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PERFORMING ETHNOGRAPHY IN A CONTEMPORARY WORKPLACE: DISABILITY DISCOURSE AND THE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATOR

Nigel D. Cox

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of

Sheffield Hallam University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the role of university administrators and the work they
carry out in relation to disability. In a context of disability discrimination legislation and
a developing culture of 'consumerism', administrators in the United Kingdom are
increasingly charged with undertaking activities that relate to the 'support' of students
who disclose a disability. Although there is a developing body of research that relates to
the work of administrators in general, their work in relation to disability remains largely
unexplored. As such, empirical enquiry is overdue.

The fieldwork for this study was undertaken in an English university. An ethnographic
research design employing observation, interview and the collection of organisational
texts is described. The ethical challenges invited by ethnographic research are also
discussed in detail. As the study context was my workplace, I consider methodological
and epistemological issues that arise when undertaking research in a 'familiar' setting.
Analysis draws upon readings of Foucault, and his thesis on discourse and power, and
the work of Douglas, and her discussion of boundary maintenance and ritual.

The thesis makes a number of original contributions to knowledge. First, it shows how
administrators are involved in the surveillance of disabilities and the circulation of
'expert' knowledge. It also shows how administrators seek to protect against ambiguous
disability classifications and the 'non-disclosure' of disability. Second, in respect of
Foucault's thesis on panopticism, it shows how the texts, practices, and material/spatial
contexts of administration serve to constitute the subjectivities of those who work in or
make use of the administrative service.

Third, the thesis shows how administrators strive to perform 'talk' that is not injurious
or offensive to people with disabilities. Using Douglas' thesis, a role for ritual in
regards to the performance of 'acceptable' speech and the avoidance of 'talk' that is
taboo is posited. Fourth, it shows that administrators are obliged to follow rules (for
instance, the 'law'), yet they are also incited to work on their 'selves' in respect of
'moral' disability standpoints, and in their facilitation of a 'consumerist' student ethic.
Summing up, it considers in detail the epistemic character of ethnographic research.

CONTENTS

CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT

Through critical examination and application of theoretical and methodological theory, the objective of this thesis was to make an original contribution to the understanding of the disability-related work of university administrators.

All published materials cited herein are summarised in a reference list. Appendices are also included to support the research design and data analysis chapters. A coda to the main text is also included, detailing more recent legislative changes.

All respondents cited within this thesis provided me with their explicit consent to include their testimony herein. I have aimed to afford them anonymity by providing them with pseudonyms and I have also disguised their geographical work locations.

The thesis title and methodology was scrutinized and approved by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee of Sheffield Hallam University. The proposal was also approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the University in which this study was undertaken.

I acknowledge my receipt of academic support. For primary supervision, I acknowledge the contribution of Dr Jenny Blain. For associate supervision, I acknowledge the initial contribution of Dr Matthew Waites and, latterly, that of Dr Jill Aylott.

This is study did not invite or require collaboration with any other person, group or collaborating organisation or team, other than the aforementioned supervision team and the research respondents selected for inclusion.

I declare that this thesis is my own work, and that no material contained within this thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

MY PRIMARY FOCUS AND OVERALL ARGUMENT

The primary focus of this thesis is the disability-related work of university administrators. My overall argument is that in a context of revised disability discrimination legislation, and the growth of consumerism within higher education in the United Kingdom, administrators are establishing new enclaves for their practice. In relation to disability, I argue that although administrators are obliged to observe both the law and the organisational 'policies' relating to disability, they also work on their 'selves', and introduce a moral (anti-discriminatory) dimension to their work. I also argue that administrative contexts provide a venue for the rehearsal of ritual practices concerned with the amelioration of risk and 'danger' and the maintenance of disability classifications that accord with the bureaucratic character of university administration.

In this chapter, I first describe the organisational and legislative context from which my thesis has arisen. I then outline my theoretical position and personal location. Following this, I outline the primary research problem, and offer my research questions. I then explain the organisation of the thesis. Finally, I provide a description of the fieldwork context and the respondents therein who participated in this research.

THE WIDER CONTEXT OF ADMINISTRATIVE WORK

Prior to my discussion of the role of the university administrator, as I apply it within this thesis, I will first outline the contexts in which university administrators are located. The role of the university administrator in the United Kingdom is undergoing a significant transformation, arguably reflecting changes both in the organisation and delivery of higher education services, and the character of student participation. One context relates to the financing of higher education. Although financial loans had been available to university students since 1990, the enactments of the *Teaching and Higher Education Act* (Great Britain1998) and the *Higher Education Act* (Great Britain 2004) served to refashion the balance of higher education funding from "the state to the student" (Whitchurch 2006, p166).

More recent changes, made in response to the *Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance* (Browne et al 2010), has meant that from 2012 the majority of full-time university students in England[1] will pay tuition fees through a system of graduate contributions (Callender and Jackson 2005; Browne et al 2010; Hall 2011). This change arguably offers challenges for university staff, including administrators, who may be obliged to meet revised expectations of students, as they are incited to identify as 'consumers' of the services that universities provide (Sharrock 2000; Szekeres 2004, 2006, 2011).

Another context, and one that provides a backdrop to this thesis, is the changed legislative context in the United Kingdom with respect to disability discrimination, and the application of such legislation within university contexts. The principal pieces of legislation which were extant during the period in which fieldwork for this research was undertaken were the *Disability Discrimination Act* or DDA (Great Britain 1995, 2005) and, with regard to educational contexts, the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act* (Great Britain 2001). These pieces of legislation provided a legal context in which disability discrimination might be understood, including a definition of disability, thus:

> A person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (Great Britain 1995, 1:1) [2]

The Disability Discrimination Act (2005) incorporated an additional element, styled as a *Disability Equality Duty* (DED). This duty, now incorporated (in an extended form) within the Equality Act, required public sector organisations and authorities to gauge and monitor the impact of their policies and practices with respect to people with disabilities, to eliminate disability discrimination, improve opportunities for (and participation by) people with disabilities and promote 'positive attitudes' towards people with disabilities (Great Britain 2005); these were styled 'general duties'. Organisations, including universities were also required to publish a Disability Equality

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[1] Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are planning their own provisions, and I do not discuss these here; see the coda to this thesis.

[2] As I also discuss in a coda to this thesis, the *Equality Act* (Great Britain 2010) has superseded the DDA; however, the key definition within this legislation is largely unchanged, thus: "A person (P) has a disability if—(a) P has a physical or mental impairment, and (b) the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on P's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities" (Great Britain 2010, 1:6)

Scheme (DES) which demonstrated how they planned to fulfil the requirements of the disability discrimination legislation.

THE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATOR AND THEIR ROLE

These contexts invite challenges for university administrators. However, before outlining these, I will first define the role of the university administrators, as it relates to this thesis. Here, I characterise 'university administrators' as those people who either support directly the work of academic staff (for instance, facilitating an examination board), work with students in respect of activities that are not immediately academic in nature (for instance, student or disability support services or student admissions), or who support the delivery of another university service (for instance, human resources or staff development) (Whitchurch 2006, 2008). However, in providing this characterisation, I recognise that formulating a succinct definition of 'who' administrators are, and what they 'do', might be considered rather problematic; this I discuss further in the following chapter.

The traditional occupational boundaries within universities (for instance, the classification of work as either 'academic', 'administrative' or 'service') are eroding (Whitchurch 2006, 2008). In the context of a revised relationship between universities and their (fee-paying) students, a reconsideration of the "service requirements" (Szekeres 2011, p683) of students has, it has been argued, led to a significant transformation in the nature of administrative work. Once viewed as 'servicing' academic staff, administrators are increasingly located within workplaces that offer services such as 'student support', as the universities in which they work strive to position themselves within a competitive 'market place' for higher education (Szekeres 2004, 2011). The provision of pastoral support, for instance, has become central to the overall delivery of a 'service' to students, and is no longer viewed as an 'exceptional' circumstance that is *only* to be delivered to students by academic staff members (Whitchurch 2006).

The erosion of traditional occupational boundaries has offered opportunities for the development of 'new' areas for administrative practice. The provision of disability 'support' as a 'specialist' area of university practice exemplifies this. In respect of the meeting of legal duties (above) in respect of disability discrimination, many universities have instigated comprehensive administrative processes linked to the 'disclosure' and 'assessment' of students with disabilities. Furthermore, and perhaps related to the legal

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requirement to demonstrate a concern for 'positive attitudes' in respect of disability, universities now offer 'training' for staff, including administrators, in respect of disability (and other forms of) discrimination. Hence, the drive to provide a distinctive and 'student-as-customer' centred service has coalesced with legislative requirements in respect of disability discrimination.

These new administrative roles and functions, and the requirement to work 'across' traditional practice boundaries, arguably require from the administrators a different set of knowledge, skills and affective characteristics. Not only might administrators be required to possess (and practise) the knowledge of other professional disciplines, but they are also invited to undertake work more independently of these disciplines; in doing this, administrators may be increasingly understood to be working "across functional and institutional boundaries to create new professional spaces, knowledges, relationships and legitimacies." (Whitchurch 2008, p375). Disability-related work, I contend, is one of these areas where the administrators are creating 'new spaces' for their practice; their work in this respect is the focus of my enquiry.

MY THEORETICAL POSITION

My primary theoretical position in relation to this thesis relates to the work of Michel Foucault. When commencing this research, I began to consider how Foucault's conceptions of discourse and power might be understood and applied to my consideration of 'administration' and 'disability'. Although I discuss this in detail later in this thesis (chapter five), some comments here are apposite. In short, Foucault problematizes the nature and formation of 'truth'. Using his particular formulation of the concepts of discourse and power, Foucault demonstrates how ostensibly stable and 'timeless' concepts, for instance mental illness (Foucault 1981, 1987), may (or may not) be accorded the status of 'truth' and, how discourse and power may be implicated in the 'making' and 'circulation' of truth. This, in addition to his later theses on the functioning of disciplinary power (Foucault 1995) and 'technologies of the self' (Foucault 1978) invited me to consider how the 'truths' of disability were produced and circulated within the administrative context, and how the 'selves' of administrators might also be implicated within this 'process'.

My second theoretical position related to the work of Mary Douglas. Her work, and in particular her thesis on 'pollution', danger and ritual (Douglas 2002), invited me to consider how apparently 'taken-for-granted' divisions in the social world (disabled or

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non-disabled, for instance, or 'dangerous' and 'safe') might be accounted for. In relation to administrative practice and 'disability-related' work, Douglas' work invited me to consider how divisions (disability classifications) were effected, and how such classifications were rehearsed and guarded (or indeed, changed) through the rituals of administrative practice. However, I discovered that neither Foucault nor Douglas provided a thorough account of their methodological approaches; indeed, I further discovered that the elucidation of a 'Foucauldian methodology' was considered highly problematic and somewhat contested (Garitty 2010). This, therefore, was an additional (and fundamental) problem I sought to address during the undertaking of this research.

MY PERSONAL LOCATION

Eve Gregory notes, with considerable honesty:

> The beginnings of an ethnographic study are often routed in anger, even fury, and, as such, are partisan. A chance encounter with a book, a classroom incident, a teacher, a child or parent's remark will often be enough to start a deep-seating anger or an unanswered question from deep in our own past, which initiates the study. (Gregory 2005, px)

Whilst 'anger' might be too strong a characterisation of my feelings towards disability and what I felt to be its bureaucratisation, my commitment to undertaking a 'disability-related' ethnographic enquiry was located in a particular configuration of prior experiences and commitments. My lengthy experience working as a nurse in the United Kingdom's National Health Service had exposed me to uncomfortable modes of discipline that, I felt, were often 'imposed' upon people with disabilities. Associated with this was my concern that often particular types of 'truth' were rendered legitimate (or not) within particular contexts.

Three 'personal experiences' illustrate my concern. One experience occurred when working in a rehabilitation setting for young adults who had experienced brain and spinal injury. I had challenged a professional colleague regarding the different choices that I felt were being offered to different groups of patients, specifically a young patient from a social background very different from that of the professionals charged with his care. The colleague sought to instruct me: "Yes, Nigel, I understand your point. But the point is that he [the patient] does not expect any better than this", his point being that 'care' or 'therapy' was an intervention and a resource that might be moderated according to expectation rather than need. This experience invited me to reflect on the power relationships that served to authorise the organisational response 'to' disability.

Another experience occurred much later, when undertaking my first postgraduate foray into qualitative research. I was interviewing a respondent (who did not identify as having a disability) about his 'understanding' of disability, and I had asked him about whether he felt any 'duty' towards disabled people. He informed me: "Well, *they* don't want to be helped, do they? If I tried, I'd be told to get lost." This experience invited me to reflect upon how representations of disablement were received and acted upon by those outside the personal or disciplinary contexts in which disability might be expressed or recognised. Both of these served as 'activating concerns', and served to frame my later engagement with the ethnographic project documented herein.

More generally, my professional experiences also served to frame how I understood my chosen research field; my vocational move into education and my evolving experiences of 'disability' in this area led me to question more rigorously the 'taken for granted' characterisations of disability that had marked my earlier career and, indeed, the revised characterisations that I encountered in the University environment. I gradually became critically aware of the pervasiveness of the disciplinary context, past and present, in which I functioned and its capacity to shape preferred, 'recognisable' identities which might themselves become legitimate subjects of professional scrutiny or enquiry. Through this process of reflection, I invited myself to become more critical in respect of 'professional' or 'expert' discourses of disablement.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Although there is research that focuses upon administrators who work in the 'revised contexts' of contemporary universities, such research remains scarce. Additionally, although there has been research relating to senior administrative functions, there is a paucity of evidence that relates to the role of the 'junior' administrator (Hockey and Allen-Collinson 2009; Szekeres 2011), particularly those working in 'student facing' roles that pertain to disability. There has also been only modest examination of the 'places' in which administrators undertake their work. Although such studies have been conducted in school and office contexts (Winiecki 2007, 2009; Gallagher 2010, 2011), the 'spaces and places' of administrative work within the university context have not been systematically explored. Moreover, and particularly in a legislative context (above) when the possession of 'desirable' attitudes in relation to disability is required, there is a paucity of evidence that addresses this 'affective' dimension of administrative work. These concerns form the focus of my research problem.

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND AIMS

Both my personal location, and theoretical inclination, combined with my critical interest in a particular theme (disability), particular people (administrators) and place (the university) now enable me to offer three research questions. In specifying these questions I recognise, however, that their relationship to one-another is somewhat fluid and that during data collection and analysis, particularly of the kind that I will soon outline, these may not be resolved discretely or systematically; rather, my aim is that they will be addressed concurrently throughout this thesis.

First, I pose a descriptive research question that relates to the 'events' of disability practice. Specifically, I will aim to describe how notions of disability are expressed by administrative respondents in the Higher Education context through their individual or collective work practices.

Second, I pose an interpretative question that considers the 'meaning' that administrators attach to disability practices. Specifically, I will aim to explore and interpret how policy, governance arrangements and bureaucratic practices enable administrators to render meaningful their work.

Third, I pose a theoretical question related to the advancement of anthropological theory and practice. Specifically, I will aim to problematize the methodological approaches used to elucidate that which is 'taken for granted' and 'commonsensical' in the everyday practice of administrative workers.

To resolve these questions and meet these aims, I plan an ethnographic research design, using observation, interview, and organisational texts as 'data'. I detail fully the rationale and nature of this design, including a discussion of my reading of a 'Foucauldian method' (see Kendall and Wickham 1999; Hook 2001, 2005; Mills 2003) in chapter six of this thesis. Recognising that this research, as I discuss below, would be undertaken in my workplace, I discuss issues arising from this, including the (complex) ethical concerns, within my later chapter.

THESIS ORGANISATION

The following chapter aims to appraise recent enquiry and commentaries about 'administrative work', particularly those associated with 'disability'. It finds that characterising the nature and role of 'street-level' and more 'junior' administrators is

problematic and subject to many contextual factors. The review also reveals a relative paucity of literature that is specifically concerned with administrators in 'junior', 'student-facing' positions and, with some exceptions, empirical approaches that are both phenomenological in nature and focused upon the hierarchical 'position' of administrators rather than their specific practices.

In chapter three I locate the concept of disability within a historical context and summarise how what is understood as 'the disabled subject' has been transformed over time. I then map three trajectories for disability-related research, and the implications of these for my own research design are then identified. The origins of the 'disability movement' in the second half of the twentieth century are described, and the relation of this to the 'rejection' of the 'individual model' and the adoption of a 'social model' for disability is discussed. The chapter acknowledges the importance of both the social model and the 'emancipatory research agenda' for research design, yet locates an alternative standpoint for my own enquiry.

In chapter four, I consider the work of Mary Douglas and discuss how it might find expression within an enquiry that is (partly) concerned with disability. I first locate Douglas theoretically, and identify some basic challenges inherent in her structuralist approach as it might be applied to anthropology. Douglas's primary thesis is then introduced, and application made to disability in respect of its perceived 'marginality' location within the university context. I then identify departure points for research design. I find that Douglas is of utility to my research design, albeit with some caveats that necessitate consideration of a further frame of reference, namely Foucauldian post-structuralism.

In chapter five, I introduce the work of Michel Foucault and provide a thorough reading of his work as I understand and apply it within this thesis. The concept of discourse, as used in its 'non linguistic' sense by Foucault, is described. Foucault's formulation of power is also discussed, as is the relationship of knowledge to power. Foucault's concept of subjectivation is then introduced in relation to his formulation of power. Elsewhere I discuss his objection to conventional definitions of 'ideology', and provide a reading of the concepts of resistance, disciplinary power and surveillance as they are later applied within this thesis. Last, applications of Foucauldian thought to disability and administration are outlined.

In chapter six, I describe in detail my methodological position, research design, analytical approach, and also include a comprehensive account of my ethical considerations. I first provide a rationale for my choice of an ethnographic design. I then discuss gaining access to the research field, and my selection of respondents and places. I then discuss in detail the nature and extent of my fieldwork, including details of the observations and interviews I undertook, and what I gained from these methods. I then discuss my analytical approach, linking this to my theoretical position. I also describe how I selected data for analysis, and issues of data quality. The closing section of this chapter provides a thorough account of my ethical position and practices, drawing upon the *Association of Social Anthropologists* ethical guidelines (ASA 2011), and more recent empirical work.

In chapter seven, I identify and discuss a number of organisational texts that illustrate how the University represents, within 'policies' and 'guidelines', the administrative response to 'disability disclosure'. I apply my reading of two Foucauldian technologies (technologies of power and technologies of the self) (Foucault 1978, 1990, 1995, 1997) and apply these to my interpretation of organisational texts, including a discussion of the practices of hierarchical observation and normalization. Following Nikolas Rose (Rose 1998, 1999), I then argue that the texts incite the 'confession', by students, of their disabilities. In presenting this interpretation, I recognise that organisational texts can only offer a partial and 'official account' of practice. As such, my analysis of these texts serves to signpost the analyses and arguments that I present in my later chapters, particularly those relating to classification (the following chapter), disability 'talk' (chapter nine), and 'space' (chapter ten).

In chapter eight, I consider how administrators 'interpret' and 'use' disability classifications, how these achieve the status of 'truth', and how these circulate through the practices of administration. I explore how particular subjects are assembled (as 'disabled subjects', or not); this invites my use of the concept of subjectivation, as I introduce in chapter five, and as deployed by Foucault (2000c), and also Rose (1998), Mills (2003) and Youdell (2006). In doing this, I consider how administrators may be incited to 'work on their selves' (Rose 1998), and consider the possibility that not only might administrators be subject *to* disciplinary and expert power but also, following Foucault (2000c) and Rose (1996, 1998), how they may also be incited to 'become' and recognise themselves as workers of a particular 'moral character'; this is developed

further in my later chapters. In this chapter I also discuss Mary Douglas in relation to disability, 'anomaly' and 'ambiguity'.

