to (re)claim value and inclusion and,

potentially, positively influence their educational outcomes.

Analysis and Results

The analysis within this chapter formed the largest part of the data and coding as it

incorporated a wide variety of peer-on-peer interactions detailed in Table 8 below. Pupil

interactions were observed within classes, during classes, and between classes meaning that

some interactions were witnessed by teachers and/or other adults and some were not (my

own observations not withstanding). Specifically, the data presented here centres around

recognition, competition and positioning strategies. The fine-grained responses to

ostracism based upon Williams' temporal need-threat model (1997; 2001) were

retrospectively analysed and the data are displayed in Table 9 in sub-section Trajectories of

and Responses to Ostracism.

Table 8

Peer on Peer Recognition Code Frequency

Code and Example Location	Frequency
Multiple Sources of Recognition[9]	
Achievement and recognition in absence of teacher recognition (p. 208)	37
Audience seeking (p. 209)	94
Competitive strategies (p. 221)	125
Dimensions of success/failure and (un)popularity; where status appeared to be conferred or denied amongst pupils (p. 196)	61
Implied or overt success/failure or (un)popularity; behaviours which appeared to be related to success or popularity (p. 208)	88
	405
Positioning[10]	
Dynamic versus static positioning, denoted by verbal behaviour (p. 221)	273
Self-esteem positioning strategies, those which appeared protective of positive self-esteem or which appeared to damage self-esteem (p. 211)	88
Spatial positioning; such as physical location, seating position and pupil choice of body position (p. 200)	116
'Winning the day'; behaviours which appeared to claim superiority in a particular domain (p. 221)	23
	500

---

[9] Following analysis, the *audience seeking* code was split to incorporate the *behaviour of recognition in the absence of teachers*. The *dimensions of success/popularity* code was split to accommodate the distinction between *implied and overt success and popularity.*

[10] The *positioning* code was expanded to include '*winning the day'* a descriptive label for specific behaviours which pertained to 'winning' in particular.

General Exclusion

There were several individuals in the cohort who were routinely and blatantly excluded, mocked and derided:

> *The whole class are told to high-five each other, following a productive*
>
> *discussion, and Thomas tries to high-five everyone around him. Again*
>
> *this is awkward as he is often refused, including Brian, whom he sits*
>
> *beside. (09/13, S3)*

Belittling was common and almost always a high-status boy to a lower-status boy or girl:

> *Max D, Callum and Angus G all chat in the corner, do little work. Then*
>
> *Callum does something and Max calls out "what are you doing ya fud?"*
>
> *"NO! Not like that!" Max D has a very dominant attitude in this class.*
>
> *(05/14, S3)*

The exclusion of some individuals was often so pervasive that a genuine enquiry from someone else was apparently interpreted as a trap by the ostracised pupil, who responded with hostility. One example of this involved Lucas, who was wearing a new achievement badge (for attending fitness club at lunch time). Finlay asked him what it is for as he hadn't seen this badge before but, although apparently kindly asked, Lucas did not appear to trust Finlay and responded negatively, ignoring the question altogether:

> *Finlay asks Lucas what the achievement badge on his tie is. Asks several*
>
> *times, gets ignored. Calls him Lucas Arsehole instead of his surname.*
>
> *Tries numerous ways to get his attention. Lucas ignores him, chats to*

Jacob. Finlay says "it's not even a bad question!" "Lucas you are soooo

lame" he concludes (01/13, S2)

Lucas' reaction serves to alienate him further from Finlay and created an awkward atmosphere. Lily, another ostracised pupil, responded in a similar way when her hair was deliberately singed at lunch time. Alfie saw the incident and asks Lily if he can see what they have done to her hair. Despite his question being asked in a concerned manner, Lily reacts angrily to him:

As we approach the class, Alfie asks Lily if he can see her hair? She

explodes and starts ranting at him that she doesn't want to talk to him

and that he and his mates were all "taking the piss," "standing there

watching while Ciaron tried to singe my hair!" "I hate you," "piss off"

"it's not funny" "just standing there, watching," " just laughing" "it's

horrible" "it's not funny" "go away" "I don't want to talk to

you."(01/13, S2)

After each of several such responses, Alfie repeats:

"I just asked to see your hair." Then she starts generally ranting and

shouting and swearing as Ciaron passes she screams at him also.

Charlotte arrives and offers her a hug; Lily declines and seems both hurt

and angry. Jacob says "well that was awkward!" (01/13,S2)

The daily experience of chronic social ostracism creates a dynamic whereby the excluded pupils reacted negatively to most interactions and not just those which are unkind. This entrenched their isolation as other pupils then avoided them.

Physical and Spatial Positioning

There were numerous instances in which pupils appeared to physically or spatially position themselves relative to their peers in a manner that reflected inclusion or exclusion. The analysis includes codes of where pupils chose to sit when seating was not prescribed, with whom they sat, and in what subjects. Additionally, codes were included of instances in which pupils used their bodies to form barriers or to express interest in others. This analysis demonstrates the marginalisation of particular pupils over time and the groups which aggregated around different levels of academic performance.

Exclusion through positioning. Dylan was chronically ostracised from the first few weeks of first year. He came from a deprived background and displayed a lack of humour and warmth relative to other pupils in my observations. Dylan's primary school friends moved away from him and made new friends. He struggled to form close bonds to replace those which he lost. Charlie and Alfie were Dylan's primary school friends and both swapped seats in a manner that distanced them from Dylan after the first week or two of school.

> *Beginning of 1st year: Charlie has swapped seats with Lucas and now sits beside Finlay with Lucas sitting beside Dylan who hasn't arrived yet (09/11, S1)*

Choosing to swap seats away from a pupil once a pattern of seating has emerged was a noticeable and marked decision. This was a pivotal event in the relationship between Charlie and Dylan, with Charlie favouring Finlay and distancing from Dylan.

2nd Year: As the class gather round to watch the demonstration, Finlay

joins the line of Charlie, Craig and Dylan but goes between Dylan and

Craig and sits on the desk. Dylan looks uncomfortable and then Finlay

stands up. Dylan then backs off and Finlay moves closer to Craig. Craig

also moves away so that Finlay is beside Charlie (08/12, S2)

This example is a practical demonstration in a Technical class and the four boys jostled and nudged until Charlie and Finlay were standing together. There were no words spoken and the boys were ostensibly watching the class demonstration while engaging in these manoeuvres, after which Charlie and Finlay were positioned together while Craig and Dylan both backed off and stood alone.

The following example demonstrates a typical seating arrangement in which pupils such as Dylan and Layla were positioned alone in the class. Dylan in particular had no one beside him or to whom he could turn.
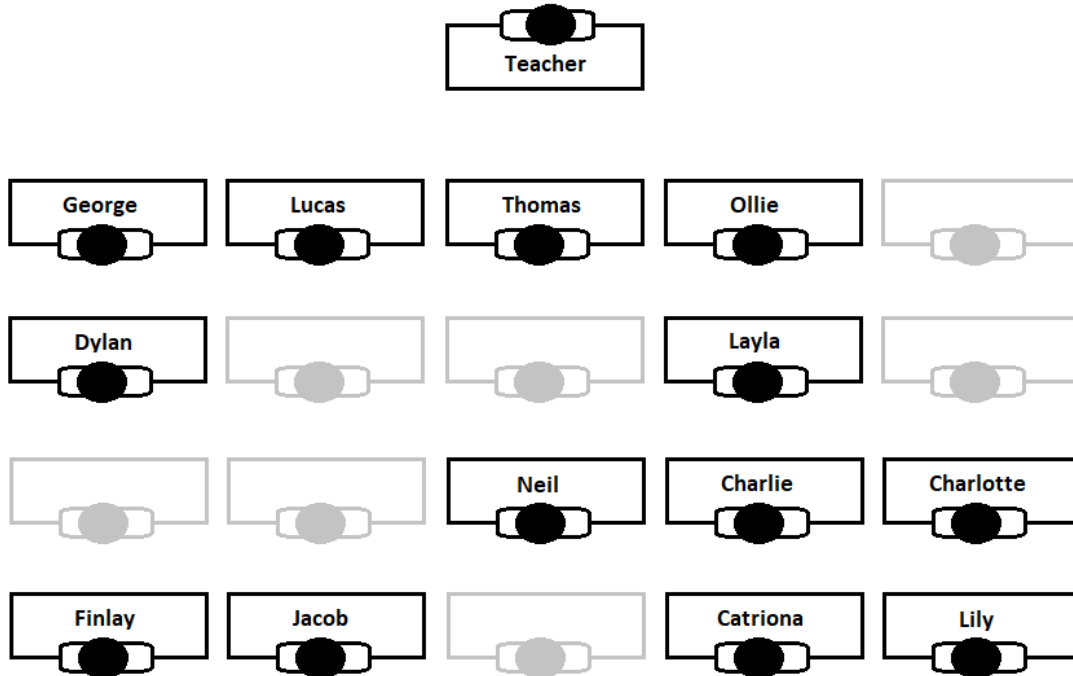
3rd Year: The class comprises:

Figure 4. Seating Plan: Exclusion of Dylan and Layla

(11/13, S3)

By fourth year, Dylan was utterly alone, to the extent that I rarely saw him speak to anyone:

> *4th Year: Dylan doesn't speak to anyone and, when asked to pair up,*
>
> *Jude who he is beside, goes to get the bass guitar and sits on the floor*
>
> *away from Dylan. He is asked to put it away and he pairs up with*
>
> *George. Dylan sits alone (06/14, S4)*

Lily was also regularly excluded by the other girls in the class and this was reflected in spatial positioning. Lily was from a far lower socioeconomic background than the majority of the girls and, as previously described in Chapter 3, wealth and belongings functioned as markers of social belonging and inclusion amongst the girls in the cohort:

1st Year: Class arrange their chairs in a circle. Emma walks toward Lily

then abruptly changes direction to sit beside Catriona (09/11, S1)

When the group take their seats in the circle again, Emma uses very

pronounced body language to separate herself from Lily but orient

herself to Charlotte (09/11, S1)

In this instance, Emma turns her back to Lily and places her hand on her hip forming a barrier between herself and Lily. This also has the effect of turning her at the waist so that she sits diagonally on the seat oriented to Charlotte. Movements like these can appear inconsequential, but in a class in which most pupils were sitting facing or leaning forward or perhaps turning to face a friend briefly, this was marked and obvious behaviour which communicated interpersonal preferences, rather than a relaxed seating pose.

In the following example, pupils again chose their own seats. Chairs were arranged in a circle in a drama class. There was only one spare chair and Mason left a space between himself and Lily before sitting down. As an isolated example, this is unremarkable; however, it was indicative of patterns of seating choice which persisted throughout Lily's time in school. In contrast, some of the girls, such as Charlotte, were almost never without a seating partner.