In chapter nine, I discuss how administrators formulate 'disability talk'. Following Austin's speech act theory (Austin, 1975), I argue that administrators strive to perform 'disability talk' that is consistent with a 'moral identity' that is selected from within discourse. I also find that when 'working with' disability, administrators are both obliged to both follow rules (for instance, the 'law'), yet are also obliged to work on their 'selves'; this invites consideration of the work of Rose (1996, 1999). My findings also suggest a role for ritual in respect of the repetition/rehearsal of acceptable speech acts, and, following Douglas (2002) and Butler (1997b), I argue that these rituals serve as controls for the successful performance of such acts, and the avoidance of the 'taboo' of 'unacceptable talk' (Douglas 2002).

In chapter ten I discuss Foucault's (1995) notion of panoptic power, explore this in relation to the 'spaces' of administrative work, and argue that the material and spatial form of administrative 'places' constitute the subjectivities of those who work and visit these areas. Second, deploying the thesis of Rose (1999) and others, I discuss how administrators are incited to (and incite others) to work on their 'therapeutic' selves in relation to disability. Third, guided by Douglas (2002), I consider in more detail how some administrative practices associated with disability may take on the character of ritual, particularly in relation to the administrative response to risk and danger.

In my final chapter, I return to my original research questions, and explain how they have been addressed in the context of an ethnographic enquiry, and necessarily reformulated during the progress of my fieldwork and analysis. I then discuss some key theoretical themes (resistance, 'psy' expertise, and ritual) which I argue are key to understanding the evolving practices of administration, particularly in 'specialist' or 'evolving' areas, such as 'disability administration'. I then provide further discussion about the epistemic character of the interpretations I have made, outline some limitations of the research, implications for administrative policy and practice, and discuss avenues for further research.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY AND RESPONDENTS [3]

This research was undertaken in a university located within Northern England. The University was, prior to 1992, styled as a 'Polytechnic', and was formed from the earlier consolidation of several local colleges of further education. In common with similar institutions within this English region, the University offers a broad portfolio of undergraduate and post-graduate provision, with a particular emphasis upon vocational and professional programmes of study. The University is sited across a number of campus settings, some adjacent to a city centre, and others which are located in suburban contexts and satellite towns within the region, recalling the collegiate heritage of the organisation. The University is sub-divided into a number of faculties, each of which represents a grouping of professional, academic and vocational disciplines. The faculty in which this research is located is concerned with the provision of programmes of study associated with the disciplines of 'health and social care', including those of nursing, physiotherapy and social work. [4]

The Administrative Staff of this Faculty
The roles of those who are employed by the University are classified as 'administrative', 'academic' or 'service'; these are accorded the title 'Divisions'; these classifications are effected throughout the Faculty structures described above. Each describes a broad range of activities: for instance, administrators' roles may be concerned with academic and learning support, the student 'life cycle' (admissions through to awards), finance and human resources. Academic roles may be concerned with teaching, research and related activities, and service roles may be technical (information technology), pedagogic-related (library services) or concerned with cleaning, catering and maintenance. For the administrators, roles are assigned a 'banding', the majority of which range from 'band five' (a 'junior' administrator with no supervisory responsibilities) to 'band seven' (the administrative 'lead' for an academic department, or perhaps an independent role with a specific remit, for example relating to disability or equality).

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[3] Brief biographies of the administrators who agreed to participate in this research are provided in an appendix to this thesis

[4] Reflecting my ethical considerations (chapter six), these are not the precise titles of the faculties of this particular organisation, although I noted during an initial survey of other regional universities that there was similarity between the titles attached to their faculties, and the programmes of study therein.

My role as employee

Throughout the period of fieldwork and data collection, I was also employed by the University in a full-time academic teaching role. My normal role throughout the period of research was mainly concerned with the teaching, assessment and pastoral support of students who were undertaking 'professional' programmes of study in health and social-service related disciplines. Due to the professional and regulatory requirements of these programmes of study, the 'university year' is atypical when compared with conventional Higher Education provision: a teaching and administrative commitment of forty-five weeks in the year, and the bi-annual recruitment of students in both spring and autumn are typical within this Faculty. Consequentially, the administrative arrangements for these programmes of study also deviate significantly from those in place for 'traditional' programmes of study.

The specific regulatory requirements of professional health care programmes also invite a greater intensity of 'non-academic' work, for both academic and administrative staff. For example, due to the regulatory requirement for some undergraduate health care students to undertake a prescribed number of 'contact hours' during their period of study, student attendance is closely monitored; this necessitates an administrative response. Furthermore, as student learning is divided between university and work 'placements', structured learning activity is planned and delivered in both contexts. In addition, close personal supervision of students is also a feature of these programmes of study. Both of these invite a considerable administrative workload: for example, the organising of placement experiences, the collation of practice assessment documentation and the recording of professionally-mandated training.

I therefore undertook my research activity whilst concurrently undertaking my 'usual' workplace activities, which included frequent collaboration with administrative workers. This required me to consider my relationship with the administrators; at times this proved challenging as my 'regular' work inevitably offered me insights into their working practices, and my 'research' activities raised further questions about their roles, specifically those in relation to disability. I therefore needed to establish clearly the nature of my relationships with the administrators, and attempt to negotiate the relationship between my 'research' and 'regular' workplace activities. A further and more detailed account of the particular 'character' of this research, and the methodological and ethical considerations arising from my personal location (as

employee and researcher) within the field of enquiry, is located later in this thesis (chapter six).

SOME ADDITIONAL NOTES ON THE TERMINOLOGY AND PHRASING WITHIN THIS THESIS

I recognise that the terms 'impairment' and 'disability' may be understood and used differently according to the context in which they are raised. For instance, within my fieldwork the term 'impairment' was rarely used by respondents, with the term 'disability' being used far more frequently; indeed, both terms were sometimes used interchangeably by respondents within the same conversation. Within scholarly literature, these two terms are understood to convey different meanings, although the nature and 'status' of these terms has created significant debate amongst those for whom disability and impairment are of personal, political and academic concern. Given these debates, I feel that some further clarification is required.

I discuss in chapter three how the notion of 'impairment' is understood by some to reflect an *individual* 'deficiency' or 'deficit'; in contrast, the notion of 'disability' is understood to relate to the *social* context in which impairment is experienced and, as such, it has been posited in terms of 'disabling barriers' (Oliver 1996; Tremain 2005; Shakespeare 2006). The Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) outlined this important distinction in their *Fundamental Principles of Disability*:

> Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. Disabled people are therefore an oppressed group in society. To understand this it is necessary to grasp the distinction between the physical impairment and the social situation, called 'disability', of people with such impairment. Thus we define *impairment* as lacking part of or all of a limb, or having a defective limb, organ or mechanism of the body; and *disability* as the disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organisation which takes no or little account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities (UPIAS 1975, p15, emphases appended)

In my research, *how* these terms are understood and used serves to frame some of my later discussion in chapter three, where I discuss the 'individual' and 'social' models of disability. Moreover, my extended analyses in chapter eight (which relate to 'classification') and chapter nine (which relate to 'language use') discuss in great depth how the 'use' of particular classifications and phraseologies relating to impairment and disability are presented, used and problematized by both my respondents and myself; this includes detailed discussion about 'pejorative' and 'people first' language.

Whilst I recognise the historical and contemporary debates regarding terminology and phrasing, my research engages with *how* such language is used in the 'everyday life' of the workplace, and not necessarily as it may be used in political or academic arenas. As such, in my data reporting I present (and, if applicable to my analysis, problematize) the language as it is used in 'workplace' and 'everyday' talk by my respondents. In addition, overall in this thesis I have attempted to reflect customary language-use and etiquette in relation to disability, and have aimed not to present people with disabilities in a manner that is disparaging or pejorative.

CHAPTER 2: THE ADMINISTRATOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter aims to appraise recent empirical work and commentary on 'administrative work', particularly that which is associated with impairment or disability. It finds that characterising the nature and role of 'street-level' and more 'junior' administrators is problematic and subject to many contextual factors. The review also reveals a relative paucity of literature that is specifically concerned with administrators in 'junior', 'practice-facing' positions and, with some exceptions, empirical data that is largely phenomenological in nature, focused on hierarchical 'position' rather than administrative practices. Departure points for research design are indicated.

INTRODUCTION

Difficulty arises around the term 'administrator', with this term being widely used to describe activities across the institutional range from clerical or office-bound roles, through professionalized 'street level' roles (Lipsky 1980), to senior management roles at 'University Board' level and beyond. This research study is primarily focused on those persons in administrative roles that are directly concerned with the enactment of policy, namely those in 'junior' or 'mid-level' roles. Issues centred on the naming and categorising of administrative work make challenging the apprehension of a clear field of literature and 'subjects' for enquiry in this area. The category of 'administrative work' is associated with a wide range of institutional practices: the title 'administrator' is applied differently across these settings, with a variety of identifying labels applied to administrators and their work. The terminology used is also "historically and contextually bound" (Dobson and Conway 2003, p126), with 'administration' conveying differing meanings at different times and in varied locations, and as such, my early attempts to appraise the literature raised a variety of regional and locally-situated vernacular associated with administrative work.

REVIEW STRATEGY

An initial search of the literature utilised the terms 'administration', 'administrator' and 'higher education'; however, this was soon extended as preliminary reading revealed alternative descriptors for this category of work and its associated roles: for example 'general staff' was widely used in non-United Kingdom (UK) literature, as were

'officer' and a variety of derivative terminology. In addition, some organisational roles associated with 'disability' appear to have recently emerged; as such, the naming conventions used for these reflect something of their unstable and evolving status, and is something that is not well documented in the empirical literature. Empirical and non-empirical papers were located using academic databases; summary search reports were then hand-sorted to exclude papers that resided outside the scope of the review. Individual papers were then utilised to search deeper into the related literature; this in turn revealed alternative terminology that contributed to further searches. Full-text versions were then obtained, allowing for finer inclusion/exclusion around the 'level' of the administrative work being documented, and its relevance to issues of disability or equalities.

Administrators, unlike their academic peers (and their student subjects) feature little within empirical studies, and ethnographic studies that consider administrators are noted to be particularly sparse (Delamont 1996). Although senior university administration[5] and management are considered, university administrators operating in more junior or mid-level roles (that is, below senior management or 'board' level) are sparsely represented within research enquiry (Allen-Collinson 2009; Szekeres 2011). Outside the university context there are studies that incorporate junior- or mid-level administrators, although the contexts and theoretical location of these studies are disparate, and the identification of administrators as a distinct group somewhat tentative; some areas include school administrator-teacher relationships and the management of change (Elstad 2008; Honig 2009); office size, spaces and workplace cultures (McElroy and Morrow 2010); administrative workers and race, ethnicity and gender (Thurlow-Brenner 2009) and poetic-ethnographic enquiry incorporating administrators (Fraiberg 2010). As such, there appears to be agreement in the peer-reviewed empirical literature that "little attention" is paid to university administrators in general (Zimmerman and Allen 2009, p472), although there is some recent indication that this is shifting, although participation by administrators (as opposed to academics) as researchers remains low (Dobson 2009). In addition to peer-reviewed sources, there is a significant 'presence' of non-empirical evidence written by, and specifically for, administrators; although much of this is rhetorical in nature, it is suggestive of a 'revised' discipline in 'emergence'.

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[5] In the US literature in particular, the term 'administrator' is also often understood to represent senior 'leadership and management' roles.

THE 'POSTMODERN' ADMINISTRATOR

The nature of Higher Education is changing in the United Kingdom and, as a consequence of this, so too are the identities and roles of the administrator. Their revised relationships with academic peers and the student (as 'consumer') and their entry into roles that cross traditional disciplinary boundaries, all serve to mark these changes. Administrators are also engaging with new technologies for the delivery of administrative services; their roles have evolved beyond the 'typing pool' and, for some, now necessitate active engagement with work challenges (for example, 'equality and diversity', or participation with external stakeholders) that might be both affective and political in nature.

These changes can be understood to align with the movement towards what has been characterised as the post-modern organisation (Hancock and Tyler 2001), understood as a departure from 'modern' apprehensions of the organisation as described by Weber (1964[1925]). Weber's interpretation of the modern organisation is not discussed in detail here; however, three broader points can be made that establish the departure points around which 'new' administrative roles might be understood to be aligned. For Weber, the process and methods for achieving rationality in the organisation (objectivity, order, logic) were privileged over the 'end point' (product) that was sought; decision-making was crystallised into formal procedure and regulation, and labour divided on the basis of qualification, not affective qualities (Hancock and Tyler 2001).

Weber's reading of the modern organisation can be seen to "ruthlessly expung[e]" (Hancock and Tyler 2001, p14) the possibility of affective or subjective dimensions to organisational life. In contrast, for the administrator working in the 'post-modern' organisation, their "subjective experience of power relations of the workplace" (Newton 1999, p413), their need to consider the affective dimensions of their practices, their use of technologies, and the requirement for them to exhibit agency in a workplace that promotes individual autonomy and "less directive" managerial styles (Hancock and Tyler 2001, p56) all serve to suggest a transformation away from the Weberian model of modern, rational organisation.[6] This revised context, and the transformation of the administrators' role therein, is discussed in this chapter.

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[6] Although this interpretation has also been disputed (Hancock and Tyler 2001, p57)

THE REVISED ADMINISTRATIVE CONTEXTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The 'massification' (Gibbons et al 1994; Whitchurch 2006) of Higher Education in the United Kingdom can be seen to establish a revised context in which administrators are located. Although the goal of massification is understood to indicate increased participation in Higher Education for the school-leaver, the process of massification can also be related to other features, including a diversification of the pedagogic functions of the University (into vocational training, for example), the diversification of the social and cultural demographic of the student cohort, and an increased concern for income generation, efficiency and bureaucracy (Gibbons et al 1994). The "increasingly complex missions" (Whitchurch 2006, p159) of the Universities has arguably led to an erosion of traditional disciplinary boundaries and relationships within organisations (Whitchurch 2006; Raelin 2003) and, consequently, can be understood to impress directly upon the role of the administrators working in these contexts.

The *Further and Higher Education Act* (Great Britain 1992) introduced significant and wide-ranging change to the governance of Higher Education in the United Kingdom. Most pertinent to this discussion was the awarding of University status to institutions previously designated as Polytechnics or those which evolved from local colleges of Further Education, the consolidation of the funding agencies charged with supporting these institutions, and the introduction in statute of quality assurance arrangements for institutions in receipt of public funds. The Universities that emerged from the Act are known colloquially within the Higher Education sector as 'new' or 'Post-92' institutions (Pursglove and Simpson 2007) and those that already held university status prior to the 1992 Act are popularly referred to as 'traditional' Universities, although these institutions may also be sub-divided.[7] The 'Post-92' grouping of Universities is diverse, but may be (very) broadly characterised by their principal commitment to teaching (as opposed to scholarly research), their historical relationship with local Further Education colleges, and an orientation towards vocational, professional or applied studies.

The diversification of university activity (for both traditional and post-92 organisations) is marked by the development of activity beyond that considered as 'traditional': namely full-time, school-leaving undergraduate and immediate postgraduate teaching

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[7] For example, the 'traditional' universities (established during the High Middle Ages and the early Tudor period), those established following the industrial revolution (mid-to-late 19th century), and those established during the 1960s and 1970s.

and research. Part-time study (Gibbons et al, 1994), and the increased participation of students in professional and vocational education and training illustrate the revised pedagogic functions with which the University sector has evolved to incorporate. The 'marketisation' of Higher Education, including an increase in international student recruitment and activities performed 'virtually' with the emergence of the Internet (Raelin 2003; Whitchurch 2006), provides another context, placing institutions in a competitive relationship with peers both locally and beyond. This is supported by political rhetoric around 'the knowledge economy', 'widening participation', 'enterprise', 'engagement', all of which serve to encourage institutions to re-shape their traditional pedagogic and 'scholarly' roles, and expand these into new areas of practice. For some organisations, these emerging activities have promoted the introduction of new or revised administrative functions, for example those concerned with 'research and enterprise', or 'community engagement'.

Associated with the changes in mission for the universities, the student population in the United Kingdom is also changing (Whitchurch 2008). Once understood to be the preserve of a narrow social demographic (male, middle class, and from professional backgrounds, see Gibbons et al 1994), political and cultural changes have served to promote the participation in Higher Education of those thought to be previously disadvantaged in terms of gaining entry. As a consequence, mature or part-time learners, women (particularly in science and engineering subjects), particular ethnic groups and people with disabilities are high upon political and organisational agenda in respect of university admission and the acquisition of graduate status, the inclusion of whom was promoted directly through government statute[8] and indirectly through legislative changes that promote anti-discrimination practices, for example the *Disability Discrimination Act* and its subsequent incorporation into the *Equality Act* (Great Britain 1995, 2005, 2010). This increased participation has, it may be argued, driven the growth of administrative services within the university.

The response to what is popularly described by the media and education professionals as 'widening participation' has, perhaps not surprisingly, been mixed, with some

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[8] Government policy in the United Kingdom, under the New Labour administration (1997-2010), had decided upon a participation target of fifty percent for Higher Education during the writing of this thesis (2005-12); this target appears now to be under revision by the new Conservative/Liberal Democrat administration at the present time (2012).

vociferously concerned about the 'dilution' of graduate status, whilst others are more sanguine yet still troubled by the "attendant problems" (Szekeres 2006, p137) that the 'revised identity' of the student may bring to the University. Certainly, a more 'diverse' and less homogenous student body might be seen to challenge the structures and roles traditionally in place to service the needs of students. Additionally, a widened student cohort also necessarily challenges the existence of a narrow employment vector for students exiting the university. As such, 'employability' becomes both a practical issue for the student, and a political and business concern for the institution, arguably necessitating a reformulation of existing roles and structures. Such changes are considered to have "unanticipated consequences [that] affect the nature and locus of control and power in [the university]" (Kogan and Teichler 2007, p10), and are perhaps a major factor in the deconstruction of traditional academic-administrative boundaries and an increase in administration (Kogan and Teichler 2007).

Universities, in common with other providers of public services, have been placed under increased external surveillance by what are prevalently described as 'stakeholders'. These stakeholders include statutory public sector funding bodies and others with a special interest in the 'performance' of the Higher Education sector (Small 2008), the majority stakeholders being the funding councils for education and research. However, less obviously perhaps, other stakeholders have emerged as a consequence of the 'marketisation' of Higher Education: the role of the *National Student Survey* (NSS) in the United Kingdom, for instance, is seen to be adopting an increasing dominant role in the shaping of University policy and practice at local and national levels, as are consumer networks and forums.[9] All these stakeholders appeal, directly or indirectly, to consumerist notions that are concerned with quality, participation and, some have argued, a standardisation of the services that they supply, and carry with them a greater role for administrators as a consequence (see Raelin 2003; Szekeres 2004).

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[9] The *National Student Survey* (NSS) in the United Kingdom is undertaken by independent research agencies on behalf of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), a non-departmental body of the UK government. The outcome of the NSS has become a regular feature within sections of the popular media, and has driven considerable debate both within and outside the academic community. The growth of the World Wide Web has also witnessed a proliferation of consumer-orientated web-based media: the UK-based internet forum *Mumsnet*, for instance is, at the time of writing (2012), garnering significant media and political attention at a national level.

Other stakeholders have emerged that are particular to professional or vocational disciplines. Although long-established with some disciplines (for example, medicine and law), the increased participation of Universities in vocational education and training, in particular the 'post-92' organisations, has necessitated closer engagement with external accreditation bodies (Raelin 2003). A consequence of this engagement with professional or vocational education and training has been the promotion of more intensive relationships with other public sector institutions. For example, the assimilation of some professional groups (for example, Nursing and Physiotherapy) into Higher Education has lead to compound institutional relationships emerging between the University, employers (predominantly in the public sector), professional regulatory bodies (for example, the *Nursing and Midwifery Council*), Government (the Department of Health) and 'third stream' groups, for example voluntary groups. When compared with the 'traditional' academic disciplines, the requirement for such programmes of study for additional support (for example, in the heavy provision of work 'placements', and the monitoring of student attendance in order to meet professional regulatory requirements) arguably necessitate more complex and burdensome administrative arrangements.

THE BUSINESS IMPERATIVE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The view of the Higher Education institution as business has realised the possibility of a 'market' for higher education in the United Kingdom and beyond. Locally and regionally, Higher Education institutions have appeared keen to characterise themselves as fulfilling a particular need, particularly in respect of their relationship to business and the professions; the former Polytechnics in particular, potentially disadvantaged by their shorter 'heritage' and more textured student identities, are seeking to make credible and purposeful their 'new' missions; in contrast, their more established peers are seen to rest on their reputations for traditional scholarly activities, around research, innovation and the authority of tradition. These challenges are seen to promote new or adapted administrative arrangements within the institutions themselves: 'the enterprise unit', 'the widening participation team' and 'community engagement forum' are oft-observed shorthand for the revised institutional agenda, and serve to afford organisations with forms of symbolic capital that are understood as vital within a competitive marketplace where the 'business imperative' of an organisation is to be cultivated.

As a consequence of this, Universities are increasingly seen to be looking both internationally (Kogan and Teichler 2007) and locally for new forms of business and, ultimately, 'income generation' or enterprise activity. For some organisations, their engagement with overseas education, research and business markets contribute significantly to their income. For others, in particular the former Polytechnics, the formation of a unique 'local' identity - the promotion of the University as one both 'in' and 'for' the local community or region – also appears as a factor that shapes the contemporary higher education marketplace. Positioning themselves as institutions for 'business' and 'professional' activity, particularly in the provision of vocational training and enterprise, such institutions represent modes of higher education delivery that are far removed from the 'ideal type' of location for academic and scholarly endeavour (Kogan and Teichler 2007), and is a strategy that remains a source of tension within the Higher Education community as institutions navigate between their traditional identity as a purveyor of teaching and research and a revised identity that incorporates (sometimes conflicting) goals such as social transformation, community participation and business enterprise (Totten et al 2003). In addition, faced with increased political and public scrutiny, Higher Education providers are also needing to demonstrate "relevance" (Brennan 2007; Kogan and Teichler 2007), a shift of emphasis from wholly scholarly activity to one of knowledge 'application'.

THE CONCERN FOR 'QUALITY' AND THE STUDENT 'EXPERIENCE'

The increased emphasis upon student-related matters[10] is seen to be related to the evolution of the student as 'consumer' and, in more general terms, an emergent political and bureaucratic "discourse of 'quality'" (Dobson 2009, p10), the emergence of the "student experience" discourse being understood as a consequence of the adoption of business methodologies aligned with this (Sharrock 2000, p151). In the context of competition, the quality of student services is understood to offer an important marketing advantage; as students increasingly identify themselves as 'customers', their perception is echoed in how they appraise the 'service' they receive. In contrast to teaching and research, the administrative co-requisites of academic activity (for example, student support services) appear more amenable to the imposition of 'quality' management approaches (Sharrock 2000; Small 2008).

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[10] In Higher Education in the United Kingdom, for instance, the notion of the 'student voice' has entered into the popular vernacular of teaching, learning and assessment.

It appears that administrators within the University environment appear able to characterise students as 'customers', albeit with considerable caveats. The limited empirical evidence indicates no preference for the terms 'customer' or 'client' amongst some administrative staff, these terms being not associated by some with the Higher Education environment at all (Pitman 2000), and in general there is evidence of resistance by University staff to the vernacular of corporate 'business'. In her qualitative study, Small (2008) records the reluctance of administrators to use the 'customer' label: this terminology is seen to have "negative commercial associations" that is in conflict with the "altruistic" administrator-student relationship aspired to by administrators; she finds the term "client" to be received better, although "student" is still used (Small 2008, p179).

Students are characterised by administrators to be an 'atypical' type of customer (Small 2008; Szekeres 2006; Pitman 2000), viewed as 'internal' and therefore 'bonded' more closely with the organisation, in contrast with the relationship between a customer and a conventional retailer[11] (Pitman 2000). Indeed, students can be thought of as performing a more complex identity altogether:

> [as a] customer wanting routine information...[a] client in need of expert guidance...[a] citizen with certain rights...[or a] subject with certain obligations (Sharrock 2000, p150).

In contrast to the retail environment, the 'stakes' for both staff and student are different: the conditions of exchange work in two directions - education is a "co-production" (Sharrock 2000, p150) of both student and the organisation - and, implicitly, their relationship is located with a particular configuration of power and knowledge fashioned by the conditions and context in which both parties are situated. Therefore, whilst some commentators understand 'quality assurance' measures to represent "a way of enhancing control" (Szekeres 2004, p13), others find the concern for 'quality' to be empowering for 'shop floor' workers only if the increased focus on the 'customer' also necessitates greater staff discretion and agency 'below' management level in customer-near administrative roles (Sharrock 2000).

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[11] That higher education institutions are increasingly attempting to find revised ways of utilising the notion of 'loyalty' (for example, through the alumni system) is arguably not a coincidence here. In the United States, for example, the courting of alumni provides a significant income. In the United Kingdom, the tradition of directly courting funding through alumni is less established, although it may be argued that recent (and ongoing) challenges to university funding in the UK may serve to reframe this relationship.

The consideration of 'quality' also necessitates a consideration of context. Arguing that quality approaches in Higher Education reflect both "manufacturing [and] marketplace origins" of the concept, Sharrock argues that the movement 'towards' quality assurance should be considered as "an open set of questions" (Sharrock 2000, p152), rather than specific prescriptions for practice. Arguably, it is administrators and academics in customer or student-near roles that are best placed to achieve this, although there exists for administrators and academics alike a set of tensions: for the former, the conflict between delivering an institutionally imposed set of standards, and the individual agency necessary when engaging directly with students; and for the latter, reconciling the same standards against the academic claim for autonomy and desire for professional or intellectual independence from the organisation. Therefore, even in the contemporary Higher Education context of 'student as customer', professionals working in these contexts arguably act as agents, mediating between the ideals of the marketplace, local policy and processes, and external stakeholders.

CHARACTERISING ADMINISTRATORS AND THEIR ROLES

Within both literature and practice, the term 'administrator' is variously employed, and therefore a "generic definition" (Conway 2000, p199) is difficult to reach. Administrators in higher education have been described by Szekeres (2004) as "the invisible workers" (p7), perhaps reflecting their performance of multifarious roles that reside between the firmer disciplinary boundaries of 'academia' and 'management' as understood by public or political discourses on Higher Education. Further complicating this are the descriptors reflecting international differences. For example, Conway (2000) notes variations in regional descriptors such as "staff" (United States), "academic-related" (United Kingdom), "allied staff" (New Zealand), and "general staff" (Australia) (Conway 2000, p200-1). Beyond surface description, the literature also reveals wide but related characterisations of administrative roles and functions, including "supporting academic staff" (Szekeres 2004, p8), "non-general staff" (Conway 2000, p200), student administration, and roles of a business (human resources, public relations) or knowledge orientation (library, information technology) (Szekeres 2004).

Roles more closely aligned with academic or management descriptors are excluded by some (Szekeres 2004; Conway 2000), with administrators being understood as not responsible for the "provision of academic or other professional services" (Conway 2000, p199). However, the roles that characterise contemporary administration in higher

education, for example learning support officers, library or learning centre staff or disability counsellors, are neither entirely academic (although they may involve pedagogic or research activity), yet nor are they 'non-academic' (as they might require an esoteric body of knowledge, distinct area and mode of practice, and so on). Administrators appear, therefore, to inhabit a wide range of contexts in the university setting, most of whom are in roles that related to the 'total' management of the pedagogic and enterprise environment. Given that academics too might be involved in administrative duties, the perception of an uncomplicated institutional division between 'administrators' and 'non-administrators' is problematic in the context of the complex and evolving Higher Education environment. Nonetheless, some observers do claim that administrators form a "discrete occupational grouping" (Dobson and Conway 2003, p124) despite the range of activities apparently encompassed within their description.

Observational enquiry by Whitchurch (2008) develops three categories of administrator. Her first, 'bounded professionals', are seen to identify strongly with their host organisations, and their position is secured by adherence to prescribed roles and structures. Their identity is enhanced by their length of experience, and might be "undermined" if their role evolves to incorporate other activities (Whitchurch 2008, p378). Her second category, 'cross-boundary professionals', engage in work that broadly follow the structures and boundaries of the organisation, but they might also cross these as circumstances arise. Their knowledge and experience enables them to "overcome isolation" and become "politically advantage[d]" (Whitchurch 2008, p381).

Whitchurch's third category, 'unbounded professionals', are seen to navigate across organisation boundaries and exhibit a preparedness to enter into organisational spaces or realms of knowledge that feature uncertainty or risk. Engaging in relationships that subvert the organisational hierarchy, they may be viewed by some as innovators, or by others as a liability (Whitchurch 2008, p382). In effect, Whitchurch (2008) is describing a taxonomy characterised by increasing agency, inclusion of 'peripheral' knowledge and decreasing perception of boundaries. However, Whitchurch also found in her (albeit small) sample that 'senior' management were more likely to be aligned with the 'bounded' category: the very group that might be expected to possess the most capacity for agency. This suggests that those situated 'lower' in the institutional order may be able to exercise greater latitude in their roles.

The Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (Dearing 1997)[12] utilised a different taxonomy. This appears to acknowledge the changing role of administrative and support staff within Higher Education in the United Kingdom and notes the emergence of several sub-disciplines, namely "technical support staff", "central and departmental administrators", "computing support staff", and "library staff" (Dearing 1997, 4.2). Utilising a focus group methodology, Dearing (1997) identified three administrator identities, "Niche finders", "Subject specialists" and "New professionals"; each identity was formed by Dearing to reflect the different motives of each grouping in relation to their career in Higher Education:

> The *niche-finders* were mostly long-servers who were not particularly highly qualified. These staff members 'fell into' higher education rather than chose it specifically as a career path...The *subject specialists* were more highly qualified and were a mix of long-servers and newer recruits. These people entered higher education because it offered them the best, and often the only, opportunity to pursue their subject interest or specialism...The *new professionals* comprised the smallest group, being newer recruits to higher education. They had taken jobs in the growth areas of higher education - student services, marketing, information services - and had often 'created their own jobs' out of new posts. They were attracted by the variety and challenge offered by their posts. (Dearing 1997, report 4, chapter 2)

Methodological weaknesses in Dearing's report have been noted (Thomas 1998; Dobson 2000), particularly in relation to the methodological depth of his enquiry, which relied on a small number of pre-defined focus groups undertaken during a single month. This lead to the under-representation of certain functional groups of administrators through selection biases that meant that that some roles characterised by employers as 'management' were excluded, leading Thomas to conclude that:

> Regrettably this report does not make a significant contribution to that debate and will leave many administrators with the feeling that their role, contribution and professionalism have failed to be recognised (Thomas 1998, p70)

Whilst Thomas' comments can be seen as a criticism of Dearing's report in terms of its methodological and representational weaknesses, the *Dearing Report* does serve to demonstrate both the difficulty in locating an adequate methodological framework and research method for ascertaining the experiences of the administrative employee, in addition to the political consequences of under-representing a particular group for whom subjugation in the broader organisational discourse of Higher Education is an oft-

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[12] Commonly abbreviated in the literature to *The Dearing Report* (1997)

cited experience (Conway 2000; Dobson 2000; Szekeres 2006). Whitchurch (2008) in effect follows this: whilst their typologies reflect a distinct disciplinary domain, career structure (albeit one that is not always formalised) and capacity for personal agency, both also reflect the methodological difficulties encountered in characterising definitively the nature of a group of workers who are somewhat subjugate in the wider discourses on Higher Education.

ADMINISTRATORS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO OTHERS

The practice of administration within Higher Education is viewed by some as a "black-hole phenomenon" (Glotzbach 2001, p16) whereby pedagogic concerns are 'lost within' the bureaucratic order that characterises the administration of Higher Education. Administration is, from this perspective, certainly a 'distinct' practice discipline within the university environment, albeit one that operates in opposition to other disciplines and discourses within the same organisation. Yet despite the disciplinary authority with which 'administration' is occasionally imbued - sometimes pejoratively - by academic colleagues (Szekeres 2004), it is administrators who remain characterised as "marginalised [and] residual" (Szekeres 2006, p134) within academic literature, and they who have traditionally been understood to be less powerful partners in the relationship (Small 2008), accompanied by a perception that,

> [O]verall, it is the academic allied staff, central academic support and central service administration that are seen to have the least critical roles, especially in terms of determining strategic direction (Wohlmuther 2008, p336)

Dobson and Conway note the "complex and influential nature of the administrative role" (Dobson and Conway 2003, p124), a reveal that it is the changing nature of the Higher Education context and its mission that serves to promote a particular mode of recognition for administrators; hence administrative 'work' is seen as a direct consequence of both pedagogic and bureaucratic activity. Yet despite the recognition that administration, like academia, represents a "distinct occupational grouping" (Dobson and Conway 2003, p125) it is argued that the continued use of the identifier "non-academic" for administrators reveals that these staff are "defined by what they are not" (Dobson and Conway 2003, p125), that is, they are the 'other' in the context of university employment, something of methodological significance that is addressed later in this chapter.

This position is also supported by McInnis (1998), who notes the "negativity" and "lack of appreciation" (McInnis 1998, p170) expressed by some administrators in Higher Education in respect to their relationship with academic colleagues. However, McInnis also notes some perceptions common to both staff groups, particularly in respect of their commitment to remain in their chosen workplace, albeit with concerns about their workloads. More crucially, however, he notes that the evolution of administrative roles, some of which are seen to fray the boundaries between administration and academia, has led to tension between administrators and academics (McInnis 1998); it is in this way that such tensions and resistances may be understood to be markers of emergence for a less subjugated practice discipline within Higher Education.

The notion of an 'opposition' or 'divide' between academic and administrative roles is commonplace in much of the literature around administration in Higher Education (Whitchurch 2006). For some observers, this 'binary' relationship provides an ontological foundation for their studies, their empirical efforts being aimed at elucidating the differences in 'perceptions' and 'practices' between the two functional groups. Indeed, it appears difficult to provide administrators with a label that is removed entirely from the vernacular propagated by the 'binary' academic-administration division (Small 2008). For example, administrative roles are frequently described in terms of how they relate to academic activity ('the assessment administrator'), and likewise for some academic roles ('the assessment tutor'); in effect, whilst administrative roles are understood to be the inverse of academic roles, and vice versa, both are necessarily allied to each other (Wohlmuther 2008).

Conflict between scholarly and administrative values and missions within Higher Education is seen by some to affect the inter-professional relationships therein. Raelin (2003) notes multiple points of conflict, including matters relating to governance, finance, regularisation and, more subtly, the appropriation by the institution of academic 'freedom' (Raelin 2003). There is a suggestion that these tensions are worsened through the mutual misrecognition of the changing role of both parties and their failure to "reassess the existing division of labour" and differing "value systems" between the two groups (Dobson and Conway 2003, p128), in addition to conflict over the overall business versus scholarly identity of the university (Raelin 2003). Szekeres (2004) also notes that the term 'administrator' is variously used by academic staff, sometimes inconsistently and often guided by a lack of awareness of the administrative role, raising

a suspicion that "texts written from the point of view of academics" (Szekeres 2004, p10) might only represent administrative practices from a perspective that only recognises their role in 'servicing' the pursuance of academic or scholarly endeavours.

In contrast, others argue that nature of the 'traditional' administration-academic divide is illusory. Recognising that in some institutions there exists an academic 'utopia' where non-conformity (that is, resistance to bureaucracy) is understood as a primary function of the university, Kogan and Teichler (2007) argue that it does not necessarily reflect 'real' practice. Instead, it functions as an ideal type (Weber 1964[1925]), an aspiration or template for scholarly activity, one that aims to function in spite of (and not in partnership with) other relationships within the organisation. It can be suggested that the notion of this ideal type persists throughout much of the literature critical of the academic-administrative 'divide' and, given the paucity of empirical evidence overall, serves to provides a convenient if not substantiated discussion point.

McInnis (1998), reporting on a Australian survey of administrators, held there are attitudinal differences between administrators and academics in relation to the "control and regulation of work" (McInnis 1998, p9); a particular point of tension arose around perceptions of time versus productivity, with administrators favouring a position that would hold academic staff more accountable for their practices. Pitman (2000) also notes that academics and administrators might be perceived to have different value systems and that a 'general perception' of separation existed. His survey, also conducted in an Australian university, suggested that administrators in particular felt that administrative work was considered less 'important' than academic work, and that their work was less appreciated as a consequence. In contrast, a survey by Totten et al (2003) in the United States suggested that the values and beliefs of the academic and administrative groups were essentially similar; although they also suggest that future empirical enquiry on these relationships might benefit from a focus on the proscribed workplace practices of each group, rather than phenomenology-informed study of 'perceptions' or 'beliefs'.

These studies were conducted in Australia and the United States, and therefore some caution needs to be exercised in applying their findings to the United Kingdom context.[13] However, there appears to be a preference amongst administrators for shared

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[13] I would argue, however, that in relation to their 'street level' roles, administrators and academics in these different (Western) contexts have many common experiences.

performance measures, something that may be seen as anathema to many in the academic group. The notion of "control and regulation" (McInnis 1998, p9) is understood differently by administrative and academic groups: for the administrative group, this equates to measurement, efficiency and regularisation, yet for the academic group, notions such as 'control' are closely associated with the ideal of individuality, autonomy and the cultivation of both academic career and practice. Hence whilst there is a suggestion that 'values' contribute to a perceived 'tension' between the academic and administrative disciplines and their practitioners, the foundation of this conflict may be arguably seen to emerge from the response of the traditional academic and administrative disciplines to the revised landscape of higher education (discussed earlier) and the effect of such a revision on the relationship between the two disciplines. If administration evolves to incorporate thoroughly the motifs of this revised educational and business context (for example, the drive for greater 'efficiency'), this might result in the discipline of 'administration' holding significantly more authority (Sharrock 2000; Szekeres 2004).

Kogan and Teichler (2007) also note the contested landscape in which all university employees find themselves, and suggest potential consequences that may arise:

> One view would see a victory of managerial values over professional ones with academics losing control over both the overall goals of their work practices and their technical tasks... [another] view would see a 'marriage' between professionalism and managerialism with academics losing some control over the goals and social purposes of their work but retaining considerable autonomy over their practical and technical tasks. (Kogan and Teichler 2007, p11)

A 'victory' won by managerialism makes assumptions about the longevity of 'academic' and 'administrative' identities in the university; a binary division is presumed, and the response is concerned with maintaining stable relationships of knowledge, power and space within the organisation. Hence this might be seen to represent a revised ontology whereby managerial-administrative power and knowledge displace that of the academic discipline. Kogan and Teichler's choice of metaphor is interesting: 'marriage' arguably allegorises a union, and not a degradation of the

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Although the economics of Higher Education differ somewhat between the different nations in respect of their funding sources (public, stakeholder or charitable involvement, for instance), the 'traditional' academic or administrative roles have much in common, and many of the challenges they face (for example, information technology, international engagement and diversification of the student body) are common to all, although local presentation of these issues might well be different.

concept of binary partnership. A question therefore arises as to whether the 'new' administrative roles that are emerging in Higher Education represent a combination of both heritages, or whether they reflect an entirely new venture. Whilst it is perhaps appealing to view 'new' or emergent identities and roles as being evolutionary products of their antecedents, thus retaining some of their characteristics and 'tribal' associations, it is perhaps worth considering whether such identities are newly-constituted, 'necessitated by' the conditions of their production, only meaningful in the discursive context that has come into being (see Foucault 1981, discussed in chapter five).

RECONSTRUCTING THE ADMINISTRATOR

There appear to be two primary narratives at play in respect of the administrative role: one that characterises their relationship with academics as one of binary opposition, and the other concerned with the evolution or reconstitution of their role within the university environment. These narratives are partially opposing, with the former presuming a relatively 'stable' academic role and the growth of 'new' administrative roles, and the latter presuming a dissolution of the binary between the two vocational groups due in part to a re-characterisation of their roles through internal and external factors. In respect of this second point, the existing literature does not deeply address the evolution of roles that cross traditional boundaries, or those that reflect evolutionary changes in the nature of administrative work within growing practice areas such as 'equalities' or 'disability', and nor does it adequately address the experience of those administrators performing less senior roles (Szekeres 2011).