The class arrange themselves in a circle in this order:

Ollie, Charlie, Finlay, Dylan, Craig, space, Katy, Catriona, Charlotte,

Emma, Neil, George, Jacob, George, William, Connor, Mason, space,

Lily, Layla (03/12, S1)

Somewhat in contrast to Lily, Layla was often very friendly and chatty and tried to ingratiate herself with the other girls. Lily instead displayed a resigned indifference to her isolation at times, echoing the findings of Gerber and Wheeler (2014) who found that those who expect rejection suffer less distress when they were subsequently rejected. However, in sharp contrast, Layla kept trying to forge friendships irrespective of chronic rejections from her class mates:

> *1st Year: During the practical demonstration, the girls all sit aside from*
> *Layla. (11/11, S1)*

3rd Year: See seating plan in Figure 4 and 5 for examples of Layla's isolation.

In contrast to Layla, Emma was not chronically excluded, but over a short period of time in second year she seemed unable to maintain positive relationships within the class and suddenly became very isolated in comparison to her previous popularity.

> *1st Year: I discover that Emma has fallen out with Charlotte and*
> *Catriona and has been going home for lunch to avoid them. They seem*
> *reasonably polite and civil in class. (05/12, S1)*

> 2nd Year: *This is the first chance I've had to see the original cohort since*
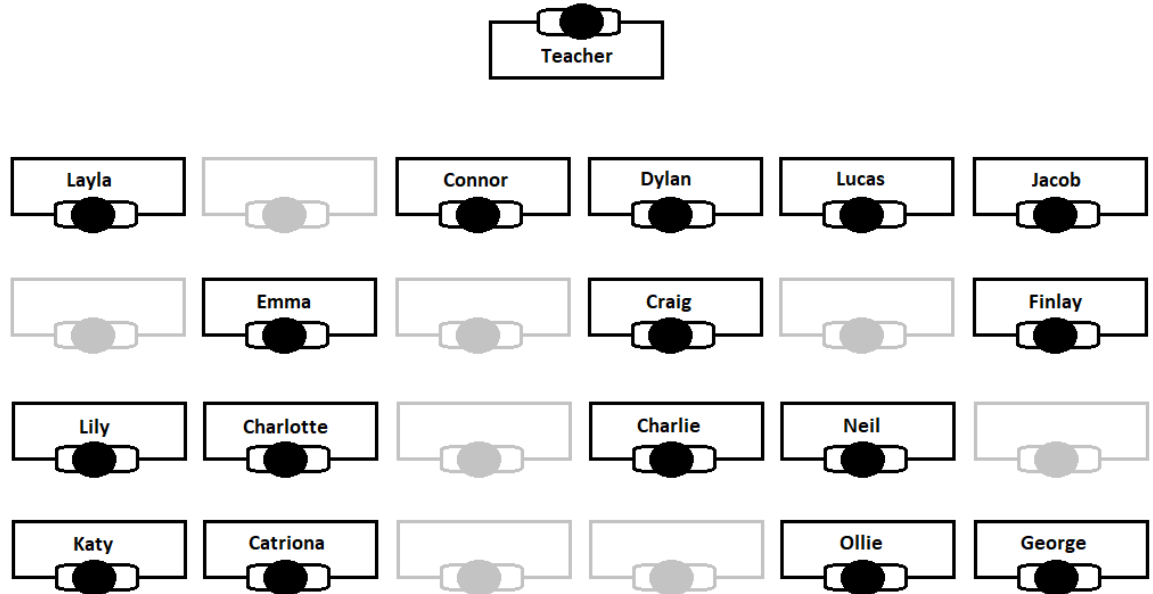> *the summer, they sit like this:*

Figure 5. Seating Plan: Exclusion of Emma

(08/12, S2)

Emma's ostracism occurred swiftly in contrast to Lily and Layla and was the result, it appeared, of a dispute between herself, Charlie and Finlay. It is a measure of the boys' popularity and status perhaps that Emma was subsequently excluded by the whole class and not just those with whom she had disagreed. Emma was moved to a different column of classes within the same year group at her parent's request thus resolution of the argument and/or recovery from ostracism was not observed.

Trajectories of and Responses to Ostracism

The positioning analysis demonstrates that for those who were chronically excluded, their social isolation was physically embodied by how their classmates positioned themselves in relation to them, creating explicit social isolation in many cases. Whilst each individual class period lasted for only 50 minutes on average, the experience of being isolated compared to peers who are socially integrated is likely to be unpleasant.

Critically, whilst these episodes may be constrained to one class arrangement, the following or previous period may have included similarly-organised seating in which the individual is rejected or isolated. Thus, the chronic aspect of the ostracism is not necessarily long periods of isolation, but repeated shorter episodes often with different cohorts. The purpose of the positioning analysis is to demonstrate the pernicious nature of social isolation by comparing it to integration and social inclusion and depict how these were physically embodied by classroom seating arrangements. With classroom practices which allow free seating choice, pupils have the opportunity to band together to leave out one or more individuals repeatedly throughout the school day establishing norms of who sits with whom and, importantly who rarely has a desk partner.

In order to further investigate the temporal and dynamic aspects of ostracism, the analysis now turns to specific, longitudinal trajectories of pupils who were routinely ostracised. The analysis also critically evaluates Williams' (1997; 2001) temporal need-threat model predictions in view of observed responses to naturally-occurring, chronic ostracism. It is important to note that whilst the exclusion depicted in these analyses is by peers, it is also framed by an institution which can define the dimensions of inclusion and exclusion by conferring social value through relative academic performance.

This analysis in this section focuses upon pupils who left the cohort citing bullying (see Table 9). It also includes Jacob and Lucas who were chronically ostracised but ultimately recovered into a position of inclusion. every piece of data relating to each pupil was collated into a trajectory which spanned the length of their school career. The separate trajectories were then coded for the four responses to ostracism. Drawing upon the ostracism literature summarised by Williams (2007), the codes were:

Fight: Derogation of those who socially exclude, reject or ostracise

Flight: Avoiding social interactions where opportunities to ostracise may exist; hostile behaviour in social interactions

Freeze: Emotional 'flatness' and/or self-defeating behaviours

Tend and Befriend: Using pro-social behaviours, cooperation and demonstrating a need to belong or to forge new or positive bonds with others. Behaviours such as helpfulness and gullibility were included alongside the tendency to blame themselves (girls) and others (boys).

Responses were coded thus:

Table 9

Coding Overview: Ostracism

	Tend and Befriend	Fight	Flight	Freeze	Flight and Freeze
Craig	x	x			
Mason	x	x			
Lily	x		x	x	x
Emma			x		
Layla	x	x	x	x	
Dylan	x	x	x	x	
Jacob	x		x	x	

From Table 9 it is clear that many of the pupils suffering from ostracism employed a variety of responses. The temporal aspect of this study revealed that responses were varied and context specific with individuals displaying a range of responses. There were

two exceptions – Emma and Mason – who will not be discussed further. Mason did not

stay at the school beyond his first year (S1) and Emma left the class immediately following

the first episode of ostracism in second year (S2). Additionally, Lucas does not feature in

this table although he suffered from ostracism, as his responses do not map onto any of the

responses in the model. Lucas' behaviour was typically idiosyncratic, slightly eccentric and

thus often difficult to categorise. His responses are described in the analysis below. The

following analyses will examine the responses made by each of the chronically ostracised

pupils.

Responses to Ostracism: Craig. Fight: Initially and for most of the first year,

Craig was the one to leave others out and to reinforce his position in class by being unkind

to others and exclude them from his friendship groups. This led to him being derogated by

others for being a bully and eventually placed him on the receiving end of the exclusionary

responses of others:

> *Craig teases Layla calling her Natalie (her middle name), Jacob turns to*
>
> *join in the conversation. He calls Craig "sad" for making fun of*
>
> *people's names. (09/11, S1)*

Tend and Befriend: One of the few people in the class who did not interact with

Craig is Dylan. Following this exchange early in first year:

> *One of the stories involves a boy who is stabbed. It contains the line*
>
> *"getting into trouble with the likes of Craig". Craig turns to Dylan and*
>
> *jokes "see, don't mess with the likes of me" Dylan gives him a look of*

complete disgust which is the first time I have witnessed Craig not

receiving positive recognition for his jokes and in general.(085/11, S1)

Subsequently, Craig does make an occasional effort with Dylan; however, this is rarely reciprocated:

Craig greets Dylan with a contrived sort of knuckle punch, grasp,

shoulder barge style handshake.(01/12, S1)

As Craig leaves, he fist pumps at Dylan who smiles awkwardly.(11/12,

S2)

Flight: Following exclusion, Craig would often demonstrate markedly quieter behaviours than usual. He became less voluble as second year progressed and his position as close ally of Charlie and Finlay waned. Perhaps due to his earlier belligerence (particularly in first year/S1), Craig found fewer and fewer pupils with whom to align himself.

Unusually Craig sits beside a girl and seems quieter than usual. (06/12,

S2)

When the video finishes the class chat but Craig concentrates upon

retying his tie.(06/12, S2)

Craig then gets on with his work, doesn't join in with Charlie and

Finlay's chat. (08/12, S2)

Responses to ostracism: Lily. From the school records I know that Lily had moved schools several times before high school and had changed her surname a number of times

for different 'fathers'. I also know that Lily changed her surname once during the observation.