The movement towards administrative roles derived from a business rather than academic model has resulted in the term 'administrator' being increasing applied solely to 'less senior' grades of non-academic or general staff; senior levels, who might have previously been described as 'administrators' have increasingly adopted styles of address that reflect the business orientation of the institution, namely "director", "manager" or "head" (Whitchurch 2006, p162). It is perhaps not unsurprising that it is the voices of senior members of administration that enjoy greater representation in the literature: within a discipline with a very short history of scholarly enterprise and a firm hierarchical tradition, those contributing to contemporary debates about administration from within the discipline already find themselves located in a position of authority and voice. Hence the assertion, by an administrator, that administrators might be thought of as "disdainful [and] out of touch with the realities of today's students [and] lacking in

basic administrative skills" (Glotzbach 2001, p2), might be understood as a self-deprecating, mocking view, albeit one that illustrates some of the more tangible tensions that persist (perhaps more in perception than reality) between 'the administration' and their academic (faculty) colleagues. Nonetheless, such perspectives, however sardonic, are representative of a particular relationship, that between the 'senior' administrator and the academic faculty. In contrast, administrators more junior in the institutional order, working closely with students and academics, are arguably in a stronger position to defend themselves against accusations of being detached from the essence of the organisational mission. They remain, however, largely under-represented in the literature.

THE EMERGENCE OF QUASI-ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES

Development of empirical and other commentaries over time (see Dobson 2009) appear to reflect a movement away from introspective examination of the immediate administrative work context, and a movement towards issues that engage both administrators and academics across the university faculty. Whereas administration work enacted lower in the institutional order has been characterised as "menial...women's work" (Szekeres 2004, p16), contemporary developments serve to problematize the academic/administrative divide and reflect a movement away from administration as a 'back office' activity towards increasingly professional roles (Kogan and Teichler 2007, p11) that are more student-facing and consumer-focused. The emergence of 'quasi-academic' or 'quasi-administrative' roles are illustrative of the emergence of new administrative roles that are a direct consequence of the external challenges to higher education and the revised governances therein.

Resisting the 'traditional' conception that administrative staff offered only a facilitative role in the achievement of university goals (Szekeres 2004), it may be argued that in the revised context of contemporary higher education, the institutional concern is not only the for the traditional academic 'end points' (qualifications, or knowledge generation) but also the 'process', which is understood to incorporate quasi-administrative/academic activity at every point, from marketing and recruitment, through political measures such as 'widening participation', and the ultimate 'success' of achieving a well-received (and evaluated) graduation ceremony and employment for the newly graduated. These latter examples, although deviant from the traditional goals of Higher Education, are goals

nonetheless and increasingly subject to both internal and external scrutiny and surveillance.

The coalescing of student activity around administrative rather than academic endeavour is also evidenced: centralised student services replace facilities that might have traditionally been located at school or faculty level (Szekeres 2004, p12). Indeed, the "corporatisation" (Szekeres 2004, p11) of Higher Education has led to the emergence of sub-specialisation within administration, each particularised around activities that are central to managerial, and not necessarily, academic ambitions. For example, 'student-centred' administrative functions that have a less central relationship with pedagogic activity are seen to be evolving in Higher Education: the constitution of administrative roles (and spaces) in student-facing enclaves (variously characterised as the 'student hub', 'student life', 'student point', or similar) provide an example of the specialisation of administrative activity around a 'sensitive' managerial aims (for instance, disability) rather than an activity explicitly orientated around the academic/pedagogic demands of the professions.

Such arrangements, Szekeres argues, lead to the provision of importance aspects of the student experience being delivered away from the gaze of academics; this in itself, she argues, may lead to misunderstandings of the nature of the administrative role. However, it might also be argued that rather than being a shift 'away' from an 'academic' centre-of-gravity, this movement is also echoed to a lesser extent in the provision of academic services: the growth of 'e-Learning', for example, relocates the student outside the traditional geography of the academic team, and away from the direct gaze of the academic, in addition to introducing new administrative functions to the mêlée; therefore the overall picture is arguably more complex than simply a shift 'from' an academic-centred university to one where student-related labour is aligned more closely with administration. Whilst Szekeres' assertion regarding misrepresentation of administrative work (due to its invisibility) still perhaps holds, at least in respect of junior administrators (Szekeres 2011), it is perhaps important not to over-emphasize the existence of a geographic or functional boundary between administrators and academics. Rather, this appears to be a comment on the changing nature of learning, a redistribution of power both outside and within the academic group, and a feathering of the boundaries between groups of disparate vocational persuasions.

It is difficult to argue with confidence whether, in the face of externally-imposed change, it is academia that has driven changes in administration, or vice versa. Rather, it can be argued that each has offered the other a range of revised possibilities in response to challenges external to both that have modified the boundaries between the two disciplines: for example, pedagogic shifts towards e-learning (a secondary effect of a widening 'market' and new technologies) necessitate changes in the administration of teaching and learning, particularly in respect of specialist information-technology skills; similarly, academic staff are increasingly subject to administrative surveillance, both as a matter of regulation and governance (for example, league tables or student evaluations) or implicitly as a function of the growth of data-rich, 'electronic' administrative systems. Particularly in respect of the latter, Small (2008) argues that strong student and administrative support allows the academic staff more time to develop traditional academic functions (teaching, research, governance). Indeed, one of the consequences of the evolution of academic work modalities (for example, enterprise and community engagement) is the emergence of administrative and quasi-academic roles that are required to support such activity (Marginson and Considine 2000; Szekeres 2006).

BLURRED BOUNDARIES AND SPECIALIZATION

Somewhat neglected has been the "twin dynamic" (Whitchurch 2008, p376) of the increasing specialisation of administrative work alongside the "blurring of activity" across traditional professional or organisational boundaries (Whitchurch 2008; Conway 2000; Dobson 2000). The softening of role differences both within administration itself and in relation to its partnership with academia offers the possibility of two sequelae. One consequence claimed might be the formulation of more generic, multi-skilled employees, proficient in several areas of practice previously undertaken by a specific category of employee. Such modes of working offer an organisation advantages in terms of flexibility and cost, and indeed there is some evidence of this practice within administration: for example, the emergence of information technology in the 1980s led to the demise of the single-task 'typing pool' that once characterised many administrative contexts, and the emergence of administrative staff equipped with a more diverse range of skills.

In addition, the softening of disciplinary boundaries has contributed to the growth of specialist roles and 'niche' areas of administrative practice. This has also arisen due to a

shift from structural, essentialist conceptions of administrative work as 'tasks' to increasingly 'professionalised' administrative work characterised by identities, themselves a consequence of the shift from essentialist, discipline-focused conceptions of educational practice ('teaching') to consumerist, 'identity-orientated' focuses ('the learner'). The softening of these boundaries, however, leads to definitional issues. For example, Whitchurch's "professional staff" (Whitchurch 2008, p376) might be defined as 'quasi-academic' (as their outputs impact on teaching, learning and research'; equally, however, they might be described as 'quasi-administrative', due to their alignment with organisational mission and processes. Her chosen term – 'professional' - is appropriate in the context of her discussion, although the identity that is described as 'professional' is problematic for all sorts of reasons related to individual identity, disciplinary knowledge and the particular mode of (social) capital it suggests.

Dobson and Conway (2003) concur that the boundaries between the two domains – administration and academia – are becoming less distinct, yet they also caution against universalising the argument about 'blurred boundaries': whilst this may be true for new and emergent roles within the Higher Education sector (for example, learning support roles), this is not applicable to more conventional pedagogic and empirical roles in the university. They argue that the debate regarding "blurring roles and converging work" (Dobson and Conway 2003, p130) presumes that administrative and academic roles are (or were) always clearly delineated; they note that, as with academic work, administrative work (or that described as such) is highly varied, with some generalists, who might secure employment outside the academy, and others with highly specific roles.

SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH DESIGN

The work roles and identities of administrators in Higher Education are undergoing transformation. These transformations may be seen as the artefacts of a movement away from the 'modern' (Weberian, as opposed to 'post-modern') conception of bureaucratic organisation within which clear functional divisions between staff are enacted and the processes of work are prioritised. Administrators are, in some roles, expected to assert considerable agency, and the issues which serve to challenge them in the workplace – diversity, inclusion, consumerism, and their changing relationship with academic staff – inevitably expose them to matters that are affective, representational and political in nature. Disability presents one such challenge, and therefore how junior- and mid-level

administrators negotiate this emerging discourse provides an empirical challenge that is, to date, sparsely represented in the empirical literature. This raises several methodological challenges for my enquiry.

First, there are foundational issues regarding the characterisation (and naming conventions) of those individuals engaged in what may be broadly categorised as 'administrative work', at a lower, junior or 'street level' within Higher Education in the United Kingdom. This partly reflects differences in the monikers attached to administrative functions across institutions, and partly reflects the unstable and evolving nature of the role of administrator in the changing context of Higher Education. This suggests the utility of a methodological approach designed to elucidate and characterise these emergent roles at the 'street level' of their performances.

Second, methodological approaches within the existing literature show an inclination towards those which are largely deterministic in relation to the purported 'academic-administrator' binary. However, some of these studies also provide emerging evidence that contradicts this particular characterisation and the pre-conceptualisation of the administrative role in this manner. This suggests the utility of a methodological approach that avoids shallow domain analysis (Spradley 1979) and emphasizes the incorporation of respondent-derived categories.

Third, there is evidence that administrators are performing as key agents in the articulation of discourses contemporary to the Higher Education context, including those pertaining to the 'disability identity' of students and co-workers. The dynamic, politicised nature of these discourses implies that administrators necessarily exhibit agency in the administrative governance of associated practice. This suggests the utility of a methodological approach designed to describe and facilitate further theorisation around the administration and governance of such identities in the Higher Education context.

The development of 'specialised' or 'quasi-academic' roles for administrators is raised in my later data chapters. However, the development of administrative roles and functions that are directly concerned with disability (for example, the administration of disability 'screening' and 'disclosure') arguably bring the administrator into direct contact with a confluence of discourses 'on' disability, some of which invite significant contestation and debate. As such, some insight into the (historical) development of

contemporary disability discourses is apposite for later discussion: this is addressed in the following chapter, 'Disability contexts'.

CHAPTER 3: DISABILITY CONTEXTS

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The first half of this chapter locates the concept of disability in a historical context and summarises how the disabled subject was transformed throughout this time. The origins of the 'disability movement' in the second half of the twentieth century are described, and the relation of this to the rejection of the individual model and the adoption of a social model for disability is discussed. The second half of this chapter maps three possible trajectories for disability-related research, and the implications of this discussion for my research design are identified. The chapter acknowledges the importance of both the social model and the 'emancipatory research agenda' for research design, yet also locates an alternate departure point for my enquiry.

DISABILITY FROM THE MEDIEVAL TO THE MODERN

The legal recognition of, and provision for, those considered 'less able' to contribute to the effort of work appears first in English law during the 14th century: the *Ordinance* (1349) and *Statute* (1351) *of Labourers* (Collis and Greenwood 1977) provides early evidence of the division between 'able-bodied' persons and others. In England, these dates correspond with the high to late medieval period where the economy was considered 'local' in nature, and people with what today might be characterised as 'disabilities' were thought to have been largely incorporated into the effort of work at the family or community level. [14] By this time, however, it is argued that "the prerequisites of a capitalist economy without factories were already firmly in place" (Barnes 1997, p16) and the relationship between those who worked and those who regulated work was undergoing significant change.

The *Ordinance* arises from a particular context (social and political unrest following the impact of the Black Death) and perhaps marks the evocation, for the first time in English history, of mode of classification for people that approaches contemporary (as defined in the law) understandings of 'disability':

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[14] For a discussion of this period, including the impact of the first encroachment of the 'Black Death' or plague (c.1348-50) on the local and national economy of (specifically) England and how this changed the nature of employment, see Moore (2007) and Whittock (2009). Note, however, that the 'transition' to an industrialised economy, when this occurred, and particularly its relationship to the 'Black Death', remains highly contested.

> That every man and woman of our realm of England, of what condition he be,
> free or bond, able in body, and within the age of threescore years...be required to
> serve (*Ordinance of Labourers* [1349], in Collis and Greenwood 1977, p21)

In these times and places, whilst people with disabilities may have been productively integrated into the everyday practices of work, their assimilation into society did not necessarily mean that disability was not immune from scrutiny or today what might be described as 'discrimination'. Although notions of disablement were not at this point firmly associated with the notion of 'work' (or the absenting from work) as it might be understood today, disability at this time does appear to have been associated at times with spiritual or moral maladies, perhaps even "demonic possession" (Robert 2003, p138). The emergence of societal features that might characterise the arrival of 'modernity' are seen to transform this conception into one that approaches those recognisable today.

In the post-medieval period, the English economy is seen to be developing a firm industrial base, and from the late 18th century in the United Kingdom this was indicated by the development of centralised and mechanistically intensive centres of production. The effect of this on disabled people is perhaps clearer. Oliver writes: "With the rise of the factory [...] many more disabled people were excluded from the production process" (Oliver 1990, p27) as both the disciplinary environments (working hours and accommodation, for instance) and the technological mode of production (heavy industrial technologies, intense and high output labour) mitigated against their participation. It was in these altered circumstances that the disabled individual is seen to begin to represent a 'threat' to the order of the modes of production and, ultimately, the segregation is seen (away from the workplace) of those unable to participate fully. People with disabilities, in effect, had become a "social problem" (Oliver 1990, p28) by virtue of the changed economic and social environment.

A "paradox" has also been described (Oliver 1990, p28) as those who were once full, participatory members of their communities became segregated at the individual level and viewed as members of an underclass who could not, or were not permitted, to participate in society. Oliver notes, however, that locating definitively the pre-industrial 'status' of disabled people is highly problematic due to a lack of documentary evidence. This appears to be a defensible position: whilst the historiography of disability has developed since Oliver's assertions (see Metzler 2006), it is also ironic for historians of disability that the necessary adjuncts to industrial capitalism (administration and

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bureaucracy) that serve to categorise individuals as disabled or unable to participate are also those provide the empirical data that is available.

The growth of industrialisation and the 'colonisation' of impairment by professional medicine is seen in this period to assert a regulatory effect on the body of the 'worker'. An individual's capacity for work was measured by their ability to labour in workplaces; workplaces that were less tolerant to individual difference than their (mainly local, mainly agricultural) antecedents. However, at this time there is no category or identifiable 'group' who are known as 'disabled' (Barnes and Mercer 2010): those who could not work were identified (medically) as 'sick' or 'infirm', the response to the emergence of whom was the creation of specialist, separated places in which they might be accommodated: the workhouse (Barnes and Mercer 2010) or, for those categorised as 'mad' or 'insane', the asylum (see Mayou 1989; Shorter 1997).[15]

Until the early twentieth century, those who were 'sick' or otherwise not able to work were provided for through a variety of means. In the absence –at this point - of a (national, universal) system of health and welfare, those considered to be 'in need' were accommodated through many different organisations: the church, charitable donation or industrial supports. This period also witnesses a differentiation in the care and treatment of individuals with mental or 'psychiatric' impairments from those with physical ailments; whilst those once described as 'lunatics', and by the end of the nineteenth century patients with mental health impairments were being increasingly placed in specialist institutions. Likewise, those with physical and learning impairments might have been similarly located (Mayou 1989; Shorter 1997).

Such a conception of disability history is, however, thought by some to be naïve (Oliver 1990; Barnes 1997; Barnes et al 1999) both on grounds of its simplicity (it focuses only on the relationship between the individual and the mode of production and ignores culture, for instance) and optimism (that, ultimately, the technologies of modernism will be purposeful for disabled people). As an alternative, Oliver (1990) argues that attempting to comprehend disability from the perspective of historical moral and philosophical development has utility. Noting the evolution of other notions and practices at one time thought 'deviant' (for example, homosexuality and mental

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[15] The asylum as it is understood today is arguably not a creation of the modern era, and examples exist before this time. However the role and function of the asylum, in addition to their number, did increase in this period: see Mayou 1989 and Shorter 1997

'illness'), he draws parallels with the 'evolution' of disability. On the development of different systems of thought on particular expressions of deviance, he notes:

> As a result of these perceptions particular deviants were subjected to moral, then legal and now medical mechanisms of social control. (Oliver 1990, p30)

As such, what can be seen in the transition between 'medieval' and 'modern' society is a transformation in the categories by which what is known today as 'disability' is organised. The appearance of segregated institutions and the emergence of the medical profession as one of the dominant disciplinary modes imposed upon those with disabilities is widely documented, a relationship that Barnes notes coheres with the emergence of 'new' philosophical positions or discourses 'on' the individual subject that emerged during the enlightenment period (Barnes 1997). These discourses serve to align science with the notion of 'truth' and embrace the notion of social progress; yet, as Corker and Shakespeare note, not all are equal in this more 'enlightened' time:

> In spite of the ideology of scientific enlightenment and progress [...] large numbers of people remain oppressed within modernism, particularly those who are perceived not to meet the modernist ideal of the rational, independent subject. (Corker and Shakespeare 2002, p2)

Acknowledging the contribution of Hunt (1966) to his argument, Barnes (1997) notes that the experience of 'disability' resided in tension with the (liberal) individualistic and work-centred valuing system that was (and perhaps still is) at play in the Western world. Understood to be unable to 'contribute' and to enjoy the material benefits that these societies offer, people with disabilities are effectively 'marked' as outsiders in their host societies, leading, he argues, to discrimination. Hence the rise of the segregated institution for those marked as such represents a "means of both social provision and control" (Barnes 1997, p9), an idea of separateness and exclusion that became a dominant mode of thought, the "common sense and everyday assumptions and beliefs" in respect of disability (Barnes 1997, p9).

THE EMERGENCE OF THE DISABILITY MOVEMENT

Whilst the positioning of disability as a social (and medical) 'problem' during the post-enlightenment era is documented, the later phases of the industrial revolution also see the early reformulation of disability as a political concept in the United Kingdom. However, a critical mass of thought and action in respect of disability in both the United States and United Kingdom did not emerge until the 1960s. In the mid to late twentieth

century, a purported division emerged (characterised as 'American' or 'British') for political and philosophical thought around disability; the former associated with Parsons' functionalism (that disability represents deviancy and is associated with the 'sick role'), and the latter associated with Marxism (that disability is constituted by capitalism and the commoditisation of labour) (Barnes 1997; Barnes et al 2002).

In the United States, the emergence of a politicised 'disability movement' has become associated with the 'turn' towards other social movements, for example the civil rights movement, consumerism and deinstitutionalisation (Shreve 1982). Furthermore, in the academy, Goffman's thesis on stigma (Goffman 1963; Barnes 1997; Barnes et al 2002) is also understood to have been instrumental in the development of (in the United States) the Movement for Independent Living (ILM) (Barnes 1997). In the United Kingdom, mirroring developments in the United States, and arguably in response to the perceived colonisation of 'disability' by the medical profession and its associated care 'industry' (Shakespeare 2006) the disability 'movement' in the United Kingdom was similarly "inspired" (Barnes et al 2002, p4), a key agency for which was *Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation* (UPIAS)[16] whose professed radicalism at the time is captured in a later statement, and whose vital impact is considered in the next section:

> It is not because of our bodies that we are immobile - but because of the way that the means of mobility is organised that we cannot move. It is not because of our bodies that we live in unsuitable housing - but it is because of the way that our society organises its housing provision that we get stuck in badly designed dwellings...Disability is not something we possess, but something our society possesses. The Union's unambiguous position forms the basis of all our policies and activities, and similarly the basis of our challenge to those involved in disability struggle. (UPIAS 1981, p5)

TWO MODELS OF DISABILITY

Although its development is popularly attributed to Mike Oliver (see Oliver 1981), the origins of a 'political' and altogether 'social' approach to understanding disability can be located in early Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) statements:

> The Union's social theory of disability, itself a product of the technological changes in society, reflects the most advanced developments which make it clear that the alternative to an "incomes" (or more properly, "pensions") approach to

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[16] The UPIAS was formed in 1972 by Paul Hunt; see Hunt (1972).

the particular poverty in disability is to struggle for changes to the organisation of society so that employment and full social participation are made accessible to all people, including those with physical impairments. (UPIAS 1975, p15)

However, as noted by Finkelstein (2004), it was Oliver who was instrumental in promoting more widely the notion of a 'social model' for disability (Oliver 1981). Oliver's paper, drawing on several key exemplars, demonstrated the limitations of what he described as the *individual model* of disability[17] (Oliver 1981). The individual model of disability locates the experience of disability firmly within the immediate domain of the individual, rather than his or her social environment, and represents disability in terms of 'impairment' and deviation from expected physical and psychological norms (Oliver 1990). In this model, therefore, the experience of 'disability' or 'disablement' is inexorably bound with the notion of 'impairment'. The individual model is therefore understood to "classify disability in terms of a meta-narrative of deviance, lack and tragedy" (Corker and Shakespeare 2002, p2), in effect, the experience of disability is a "personal tragedy" (Oliver 1996, p65).