Tend and Befriend: Lily did not display any fight responses whatsoever, and initially displayed tend and befriend responses to the dynamic amongst the girls in the class. Lily never fully seemed to 'fit in' with the girl group. This was especially clear when Catriona held a party where the girls were adorned with 'tattoos' on their hands and Lily wasn't invited (also cited in Chapter 4):

> *Catriona has had a party over the weekend and she, Emma and Charlotte*
>
> *have really intricate tattoos. I notice that Lily has tried to copy the*
>
> *designs on her hand in a green felt tip pen (11/11, S1)*

Lily often sought reassurance about her work from the class:

> *Lily regularly asks the girls "is this ok" as she holds up her work (09/11,*
>
> *S1)*

Freeze: On occasions where Lily was demonstrably ostracised I noted several times that there was an odd lack of affect or reaction which struck me as unusual at the time; this is consistent with a 'freeze' response:

> *Emma uses very pronounced body language to separate herself from Lily*
>
> *but orient herself to Charlotte. Lily appears unconcerned by this (09/11,*
>
> *S1)*

> *There seems to be some disruption between Craig and Lily, he's quite*
>
> *nasty towards her but I'm unsure why. He tells her "shut the fuck up" but*

I don't see that she said anything. She seems unperturbed by this. Craig

seems really riled (09/11, S1)

Lily's tend-and-befriend behaviours had all but disappeared by the beginning of second year (S2). In direct contrast to her earlier clothing choices, such as copying the clothes the satellite girls wore on dress down days, behaviour which perhaps claimed inclusion (for a more detailed discussion, see Chapter 4), Lily started to ignore school uniform completely and to wear heavy amounts of make-up and fake tan:

Lily and Layla still sit alone… I notice that they are all really smartly

dressed except Lily who wears a burgundy hoodie and pink converse

trainers (09/12, S2)

Lily then started to display exaggerated self-defeating behaviours such as failing to even attempt work or to be awkward or disenfranchised in group work:

Lily seems dejected and disengaged. Her body language and appearance

are lack lustre and lethargic (11/12, S2)

Lily asks for a toilet pass, says she feels really sick and seems to really

exaggerate her usual slumped posture. Seems really affected and I

wonder if this is more attention seeking than genuine. She claims to be

too weak to even open the door, teacher opens it for her (11/12, S2)

Lily reinforces her helpless role in this class saying "I don't know how to

make tea" I am unsure if this is a self-limiting technique as she feels

unable to accomplish the mime or she is simply looking for attention. I

am certain she is aware of how to make tea, not least because she has

just watched a demonstration (01/13, S3)

Freeze and Flight: Lily also alternated between freeze and flight behaviours in the same exchanges. A pattern involved trying to get involved in activities, making silly suggestions, and becoming belligerent when no one responds positively. She would become hostile and then opt out completely, refusing to get involved and withdraw to the side of the room:

The class are too small for any more than two groups the teacher

explains. Lily suggests that three would be better, "How does that work

then?" Aiden asks. Again he shakes his head. "eh no Lily, three groups

would be smaller than two" Lily says "nut, how?" Aiden and Katy both

bury their heads in their hands. "I don't know anything" she says "I've

never even heard of any of these things (11/12, S2)

Lily then tells everyone to take the lead role at the front of the diamond.

Refuses to do it herself. George is really mature and tries to quietly

organise the group and the others listen to him. He does not seem to

relish the lead role but takes it in the face of the disaster of the group so

far. The other group are well organised and working well as a group

whereas Lily's group are completely dysfunctional. When George steps

up to try to take charge, everyone except Lily gets involved. She sits

apart, chews her fingers (11/12, S2)

Responses to ostracism: Layla. Tend and befriend: Layla came from a small primary school and started completely alone with no initial peer group, struggling to establish positive social connections. Throughout first year (S1) Layla tried repeatedly to engineer friendships and forge bonds. In particular, she sought attention from the boys:

During the practical discussion Layla tries very hard to engage Charlie, actually flutters her eyelashes, tilts her head to the side and smiles but he is completely disinterested. (08/11, S1)

Lily joins Layla who is the only girl in a row of six boys. Layla tries to get attention from the boys (01/12, S21)

Layla sits behind Charlie at the demonstration. He turns and looks at her briefly. She smiles and as he turns back to the front, she tries to catch the other girls' eyes of those who are facing her. None of them are paying her any attention (11/11, S1)

Layla's positive overtures extended to helping behaviours:

At the end of Art, Layla hands out her Christmas cards. Steven receives his in Maths "where's mine?" asks Charlie? I have yours she smiles (begging the question why she didn't give it to him in Art, along with everyone else) "oh yeah, saving the best til last eh?" she smiles at him (11/12, S2)

Layla gets herself a ruler, hands one to Charlie, her partner and the boy next to Logan only (11/12, S2)

Layla also tried to forge bonds with the other girls in the class but never really succeeded:

> *I notice as she parts from Charlotte and Catriona, who have also missed*
> *the bus and are standing with two teachers who supervise the buses, she*
> *hugs them both simultaneously and they are reticent in their responses.*
> *Maybe it is the presence of the adults or perhaps Layla is trying to forge*
> *or create a stronger bond than is actually there or they reciprocate?*
> *(08/11, S1)*

In contrast to Lily and Craig, Layla's responses to her continued and sustained ostracism don't really fit very well with the temporal need-threat model. Layla did self-limit and she often displayed self-defeating behaviours, but her responses were often dramatic but not especially confrontational, in a manner that did not map clearly on to fight or flight as a response type. Coding Layla's behaviour thus required some adaptations to include a dramatic and emotional, but not confrontational version of the fight response:

> *Layla struggles to co-ordinate her steps with the others, claims to be*
> *unable to count to two and cannot distinguish left or right. Is incredibly*
> *frustrating for Aiden and Katy who are trying to take charge. Layla,*
> *however, is getting a lot of attention and encouragement so it makes*
> *sense for her to continue to pretend to be helpless. It is only when the*
> *teacher steps in and takes over that Layla gets very huffy as if she is*
> *being asked to complete an impossible task and the teacher is being*
> *unreasonable. She then adopts a hurt manner and looks upset as if she is*

being made to look foolish whereas she relished this role amongst her

peers (12/12, S2)

One interpretation of this behaviour could be that the heightened responses are a tend-and-befriend strategy to elicit sympathy and forge a bond. However, in the following example the response is coupled with a request to move seats, which is more consistent with a flight response:

When Layla's name is called Charlie informs the class that

"unfortunately she is here" Finlay, Mason, Charlie and Craig all

snigger. Finlay stares at Layla, at the back of her head. She looks upset

and angry and is allowed to move next to the girls (03/12, S2)

Layla often looked sad and dejected rather than emotionally flattened as in a freeze response; that is, there was an active, communicative component to the display in drawing the attention of others:

Layla watches her every move, stares, looks very sad (05/13, S2)

Layla continually flirts and creates constant dramas around herself

(02/14, S3)

Layla often disappeared from class with an illness or injury. She was virtually the only pupil to require first aid during my time in class:

Layla has gone to first aid as she feels dizzy "there's always some

drama" comments Jacob (03/13, S2)

Freeze: Layla displayed a 'freeze'-type response by self-limiting her academic efforts and either voicing genuine difficulty or feigning inability to try or participate. This became more marked in third year (S3). Given she was often mocked and derogated for her academic shortcomings, this is potentially an adaptive response but one which only appeared from second year onwards; up until then, she did appear to try to perform as well as she could. Throughout third and fourth year, a more obvious freeze/flight response from Layla was to stop attending school with any regularity (also covered in Chapter 3) and then, as she was invited to try sitting her National 5 prelims, she stopped attending altogether and did not take the opportunity presented:

> *Layla gives up and does nothing, holding her head in her hand (01/12, S1)*

> *Class are writing up a laboratory report and Layla has forgotten her jotter and the sheet of paper she had started working on yesterday. She receives a punishment exercise and returns to her seat making faces of nonchalance to Charlotte and Catriona as she sits she shrugs, shakes her head (03/13, S2)*

> *Layla sits on the floor, behind a pillar, on her own, on her phone (03/13, S2)*

> *Layla then says three times "I can't do it" "it's easy" says Logan (06/13, S3)*

Responses to ostracism: Dylan. Dylan rarely displayed a tend-and-befriend-type response. During the first few weeks of first year, he tried to respond to Charlie's move

away from him by making some overtures towards Craig, for example, but this was unusual. He was mostly surly and aggressive or disruptive throughout the first part of the data period:

> *Charlie asks for a move away from Dylan, says he's annoying him,*
>
> *poking him all the time. He requests a move to sit by Finlay. Dylan is a*
>
> *friend from primary and Finlay is a new friend. Teacher permits this;*
>
> *surprisingly Dylan then starts to chat to Craig. I've never heard him chat*
>
> *before (09/11, S1)*

Dylan also appeared to become utterly disengaged after being ignored in group work. The more Dylan was treated as invisible by others, the more invisible he seemed to become:

> *Craig and Charlie discuss the class task, Dylan is sitting with them but is*
>
> *completely disengaged from the discussion, he does, however, write*
>
> *down the answers the other two come up with and checks Charlie's jotter*
>
> *to copy him (09/11, S1)*

In terms of 'fight' responses, Dylan was quite aggressive initially and threatened Oscar. Oscar retaliated by bringing a weapon to school and threatening Dylan with it. Dylan was never as visibly aggressive following that episode, retreating more and more into himself, even when Oscar did not return to school:

> *Dylan corners Oscar at the back of the class, against the wall and is*
>
> *about triple Oscar's size. Oscar is visibly threatened by Dylan, who, for*
>
> *the first time looks like he in enjoying himself. I catch them in a tug of*

war over a pencil; Oscar looks beseechingly at me and says "it wasn't

me!" (09/11, S1)

The above episode was also rather exceptional for Dylan, who was not habitually aggressive and his behaviour coincided with his separation from his primary school class 'buddy' Charlie. Pupils were paired up with one member from their primary school where possible and often those initial partnerships remained constant over time. Charlie, however, made a definite move towards Finlay, and Dylan seemed unable to substitute another friend to take Charlie's place, thus leaving him ostracised from this time onwards. Dylan rarely tried to escape or avoid situations or display flight behaviours. Instead, Dylan's most frequent response type was 'freeze' (21 examples). The 'blankness' he displayed was noted from his primary school records and he was flagged as requiring transitional support. His exclusion by peers started from the first few weeks of first year:

Emotional 'flatness' or lack of affect:

Dylan is struggling in this class and looks as glum as ever (08/11, S1)

I notice that Dylan almost never engages in any form of social

communication (01/13, S2)

Dylan has not yet spoken despite being a group of only 8 (06/13, S3)

Dylan looks up for a second, I catch his eye and smile, he looks at me but

is blank, neither smiling nor frowning (11/13, S3)

Self-defeating behaviour:

Class offer several ideas and he gets to Dylan who claims not to know anything. Mr Mitchell says "I can see that, you have your fingers in an electricity socket!" the class laugh and Dylan says "no, I'm not!" although he did have his fingers in the socket. (03/13, S2)

Following the marking of the quiz, those who get 10/10 are asked to "stand up" Dylan volunteers nothing. Ms Grant asks him "what did you get Dylan?" he mumbles "10" "why are you not standing?" She asks. Dylan simply shrugs. Recognition is clearly not a motivational force for Dylan (11/13, S3)

More general 'flat' isolated responses:

Dylan is isolated from the boys, arrived late and is not wearing any uniform (06/12, S2)

Dylan has no school bag. Dylan is completely isolated from the other boys, sits quietly (11/12, S2)

Dylan sits removed from the rest, says nothing (11/12, S2)

Both Layla's and Dylan's responses to ostracism echo the findings of a study by Twenge, Catanese and Baumeister (2002) looking at self-defeating behaviour as a response to ostracism. When participants were advised they would end up alone, the results indicated that, compared to controls, participants chose riskier, self-defeating behaviours such as higher odds lottery tickets and unhealthy snack choices respectively. It is important to note that Twenge et al. (2002) were not suggesting that their participants deliberately

sought abject failure; rather, they propose that their participants chose self-defeating

outcomes which retained at least some positive benefits for the participants (better prizes if

winning and the tasty if unhealthy snacks). In the present study, neither Layla nor Dylan sat

any formal examinations. Whilst not sitting exams is on the face of it a negative outcome, it

is possible that not attending school and not sitting exams may have represented an

adaptive response for Layla and Dylan, in that it insulated them from possible failure.

Successfully Responding to Ostracism: From Exclusion to Inclusion

In contrast to the majority of pupils who faced chronic ostracism, there were two

pupils who were able to transform their inclusion status: Jacob and Lucas. Crucially,

neither had low SES and both were academically capable. Their position began to change

as academic performance became salient at school and formal examinations came closer.

They also benefited from the tendency towards academic ability-based social groups during

their third and fourth years. As the classes diversified by individual subject choice, social

groups became more fluid and classes were comprised of a greater variety of pupils. Both

Jacob and Lucas were then able to navigate their way out of their previously excluded

positions by employing different strategies.

Responses to ostracism: Jacob. Rather than being completely ostracised, Jacob's

interactions were limited to a very small group in the class and the others in the class

ridiculed him for his odd behaviours. For example, he paced when uncomfortable. The

following examples are labelled as 'flight' as Jacob paced to avoid awkward social

situations where he was picked on, ridiculed or left out:

Emma gives Jacob a very dirty look in this demonstration as Jacob is

constantly nudging her and generally it is very annoying as he paces

(09/11, S1)

The librarian doesn't seem to understand Jacob's slight rocking/pacing and persists in telling him to stand up straight, keep still (09/11, S1)

Jacob also displayed flight-type responses where he tried to physically leave the room or situation. In this example, Jacob and William had been truant from school, a very rare phenomenon at this stage of first year (S1) and also quite out of character for two boys who were usually quiet, compliant, and socially awkward:

Mr Love comes to check that William (and perhaps Jacob) are in class

and William comments to Jacob, "For some unknown reason, teachers

keep following us to check that we are in school. Just 'cos we went out of

school yesterday. I'm doing that again!" I subsequently discovered that

he had left school without permission on Friday (08/11, S1)

In terms of 'fight' responses, Jacob rarely challenged behaviour but he did get involved in a discussion about bullying:

Jacob turns to join in the conversation. He calls Craig "sad" for making

fun of people's names (09/11, S1)

In response to some difficult situations in which he was routinely picked upon, Jacob used a tend-and-befriend response. Most often, this involved demonstrating his humorous or disruptive side in the absence of Craig, Finlay, and Charlie. He only

demonstrated this in the Drama class, from which Craig, Finlay, and Charlie had all been
permanently removed for insubordination or misbehaviour:

> *The class discuss Hamlet. Teacher says that Hamlet's father has been*
> *killed and Jacob announces in a stupid sort of voice "He was murdered –*
> *spoiler alert". Teacher then tells class that Hamlet's uncle marries*
> *Hamlet's mother 'his uncle killed his dad' shouts out Jacob. He is*
> *threatened with being asked to leave (01/13, S2)*

Jacob then developed this humorous side in conjunction with being noticeably
cleverer than most of the other pupils. Teachers mostly indulged his interruptions as
amusing, which helped him to gain popularity and respect from other pupils. Critically,
Jacob thus used tend-and-befriend responses *successfully*, something that none of the other
ostracised pupils managed:

> *They talk of prospective careers and Jacob notes "I will be a bank*
> *robber but with brains (01/14, S3)*

> *Jacob also does lots of impressions (mostly on topic) and is actually*
> *pretty funny (01/14, S3)*

> *"How can this situation be resolved? Jacob suggests "talk to them?"*
> *"Yes" agrees the teacher and he follows it up with "then kidnap their*
> *children" (05/14, S3)*

Jacob also used his new-found confidence and developing popularity over his third
year (S3) to assert a position over pupils such as Brian, who was similarly intelligent but

lacked the same ability to inject humour into conversations. Brian was also habitually

highly competitive, as detailed in Chapter 3:

> *every time Brian speaks (he is engaged and interested) Jacob talks right*
>
> *over him (05/14, S3)*

> *Teacher then takes Jacob's jotter to look at his work "I don't mean to*
>
> *brag" adds Jacob. Brian then asks "what did you get in Chemistry?"*
>
> *"54" Jacob replies (01/15, S4)*

Jacob also later seemed to have found a strong position, not just with the few boys

from the original class, but a wider group of friends, mostly all intelligent and humorous

boys:

> *Jacob must be first further on but doesn't say. Ricky says "10" is hard,*
>
> *how do you do it?" Jacob has to turn back several pages to reach it. It's*
>
> *a simple solution, then Ricky gets it "you really should have worked that*
>
> *out Ricky, you let me down!"(03/15, S4)*

Jacob was also very confident laterally with the teachers, which the other pupils

enjoyed and he often caused great hilarity with dry comments:

> *Lucas says "I've got no paper" "what? You're only telling me now?"*
>
> *"Give him a slap!" shouts Jacob from the back of the class. "There are*
>
> *laws regarding that sort of thing Jacob!" "ahh but I'm offering, I'll give*
>
> *him a slap? (01/15, S4)*

Jacob was thus able to gain acceptance and inclusion following initial experiences of ostracism. This was facilitated by his obvious competence in domains that were valued by the institution, and which became increasingly salient over time. In this way, the academic ability-based hierarchy provided by the institution (e.g., through class streaming and exam outcomes) provided a means by which Jacob could (re)claim social value and be socially included, despite earlier experiences of exclusion based on more pupil-driven dimensions of popularity based social value.

Responses to ostracism: Lucas. Like Jacob, Lucas was a bright, capable pupil who experienced ostracism throughout most of the early stages of the data period, by virtue of being quiet, studious, and rather eccentric. However, Lucas' strategy was markedly different to Jacob's. Lucas did not demonstrate responses to ostracism which fitted with the temporal need-threat model; instead, Lucas consistently positioned himself as clever, and when academic performance became increasingly salient over time, he was able to harness a key social value structure within exam-focussed classes.

Initially, Lucas's eagerness to answer questions in class and display his knowledge tended not to endear him to his new (S1) classmates:

> *1st Year: Lucas answers a question very articulately and Emma and*
>
> *Catriona actually turn themselves away from him (09/11, S1)*

As illustrated in the positioning analyses in the previous section, having somewhere to sit is important in classes, and pupils could become very distressed if there was nowhere suitable to sit. In this example, Lucas is moved about the class until he finally sits on a stool, on his own, facing the wall:

Connor sits beside Jacob which is usually Lucas's seat. Jacob says "this is the new improved Lucas haha" "but that is where I sit?" Lucas replies. Lucas then takes a spare seat from the boys table and carries it to the girls table rather than sit at the vacant space with Charlie, Craig and Finlay. He sits down but Lily arrives a bit late and says "that's my seat!" Neil tries to help by indicating the wooden desk at the front but Mason says "that's mine!" Lucas looks both upset and angry. He takes a seat facing the wall "I might as well just sit here then" he says resignedly (02/12, S1)

It is noticeable that there are two spare seats on either side of Lucas in his row; everyone else sits side by side:

Class are doing a computer session. Class choose seats as follows: Charlotte, Catriona, Katy, Dylan, Emma, Finlay, Charlie, Craig, Neil, space, space, Lucas, space, space, Lily, Ollie, George, Jacob and William (06/12, S2)

By fourth year, however, Lucas' position had changed dramatically. Having been placed in high-performance classes with lots of other capable pupils, Lucas was much more socially included.

4th Year: Lucas has his arm on the table, right over Callum's half of the desk, jokes with Jacob, who he is in line with, says something about Callum. Leans behind Callum then to continue chatting to Jacob. They laugh… Lucas tries to emphasise a point, digs his chin into Callum's

back as he does so. They seem to be discussing strobe lighting. Lucas

then turns to chat to George behind him, Jacob joins in the chat. Lucas

puts on a silly affected voice "I suck at Maths" "yeah – you should get

an award for it" agrees Jacob. They laugh; they know they are pretty

good at Maths and amongst the brightest in the class (11/14, S4)

Lucas' trajectory was thus strongly shaped by his ability to embody institutionally-valued characteristics of academic performance, more so even than Jacob, who was also highly academically able. In contrast, Jacob cultivated inclusion by peers as much through humour and mischievous interactions with teachers. By sticking consistently to simply performing his academic performance, Lucas was thus able to capitalise upon two emergent features of the institutional setting (Harre & Langenhove, 1991; Davies & Harre (1990): the new network of friends offered by the changing class structure as pupils chose their subjects, and the increasing importance placed on academic performance. The school provided the increased focus upon performance and achievement together with the formal exam structure and this permitted Lucas to position himself in a more positive and ultimately successful position relative to his peers, and relative to his previous position.

Lucas says, to himself, "I am smart, S.M.A.R.T, oh S.M.A.R.T." then

says "finally, something challenging" (02/14, S3)

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Wirth & Williams (2009) found that being ostracised for an enduring characteristic, such as being academic in Lucas' case, was harder to escape from than group memberships which were more transient. In contrast, the present findings indicate that in the long term, opportunities afforded by the institution are a critical moderator of such outcomes. Lucas's recovery from ostracism involved an

alignment with emergent social value systems, specifically, the increasing institutional focus upon academic performance.

Discussion

Being included and having a sense of belonging are fundamental to wellbeing (Leary & Baumeister, 2017; Hornsey & Jetten, 2004: Crocker & Major, 1989), yet many school children are faced with chronic ostracism and its potentially highly-negative effects (Williams, 2007). Some of the reasons that pupils find it hard to 'fit in' with their peers have been detailed in Chapters 3-5, and reflect wider socio-structural factors such as socio-economic status and gender. This chapter has in turn placed more emphasis on social evaluations at a more individual, peer-on-peer level. As in each of the preceding chapters, however, the experiences of the pupils analysed in this chapter have been inextricably linked with the institution in which they were observed: their school.

Typically the pupils who were able to embody school principles of inclusion and cohesion were more popular (Charlie's popularity and his hybrid identity management strategies are well developed in Chapters 3 and 4 of this volume). Similarly, both Lucas and Jacob were able to reverse their persistent ostracism by emphasising their intelligence and wit to coincide with increased opportunities to share their knowledge. Not only did the increased focus upon exams occur from S3 onwards, but the changing class structures also allowed both pupils the opportunities to claim social value through characteristics which were enshrined by the values and aspirations of the school. Put simply, the data have demonstrated that structure and institution intersect with pupil inclusion and exclusion. Pupils include and exclude each other but they do so in ways which are shaped by the value

systems and structures promoted by the school: academic success and pro-social, community-focussed behaviour.