The individual model can be understood to appeal to the 'psychological imagination' that attempts to comprehend and 'make sense' of the personal experience of disablement and, in isolating the 'individual', it provides a convenient (political) subject towards which (professional) intervention may be focussed (Oliver 1981). In contrast, the *social model* views disability as being socially constructed; that is, it is society that constructs disabling barriers (either material barriers, or those that are attitudinal or cultural) that serve to exclude or disadvantage individuals or groups who have impairments. In this model, therefore, 'impairment' does not equate to 'disablement'; they are, notionally at least, separate concepts; disability is "constructed on top of impairment" (Corker and Shakespeare 2002, p3), and is independent from it. Oliver's 'social model' can be seen to have directly evolved from the earlier statements by UPIAS and its protagonists through its inversion of the presumptions of the individual model, locating disability 'outside' the individual, and (reflecting, perhaps, its Socialist provenance) specifically towards the organisation of work and living spaces:

> The importance of this social model of disability is that it no longer sees disabled people as having something wrong with them - it rejects the individual pathology model. Hence when disabled people are no longer able to perform

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[17] The individual model is referred to by some as the 'medical model', although others reject this (Oliver (1990); within my later data chapters I use the both terms interchangeably, reflecting how these terms are used in the everyday talk of individuals.

certain tasks, the reasons are seen as poor design of buildings, unrealistic expectations of others, but the organization of production and so on. This inability does not stem therefore from deficiencies in the disabled individual. (Oliver 1981, section 5).

As Oliver (1996) and Barnes (2003) note, the social model of disability gradually became the *de facto* political and conceptual basis for disability practice or, as Oliver himself suggests, "almost...the new orthodoxy" (Oliver 1996, p5). In part, this appears to be due to its incorporation into the political endeavours of organisations represented by -and for- disabled people, thus leading to its overt promotion. More subtly, the principles of the social model appeared to be incorporated by others not directly associated with the 'disability movement' (Oliver 2004), and although a striking feature of Oliver's definition of the 'social model' is its clarity of purpose, its wide expression has arguably led to differing interpretations as it has found expression outside its intended 'activist' scope (Finkelstein 2004; Sin and Fong 2010).

CRITICAL RESPONSES

The social model of disability has not, however, been incorporated into disability theory and practice without a critical response. The criticism levelled at the social model has centred on several key issues that can be broadly organised into five areas: theoretical inadequacy, disciplinary authority and power, the place of (or for) impairment, its materialist foundations, and its cultural impact. In respect of theoretical inadequacy, some commentators have argued that the social model lacks theoretical authority and substance. For example, it has been argued that the social model is under-theorized in respect of "embodiment, identity and the operation of power" (Sherry 2006, p53). Oliver dismisses this, and asserts that the social model was never proposed to be a 'social theory', rather it was intended as a framework for comprehending practical, emancipating action (Oliver 2004), a statement perhaps at odds with the original UKIAS position and Oliver's earlier thesis[18] (Oliver 1990). Gleeson (1997) summarises these tensions, highlighting the 'practice focused' role of materialist approaches, yet offering opportunities for further theoretical development:

> [T]he works of many disability scholars are frequently marked by a first-hand grasp of the social oppression which attends impairment. By nature, disability studies justifiably challenges the social theorist by demanding explanations that

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[18] In 1990, Oliver's position appears to be that a 'social theory' for disability is a 'work in progress'; in later texts, he appears to move away from this position.

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lead to policy prescription. The...nature of disability studies promises great potential for a more theoretically-informed praxis (Gleeson 1997, p181)

In respect of disciplinary authority, the social model has been understood by some commentators as having become the *de jure* basis for disability policy, practice and research through the effective 'disciplining' of debates surrounding its nature and application. For example, criticism has been levelled at a principal disability journal of the United Kingdom (*Disability and Society*) for appearing to apply editorial censorship to submissions perceived to be at odds with its presumed (emancipatory) position (Shakespeare and Watson, 2002). Whilst Oliver (2004) strongly refutes this accusation, citing his own interpretation of the journal's content as evidence, the debate arising within the 'disability academy' following these assertions serves to illustrate the sensitivity around how disability is framed: the tenor of the debates marks a tension between original 'founders' of the disability movement, their equating of disability with oppression (Shakespeare 2006) and the 'street level' concerns of the disability movement, and those characterised as "philosophers and some social theorists", somewhat divorced from 'practice' (Barnes 2003, p6).

In respect of 'impairment', some have argued that the social model fails to recognise or address the individual 'reality' of living with impairment due to its focus upon externally imposed 'disabling barriers' and its "crude separation" (Shakespeare 2006, p201) of the concepts of impairment and disability. Further to this, others have suggested that the normalising 'pressure' of the social model advances expectations upon disabled people themselves, in effect disabling them further as they are encouraged to overcome disabling barriers (French and Swain 2001) . Oliver (2004) defends the social model by reminding its antagonists of the political nature of its mission, a "conceptual misunderstanding" (Oliver 2004, p8) that, whilst not ignoring the individual impairment(s) of people, is more concerned with the communal rejection of disabled people by a disabling society.

Paradoxically, others have suggested that the social model is inadequate in accommodating other socio-political issues, for example gender or class inequalities (Shakespeare 2009) and have criticised the materialist foundation of the social model: for these critics, the social model is overly concerned with what disabled people do not have (food, money and physical security, for example) and is less concerned with the principle of 'representation'. Oliver defends this bluntly:

> [T]o move disability politics exclusively into the realm of the politics of representation is fundamentally misguided and inappropriate when so many disabled people continue to experience life-threatening material deprivation (Oliver 2004, p9)

The social model has also been criticised in its application: Oliver notes that the "over-zealous" (Oliver 2004, p9) application of the social model in workplace training schemes, for example, is not a result of the social model itself, and rather more of its interpretation and application in practice. The evolution of public discourses on disability, perhaps conflated by the perception of a 'politically correct' culture, have led to some commentators questioning the superficiality of popular or lay discourses on disability. Whilst, for example, the media might not (in the United Kingdom) use the pejorative language of earlier times, it is argued that such a change in language does not necessarily signal a deeper recognition of the issues that were instrumental in the development of the social model; as Darke comments: "The language has changed, but not the politics behind it; for example, institutionalisation itself is not questioned, only the excesses of abuse within an institution" (Darke 2004, p101). Therefore it appears that whilst the social model may have provided a set of linguistic tools, doubts exist regarding the assimilation of its essentially political nature into 'everyday' life.

TURNING POINTS

Colin Barnes notes the contribution to disability theory made by those he characterises as "mainly feminist or postmodernist" commentators (Barnes 1997, p9), and such comments reveal further some of the tensions that have arisen in the 'turn' towards post-structuralism made by more recent contributors. Reminiscent of earlier developments within feminism, Rapley (2004) documents and characterises the shifting emphases represented by disability theorists as 'first wave' and 'second wave'. The 'first wave' he associates with the originators of the social model of disability (primarily Mick Oliver, Vic Finkelstein and Colin Barnes), a position variously characterised either as 'materialist', concerned with the structure of society or, as Finkelstein describes it, 'outside in':

> [T]he radical social model of disability gave us the words to describe the way society is constructed so that we become disabled. It was an outside-in approach (Finkelstein 2001, p4)

The 'second wave' is associated with writers and theorists who depart from the materialist position of the 'first wave', instead associating themselves with a range of

locations that may be characterised as feminist, postmodernist (Barnes 1997), or post-structuralist (Rapley 2004). These writers (including Tom Shakespeare, Mairian Corker and Shelley Tremain) are associated with the notion of disability as "product of discursive practices" (Rapley 2004, p65), configurations of knowledge, culture, history and power that serve to constitute a necessarily contested understanding of what is meant by 'impairment' and 'disability'.

These writers arguably placed themselves in tension (both publicly and philosophically) with their 'first wave' peers, locating their interests away from wholly materialist conceptions of disablement, and adapting theoretical ideas from, for example, cultural and anthropological theory (Shakespeare 1994), post-structuralist and feminist standpoints (Corker 1998) and Foucauldian perspectives (Tremain 2005). Their work signposted alternative departure points for theorizing about disability, a departure that led to considerable debate and acrimony within the 'community' of disability writers and activists (see Barnes 1997; Shakespeare 1994; Shakespeare and Watson, 2002; Shakespeare 2005).

Tremain (2005) locates her work firmly within a post-structuralist Foucauldian tradition and utilises this in order to apply a critique to the social model of disability. Her contestation of the social model centres on its premise that disability is neither a consequence of impairment, nor that impairment (necessarily) 'causes' disability. Tremain attempts to demonstrate how a Foucauldian analysis can serve to problematize conceptions of disability and impairment that, like the social model, rely on *juridical* (or hierarchical, downwardly oppressive) notions of power, addressed later in this thesis. The social model's adherence to the premise of two isolated concepts, and 'external' or social barriers 'causing' disability, is seen as troublesome:

> [A]n implicit premise of the [social] model is [that] impairment is a necessary condition for disability, because proponents of the social model do not argue that people who are excluded or discriminated against on the basis of (say) skin colour are by virtue of that fact disabled, nor do they argue that racism is a form of disability. (Tremain 2005, p9-10)

Shakespeare (2006) appears to locate his interests around those of Tremain (2005), and he utilises her arguments in part to deploy a critique of the social model. Another departure point introduced (although perhaps not advanced) by Shakespeare is the role of anthropology, specifically that of the British structuralist anthropologist Mary Douglas (Shakespeare 1994). Although Shakespeare's reading of Douglas has been

noted as being somewhat phenomenological in character, rather than distinctly anthropological (Metzler 2006), Shakespeare utilises Douglas's conception of purity and danger (Douglas 2002) and considers how it may be applied to the divisions, boundaries and anomalies that arise in the cultural response to the 'threat' of disability.[19]

Similarly, Corker (1998) adopts a post-structuralist position, foregrounding the importance of language and its effects upon "meaning, representation and identity" (Corker 1998, p224). Corker pays, following Foucault, particular attention to the allied concepts of power and discourse and how these serve to constitute 'legitimate' representations of disablement in different places at different times. This enables her to deploy a critique of social model-informed traditions that, she argues, under-acknowledge the role of discourse in the constitution of disability, and fail to acknowledge the methodological opportunities that are awoken through a consideration of disability in terms other than "methodological individualism" (Corker 1998, p222).

RESEARCHING DISABILITY

Three candidate trajectories for my research are therefore suggested. A first trajectory might align itself with those methodologies offered by positivist science, specifically medicine and related disciplines, where the subject of concern is the 'impaired body'; this trajectory is within the 'disability studies' community considered anachronistic, although some artefacts remain in contemporary discussion. A second possible trajectory might evolve from the materialist tradition of the social model and would make use of methodologies that promote research as a deliberate political or representational endeavour aimed at offering remedy to the 'disabling barriers' that serve to constitute the experience of disability: this is the 'emancipatory project' for disability research. A third trajectory, and perhaps one that is more difficult to locate, might be understood to incorporate the methodological insights gained from readings of other disciplines and philosophical traditions, specifically those associated with post-structuralism. I now consider each of these possible trajectories, prior to outlining the position I take within my research design.

The first trajectory was predominant until the later decades of the twentieth century and was characterised by largely positivist, scientific enquiries into the nature and

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[19] Douglas's theoretical stance is addressed in greater detail later in this thesis

consequences of pathological impairment and, as such, might be aligned with the individual or 'medical' model for disability. Disability research was seen to be associated with the evaluation of social policy and as a "research domain for medical sociology" (Shakespeare 2005, p139). However, by focusing on the individual experience of disability and not the societal causes of disability these approaches to the study of disability were argued to be at odds with those of the 'political' project of the social model (Stone and Priestley 1996; Barnes 2003) and did little to ameliorate discourses of charity, tragedy and 'difference'. Concerns were also raised regarding the continued relationship of 'experts' to their 'disabled subjects' (Hunt 1966; Stone and Priestley 1996; Danieli and Woodhams 2005), and the effects such a presence might have on the research produced.

Closely associated with the 'first trajectory' was the undertaking of research 'about' disability by 'non-disabled' researchers. This was also challenged as being reflective of the 'oppressive' nature of societal relationships between those 'with' and those 'without' disabilities, and for some time the 'status' of non-disabled researchers within disability research raised much debate (Stone and Priestley 1996; Drake 1997; Branfield 1998; Tregaskis 2000; Tregaskis and Goodley 2005; Danieli and Woodhams 2005). These were highly contested (and sometimes personal) disputes, although more recent contributions appear more sanguine (Barnes 2008). These debates, however, arguably resonated with those experienced by subjugated groups elsewhere and served to consolidate the emergence of an 'emancipatory' disability research agenda (Barnes 2002, 2003).

A second possible trajectory for enquiry might be one that would be in closer alignment with the emancipatory ambitions of the social model for disability. Whilst the emancipatory disability "paradigm" (Oliver 1992, p110) has its origins very early in the 'disability movement' (see Hunt 1966), the early 1990s saw firmer discussion and a consolidation of its principles. Oliver (1992) unpacks the concerns of the disability movement and social model theorists in respect of positivist and interpretive methodologies; in response, what he suggests is an effective reversal or inversion of traditional (empirical) research positionalities:

> The issue then for the emancipatory research paradigm is not how to empower people but, once people have decided to empower themselves, precisely what research can then do to facilitate this process [...] Emancipatory research is not, as is sometimes implied, to help the researched to understand themselves better,

but to develop its own understanding of the lived experiences of these very subjects. (Oliver 1992, p111)

The concept of 'emancipatory disability research' is distilled by Stone and Priestley (Stone and Priestley 1996; Barnes 2002; Barnes 2003) into core principles 'for' emancipatory disability research which during the last decade found expression within academic literature, in national policy, and empirical practice (Mercieca and Mercieca 2010; Sin and Fong 2010). The "adoption of a social model of disablement as the epistemological basis for research production" (Stone and Priestley 1996, p706) provides one such principle. However, the consideration of 'epistemology' inevitably raises questions of representation regarding the subjects that are being represented 'by' such research, and the nature of the knowledge that is generated therein. This has been subjected to considerable interpretation and has generated considerable conflict between disability research commentators. Finkelstein summarises these conflicts, suggesting that 'individual' considerations of the experiences of people with disabilities have displaced the epistemological foundations of the social model as originally conceived:

> [T]he radical social model of disability gave us the words to describe the way society is constructed so that we become disabled. It was an outside-in approach to our situation; words to describe our experiences of inequality [are] an inside-out approach...Our society is built on a competitive market foundation and it is this social system that disables us. (Finkelstein 2001, p3)

Research enquiry that exposes individual or group 'discrimination' is, therefore, not necessarily discordant with the 'social model'; however, if Finkelstein's argument is followed, it suggests a failure to address the wider cultural and social issues that make 'thinkable' and 'permissible' those practices that ultimately discriminate or disadvantage at the individual level. Therefore, whether or not the social model becomes the 'epistemological basis for research production' appears related to how the researcher comprehends the social model and what it aims to 'achieve' both politically and epistemologically.

Another principle of the emancipatory trajectory, "The willingness only to undertake research where it will be of practical benefit to the self-empowerment of disabled people and/or the removal of disabling barriers" (Stone and Priestley 1996, p706) might also be understood to be problematic. Whilst disability research has witnessed a movement away from 'medical' methodologies (Barnes 2008; Finkelstein 2001) this arguably has not corresponded with a re-orientation of 'control' to people with disabilities. Although some contemporary research serves to illustrate the intensive

involvement of 'disabled people' in research (for example, Tregaskis and Goodley 2005), concern remains that such research remains conditioned by other discourses: academia, charity or the imperatives of local or national law or policy (Sin and Fong 2010). Considering 'practical benefit' alone also locates (rightly, perhaps) the interest of research at the foci of the 'barriers' problem; that is, research should, if the emancipatory prescription is followed, enable the explicit removal of such barriers. Where the emancipatory approach is less clear is in respect of practices that are not directly amenable to 'removal', for example cultural or linguistic practices (Corker 1998), and it appears difficult to isolate with precision the basis by which the practical 'removal of barriers' in such circumstances might be evaluated.

The principle to "adopt a plurality of methods for data collection and analysis in response to the changing needs of disabled people" (Stone and Priestley 1996, p706) is also a concern. Qualitative methodologies appear to be the dominant mode by which emancipatory enquiry is undertaken due to their perceived sensitivity to matters of representation, personal contribution and 'voice' (Barnes 2008). The dominance of qualitative research in this area is enhanced by the suspicion that larger-scale quantitative enquiry will necessarily reflect the 'oppressive' discourses that prevail in society (Barnes 2008). However, criticism has emerged regarding the conflation of political and epistemic positions in relation to disability related research. These criticisms imply that an unquestioning adherence to the tenets of 'emancipatory' research may itself be understood as a form of oppression, one that enables the 'emancipatory agenda' to become hegemonic and unchallengeable, reproduce the 'power relationships' it seeks to dissolve, and may serve to undermine research that is of broader interest and scope (Mercieca and Mercieca 2010; Danieli and Woodhams 2005; Sin and Fong 2010).

It is in response to these critical responses that I select *not* to commit to a research design that is closely aligned with the tenets of the 'emancipatory disability' "paradigm" (Oliver 1992, p110), as outlined above. However, in making this decision, I also recognise that the 'social' or 'emancipatory' discourse on disability is one that has entered into lay or popular discourse, and is proving to be influential in the development of public policy (Sin and Fong 2010). However, following Corker (1998), Mercieca and Mercieca (2010), Shakespeare (2009) and others, I question its role as being the principal theoretical position through which disability-related knowledge might be

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elucidated. As such, in the following chapters I consider alternative theoretical frameworks, those of Michel Foucault and Mary Douglas, and discuss the contribution their theses may make to a study that is concerned with disability. However, in respect of what I have already considered in this chapter, I conclude by outlining some implications for research design.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

First, the historical constitution of the disabled 'subject' reminds me that the categories of 'disability' and 'impairment' are inherently uncertain and subject to transformation over time. They are, arguably, produced by and through the 'discourses' that prevail at the time of their emergence: the emergence of recognisable economic and occupational relationships and the disciplining effects of (in particular) the medical profession serve to illustrate how the categorisation of disability or impairment has occurred in the modern period. This brings to my research a consideration of how 'disability' is constituted discursively in the present, and invites in particular an exploration of how language-use around disability is symptomatic of, and has contributed to, a change in 'disability' knowledge, power and practice (Grue 2009).

Second, Darke's comments on the 'thin' application of an inclusive or emancipatory veneer (Darke 2004) raises questions regarding how 'emancipatory principles' have been incorporated (or not) into the 'wider culture' of both disabled and non-disabled persons alike. Although evidence appears to be emerging that although emancipatory 'gestures' within wider social research, policy and practice have been instrumental in promoting social and cultural changes that are beneficial to people with disabilities (Barnes 2008) there persists an anxiety that 'tick box' (Sin and Fong 2010) responses to the challenges offered by emancipation for disabled people have become incorporated into the bureaucracies that have emerged to support these efforts. The nature of this bureaucratisation therefore perhaps deserves further scrutiny.

Third, the location of the 'non disabled' researcher in the progress of 'emancipatory' disability research has been problematised (Drake 1997; Branfield 1998; Tregaskis 2000; Tregaskis and Goodley 2005; Danieli and Woodhams 2005). Although more recent texts suggest that the disharmony present during earlier debates on this issue have been somewhat ameliorated (Barnes 2008), questions as to the location of the 'non disabled' research in disability-related enquiry remain unresolved. Although my research is not specifically located at 'lives and experiences' of disabled people and the

experiences of discrimination that they may or may not experience, the debates regarding the credibility of a 'non-disabled' researcher undertaking enquiry that might indirectly affect disabled persons serve to problematize my 'location' in the research.