Extending Models of Ostracism

The unique method employed in this study offers an important contribution to research on ostracism. The analyses in this chapter offer support for William's (2009; 2011) temporal need-threat model in terms of common response patterns to ostracism (e.g., Dylan's extreme flattened affect). For those who lacked academic ability, their dominant and ultimate response was flight. I was alarmed by how many of the pupils left the cohort during their school career, and tracking those who left prematurely highlighted the ostracism they faced daily which was often so chronic and mundane it became commonplace and absorbed into the fabric of daily school life. Pupils like Lily, Layla, and Dylan were ostracised from their first weeks in school and from then never achieved social status or cohesion.

In turn, the pupil trajectories analysis revealed ways in which this model could be extended to account for responses to chronic ostracism as they unfold in natural settings. Lucas, for example, did not display any of the behaviours the model predicts. Lucas and Jacob were both able to attract value to themselves by virtue of their compliance with the ideology of schools – by being clever and applying themselves – and thus also gained acceptance and recognition from their peers who were similarly invested in academic success. While both pupils responded to their ostracism in very different ways, their outcomes were both shaped by the institution in that they were both able to transform their isolation into social acceptance through the School's recognition of academic achievement.

Lily and Layla also demonstrated behaviours which did not fit obviously with the temporal need-threat model. Particularly in relation to teenagers who can have heightened or flattened affect, the 'flight' component of the model would benefit from incorporating a 'dramatic' response in addition to the hostility response. For example, Layla often used dramatic, emotive responses. With Layla, and to a lesser extent Lily, there was also a sexualised response to exclusion which isn't well explained by the model: both girls became increasingly flirtatious and adapted their appearance accordingly. Whilst this could be explained by their development and sexual maturation, they were the only girls whom I witnessed to overtly change their appearance in a similar manner from S2 onwards.

The analysis in this chapter has also highlighted that whilst experimental paradigms are useful for testing causal processes involved in ostracism, they do not fully capture the dynamics of ostracism as it occurs over an extended period in 'real' settings. Ostracism occurs chronically for some pupils, but also operates in a mundane, everyday reality to which some pupils resign themselves. The outcomes of ostracism are ultimately social and structural and, as noted above, those who recovered from ostracism were those who had the ability to utilise some shared social value between the social and structural/institutional setting. In contrast, the outcomes for the chronically-ostracised pupils were somewhat bleak. Layla and Dylan were the only two of those suffering chronic ostracism to stay in school and not seek a transfer elsewhere. Both pupils ultimately left school with no qualifications and Dylan was noted by a member of staff to have returned to the school some months after he stopped attending and was witnessed throwing stones at the building. Understanding the mechanisms of inclusion, exclusion, and ostracism are crucial to protecting vulnerable pupils like Dylan and Layla whose failed school careers could

perhaps be predicted from their inability to gain social traction in their first few weeks of school.

Practical Implications

In terms of interventions for schools to adopt, pupils could perhaps be asked to complete simple surveys in their first months of high school to ascertain the extent and number of their social connections. This would enable social network analyses (Scott, 1988) to identify pupils with limited social connectivity. From this cohort, it could be also be predicted that the least affluent and also possibly the most eccentric are likely to be vulnerable to ostracism. Identifying vulnerable individuals as early as possible before social hierarchies become very established would be the first step to ameliorating some the factors which increase their isolation. Disallowing free seating choices, for example, or encouraging pupils to sit together rather than leaving noticeable gaps would also remove key opportunities for systematic exclusion. Whilst these matters appear trivial, pupils who are being ostracised have increasingly limited opportunities to forge social bonds as emergent group norms develop whereby leaving out particular pupils is seen as perhaps 'normal' or 'acceptable'. Simple but possibly effective classroom management practices that bring pupils closer together may help ostracised pupils to have at least some increased social contact.

Ultimately, when considering the outcomes of all the ostracised pupils in the present analysis, the key message of this chapter is that role of the institution must be examined. Institutions create social value structures which elevate some pupils at the expense of others. All of the pupils featured experienced ostracism, but their incredibly diverse outcomes are explicable at least in part by the extent to which the individuals could

interact with the institution and utilise institutional value systems to successfully claim

social value.

CHAPTER 7

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The aim of this research was to investigate how young people negotiate positive

social value in a continually-stratifying institutional setting. Based on a four-year

ethnographic study in a school in Scotland, the analyses have demonstrated a complex

interplay between bottom-up identity management strategies developed by pupils and top-

down institutional influences that shape recognition opportunities. By understanding the

process of recognition and social value negotiation in a stratifying environment such as a

school, the findings presented in this thesis can inform and extend current theoretical

models pertaining to identity management, social mobility, and ostracism in particular, and

also offer insight into the dynamics of persistent social inequality based around social class

systems and gender.

The ethnographic method allowed the data collection process to be flexible and

responsive to unfolding events and was a highly-iterative process. The longitudinal aspect

of the project meant being immersed with the young people for at least one day per week

for four years. This extended time frame allowed for insight and understanding of specific

interactions and events, and also how these fitted into pupils' longer-term development

over several years, offering insights which would otherwise have been impossible. The

initial research question was not pre-determined by any specific theoretical premise or

preconception, even if the broad concern with social value and recognition guided the

research from the outset. Reflection on the initial data collection and consideration of relevant theory-driven themes led to the development of a hybrid coding scheme. The analysis process which followed produced results which developed organically over the duration of the project, leading to a unique set of findings.

Implications for Theory and Established Findings

The findings of the thesis have posed a range of novel and varied ways of looking at established social psychological theories and bodies of research. Across the four empirical chapters, some key themes and findings are as follows: Chapter 3 examined the interplay between institutional practices and pupils' identity management strategies, and suggested that one consequence of negotiating social value in a continually-stratifying environment was that pupils developed highly-fluid and interactive strategies, or hybrid identity management strategies that combine elements of different identity management strategies in ways that have not previously been considered within social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Chapter 4 focused upon the expression of socio-economic inequality within schools, and highlighted an unexpected morality-based dimension to the differential value placed on pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds. Specifically, pupils from impoverished backgrounds not only faced institutionally-defined standards of competence and ability that co-varied with social class, but were more likely to be judged negatively in terms of morality – for example, falling foul of disciplinary standards because of inadequate material preparation for class, or because of inconsistent application of standards by teachers. The moral component of the low SES stereotype created an additional focus for the current social class stereotype threat literature to consider (Croizet & Claire, 1998; Croizet et al., 2001). Turning to focus on gender, Chapter 5 presented a

unique analysis which laid bare the complicity between bottom-up sexist behaviour and social organisation, promulgated by pupils, and top-down validations (both implicit and explicit) of those sexist structures by teachers. When combined with institutional norms, toxic environments were created which negatively shaped the experiences of highly academically-capable girls in STEM learning environments. Finally, Chapter 6 examined the relations which are negotiated between peers, focusing on ostracism. The key contribution of this analysis was that the longer-term outcomes of ostracism were shaped by the opportunities afforded by the institution. This adds an important dimension to prevailing models of social ostracism in terms of understanding different responses to episodes of ostracism by bringing the institutional setting into the frame of analysis. The institutional setting opened up longer-term responses to ostracism that are not currently predicted by the temporal need-threat model (Williams, 2009), including using institutionally-defined values such as academic achievement, to allow some pupils the opportunity to work their way back towards an inclusive relationship with their peers. The key contributions of each chapter in theoretical terms are elaborated below.

In terms of identity management strategies and responses to devaluation, I suggested in Chapter 3 that pupils appear to internalise their expected achievement pathway (National 3, 4, or 5) as a stigmatised group identity (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). The stigmatised pupils also often relinquished the opportunity for individual social mobility, which was unexpected and runs somewhat counter to predictions regarding permeable group boundaries and individual mobility derived from social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Wright et al., 1990). Focussing upon individual-level responses to evaluation and devaluation, pupil mobility and social creativity strategies were then

examined. Pupils were found to display an astonishing range of responses which were often related to the relative perceived academic standard of the class, or the individuals beside whom they were seated. Specifically in boys, when in proximity to those who favoured academic success, one pupil chose to align themselves with the high performing pupils and often loudly eschewed the disruptive, underperforming pupils, yet when seated with the same underperforming pupils the same pupil instead flipped to devaluing the subject matter itself – a quite different strategy that functioned to ingratiate him with his immediate audience.

In stark contrast to the flexibility highlighted above, another pupil tended to use the same but unique hybrid strategy which combined elements of both social mobility and social creativity (Jackson et al., 1996; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This pupil created a niche for himself as a model pupil, but he also used a socially-creative approach to elevate the status of his group by demonstrating leadership and modelling pro-social behaviours. He encouraged his lower-status peers to behave in accordance with school policy, thus negotiating positive value for the group as pro-social, compliant and hard working. This hybridised approach is unusual and suggests that individual- and group-level strategies such as individual mobility and social creativity are not mutually exclusive (cf. Hogg, 2016, Tajfel & Turner, 1979; 1986; van Knippenberg, & Ellemers, 2003). In contrast, social identity theory typically presents the strategies of individual mobility and social creativity as alternative choices when faced with unfavourable group comparisons. The findings here indicate that both strategies can co-exist, with an individual achieving value at an individual level and transcending their stigmatised group membership as an academic low-achiever, but also elevating the entire under-achieving group by positively subverting

school staffs' expectations of a low-set class with significant behavioural issues and featuring pupils from predominately low-to-deprived SES backgrounds.

Chapter 4 also highlights how institutions such as school can recapitulate socio-economic inequality, but that it does so through applying standards of moral behaviour (e.g., good discipline; being compliant; helping teachers) as much as it does through standards of academic competence (cf. Croizet & Claire, 1998; Croizet, et al., 2001). On the one hand, this offers opportunities for individual pupils from poorer backgrounds to claim value in terms of moral behaviour as evidenced in Chapter 3, even if they are not high-achievers in an academic sense. Conversely, however, the same institutionally-defined moral standards also disadvantage pupils from lower SES backgrounds. Some pupils, particularly girls, were more likely to be considered immoral compared to their wealthier peers. In addition to carrying the weight of a low-competence stereotype, it was observed that these pupils were also stereotyped as being lower in terms of morality as a function of their social class. Whilst these findings represent a small subset of the data, they are nonetheless important and ask important questions of the current stereotype threat literature, suggesting that it could be extended to encompass dimensions of morality as well as more well-established effects relating to stereotypes of competence (e.g., Steele & Aronson, 1995; Spencer et al., 1999).

A key theoretical contribution of Chapter 5 was in addressing the experience and engagement of girls in STEM subjects, which occupies much of the education literature (e.g. Smith, 2011; Kulturel-Konak, D'Allegro & Dickinson, 2011). Girls were often more passive and compliant in classes than boys, but close observation of the interactions in STEM revealed a particularly insidious side to this gender dynamic. Throughout their

schooling, very capable and academically-excellent girls were subjugated by the boys in their classes, specifically in traditionally male-dominated subjects like Mathematics and Sciences. Critically, when pupils overtly displayed misogyny and sexism, it was never addressed by the teachers; indeed, gender stereotypes were reinforced by teachers on several occasions. The intersection of bottom-up sexist attitudes and top-down complicity from the institution created a gendered environment in which boys repeatedly held dominion in class over girls, who were often exceedingly talented in the subject matter. The close analysis of micro-contexts within the science classes demonstrated that this interplay between (1) bottom-up sexist attitudes, (2) top-down, teacher-driven complicity in those attitudes, and (3) classroom practices such as free-form group work that gave power to male pupils, created degrading and disenfranchising experiences for female pupils trying to succeed in traditionally male expertise subjects. Belfi, Goos, De Fraine, & Van Damme, 2012) report that same-sex classes are beneficial for girls, but that results are inconclusive for boys. Clark Blickenstaff (2005) suggests that classes should be inclusive of both genders; however, the results presented here closely observing co-educational laboratory classes would argue against this recommendation and suggest instead trialling same-sex laboratory classes. It would be useful to determine if they were sufficient to undermine prevailing sexist attitudes towards girls and allow girls to proceed unhindered by misogynistic power structures in classes.

Chapter 6 critically considered Williams' (2009) temporal need-threat model of ostracism in terms of how individuals responded to ostracism. A key insight is that pupil responses and longer-term outcomes were shaped by the institutional setting of the school: a point which is not typically acknowledged in experimental ostracism research. Ostracism

experiences tended to be chronic and the responses, whilst bearing resemblance to Williams' model, do also depart from the theory in important ways. First, the 'flight' component of the model could perhaps be extended to incorporate overtly dramatic responses and even sexualised or flirtatious responses to ostracism. Second, because the institution's value hierarchy is somewhat different to pupil's bottom-up hierarchies, the institutional setting offered opportunities in the long run to harness the social value systems provided by the institution to reclaim social value and inclusion. For example, being clever when academic success was most valued allowed some pupils to obtain formal recognition for their abilities which, when coupled with the streaming by performance policy of the institution, meant that they displayed institutionally-defined desirable qualities, gained social value traction and reversed their chronic ostracism. Overall, theory and research on ostracism would benefit from closer consideration of the institutional settings within which ostracism frequently occurs.

Methodological Strengths and Limitations

A unique strength of the research is the intensive and long-term ethnographic approach. The fully-immersive process allowed close understanding of manifest behaviours observed as far as possible without manipulation or researcher instruction. All behaviours were captured on a daily basis in the most naturalistic manner possible. Researcher familiarity with the participants and the culture and institution in which they were embedded allowed sense to be made from complex social phenomena, not least of all because those phenomena were also placed in long-term *temporal* context (i.e., in the context of pupil's development over four years), as well as the in-the-moment institutional context. It was precisely these features of the methodological approach that allowed the

analysis to offer fresh insights into established social theories and highlight hitherto underexplored phenomena for future consideration. In particular, most pupils changed substantially between S1 and S4 and the analysis of their trajectories has provided a uniquely-detailed account of adolescent social value negotiation over time and, specifically, within a stratifying institution.

In addition to the strength of the ethnographic method, its long-term nature meant that the analytic process was reflexive throughout. The time and space allowed for reflection with an extended project, allowed the analytic frame to develop iteratively as events unfolded. This in turn allowed the key theoretical concerns that informed the formal analysis to be shaped by the phenomena themselves, rather than placing a rigid, a priori constraint on what was considered to be 'relevant' or not. In this way, the analysis process was reflexive in terms of the relationship between theory and phenomena, as well as between researcher and data. This has allowed me to use theory to make sense of phenomena on the one hand, but also to allow the phenomena themselves to shape those theories in return.

Typically, generalisability from ethnographic studies can be seen as a key limitation rather than a strength, embedded as it is within one particular culture in one particular timeframe. Current qualitative methodology evaluations, however, rely upon principles such as contextual sensitivity, commitment and rigour, transparency and coherence, impact and importance (Yardley, 2000) and not generalisability. Tracy (2010) adds sincerity, credibility, and resonance and ethical to the list of standards by which to evaluate excellent qualitative methodology and research. Smith (2018) advises that generalisability, however, can be naturalistic meaning that the reader can find resonance in the work presented which

coincides with their own personal experience. It is here that the generalisability of this study fits. The richly detailed vignettes presented throughout are of ordinary, everyday experiences which most readers will find familiar to some extent from their own school day recollections. Similarly, the characters described throughout this thesis may also resonate or seen identifiable with characters readers have met in their own lives or school careers. Furthermore, longitudinal ethnographic research allows for phenomena to be captured and recaptured many times. Rather than an attempt to present the naturally occurring findings of this chapter as generalisable in a basic descriptive sense, the findings instead serve as an immutable, critical test of the limits of many current theoretical premises, thus problematising some more static accounts of behaviour by presenting suggestions for theoretical extensions and revision (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Extended access to an institution has also been a key strength of this project. Whilst a school was the chosen institution in this project, institutions are an essential feature of organised societies; prisons, hospitals, Government offices to name a few. The key principles of institutional life are here framed in terms of education but are transferrable as concepts to other examples of institutional life. Similarly, as specific as this project was, it was also generalisable in terms of the routine aspect of the target population's experiences. Pupils attend comprehensive schools all over the UK and those pupils will be streamed by academic performance, will be of varying socio-economic backgrounds, and will compete with each other in subjects which hold culturally specific values. In this study, one of the arenas of competition was the Science laboratory, but in another school it may be Music practice rooms or upon the playing fields. Whilst the subject matter is arguably singular to the project and context specific, the *principles* drawn out from the analysis are general,

generalizable, and likely to be replicated in similar institutional settings. Where people are stratified and hierarchically arranged along relatively arbitrary dimensions, there will be varying levels of stigmatisation, competition, and inequality. Individuals lacking the valued commodities within each institutional culture are vulnerable to ostracism, and the cultural frame provided by the institution will create social value systems and norms which individuals can resist, comply with, or opt out of entirely. For these reasons, the institutional focus of the analysis has been a key strength and has potential to explain some of the variance of human behaviour of those residing within various institutions.

Whilst the methodological strengths of this project are clearly outlined above there were also important limitations. From the outset, the project was conducted entirely at the behest of the school's rules and the permissions they were prepared to grant. There was no control over participant selection, and, as mentioned in Chapter 2, pupils could also be withdrawn from the study at any point by their parents which would render an entire class unobservable, thus restricting the opportunities for observing particular cohorts or class compositions. This did impact upon the ability to observe certain classes; however, the pupils who were withdrawn were not part of the original class cohort and no data were removed as a result.

The data collection process was also limited to one field researcher and reliant entirely upon field notes which cannot ever claim to be facsimile accounts of interactions or events. The data collection process was also restricted to manifest behaviours without any access to or discussion of psychological states or emotions with participants. Clearly, for clarification of pupils' subjective orientations or 'inner world', additional methods would have been required. Balanced against this, the omission of alternative methods was

necessary to protect the integrity of the ethnographic approach. The school gave permission

for follow-up, post-observation informal interviews and specific parental consent was

sought for all selected pupils, for example. However, the organising Rector was unable to

collate the consents and schedule the interviews before the S4 students left school for their

formal examination study period. Recorded interviews would have perhaps offered insight

and corroboration of some of the major claims of this thesis, but the absence of any control

over the observed population was difficult throughout the process and this final omission

had to be accepted. Ultimately, this thesis comprises a rich account of pupil experience but,

unfortunately, not from their perspective. The data corpus was sufficient to stand alone as

an ethnographic body of work, but insight into pupils' own subjective orientations would

have been optimal in addition to the strength of the observational data collected.

The immersive nature of ethnographic work is a key strength of this project but

only if the researcher is fully accepted into their chosen culture. I spent considerable time

reflecting upon how best to appear to pupils to minimise researcher impact, and the

experience was effortful at times. Being unable to intervene when watching pupils being

insulted, picked on, ostracised and isolated was difficult, as was witnessing incidents of

unfairness, inequality and the subjugation of girls who often deserved so much better from

their peers and from their teacher. Witnessing the daily effects of grinding poverty and

misogyny was unpleasant, but necessary for the data to actively reflect social conditions

and the often pernicious effects of stratification as realistically as possible. The extended

nature of this project has allowed significant time for reflection and undoubtedly sharing

the experience of impoverished and ostracised pupils' daily lives will have shaped the

analysis by opening up a perspective into the reality of poverty and inequality that I had hitherto been unexposed to in any active sense.

One final limitation concerning both the data collection and the analysis process was the length of time taken by both. As mentioned above, the project was seven years long with at least another year of planning, preparing and completing the six-month orientation placement as a behaviour support worker. The analysis was time consuming and required a creative hybrid coding strategy. Given the familiarity gained with all the pupils concerned, bias and pre-existing theoretical beliefs were a concern throughout the lengthy analysis (Drury & Stott, 2001). To mitigate against some of this bias, all pupil names were changed prior to coding which allowed some distance to be created between the pupil and their pseudonym to the extent that, for some pupils, I have to think of their 'actual' name rather than the character that was created for analysis. My personal likes and dislikes for pupils and teachers could also have been an issue; however, having spent so much time with each, even their most distasteful behaviours were considered in context with their situation and their position within a sometimes unforgiving and rigid institutional frame.

Moreover, as stated in Chapter 2, it is important to consider how my political and social beliefs may have shaped the research process. For one thing, I was surprised by some of the events and incidents I witnessed. At the outset of the data collection I did not expect gender to become a key focus of the project. I was as surprised as I was dismayed to witness everyday sexism in practice amongst young people, and to some extent my socio-political views became increasingly radicalised by the research process. Furthermore, my belief in equality of opportunity irrespective of background, class, and gender increased

over the research process as I witnessed those obstructing progress for pupils. My

increasing sensitisation to palpable inequality has undoubtedly sharpened the focus of this

project and whilst researcher bias can be viewed as an obvious limitation, it is also entirely

inevitable in an immersive ethnographic project. The collaborative nature of the project,

however, with supervisors who were distant from the data served to ensure that the

resultant analysis is balanced and considered despite the emotive nature of the data

presented.

Future Directions

In addition to the contributions noted above, the research presented here sets an

agenda for further research. The analysis contained in this thesis is limited to observational

reports, opening up further investigation both within the educational context and beyond.

All of the analyses featured pupils' behaviours as they occurred. Future research would

perhaps be best directed to extending the methodological approach to supplement

observational accounts by examining subjective orientations through pupil focus groups,

interviews, and diary studies, for example. Complementing ethnographic observations with

more structured observations of pupil interactions – for example, that would be amenable

to social network analysis – would also be beneficial. Focussing upon pupil experiences

before and after high school would also provide useful extensions to the pupil trajectories

and social narratives contained within this project. Pupil transition to and from high school,

for example, is well researched but perhaps less well understood in terms of pupils' social

identity development.