Fourth, and related to the above concern, is the question of 'practical benefit' in relation to disability-related research. What constitutes 'practical' advantage in such circumstances remains uncertain. Whilst earlier commentary on the emancipatory 'project' for disability research suggests that such enquiry may be directed specifically towards the amelioration of 'disabling barriers', including those that are methodological, the unquestioning adherence to a specific model 'for' disability-related research has come under more recent criticism (Mercieca and Mercieca 2010). For this research, my intention will not necessarily be to identify *specific* material and attitudinal barriers as they might be perceived to exist. However, my research might invite discussion and theorising on how such barriers might be elucidated methodologically.

Last, the binary division between individual (medical) and social conceptions of disability and impairment form a principal axis around which criticism of social or emancipatory disability research has occurred. Debates persist about 'whom' the social model can (or should) represent, with the location of 'variable' or "liminal" (Turner 1979, p465) disabilities or impairments (such as those associated with mental-wellbeing) particularly problematic,[20] and evidence of a discourse within ostensibly emancipatory discourses on disability that, paradoxically, have served to exclude or under-represent certain impairment groups or 'categories'. Whilst not focusing on the ontological status of these impairment groups or categories, my research offers the opportunity to elucidate how university administrators resolve these categorical issues.

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[20] Victor Turner defines the state or experience of 'liminality' as "'being-on-a-threshold'...betwixt-and-between the normal" (Turner 1979, p465).

CHAPTER 4: DOUGLAS: PURITY AND DANGER

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Within this chapter I consider the structuralist approach of Mary Douglas and discuss how it might find expression within an enquiry that is (partly) concerned with disability. I first locate Douglas theoretically, and identify some basic challenges inherent in the structuralist approach as it might be applied to anthropology. Douglas's primary thesis is then introduced, and application made to disability in respect of its perceived anomalous or marginal location within a specific social context. I then identify departure points for research design. I find that Douglas is of utility to my research design, albeit with some caveats that necessitate consideration of a further frame of reference (Foucauldian post-structuralism).

INTRODUCTION

My 'anthropological imperative' is not one of studying 'the disabled person'; rather, my research considers how individuals and groups become categorised as such in a specific context, and how one group of staff (university administrators) are located in respect of this. Both of these contexts might be considered to be characterised by binary oppositions. For disability, categorical oppositions such as 'disabled or non-disabled', 'included-excluded', 'individual-social' characterise many of the discussions that arise. For the administrators, too, such oppositions can be described: 'academic-administrator', 'junior-senior', 'student-consumer' are some that might be encountered. These binary oppositions invite a consideration of structuralism and, particularly in respect of disability, how marginal or anomalous categories are socially apprehended, incorporated or rejected.

My primary source in this chapter is Mary Douglas, and her early thesis, *Purity and Danger* (first published in 1966). Douglas's thesis describes how distinctions are made between what is understood to be 'pure' and what is understood to be 'dangerous' in specific social contexts. This invites application to a contemporary context where the categorisation and 'ritual' regulation of disabled/non-disabled people appears prevalent, and where the 'response' to disability by a specific group, the administrators, is of interest. In this chapter, I first outline the structuralist context with which Douglas is usually identified, and outline some difficulties of this position in relation to anthropological research. I then consider in detail Douglas's primary thesis as outlined

in Purity and Danger and discuss its application to disability. Following this, I consider Douglas's five modes for 'purification', again attempting to establish linkages with a contemporary university and its disability contexts. In conclusion, I discuss some implications for research design, and make tentative links to the subsequent chapter on post-structuralism.

STRUCTURALISM

Mary Douglas is usually identified with the tradition of structuralist anthropology, and in particular the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss (Turner 2006; Barry 2002). Lévi-Strauss, in turn, is seen to be influenced by Saussure through the formers "appropriation" of Saussure's linguistic theory (Hall 1980, p64) for his conception of 'structuralist anthropology' (Baert and Carreira da Silva 2010). Following Saussure, four basic premises for structuralism that find expression in social research can be ascertained.

First, the relationship between signs and what they signify is central to the structuralist account of culture. Saussure's linguistic theory maintained that the 'meanings' attached to words are arbitrary, that is they are chance occurrences and as such, there is no direct, explicable connection between the word (the signifier) and the meaning that it suggests (or signifies), whatever this is understood to be. 'Word' in this sense does not necessarily only refer to the 'spoken' word or utterance; words can be 'signs', but "also whatever else that, on being heard, or seen or touched or tasted, 'makes sense'" (Faubion 2007, p42).

Second, these signs can only 'make sense' only as part of a (larger, social) system and, within structuralist thought, culture provides the organising context in which the (required) categories and frameworks articulate meaning (Hall 1980). Therefore, structuralism recognises that which is 'signifying' or 'non-signifying', or that which is "culture" or "not culture" (Hall 1980, p65), and it is the 'arrangement' and the "articulation of parts" (Hall 1980, p65) that are privileged. It therefore follows that structuralism rejects phenomenological thought (that the 'objective' world is constituted by human 'subjectivity'). Rather, human subjectivity is the effect of structural systems. In effect, structuralism, by way of language, has a "decentring" effect upon the human (speaking) subject and their experiences (Hall 1980, p69). As human 'experience' is therefore no longer privileged, for structuralism it belongs "to the world of manifestations and appearances [...] an effect of structure" (Van Loon 2007, p275).

Third, the meaning of the social world is constituted 'through language'; put another way, Saussure's structuralism implies that language does not simply describe the (social) world; rather, the social world is ascribed through the forms, structures and relationships of language. Language, understood as such, overlooks 'reality' in favour of social meanings (Crotty 1998; Turner 2006; Barry 2002). These relationships are necessarily mutual: 'roughness' can only have meaning when contrasted with 'smoothness', for example (Jenkins 2003; Turner 2006; Filmer et al 2004). Structuralism therefore finds that that the cultural world, its 'meaning', is constituted through language, whereby:

> [The] elements of a culture, as we experience them, are the surface patterns or manifestations of underlying structures at a deeper level. Because culture is based on deep structures the rules that order it may be only part of the unconscious of its members. Cultural symbols and representations are the surface structure and acquire the appearance of 'reality' (Filmer et al 2004, p41)

Last, Saussure's structuralism privileges a synchronic, or 'in the moment', consideration of language (in contrast to the diachronic, or 'historical' view). That is, language exists (only) in the present and is configured around the mutual relationship between words; this notion finds its clearest expression in the notion of binary oppositions or differences between words, for example 'male-female', 'smooth-rough', 'straight-curved', indeed, 'able-impaired'. It follows, therefore, that for structuralism the accent is upon, as Douglas and Isherwood note, "social processes in knowledge" (Douglas and Isherwood 1996, p42), rather than 'social processes in time'; hence, structuralism does not attend directly to concepts such as 'social change' or 'social action' (Jenkins 2003; Filmer et al 2004). Rather, culture is constituted through language and 'deep' linguistic structures that are "hidden behind the mask of everyday life" (Jenkins 2003, p31).

As applied to anthropological research, structuralism has been understood by some to be problematic. I outline several principal issues of concern here prior to my more detailed discussion of Mary Douglas's thesis in *Purity and Danger* (Douglas 2002). These points are then further addressed at the conclusion of this chapter where departure points for the following chapter, and subsequently my research design, are outlined.

Principally, structuralism deprecates historical time. By necessarily 'isolating the moment' (that is, structuralism is synchronic), structuralism might appear to make problematic the performance of social research that both considers time as an 'axis' of analysis (for example, the consideration of contingent, historical conditions) and, as a

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consequence, might appear to reject methodologies that appear reliant on time for their elaboration (Fabian 1991), for example ethnography (considered later in this thesis).

Second, structuralism might appear to favour the 'centre' of social life, its primary categories, their relationships and their concordances. In doing this, structuralist approaches might be understood to overlook the 'margins' of the social world and the possibility of 'contested categories' therein (Kilduff and Corley 2000). This has implications for social research that is principally concerned with subjects or groups considered to be disenfranchised, outcast or misunderstood, for example those with disabilities.

Third, human action or agency is not accounted for in structuralism as it might be understood. That is, there appears to be little place for individuals, their thoughts, affectations and experience within a social theory that resides 'above the subject' and that renders the individual subject as merely 'responding to' the social world, rather than actively constituting it. It follows from this critique that structuralism would appear to reject methodologies that favour unique 'interpretations' of the social world in favour of its 'invisible' organising structures (Kilduff and Corley 2000).

PURITY AND DANGER

Purity and Danger: an analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo (Douglas 2002) is Mary Douglas's first major text, following the earlier publications of her anthropological monographs *Peoples of the Lake Nyasa Region* (1950) and *The Lele of the Kasai* in 1963, both accounts of her African fieldwork. Following the publication of *Purity and Danger*, her later works include her seminal 'grid and group' contribution to cultural theory (*Natural symbols*, 1970) and her collection of organisational texts, *How Institutions Think* (1987). Prior to discussing the central thesis of her early work and its contribution here, I find that Douglas's definition of culture in *Purity and Danger* provides a useful departure point:

> Culture, in the sense of public, standardised values of a community, mediates the experience of individuals. It provides in advance some basic categories, a positive pattern in which ideas and values are tidily ordered. And above all, it has authority, since each is induced to assent because of the assent of others. But its public character makes its categories more rigid. A private person may revise his patterns of assumptions or not. It is a private matter. But cultural categories are public matters. They cannot easily be subject to revision. (Douglas 2002, p48)

This statement necessarily requires unpacking. First, Douglas's commitment to structuralism appears clear at this point. Although the individual has an entitlement to revise his or her relationship with the culture in which they are located and the values therein, it is the culture that impresses upon all its members a collective sense of order. Second, culture is understood to provide social categories in advance of their expression: these categories provide the organising principles for cultural expression. Again, a structuralist tenor is apparent in her description: these categories are configured (patterned) in relation to one another; they are taken to be affirmative and prescriptive, and the public apprehension (if not deeper consciousness) of the taken-for-granted nature of these categories flanks their passive reception. Third, and perhaps of most significant to my thesis, culture incorporates 'positive' patterns, that is, culture is performed within systems of knowledge; these systems of knowledge are socially-constituted, and the defining categories therein serve to impress a social 'reality' onto their subjects.

Douglas's thesis in *Purity and Danger* is two-fold. Her central thesis, and one that she later felt had been overlooked by some, is that "social life makes categories" (*Interview of Anthropologist Mary Douglas*, MacFarlane 2006); that is, cultural categories are not 'natural' or pre-ordained 'outside' humanity; rather, they are abstracted from the social world, and they configure the 'possibilities' of thought and practice in these contexts. Her secondary thesis, and that which is more commonly privileged in descriptions of her work, is concerned with the study of taboos, purity 'beliefs', and the cultural control of ambiguity (Douglas 2002). For Douglas, the taboo illustrates the taken-for-granted concordance of the community; it also articulates a matrix of signs that serve to mark the edges of its belief system:

> Taboos depend upon a form of community-wide complicity. A community would not survive if its members were not committed to it; their concern shows in oblique warnings not to undermine its values [...] Taboo is a spontaneous coding practice that sets up a vocabulary of spatial limits and physical and verbal signs to hedge around vulnerable relations. It threatens specific dangers if the code is not respected. (Douglas 2002, p*xii-xiii*)

At the heart of Douglas's cultural categories within *Purity and Danger* is the dyad 'order-disorder', which finds expression in other relational categories: "being to non-being, form to formlessness, life to death" (Douglas 2002, p7). These relationships form the basis of a cultural analysis that Douglas aimed, in part, towards the comparative study of religion, and for which I will attempt later in this chapter to appropriate a

secular application to the outwardly 'taken-for-granted' categories of impairment and disability. First, however, her order-disorder system requires discussion and for this Douglas's notion of 'dirt' requires further discussion.

The notion of 'dirt' is used by Douglas acts as a allegory for all that is rejected by an ordered cultural system; considered another way, the presence of dirt or pollution can only be meaningful in a cultural system that has rejected, or cannot account for, its presence. This, suggests Garland-Thomson, is a dominant mode for 'Western thought', a value system for which dirt represents:

> [A]n anomaly, a discordant element rejected from the schema that individuals and societies use in order to construct a stable, recognisable, and predictable world (Garland-Thomson 1997, p33)

Dirt is not, however, 'essential' or ever-present; that is, the understanding of what is 'dirt' is dependent on the historical, cultural and spatial context in which it occurs, and how its placement in that context coheres or disrupts existing ordering system: Douglas's example, "Shoes are not dirty in themselves, but it is dirty to place them on the dining table" (Douglas 2002, p44) illustrates her point clearly. It is therefore the relative positioning and organisation of such symbols within a culture that is important.

In using the term 'dirt', Douglas also contextualises the current understanding of this concept. To the contemporary person, the response to 'dirt' is made comprehensible, indeed 'knowable', mainly through the orders of pathogenic (germ) science. This order, or configuration of knowledge, is persuasive in the present, and serves to configure and 'explain' that which is understood to be commonsensical. Hence 'washing hands' prior to the consumption of food is an expected behaviour; that it might be reasoned in the present in terms that are pathological (explained as a concern for germs or infection) does not explain why, in the pre-scientific era, the washing of hands was still customary.[21] Hence, what is understood to be 'dirt' is not only ordered by the place in which it is located, but also by its prevailing systems of knowledge:

> If we can abstract pathogenicity and hygiene from our notion of dirt, we are left with the old definition of dirt as matter out of place. This is a very suggestive approach. It implies two conditions: a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order...Where there is dirt there is a system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involved rejecting inappropriate elements. (Douglas 2002, p44)

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[21] See Whittock (2009, p112-115) for a brief account of pre-scientific hygiene practices.

To place, or discover, dirt in a place where it is not expected or desired presents a threat. At this point, dirt is transformed into a pollution or 'danger', and its transgression is marked by the crossing of a boundary, hence "matter out of place" (above). This belief constitutes part of the total 'meaning system' that operates in the culture, and transgressions are accorded the status of 'taboo'. Douglas's notion of purity, rather than acting as a hard differentiator of 'normal' and 'other', acts as an ordering concept that is necessary for the construction of the cultural symbols of everyday life. A 'pressure to order' arises from the presence of difference, deviation and disruption: these are necessary requirements within any systemised concept of culture. In enacting a response to a pollution threat, a boundary is opened up between that which is 'pure' (classifiable) and that which is impure and a threat (unclassifiable). The rituals that are enacted in response to pollution threats are not simple acts of 'removal'; rather, they can be understood as an attempt to restore order:

> In chasing dirt, in papering, decorating, tidying we are not governed by anxiety to escape disease, but are positively re-ordering our environment, making it to conform to an idea [and] create unity in experience. (Douglas 2002, p3).

Using my previous example, for example: the unwashed hand is not by itself a pollutant, but its presence at the dining table is. The conjunction of unclean hands and (pure) food creates a disruption, a space in which rituals, or 'boundary activities' (the washing of hands, the presentation of a neat dinner service), are enacted, serving to restore order and in doing so, "relate form to function" (Douglas 2002, p3). The identification of these rituals enables the researcher to characterise more readily the categories and boundaries that constitute the social space where cultural life is performed: a methodological departure point that is returned to later in this chapter.

For Douglas, power is distributed at the points of anomaly in any system. The boundary between 'pure' and 'dangerous' represents a transitional space in which ambiguity (uncertainty) and anomaly (difference) are negotiated by ritual; this is a place of marginality which in itself is considered a place of danger:

> These are people who are somehow left out in the patterning of society, who are placeless [...] Danger lies in transitional states, simply because transition is neither one state nor the next, it is undefinable. The person who must pass from one to another is himself in danger and emanates danger to others. The danger is controlled by ritual which precisely separates him from his old status, segregates him for a time and then publically declares his entry to his new status. (Douglas 2002, p118-120)

Douglas reflects on how the notion of 'marginality' is explicable in cultural terms. To be marginal is to lack the regular systemizations that render an object familiar and 'knowable' within a specific cultural setting. Using the example of the unborn child, Douglas outlines how the object of the foetus – sexless, invisible and of uncertain capacity to live – is presented as vulnerable, a danger, a threat to continuity and order. Menstruation and miscarriage are handled similarly, as are the initiation ceremonies of the adolescent boy: as exemplars of marginality or incompleteness, they defy order and thus constitute a threat, a danger that invites the application of ritual. During this period the person is "temporarily outcast" (Douglas 2002, p120) from the community; ritual serves to 'make them safe' for their subsequent reincorporation. This constitutes another methodological departure point that is returned to later in this chapter.

A present-day illustration may be useful at this point.[22] The visitor to a hospital represents an anomaly: they are neither 'inside' nor 'outside', and nor are they patient or nurse, and they constitute a threat to the "well articulated" (Douglas 2002, p124) authority (power) that operates in the hospital environment. Their entry into the hospital space, their transformation into a 'true' or legitimate visitor, is subject to ritual purification. Entrances and exits are dressed with basins and signage requiring the visitor to wash their hands; lotions are provided ('alcohol hand rub'); areas marked ('please do not sit on the beds'), punitive penalties for transgression communicated ('you will be asked to leave') and temporal limits assigned ('visiting time'). This reflects the ordering of the hospital staff: finger rings are removed, hair tied, shirtsleeves are rolled or shortened, shift-working is operated and a symbol of hygienic compliance is worn, the tiny bottle of sanitizing hand solution displayed upon the belt or pocket.

The notion of 'pollution' finds clear expression in the above example: in the present, the association of a (pathological) explanation of 'hygiene' with a cultural notion of pollution might have arisen through a "happenstance of language" (Douglas 1994a, p4); that is, the biomedical reasoning of a particular threat or risk is organised by an order somewhat removed from that belonging to a study of culture. In the example above, the idea of the contaminated workplace is rendered meaningful through a particular set of understandings or, a "dominant form of explanation" (Douglas 1994a, p5). A wholly 'cultural' explanation of the response to the threat of contamination might appear irrelevant and meaningless to hospital community; it is, after all, a 'threat' that can only

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[22] Personal observation, 2010.

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be understood and meaningfully mitigated through actions that make sense within a particular discursive frame, that of the scientific world and the theories of pathological contagion.

DISABILITY AS 'MATTER OUT OF PLACE'

Douglas's conception of purity-danger and symbolic responses to ambiguity and marginality can be brought to bear more specifically on a study of both disability and the University context. Although Douglas herself never considered disability as a discrete 'analytic concept', inference may be made to this area of study. Garland-Thompson (1997) acknowledges this, noting that whilst Douglas does not identify 'disability' directly, she does consider the cultural signification of objects and actions that may be related to a contemporary understanding of disablement, for example her discussions around bodily anomaly (Douglas 2002) certainly address the ritual response to a body that is disruptive to ideas of normalcy in particular contexts. The contemporary category of 'disability' might be understood as a risk, a subject for 'blame', and a 'danger' to the community. This 'danger' derives its authority from a particular configuration of knowledge and rhetorical resources that explain disability in a manner that suggests that a threat exists to communality, cohesion and cultural order.

Holmqvist (2009) examines the association between 'dirty work' and disability in his ethnographic study. He finds that being offered 'dirty work' to undertake enables problematic social concerns, like disability, to be addressed. Holmqvist links this directly to the work of Douglas (2002), finding that the apparently 'objective' category of 'disability' is being constituted through an organising "mechanism" (Holmqvist 2009, p871) that serves to intervene at the boundary between pure and impure, disabled and non-disabled. Therefore:

> By performing dirty work people tend to reproduce social norms and ideas about dirty people. By doing dirty work there is the potential that they become dirty through physical, social and moral pollution. (Holmqvist 2009, p872)

Contradicting 'principled' ideological positions on participatory or emancipatory disability, his study finds that the 'enabling policies' of the (Northern European) organisations with whom he was concerned, and their 'special' or 'inclusionary' practices served to "construct disability" (Holmqvist 2009, p879) in a manner that, paradoxically, reinforced its marginal position as social 'pollution'. For my study, this suggests that exploration of liminal or boundary categories might provide further insight

into how an organisation (re)constitutes certain disability categories in the context of public or enounced discourses on emancipation or inclusion.