The data collected commenced with pupils who had all just transitioned to high

school. A similar extended ethnographic project within upper primary school would shed

further light on how pupils at risk could be best identified and supported throughout their transition to high school to improve their outcomes both educationally and socially. Common themes within each chapter relate to pupils who were not able to integrate optimally or who were finding school more complex to navigate than others (Williams, Berger & McClendon, 2005). The pupils displaying early risk factors are highlighted most clearly in Chapter 6's ostracism analysis which demonstrates clearly the importance of social integration at the earliest stages of high school. For pupils like Dylan, with integration problems from the outset, earlier intervention might have been useful. Similarly, in Chapter 5 the issues faced by academically-capable girls in STEM classes was highlighted. Future research could chart the progress of similarly-situated girls as they transition to University, charting their progress to extend the understanding of their social experiences within STEM specific laboratory classes and further education in general to address the 'leaky pipeline' (Oakes, 1990:161) phenomenon (Metcalf, 2010) .

The relative academic performance of pupils provided much of the focus for this thesis especially given the institutional practice of streaming by academic ability. This institutionally-created system of hierarchy could be further investigated by field experiment studies that involve manipulation of seating arrangements, disrupting homophilous groups aggregated by ability, and by interspersing pupils of different abilities. Grouping pupils by ability is contested in educational literature, and for subjects like Maths, ability grouping is considered to be useful for improving pupil ability (Slavin, 1987) but Maths is often the only subject evaluated with a focus upon numeracy attainment versus pupil wellbeing or social inclusion (Boaler, William, & Brown, 2000).

The manipulation of pupil seating arrangements could also lead to a related assessment of when social mobility opportunities are accepted or declined. Educational reviews of pupil wellbeing and academic self-concept report that streaming by ability is problematic for pupils of lower ability but advantageous for higher-ability pupils' wellbeing (Belfi et al., 2012). Given that pupils may be less likely to internalise stigmatised lower ability identities when amalgamated with pupils of different abilities, they may be more inclined to perceive group boundaries as permeable if the boundary distinctions, relative to academic ability or performance, were undermined by an integrated group of varied academic abilities. Reducing the extent to which stigmatised identities are internalised is likely to positively impact upon lower ability pupils' school wellbeing by varying the perception of the group status (Ellemers, Kortekaas & Ouwerkerk, 1999).

The institutional frame provided the backdrop for all of the pupil experiences documented in this thesis, but perhaps most surprising was the ability of some pupils, detailed in Chapter 6, to use the institution to reclaim inclusion amongst their peers. Social network analyses could identify more specifically the strategies pupils can use to reverse inclusion and together with pupil diary studies could examine the reproduction of inequalities throughout high schooling. Social network analyses in schools tend to focus upon educational outcomes versus social inclusion (c.f. Martınez, Dimitriadis, Rubia, Gómez & De La Fuente, 2003) or upon specific issues such as peer pressure (e.g. Ennett & Bauman, 1993). Social network analysis focussing upon pupil perceptions of peer relations would potentially be useful to elaborate upon some of the assertions made here about ostracism and the subsequent recovery featured by some of the pupils. This method of

enquiry was beyond the scope of this project as it could have compromised the integrity of the ethnographic approach.

The use of and engagement with institutional norms and practices to reverse exclusion need not be restricted to educational establishments. Future research could look at other institutional and organisational contexts in the same way; the armed forces, as a particularly hierarchical and stratifying institution. The US military, for example, are increasingly concerned by the impact of ostracism upon female combatants yet Kate McGraw (2016) notes that there is currently no research into this issue. The ostracism she refers to is classified as a lack of social support, however, given she states that as female combatants are usually a minority group in combat situations, there may also be a difficulty 'fitting in' with the male majority (McGraw, 2010). Research into this area would bring together two of the critical areas in this thesis; social ostracism and gender inequality manifest in a traditionally male-dominated environment. Based upon the findings presented here, identification with institutional norms would appear to be a critical factor in the reversal of ostracism together with the opportunity to demonstrate institutionally valued prowess and ability. In army contexts this is perhaps likely to be combat ability versus the academic ability cited here which was used almost as a bargaining chip to secure inclusion in the preceding ostracism analyses. McGraw (2016) recommends longitudinal studies to examine closely how ostracism functions within the military to ensure female soldiers achieve full and equal integration both with their peers and within their institution.

Practical Applications

In addition to its theoretical contributions, the present research also suggests a number of practical applications. The suggestions below are limited to schools as

institutions. This does not mean that the findings are not relevant or applicable in other institutions; however, my experience of those are limited, therefore the recommendations here relate purely to the observations within school and my extensive experience accumulated within that specific institutional setting. Based upon lengthy observations of teaching practices and pupil experiences, the suggestions are also not themselves criticisms of current teaching practices or classroom management per se. Rather, they highlight areas where simple strategies could help teachers to reduce the inequalities in their classrooms. I had a completely different perspective and agenda when in a classroom than a teacher, and the following are suggestions based on this alternative perspective on classroom dynamics, and informed by a social psychological rather than educational theoretical background.

First, as suggested in the previous section, there is a case for directly setting pupils' seating arrangements. Future research would determine whether pupils would achieve more and/or be better included in mixed ability seating or indeed separated entirely into different classes on the basis of their projected academic outcomes (National 3, 4 or 5). For smaller schools and in less popular subjects, however, separate classrooms would be unsustainable. Integrative seating arrangements would perhaps be beneficial in such cases, highlighting shared classroom identities rather than emphasising the differences between academically streamed groups.

Second, pupils without any of the most basic equipment are simply not equipped to learn. Pupils having to admit to being without pencils up to six times a day, to separate teachers, and in front of different pupil cohorts can be incredibly stigmatising. Having a supply of basic school materials such as pencils, folders, and rubbers available for the lowest-income pupils seems a sensible solution to prevent those pupils most in need from

having to regularly admit their lack of equipment. During the research, the Home

Economics department did depart from their standard punishment regime for one pupil who

was habitually unprepared and allowed him to access the materials required on entry to the

classroom. He collected the materials unobserved, or unmentioned at least, by his peers.

Thus, he was equipped to learn and was saved the indignity of having to ask for a pencil.

Whilst this seems a most rudimentary suggestion, currently pupils from deprived families

are heavily encouraged to engage with education, in part to attempt to close the attainment

gap, but are not supplied with the basic materials to complete their work. In terms of

budget allocations, the cost to the school would be minimal and discreetly administered the

scheme need not increase stigmatisation in the manner that the free school meals provision

can (see Chapter 4 for a full discussion) but can proactively assist and enfranchise the

pupils who are at most risk of not attaining during their school careers.

Adjustment of school catchment areas could also reduce the effects of stark income

inequalities by having a greater spread of income statuses. The school in this project had a

remarkably bi-modal socio-economic spread and the treatment of pupils from the different

backgrounds was often starkly different.[11] Classroom management strategies, discipline

and even constructions of morality were all observed as overlapping with socio-economic

status relative to others. If schools have a more equal spread of SES backgrounds, the

contrast effects of poverty and affluence may be reduced. Teachers were witnessed using

standards of appearance as a heuristic of behaviour and, on occasion, moral worth.

Dominant and affluent pupils, all male, benefitted from their well-dressed status to the

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[11] The school catchment area has been recommended for change and was re-zoned in time for the

cohort starting school in August 2018

detriment of less well-dressed and less dominant or disruptive pupils as documented in

Chapter 4. Teacher awareness of and sensitivity to these issues could be increased and

classroom management strategies examined to undermine this wealth, status, or class-

related bias (Spencer & Castano, 2007).

Another practical suggestion relating to teacher biases is to provide substantial

training for teachers to undermine pernicious gender biases which proliferate, especially in

STEM subjects (Lundeberg, 1997). Teachers of both sexes would benefit from

understanding the factors involved in Queen Bee Syndrome. Women would benefit perhaps

from support within traditionally male dominated subjects in order to minimise tendencies

to (inadvertently or otherwise) validate pernicious gender stereotypes and male teachers

might benefit from understanding their profession as often male-dominated whilst they

may themselves be inclusive (see Chapter 5). Moreover, school management teams should

examine the possibility of gender-neutral classrooms. Pauwels and Winter (2008) found

that many younger English teachers preferred using gender neutral pronouns for example.

This would support current movements away from dichotomous gender language but

would also highlight how many classes are unnecessarily and possibly unintentionally

gendered. A recent study of transgender college students, for example, found that many felt

marginalised (Pryor, 2015). The use of non-binary gender pronouns would represent,

perhaps, a more inclusive classroom experience for all pupils. As analysed fully in Chapter

5, independent group laboratory exercises in science classes can be toxic for girls who

excel in science. Such toxic environments, however, can only exist when the wider

institutional practices and norms permit. Teachers' tendency to allow misogyny to pass

uncommented upon creates a sense of acceptance of top-down male domination which in

turn allows bottom-up sexist influences to flourish unfettered. Teachers are likely to be largely unaware of these socio-structural gender-based influences which gather momentum and influence when observed over a number of different events and in various different classrooms; even small instances can have a cumulatively big impact. There is perhaps a consensus that non-sexist beliefs proliferate amongst educated professionals. Individual teachers were invested in the success of all of their pupils and most displayed no overt sexism themselves. What did occur, however, was that sexism from pupils was left uncontested. In a progressive, gender-neutral institution, this should never be permitted to occur. Likewise, to tackle the bottom-up sexism and the subjugation of girls on the basis of their gender and their capability which was witnessed amongst pupils, sex-stereotypical beliefs should form part of a targeted curricular social education programme for pupils. Mary Anna Lunderberg (1997), however, goes further and argues that gender equity should be part of basic teacher training methods to highlight to teachers how and where male-dominated classrooms proliferate and how they can be undermined. For example, she cites that teachers rarely wait more than 5 seconds after asking a question before choosing a respondent; a practice which favours socially dominant boys.

Finally, changing institutional practices may provide a way to positively affect the outcomes of chronic ostracism. Friend network surveys could be issued throughout schooling to identify self-reported ostracism or those at risk. Pupils asked to identify their social networks or required to place themselves upon social network matrices can assist educators in early detection of ostracism or significant changes in inclusion over time. Many schools have incorporated co-operative working to include all pupils such as Aronson's (2002) co-operative jigsaw groups, which reduce stigmatisation of minority

group members and promote cohesive, collaborative working which must include all members equally to be successful.

Conclusion

Current theories of identity management, social mobility, social creativity, social identity and ostracism are all valuable contributors to our understanding of how young people negotiate social value in the face of continuous (de)valuation and stratification. By examining the lives and daily behaviours of a cohort of adolescents throughout their schooling, the overarching contribution of this thesis is to note that all of the afore-mentioned theories lack one critical element: adequate consideration of the influence of institutions. All of the pupil behaviour in this thesis has been shaped within a specific institutional frame and that frame has shaped their responses and, ultimately, their early life outcomes as they approach adulthood.