Rogers (2009) examines, in a compelling auto-ethnographic account, her experiences in providing support to her learning disabled daughter as she encounters issues of intimacy and relationships in her teen-aged years. Her analysis draws upon the characterisation of the 'disabled body' as 'dirty' and 'uncivilised', and she notes the influence of both Douglas (2002) and Shakespeare (1994) in respect of this formulation. She observes how, whilst the disabled body is "intellectually impaired...spasmodic...feared" (Rogers 2009, p285) these categories of pure/dirty and safe/unsafe are in constant negotiation with participatory and emancipatory discourses, narratives on 'letting go' and independence that are subject to contemporary "legal, political and social discourse" (Rogers 2009, p285), some of which operate against normative discourses on disability and independence. For my study, this illustrates how disability is 'enacted' at cultural boundaries (for her, child/adult, inactive/active, dependent/independent) and how these enactments are regulated by other discourses (the law, the professions).

Battles and Manderson (2008) discuss the normalization of the disabled body, with particular reference to debates that have arisen regarding what has become referred to (in the United States) as the 'Ashley Treatment'. This relates to the experience of a physically impaired child and the decision of her parents to invite a high level of medical (surgical) intervention for their child with the aim of minimising her later physical development. For Battles and Manderson, this 'case' allegorises the location of the disabled body as that which is 'normal' or 'not normal' and, significantly, the nature of the medical intervention that was introduced:

> [Her treatment] refers to a constellation of medical procedures that Ashley underwent, including appendectomy, hysterectomy, breast bud removal, and, most controversially, growth attenuation, which was performed with the expressed intentions of improving her quality of life and preventing future medical problems. (Battles and Manderson 2008, p220)

Battles and Manderson explore the apparent contradictions of this case. The child, 'Ashley', is understood to "disrupt normal systems of classification", and that her intensive medical treatment "crosses the boundary between normal and abnormal" (Battles and Manderson 2008, p222-3). Her experience therefore represents a paradox: rather than normalizing her (impaired) body, the 'expected' aim for medical treatment, her "liminality is made more monstrous [and her] grotesque body produced through

technology to suit others" (Battle and Manderson 2008, p223). They point to further ethnographic enquiry, questioning the dominance of social (emancipatory) models for research that might prove inadequate in addressing such contradictory disciplinary responses. More pertinent to my research, however, is their assertion that this case is about 'more' than the disabled subject: rather, it concerns the role of (medical, professional) disciplines and methodological issues that are raised at the social 'junction' between normality and 'abnormality', and invites a discussion of power and discourse, something that I attend to in the following chapter.

The above examples serve to illustrate how a lack of classification may invite a ritual response. Anomalies, 'failed categorisations' and 'disruptions' such as these are seen by Douglas to be loci of power: subjects marginal to 'mainstream' culture offer dangers to their hosts, and dangers are ameliorated through separation and ritual that legitimises their position at the margins of social life. Douglas, in applying her theory to "secular, not ritual context[s]" (Douglas 2002, p121), draws on examples from criminal rehabilitation and mental health to illustrate her position:

> To have been in the margins is to have been in contact with danger, to have been a source of power. It is consistent with the ideas about form and formlessness to treat initiands coming out of seclusion as if they were themselves charged with power, hot, dangerous, requiring insulation and a time for cooling down...A man who has spent any time 'inside' is put permanently 'outside' the ordinary social system. With no right of aggregation which can definitively assign him to a new position he remains in the margins... The same goes for persons who have entered institutions for the treatment of mental disease. So long as they stay at home their particular behaviour is accepted. Once they have been formally classified as abnormal, the very same behaviour is counted intolerable. (Douglas 2002, p120)

For example, the identification of *Myalgic Encephalomyelitis* (ME) as a distinct medical or impairment 'category' only occurred following lengthy debate and considerable unease regarding its status from both within and outside the medical and scientific disciplines (Ong et al 2005). Its ambiguous location was represented symbolically (by professional suspicion, pejorative media representation, and an absence of statutory supports); its successful transition and incorporation into legitimate medical, legal and bureaucratic discourse and practice was marked by the publication of evidence gathered through scientific enquiry. Other experiences (and I am reminded here particularly of mental health impairments or disabilities) defy stable and unequivocal categorisation in some contexts, and hence invite 'pollution' behaviours such as public rejection or loss of work, whilst they are accepted in others: illustrating, if it was necessary to do so, that

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the legitimacy or otherwise of impairment categories is not wholly dependent on scientific rationality, but also on local culture, custom and perhaps more contestable, 'political' matters of representation.

In contrast, in the contemporary context, certain disabilities might not be understood to represent 'pollution' in this sense at all; this recalls Douglas's notion that what is 'unclean' can only be understood in relation to the context in which it is located (see earlier). Some classifications, although (medical, individual) impairments, might be understood to unambiguously cohere with specific material and symbolic schemes that relate to specific disciplinary requirements. Hence a specific disability, when considered in the context of a particular legal, medical or pedagogic definition, will 'legitimately' be held as such, and not be outcast from a classification scheme.

For example, the experience of 'total' visual impairment or 'blindness' is, in the present time, explicable and recognisable within all three of the above disciplines: it is likely to be explained medically, its pedagogic consequences are perhaps commonsensical, and its legal status as such appears certain. Therefore, although to be 'without sight' may be readily understood as a 'deficit' with significant consequences for the individual, it does not "contradict cherished classifications" (Douglas 2002, p45). Blindness can therefore be understood to constitute a 'legitimate' category within the (contemporary Western) notion of disablement or impairment.

PURIFICATION NARRATIVES

As the above illustrations suggest, Douglas's thesis has found expression for those wishing to depart from both individual (medical) and emancipatory or 'political' (social model) conceptions of impairment and disablement. If Douglas is followed, the disabled subject can be understood to be a "receptor of social meanings" (Edwards and Imrie 2003, p241), and the liminality, ambiguity or "blurred boundaries" (Turner 1979; Pinder 1997, p278) that are represented by the disabled subject are understood to be the consequence of their 'failure to fit' within the systematic orders, "purity codes" (Martone 2008, p231) and classification schemes of a given society (Susman 1994).

To view disability as a transgression, a disturbance in order, then Douglas's theoretical position might be seen to provide a useful theoretical departure point from which to consider the ethnographic capture of disability symbol and practice. However, there are issues of representational 'politics' here: certainly, the representation of disability as

'transgression' is, at best, an anachronism and, at worst, considered as a pejorative in the present. Positioning disability concepts as a 'disruption' to notions of 'normality' also may be seen to recall an individualising or medical ordering of disability. However, to suggest disorder as being somehow 'necessary', a prerequisite to understanding social order, then perhaps there is utility.

The individual or medical model 'explains' disablement in terms of impairment, or deviation from biomedical norms. The social model, by contrast, locates the experience of disablement firmly in the social world; it represents conflict. Tom Shakespeare considers the relevance of Douglas in respect of this:

> What is being suggested here is not a dichotomous, conflictual situation, but a comparison between the dominant, normal, ordered structure, and that which disturbs or conflicts with it. For there to be normality, it is necessary for there to be an abnormality (Shakespeare 1994, p294)

Disability is, therefore, the inevitable consequence of an ordered social system. In order to maintain its (internal) order, a social system must, if Douglas (2002) is followed, have a way of comprehending and (ritually) dealing with the 'threat' to its internal order that is offered by the (ambiguous, anomalous) disabled person:

> [Douglas's] speculations suggest that disability is the systematic social interpretation of some bodies as abnormal, rather than any actual physical features. Douglas acknowledges that culture mediates all individual experience, imposing systems of perception that are not easily revised. She notes further that all societies must come to terms with the anomalies that their schemata produce. Because cultures do not tolerate such affronts to their communal narratives of order, what emerges from a given cultural context as irremediable anomaly translates not as neutral difference, but as pollution, taboo, contagion. (Garland-Thomson 1997, p34)

Douglas (2002) suggests that a range of responses, what might be described as 'purification narratives', may be enacted by a society in order to contain and ameliorate the threat that those who are 'different' present, namely the reduction of ambiguity, the physical control of the anomalous, their avoidance, their labelling (Shakespeare 1994; Garland-Thomson 1997), or, as a contrast, their potential to "enrich meaning" (Douglas 2002, p48-50. I now consider each of these in respect of disability and my present enquiry.

Douglas's first response relates to the effort of a group to definitively categorise its members. Doing so, relocating the anomalous or 'different' into an 'available' category,

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provides a salve for the 'danger' that their 'difference' offers to the community. In order to achieve this, the 'system' may necessarily isolate one feature of the individual (a specific, identifiable impairment) in order to provide a single, unequivocal categorisation that will 'overcome' the ambiguities perceived. For example, the able-bodied individual with hearing loss will still be assigned the (general) category 'disabled' despite the presence of a single impairment and full capacity in all other respects. This represents a pressure to order, a "cultural imperative" that is so profound that disordering subjects who "defy categorisation [are likely to] elicit anxiety, hostility or pity and are also rigorously policed" (Garland-Thomson 1997, p34).

In the university context, the *Disability Discrimination Act* (Great Britain 1995, 2005)[23] can be understood to represent a (legal) effort to reduce ambiguity. The imperative of the legislation may be read to be the reduction of ambiguity through the assigning to one of two categories, disabled or non-disabled. There is no scope for a person to be 'in-between' these two categories: an individual is either a subject of the legislation, or they are not. Once a category can be assigned to an individual, the 'threat' that they offer is ameliorated. That there is a 'pressure' to unequivocally order individuals in this way is illustrated by the progression of the law in this respect. The first iteration of the *Disability Discrimination Act* in 1995 did not make 'certain' the categories of mental health, cancer and HIV/AIDS. This was later resolved (in the 2005 legislation), thus reducing the likelihood that an anomaly might be understood as such.

Douglas's second response she describes as "physical control", or the total removal or exclusion anomalies that "contract [the] definition[s]" (Douglas 2002, p49) established within the social system. Both Garland-Thomson (1997) and Shakespeare (1994) relate this to the 19th century scientific eugenics movement, the Nazi exterminations and, perhaps more controversially, to contemporary debates regarding reproductive technologies that aim to remove the possibility of a "defective" foetus:

> Eliminating disabled people as discordant social elements is the logical extension of an ideology that esteems national and individual progress towards self-reliance, self-management, and self-sufficiency. (Garland-Thomson 1997, p35)

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[23] Since the completion of my fieldwork, the *Equality Act* (Great Britain 2010) has been enacted; this replaces the earlier disability discrimination legislation.

In the University, the notion of "physical control" might not be so darkly applied, but may well find expression in relation to disabled people. The social system of the University (necessarily) establishes categories that establish clearly its memberships, although locating specific examples of categorical exclusions is perhaps more troublesome. Some of these are perhaps self-evident: to lack the skills for independent learning, for example, would necessarily preclude membership of the University community. Others possible exclusions are located within specific disciplinary or professional contexts. For example, the inclusion or exclusion of students with specific learning-related difficulties (for example dyslexia) or mental health problems from University-level training in selected occupational groups, for example healthcare, is of continuing debate (Tee et al 2010).

Douglas's third response is the avoidance of anomalous "things" (Douglas 2002, p49). Douglas argues that the act of 'avoidance' in itself serves to reinforce the social categories that are at risk of compromise. Once more, both Garland-Thomson (1997) and Shakespeare (1994) read this differently as applied to disablement. For both, the avoidance of anomalous 'things' is understood to represent the systemised segregation of the disabled from those who are not categorised as such: the establishment of specific institutions, for example, might allow specific categories of person to be effectively avoided by the larger population.

Garland-Thomson (1997) does note, however, that segregation might inspire collegiality and the emergence of change agents. Indeed, in the United Kingdom, the important contribution to the 'disability movement' of a (relatively) small number of activists operating from an institutional context has been recognised (Evans 2002). Clifford Geertz offers a different illustration. Writing about the (East African) Pokot people, he notes that whilst the birth of an intersexed (both male and female physical characteristics) child is viewed as an anomaly that offers little to a culture rooted in the value of "cattle, wives and children" (Geertz 1993, p84), the same child will experience economic advantage as they do not, for example, perform the resource-intensive roles of child-rearing. Yet, despite their apparent economic wealth, they have no other meaningful place in the cultural order. Avoidance in this sense affords their 'difference' with particular material advantages, although they still remain 'outside' the social order.

In the University context, the avoidance of anomaly is perhaps exemplified through the division of staff or student support services for persons with disabilities. The avoidance

of anomaly in this case may involve the establishment of (notionally) segregated 'spaces' for those with disabilities (a learning support centre, for instance). The provision of 'disability-specific' policies might also invite such an interpretation, with disabled staff or students offered an 'equivalent' but nonetheless 'different' configuration of texts and systems that serve to regulate their University experiences in parallel to those for the 'non-disabled' (Palmer 2003). Like Geertz's Pokot people, these avoidance responses confer on their subjects separation, although, of course, whether this constitutes an 'advantage' to the disabled student or staff member is perhaps a moot point.

For her fourth response, Douglas finds that the anomalous may be labelled as 'dangerous'. This is provided with two elaborations. The association of the anomalous might be responded to with "laughter, revulsion and shock" (Douglas 2002, p46), the synonymising of disability with cultural signifiers such the "freakshow [or] the court jester" (Shakespeare 1994, p295) or as subjects for comedy (Shakespeare 1999; Albrecht 1999; Stronach and Allan 1999; Robillard 1999). Such responses are embedded deeply in literary culture: William Shakespeare's characterisation of *Richard III* for instance ("Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time", 1995[1591], *I*.1:20) recalls both the aberration that 'is' impairment, and makes deeper reference to the uncertainty and danger of childbirth and the consequences of both on the temperament of the person. Disability humour might hold methodological utility, helping to 'act out' the boundaries inherent in its production:

> Disability humor is a marvellous example of how life is stranger than fiction but also how fiction and narrative help us understand reality. To see the interplay between the comic and the tragic in disability is to deepen our understanding of the disability world and the outsiders to that world. (Albrecht 1999, p73)

Westwood (2004) finds that, in the organisational context, humour provides a foil to the sober and serious ethic of organised labour. Further, he notes how organisational discourse serves to constitute what is comedic setting and that (following Douglas 2002) deviance of some form is a prerequisite to the 'completeness' of the setting. On boundaries, he notes:

> The serious has clearly been privileged and delineated from the comic in organisations. A boundary is constructed that both limits the intrusion of the comic and creates the very condition by which it can be seen as subversive. The comic's intrusion into the realm of the serious implies an antithetical relationship and the two need delineating. (Westwood 2004, p781)

It is the transient or spontaneous performance of humour that carries meaning in such contexts. In aiming to sustain the "boundaries of mundane reality" (Westwood 2004, p783), humour presents an acceptable mode of sporadic deviancy that serves to promote the "realization that there is no substantive and sustained threat to civilized order" (Westwood 2004, p788). This 'difference' - the deliberate division of categories that are 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' - can be understood to offer a mirror to an organisation's categorising systems and might aid in the mapping of the accepted boundaries of disability discourse in particular contexts. A second explanation associates disability with moral deviancy. This is implicit in the example of *Richard III* (above), and deeply historical texts on persecution (Moore 2007), although contemporary examples, for example the association of HIV/AIDS with moral transgression (Garland-Thompson 1997) can be located. This also appeals to a discourse on disability that is concerned with the 'tragic'. 'Tragic' and 'deserved' are opposing moral locations for 'blame', yet both are established in relation to the (individual) disabled subject. In my study context, therefore, how students with particular disabilities might be understood to threaten 'order' is explored in later chapters.

The enrichment of meaning through ritual (Douglas 2002) provides Douglas with her fifth response to anomaly. Douglas's thesis in this respect arises from her observations that , for some cultural groups, the 'response' to dirt is not simply explained by the responses outlined above, responses that, although 'sophisticated' in their own right, are readily comprehendible as different modes of 'rejection' or 'assimilation' of the pure/impure subject. Her observations suggested that within some communities, the 'unclean' was sacralised: transformations that illustrate how "dirt, which is normally destructive, sometimes becomes creative" (Douglas 2002, p196). For Douglas, power resides at the margins of culture (see above); her argument is, therefore, that these powers (of disruption, anomaly and ambiguity) might sometimes be reincorporated through ritual into the culture that has (superficially) appeared to 'reject' them. Commenting on the (central African) Lele communities, she observes how they 'account' for their consumption of foods that are considered dangerous and impure:

> For the main part, their formal rituals are based on discrimination of categories, human, animal, male, female, young, old, etc. But they lead through a series of cults which allow their initiates to eat what is normally dangerous [and] that which is rejected is ploughed back for a renewal of life. (Douglas 2002, p206-7)

By elaborating the marginal or anomalous as symbols of 'power', Douglas's Lele people allow themselves to explore, through ritual, the classifications and boundaries of their cultural lives: a re-exploration that enables them to "enrich meaning or to call attention to other levels of existence" (Douglas 2002, p49-50). This arguably offers the prospect of transformation to a culture, something that, if applied to disability, Garland-Thomson (1997) suggests is reminiscent of the "unsettle[ment] of the ascendant order" suggested by Kuhn's notion of the paradigm shift, a fundamental realignment of the categories that constitute meaning:

> Imagining anomaly and the grotesque as agents capable of reconstituting cultural discourses suggests the possibility of interpreting both dirt and disability not as discomforting abnormalities or intolerable ambiguities, but rather as the entitled bearers of a fresh view of reality. Moreover, because the disabled figure always represents the extraordinary, such interpretations open the way for us to imagine narratives of physical disability other than deviance and abnormality. (Garland-Thomson 1997, p38)

In the university context, and beyond, the political location of disability as expressed through the social model of disability and the 'emancipatory disability research' movement might be understood to articulate such a movement or 'shift' in categorical descriptions of disability. The emergence of these discourses in the present context serves to greatly inform some of my later analyses in this thesis.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH DESIGN

Douglas's thesis appears to suggest that the notion of 'disability' might be subjected to anthropological analysis. However, critics of structuralist approaches might suggest that such an approach might be inadequate in respect of its synchronic ('out of time') nature, its potential to overlook the 'margins' of the social world, and the 'hidden' or 'invisible' nature of its organising principles that appear to reject individual interpretations. My reading of Douglas suggests otherwise, albeit perhaps with some caveats.

Douglas's argument that anomalies offer an opportunity for a community to "enrich [their] meaning" (Douglas 2002, p49), that is, to invite a reflection on the nature and relationship between 'established' social categories such as disability (Garland-Thomson 1997), suggests that there is utility in her theory for the consideration of the changing 'apprehension' of disability in the contemporary contexts and how present-day 'ritual' in the organisational context might effect this. Douglas here also invites a consideration of how 'new' frames of understanding represent "power" in the

anthropological context. For my research, the (discursive) nature of this power invites further consideration, something that I address in the following chapter.

The criticism that structuralism might neglect the marginal of the social world (Kilduff and Corley 2000) appears at odds with Douglas's central thesis in *Purity and Danger*. Her thesis relocates the marginal and excluded to the centre of anthropological concern and subjects their (ritual) 'treatment' to scrutiny. Therefore, a consideration of how marginal or ambiguous categories, different expressions of impairment or disability, are understood and responded to in the present context would appear to be of importance to my thesis; Douglas's consideration of how individuals are "temporarily outcast" (Douglas 2002, p120) provides a guide to the contexts in my research such marginalities might be exposed.

The criticism that structuralism overlooks or ignores individual action and human agency is more problematic. Although Douglas does not dismiss entirely the possibility that individuals might choose to revise their "own personal scheme of classifications", her statements in this respect remain tentative and conditional on the "received" (Douglas 2002, p48) categorical schemes in which the individual is located. However, it has been suggested that this might not be overly problematic in the context of interpretative (for example, ethnographic) enquiry (see Marcus 1998, p38), and that the "genre diaspora" (Geertz 1973; Geertz 1993; Denzin and Lincoln 2003, p25) of contemporary ethnographic enquiry is accommodating of such a position. Taking this into consideration, some implications for research design may now be offered.