The institution frames all pupil behaviour and outcomes in conjunction with their individual socio-economic status and background. The cycle of poverty does not begin or end with school, but if schooling reinforces privilege and underscores disadvantage then the opportunity is lost for education to be fully accessible and equitable, and limits the potential to change and enhance the lives of those pupils who perhaps need it most.

The negotiation of social value by adolescents is shaped by institutional interaction. Bringing the institution into the frame of analysis following an extensive ethnographic study of individual behaviours and interactions has enabled critical evaluation of and offers a dynamic extension to a number of current social psychological theories. Much of our social behaviour occurs within institutional structures which can be detrimental to some, driving inequality and entrenching difference whilst also actively framing the terms of

success and failure. This thesis has highlighted the positive contribution social

psychological theory and research can make to understanding more about the impact of the

institutions within which we live, learn and work and whilst it is not possible to change the

experiences of those pupils whose experiences have informed this study, perhaps through

increased understanding, it is possible to improve the lives of those whose experiences with

institutions are still to come.

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APPENDICES

Sample of raw data from one day's observation September 2011 (which contained observations from four out of six classes. It was usual to take a period out to write up observations).<u>Example coding for one of the codes: institutional interaction and/or stratification denoted by underlined text</u>

P1. French. Mr Maxwell

<u>Teacher asks Noah for the weather in French, before Noah has the chance to answer, Brian interrupts with (in French) the fact that it is raining. Noah says "oh yes, cos you're so smart", Brian then repeats it, in English this time. Mia turns round to Noah and says nicely "don't worry, French is not my best subject either",</u> Noah smiles at Mia but is clearly irked by Brian as he was very capable of answering fully by himself. Why is French good to know asks the teacher? Katy volunteers "so if me and Lily knew French, we could talk about Catriona behind her back and she wouldn't know". I think she is joking but Charlotte and Lily both say "that's horrible". Michael asks " why does the song contain 'une'" Charlie says "it's feminine" but the teacher doesn't hear him. Charlie turns to me and says "but I said it first" when someone else shouts it out. <u>Mr Maxwell offers a reward stamp for this answer and offers it to the two that answered first. Charlie says "me, it was me". Charlie gets out his planner ready to receive his stamp. In error, Mr Maxwell stamps Jack and the boy next to Charlie, Alfie's jotter. He then does the register. Charlie persists and is really quite insistent that he should get the stamp. He says "Mr Maxwell, Mr</u>

Maxwell" to no avail. eventually, Mr Maxwell turns to look at Charlie and he asks for his reward stamp. Mr Maxwell explains that he gave it to the first two to answer. Charlie persists "No, it was me", "he didn't say it". Alfie protests weakly that he did but he knows this is not true. Charlie then enlists me "but eh? It was me, I was first, wasn't I?" I nod in agreement. Mr Maxwell stamps Charlie's jotter and apologises very sincerely for the mistake/ Charlie then asks if he can have another stamp for his very neat work./ Charlie seems really keen to please Mr Maxwell, he tries really hard and even sings all the songs, even if they are about little flowers./ Brian shouts out "I'm done, in one minute, haha" looks straight at me from the back of the class and smiles. I think maybe Brian then texts Noah in class. Brian smiles at me almost because he thinks I know something is going on. Noah says "Mr Maxwell, I'm finished, it took me a while, but I'm finished".

I see Mason in the corridor outside our classroom, looks like he may have been sent out of class. 40 minutes into the class, Charlie totally loses focus. He doesn't disrupt anyone but he does stop working and does not resume until Alfie needs some help. Teacher gets out the beanbag again and throws to Ava, she is asked to quote the numbers from 11-20. She struggles and really hates speaking out in class, Charlie tries to help her. When she finally gets *it all completed she really throws the beanbag hard at Mr Maxwell. Jack then drops it again. Brian receives a very tricky question from Mr Maxwell rather than answer, or attempt to answer, he angrily throws the bean bag at Mr Maxwell but to the floor in front of him so it cannot be caught and Mr Maxwell has to retrieve it from the floor*. Alfie hates singing the final song but Charlie and the others are enjoying it. He takes time to check everyone else sings before he resigns himself to joining in. The song ends, Charlie says "and again?"

P2. Art and Design. Mr Oscars

Aidan leaves his homework jotter out open at his completed homework page. Everyone around says 'wow, your's is so good!" and "Brilliant" He smiles at the attention and compliments. Charlie, Finlay, Mason, Craig and Jacob occupy the back row. I fear this is not a good seating plan. <u>This is a practical set class and the behaviour is markedly different</u>! The presence of Mason and his increasing attitude seem to have a negative impact, particularly on the boys. Jacob and Lucas sit far apart and can't interact, perhaps as a consequence, they are both very quiet. Teacher asks me if I follow this class in lots of different classes and I explain this is a practical set and the mix is dramatically different behaviourally with the addition of a few individuals. Teacher is called to discipline a boy in another class. <u>He is really quite firm with this boy and some of the class look quite shocked. I haven't yet witnessed any real behaviour issues, pupils being sent out of classes or even really shouted at</u>./ <u>Craig is told his work is excellent. He seems really surprised and really pleased.</u> The class subsequently gets noisier and before the teacher can admonish them, Craig says "guys". This has the desired effect. The teacher uses Layla's middle name, the boys use this to tease her throughout the class. She feigns annoyance but I suspect she enjoys the attention. Mason and Craig are the main culprits but Mason notes "she's laughing" and stops the teasing. He seems to prefer the idea of annoying her rather than being amusing. Craig is the entire opposite. Craig and Finlay chat behind Dean's back as he sits between them, working diligently. They seem to be talking about Mason but I am too far away to hear properly.

P3. PE – swimming (do not observe)

P4. Assembly – All year group (do not attend but write up notes in behaviour support base)

P5. English. Miss Neil

top set class

Noah is handing out the jotters and makes a mistake, he pulls a face at me, as if to say "oops". For a boy who is so capable and so accustomed to being correct and at the top he's very comfortable with his mistakes. This is a top set English class. Jacob is really engaged in this class, proactive and very settled and focussed. Max gets picked up for doodling on the whiteboard and he looks guiltily at me. The competitive boys from the top set Maths class are all in this class, Noah, Brian, Michael and Max (although he is very capable, he doesn't actually compete but perhaps is seen as a threat). There is little competition in this class. I discuss this with Miss Neil, perhaps there is sufficient space in English for lots of people at the top with a variety of answers whereas maths is right or wrong, first or last and thus dichotimises the pupils accordingly. / Brian is much less engaged in this class, although behaves beautifully, he seems less eager to answer questions or make himself known. Maybe he lacks confidence in this particular subject or maybe he places less value upon it. He is definitely much more 'chilled' in this class. / Noah, however, is as eager in this class as usual and volunteers some excellent, insightful and emotive answers. / The class are asked for a thumb sign of how confident they are of reproducing their own descriptive writing and only Noah displays a thumbs up sign.

Lucas is very excitable upon packing up, I ask "are you ok?" he replies "it's the weekend" accompanied by a little dance. He continues to be as excitable as we proceed to

the Technical department. He dances, walks backwards and seems actually quite hyperactive whilst seeming also cheerful as we line up outside the class.

P6. Design Technology. Mr Smith

There is an incident when the class are selecting their drawing boards. I don't see how it starts but I see Mason, Charlie and Lucas and then I see Charlie holding Lucas down onto the desk in a head lock type of manoeuvre. Mr Smith intervenes quickly, separates the boys, sends Charlie out of the room and tells Lucas to sit down. I check on Lucas to make sure he is ok as he is crying. He tells me that Mason pushed him and caused him to elbow Charlie who then hit him and got him in the headlock. Teacher then removes Lucas to another room so I am unable to see or hear anything further. Jacob responds by saying "that was scary" and Neil says "when you are mental, you don't think what you are doing". Mason, in contrast, seems quite excited and happy, maybe because if he was involved he got away with it? Perhaps he started it deliberately? Perhaps it's nothing to do with that and he's happy it's the weekend. He runs outside the class to check on Charlie. The incident is quietly dealt with and the class moves on calmly. Charlotte asks for a toilet pass, Jacob asks her to check up on Charlie. Mason gets several rows for inattention but can't seem to stop smirking. Teacher then admonishes him during the demonstration for smirking and not concentrating. Mr Smith seems very unimpressed and the class is extremely tense. / He does, however, give the others lots of praise for their work and encouragement and the atmosphere lifts a little. At this point Craig looks at me and rolls his eyes. Teacher has a word with Mason, telling him he is a smart boy but to do his best he must pay attention. Finlay seems quite upset by the incident with Charlie and Craig goes round the girls dispensing hugs. Jacob then gets a toilet pass and tells Michael, on his return, that the boys

have a detention. Mason overhears this and makes an announcement in the middle of the class "You guys, you guys, they never got a puni, Charlie and Lucas, they got a detention."

Teacher acknowledges that some of the class are struggling and says "There is nobody in this class who cannot do this task, there are those, however, that are not following instructions and are not listening". Charlotte turns to look nervously at me, I smile back. Finlay frowns hard. Just as the teacher is saying this, Mason again becomes disruptive and doesn't pay attention. Mr Smith removes him to the other side of the room and continues. Charlie returns quietly and gets on with his work. Emma looks and me and half smiles a bit uncertain perhaps. Lucas comes back slightly later and immediately Jacob starts chatting to him about it. Lucas seems strangely quite happy about everything and smiles and jokes with Jacob. Charlie and Finlay have a brief discussion but Charlie tries to catch up with the drawing work he has missed. He and Lucas are both collecting their materials and I watch for any tension but there doesn't seem to be any residual annoyance or aggression. Craig comes to ask me if I saw the fight, I say "some of it" I add "it's quite sad isn't it?" He agrees and I say "I think they have a detention?" "Tuesday after school" replies Craig./ Teacher tries to discuss with Mason about why he isn't paying attention. Mason trots out a list of excuses but Mr Smith won't let him off the hook and insists that, in his class, irrespective of what's happening he requires concentration. On leaving the class I ask Charlie what happened. He said that "we went for the same drawing board, he wanted the one I got first so he punched me in the head, I got him in a headlock so he couldn't hit me again". He seems really quite dejected by the event. He then joins his friends and I am now walking behind Mason, Craig and Charlie. They are discussing the fight and Lucas. I hear Craig say "He's an annoying cunt". Charlie nods towards me as I

have now drawn level with them. Craig looks unconcerned at the swearing and says to me "he is though, he's had a fight with almost everyone in first year" "really?" I say, Mason responds "yes". I wish them a good weekend and say "stay out of trouble" they laugh.