First, Douglas permits a (re)consideration of disability that is neither located entirely within individual or medical conceptions of impairment, not located with the social or ideological framework that is suggested by the social model. For research design, therefore, this suggests that neither provide a unitary 'standpoint' around which my research need be located.

Second, the consideration of boundaries, transgressions, 'marginal categories' and their (ritual) responses in 'the present' are an important consideration. This invites a methodology that locates people, spaces and texts where such transitions might be observed and documented: locations at the interfaces and transition points that reside 'between' those points that are more privileged and 'central' to the social context.

Third, Douglas's 'anthropological self' is largely absent from Purity and Danger. Although her later work, for example *The Hotel Kwilu* (Douglas 1994c), reflects on her personal location, she dismisses Geertz's (1973) concern that relationships of 'power' between the 'researcher' and the 'researched' are problematic for anthropology (Douglas 1994b). I argue that I cannot overlook such a concern: my location within a culturally-near or familiar field of enquiry and my engagement with a contested discourse (disability) would appear to necessitate a consideration of the positionalities inherent in such enquiry.

Last, Douglas makes contact with the notion of 'power' but does not develop this as a primary site for theoretical elaboration. As the preservation of (social) order through ritual acts of regulation/purification also appears central to her thesis, a consideration of post-structural positions in methodology and analysis is suggested. These positions are considered in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 5: FOUCAULT, DISCOURSE, POWER AND THE SUBJECT

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter I introduce the work of Michel Foucault and discuss my reading of his work as I understand and apply it within this thesis. The concept of discourse, as used in its 'non linguistic' sense by Foucault, is described. Foucault's unorthodox formulation of power is also discussed, as is the relationship of knowledge to power. Foucault's concept of subjectivation is then introduced in relation to his formulation of power. Elsewhere I discuss his objection to conventional definitions of 'ideology', and also outline the concepts of resistance, disciplinary power and surveillance as they are used by Foucault, and as they are later applied within this thesis. Last, applications of Foucauldian thought to disability and administration are outlined.

DISCOURSE

The concept of 'discourse' is strongly associated with the work of Foucault. As such, I will now outline what I understand as a 'Foucauldian' conception of 'discourse' as it is applied to my data and analysis within this thesis. In doing this, however, I note that Foucault's definition and deployment of the term 'discourse' and its etymology and popular association with Foucault is somewhat contested, and that different interpretations of 'Foucauldian discourse' are in circulation (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). [24] The contested nature of Foucault's specific use of the term 'discourse' (Mills 2003), and the decline in his use of the term within his later works (Sawyer 2002; Hacking 2004) has, some have argued, led to its misappropriation (Garitty 2010) within many empirical studies and, indeed, Foucault himself recognised that his use of the term 'discourse' differed somewhat from its usage within other disciplinary contexts (Foucault 2002). [25]

I order that I can make clear how I am utilising a Foucauldian concept of discourse within this thesis, it is important for me to stress that Foucault's conception of discourse

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[24] See Sawyer (2002) for a detailed discussion on the etymology of the term discourse as it is used by Foucault, and specifically his argument regarding how the term has been claimed and deployed by 'Anglo-American' theoreticians. See also Hacking (2004, p300n) for a similar observation.

[25] Specifically, he notes: "I am well aware that most of these definitions do not conform with current usage: linguists usually give the word discourse a quite different meaning" (Foucault 2002, p121)

is quite different from the concept as it is named and used within linguistic disciplines. Within the 'linguistic sciences', 'discourse' is understood to represent the organisation of the spoken word in interaction or conversation, and specifically how speech acts are expressed and used in the conduct of social interaction (Potter and Wetherell 1994). In these disciplines, the 'discourse' of interest ranges from those concerned with the structure (grammar, syntax, length) of specific 'utterances', to those concerned with how these forms of speech are modelled by and expressed within particular contexts, for example in religious texts or advertising (Mills 2004). In contrast, Foucault adopts a somewhat different usage, shifting his attention away from the mechanisms of language alone; for Foucault, the term 'discourse' is *not* analogous to 'language' or 'speech' (Hoy 1988; Said 1988; Kendall and Wickham 1999; Bruns 2003). Indeed, Foucault's use of the term 'discourse' is somewhat more subtle and complex:

> I would like to show that 'discourses', in the form that they can be heard or read, are not, as one might expect, a mere intersection of things and words...[my project is] of no longer - treating discourses as groups of signs (signifying elements referring to contents or representations) but *as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak*. Of course, discourses are composed of signs; but what they do is more than use these signs to designate things. It is this more...that we must reveal and describe. (Foucault 2002, p54, my emphasis)

Discourse does not 'stand alone' as an abstract concept that is divorced entirely from its operation within social practice. Rather, discourse is implicated in the assembly of 'truths' about the (social) world, that is, what is 'thinkable' and 'permissible' in particular places and times. Rather than arguing that discourse simply 'informs', 'influences' or somehow 'shapes' what it describes (yet in itself remaining intangible), Foucault instead affords discourse a constitutive function: by configuring what is 'truthful', discourses establish what it is possible to 'know' (meaning) and 'do' (practice) in the social world, although it is perhaps useful to remark at this point that this does *not* mean that Foucault's formulation of discourse and his use of 'truth' equates to 'ideology'; I elaborate this point later in this chapter.

A brief example will serve to illustrate this function of discourse prior to my more detailed explanation. What is understood to *be* 'madness' is, from a Foucauldian standpoint, constituted by discourse: that is, there are 'statements' that describe what may be 'truthfully' said 'about' madness. In the Western present, for instance, the 'truths' of madness are predominantly (although not wholly) specified, hence 'explained', by those statements about 'mental health' or 'illness' that arise from

medical psychiatry. In a different time, the 'truths' of what madness was understood to 'be' might have been specified quite differently (in terms of spirituality, or the 'reform' of morality, for instance) or, indeed, it may have not been described at all (Foucault 1987; Szasz 1960; Foucault 1981; Gutting 2005).[27] However, in order to more fully progress an understanding of Foucauldian discourse, I must first describe the 'statements' that make up discourse. Following this, I can then address Foucault's important and innovative handling of the notions of 'power', 'practice' and 'knowledge'.

For Foucault, statements are "the primary building block[s] of a discourse" (Mills 2004, p54); that is, they form the elements of discourse. However, statements are *not* the same as sentences, utterances or texts (Mills 2004).[29] Whereas a sentence (or utterance, or text) can "function as several different statements depending upon which discursive context it appears in" (Mills 2004, p54), 'statements', as understood by Foucault, are never 'free', and represent *more* than language or linguistic 'rules'.[30] Foucault outlines several key characteristics of statements that serve to differentiate them from (linguistic) sentences. First, statements do not refer to "'things, 'facts' [or] 'realities'" (Foucault 2002, p103). Rather, statements define the "laws of possibility, rules of existence for the objects that are named, designated, or described...a proposition that may or may not be accorded a value of truth" (Foucault 2002, p103). Hence the statement, as an element of discourse, is seen to establish the conditions for which what is said (or not said) about the objects to which it refers are legitimate, or 'knowable'; in short, statements make 'truth-claims' (Mills 2004).

Second, statements do not 'exist' alone; rather, not only are they associated with a specific context, but they also support the 'making up' of that context; that is, the context and statement are constitutive of one-another:

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[27] For a similar treatment of leprosy in High Medieval Europe, see Moore (2007), and for a more contemporaneous (twentieth century) account of 'personality disorders', see Hacking (1994, 1998)

[29] I provide some examples of how I use the notion of Foucauldian 'statements' in my discussion of my analytic approach, chapter six.

[30] Mills notes, however, the "striking similarity" (Mills 2004, p55) between Foucault's use of the word 'discourse' and that used within speech act theory; the latter, she notes, is more concerned with the "way an utterance is understood and acted on" by individual speakers, rather than Foucault's more 'institutional' usage.

A statement always has borders peopled by other statements. These borders are not what is usually meant by 'context' — real or verbal — that is, all the situational or linguistic elements, taken together, that motivate a formulation and determine its meaning. *They are distinct from such a context precisely in so far as they make it possible...*The associated field that turns a sentence or a series of signs into a statement, and which provides them with a particular context, a specific representative content, forms a complex web...The associated field is also made up of all the formulations to which the statement refers (implicitly or not), either by repeating them, modifying them, or adapting them, or by opposing them, or by commenting on them (Foucault 2002, p110)

Third, a statement (unlike a sentence or utterance) must have a "material existence": it cannot be extracted entirely from the 'real world' in which it has been 'made'; rather, as the context (above) plays a part in constituting the statement, then a statement "must have a substance, a support, a place and a date" (Foucault 2002, p99,113). For instance, an utterance referring to 'disease' might be considered to be a legitimate statement within a set of statements that together constitute a discourse of 'medical science', at least in respect of Western medicine; it functions alongside other statements (for example, statements on hygiene, or pathogenesis, or the role of the physician), whilst others might be excluded (for example, statements with a religious or spiritual dimension). In a different place and/or historical time period, the utterance 'disease' might have operated alongside a different set of statements, and hence together have constituted an entirely different discourse altogether.[31]

As such, discourses can be understood to comprise of a "regulated set of statements which combine with others in predictable ways" (Mills 2003, p54), although Foucault himself is fully aware that his use of 'discourse' might be understood in other ways, too. Here, he presents three possible interpretations, of which his third (pertaining to practice) is of most use to this thesis:

> [I]nstead of gradually reducing the rather fluctuating meaning of the word 'discourse', I believe that I have in fact added to its meanings: treating it sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, *and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements.* (Foucault 2002, p90, emphases appended)

It is the regular and systematic nature of statements that is of importance here (Kendall and Wickham 1999; Mills 2003). In order to be recognised as a discourse, those statements that 'make up' the discourse need to possess coherence. Take, for example,

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[31] See Armstrong (1993) on the discursive production of 'public health', for instance.

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the notion of a 'disability discourse'. If discourse is understood to encompass "institutions, rules, practices, objects [and] events" (Bruns 2003, p358), then those statements that constitute a specific disability discourse would necessarily describe those institutions (for example, universities or schools), rules (for example, 'what' is recognised as 'a disability'), practices (for example, 'inclusion' or 'additional' practices), objects (for example, materials and spaces) and events (for example, 'disclosing disability'). Mills (2003) explains this notion of 'regularity' succinctly, and in doing so clearly deprecates language in favour of a more 'inclusive' definition of discourse:

> [W]ithin Western European languages, there tends to exist a wide range of terms for colours; yet not all languages distinguish between colours in the same way and parcel up the spectrum into blue, red, green and so on as English does. For example, some languages make no lexical distinction between green and blue. This does not mean that speakers of that language cannot tell the difference between blue and green, but that this distinction is not one that is especially significant within that culture. Thus, the regularities which we perceive in reality should be seen as the result of the anonymous regularities of discourse that we impose on reality. Foucault argues that, in fact, discourses should be seen as something which constrains our perceptions. (Mills 2003, p55)

If discourses can be seen to constitute that which is knowable and "sensible" (Bové 1988, p59) then, conversely, discourses may also be understood to have the capacity to *exclude* or to delineate what one can 'know' and 'speak about'. Foucault (1981) elaborates this function of discourse in three ways: in relation to prohibitions (what is taboo, for instance), how subjects may be divided and rejected, and how what is understood to be 'true' drives (or is productive of) 'new' knowledges and practices. Prohibition, that "we cannot just speak of anything whatever" (Foucault 1981, p52) concerns both 'what' can be said, and by whom. For division and rejection, he uses the example of "the opposition between reason and madness", Foucault (1981, p53). These Foucault relates to a 'will to truth', or quest for a single, unfettered 'objective' understanding; for instance, he notes how (in what he describes as the 'Middle Ages') the utterances of those identified as 'mad' would be either disregarded entirely (divided, then rejected), or endowed with reason ('truth'):

> [T]hat for centuries in Europe the speech of the madman was either not heard at all or else taken for the word of truth. It either fell into the void...or else people deciphered in it a rationality, naive or crafty, which they regarded as more rational than that of the sane (Foucault 1981, p53)

Although Foucault is using archaic references here, he however argues that such exclusions are extant in the contemporary (Western) context, and that 'madness' is rendered knowable, comprehensible, through new "framework[s] of knowledge" (Foucault 1981, p53), namely those of medicine and psychoanalysis (Hacking 1998, 2007; Rose 1998). In short, although discourse is intangible and "nothing in itself" (Bruns 2003, p358), discourse can be understood to be the "vehicle for the construction of meaning and 'truths' in specific socio-historic circumstances" (Blain 1994, p524), and this is the operational definition of Foucauldian discourse that I intend to use within this thesis.

WHAT DISCOURSE 'DOES'

Implicit within the above description is the notion that discourse 'does' something. Not only do discourses establish what is 'knowable', but discourses necessarily incorporate "practices and institutions that produce knowledge claims" (Wolin 1988, p184). Hence discourses, from a Foucauldian perspective, are inseparable from practices. Not only can discourses "constitute experiences" (for example, madness or dyslexia) and in doing so 'make' social practice, but they also "emerge from social events and practices" (Hacking 2004, p280); that is, discourses can be constituted *by* and *circulated through* social practice, as Mills explains:

> Discourse is regulated by a set of rules which lead to the distribution and circulation of certain utterances and statements. Some statements are circulated widely, and others have restricted circulation...Rather than seeing discourse as simply a set of statements which have some coherence, we should, rather, think of discourse as existing because of a complex set of practices which try to keep them in circulation and other practices which try to fence them off from others and keep those other statements out of circulation. (Mills 2003, p54)

However, in order to progress a reading of Foucauldian theory, these descriptions of discourse and practice require another theoretical axis in order to make them operable, which brings me to a discussion of Foucault's particular treatment of the notion of *power*.

POWER

Power, in the Focauldian sense, is not something that can *only* be 'possessed' (by, for instance, an individual leader) and imposed in a 'top down' manner. Rather, Foucault's preference is for a conception of power that is diffused throughout society (Foucault 1995), and which only becomes apparent, into being, when it is "exercised" or practised

(Foucault 1980, p89). Foucault understands power to 'produce' discourses, and discourses, as I discussed above, configure what is understood to be 'truth' in a given place, time and disciplinary context (Foucault 1980). Yet, for Foucault, power requires the "production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of [...] discourse" (Foucault 1980, p93); hence the two concepts are, tantalisingly, distinctive yet inculcated in each other's operation.

In the unorthodox manner in which Foucault is describing it, power may be understood using the metaphor of the rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari 2004), a complex root system with no apparent structure and which "connects any point to any other point" and is "acentered [and] non-hierarchical" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, p21) in nature. Just as rhizomes proliferate, interconnect (and can be disconnected), may establish and re-establish themselves, and operate through "variation, expansion [or] offshoots" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, p21), so too does power. As such, Foucault views power as not inevitably possessed by a particular regime, leader or state. This notion of power, as diffuse and complex, is a principal axis around which much of Foucault's work is located.

Foucault asserts that not only are relationships of power "everywhere" (Foucault 1978, p93), but there is an intimate relationship between power and discourse. Whilst he does not dismiss entirely the possibility that power might be imposed 'from above', his thesis is that power is instrumental in the *production* of discourse, and (relatedly) knowledge:

> In defining the effects of power as regression, one adopts a purely juridical conception of such power, one identifies power with a law that says no, power is taken above all as carrying the force of a prohibition. Now I believe this is a wholly negative, narrow, skeletal conception of power, one that has been curiously widespread. If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think that one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that is doesn't *only* weigh on us as a force that says no, *but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse*. (Foucault 2000a, p120, emphases appended)

For Foucault, such a conception allows power to be understood as "continuous" (Foucault 1980, p119); that is, he understands power to *circulate* invisibly throughout a social system. The relationship between power, knowledge, truth and discourse is intimate and circulatory: not only does Foucault see power as productive of discourse, and that discourse supports the configuration of 'truth', but he also argues that power itself requires the "production, accumulation, circulation and functioning...of

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discourse" (Foucault 1981, p93). Hence power both produces the 'truths' that are foundational to discourse, yet discourse (in its practice) enables the production of power. Indeed, for Foucault, the "success" of power is "proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms" (Foucault 1978, p86), and it is only through examination of its practice (discourse) might its effects be ascertained.

KNOWLEDGE

Earlier I outlined how discourses (and their statements) not only function to constitute what is 'knowable' and 'sensible', but also function to 'exclude' and 'delineate'. That is, what 'counts' as *knowledge* is elaborated within discourse, with power being the device by which what counts as 'truthful' may be established and circulated. As such, Foucault is not concerned with establishing 'a singular truth'; rather, he is concerned in establishing or ascertaining the conditions whereby statements become 'truthful' (or not), the strategies and practices that 'make' what is 'true', and the agents for whom the 'speaking of truth' is their practice:

> The important thing here, I believe, is that truth isn't outside power...Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its own regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (Foucault 2000a, p131)

Foucault, therefore, is less concerned with the 'creation' of knowledge by, for example, 'key' or 'important' individuals or groups of people (Mills 2004). Rather, he is concerned to examine the conditions in which such knowledge becomes 'possible' and 'truthful'. However, as power is implicated in the production of knowledge (what is knowable), there can be no possibility of knowledge that is unmoved or unauthorised by power. However, Foucault further advances his thesis, by implicating knowledge in the production of power. This is an important break with orthodox formulations of knowledge, as it problematizes the notion that knowledge can be 'objective' or "dispassionate" (Mills 2004, p69), as Foucault himself explains:

> [T]he exercise of power itself creates and causes to emerge new objects of knowledge and accumulates new bodies of information...The exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power...Modern humanism is therefore mistaken in drawing this line

between knowledge and power. Knowledge and power are integrated with one another, and there is no point in dreaming of a time when knowledge will cease to depend on power. (Foucault 1980, p51-2)

In short, the exercise of power produces what 'counts' as knowledge; similarly, the exercise of knowledge can 'effect' the production of power. Relating this back to my earlier discussion about discourse, what *counts* as 'truthful' is embedded within the statements that comprise discourses. That is, discourses/statements are, by themselves, neither 'true' nor 'false'. Indeed, the 'valency of truth' is perhaps rather irrelevant in respect of Foucauldian discourse. Rather, discourses are simply the means through which power/knowledge can be assembled and circulated. However, this not explain how some 'truths' become extant, whilst others are deprecated or overlooked or 'lost' entirely. Foucault's solution is to argue that it is the arrangement and adaptation of statements/discourses with one-another, as they are configured through power/knowledge, which enables the foregrounding (or deprecation) of what is maintained as the 'truth' of a particular time and place. Rouse (2003) explains this, and implicit within his explanation is the embeddedness of discourse within (social) practices:

> Knowledge is established not only in relation to a field of statements, but also to objects, instruments, practices, research programmes, skills, social networks, and institutions. Some elements of such an epistemic field reinforce and strengthen one another and are taken up, extended, and reproduced in other contexts; others remain isolated from, or in conflict with, these emergent 'strategies' and eventually become forgotten curiosities. The configuration of knowledge requires that these heterogeneous elements be adequately adapted to one another and that their mutual alignment be sustained over time. (Rouse 2003, p113)

THE SUBJECT, POWER AND SUBJECTIVATION

Much of what I have discussed so far about Foucault's position on discourse, knowledge and power is derived from his earlier theses, particularly *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969). In his later works, styled as 'genealogies' (of which a key text is *Discipline and Punish*, first published in 1975) Foucault notably shifts his attention towards the 'subject'. Whereas his 'archaeological' works are concerned with the relationship between discourses (groups of statements), power/knowledge and the elaboration of 'truths' (Kendall and Wickham 1999; Mills 2004), his later 'genealogical' texts develop his thesis to incorporate notions of subjectivity and the assembly of our 'selves', as Gutting (2005) explains:

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> Although archaeology is quite capable of describing the conceptual system underlying a practice, linguistic or not, it is not suited to describe the effects of a practice...[Foucault] has restricted himself to a *description* of systems of thought, with no attempt to *explain* changes...By the time he wrote *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault had what he saw as an adequate method of causal explanation to complement archaeology... genealogy. (Gutting 2005, p45-6) [33]

This Kendall and Wickham (1999) describe as Foucault's interest in how individuals come to be incited to "work on our 'selves'" (Kendall and Wickham 1999, p30). [34] This interest is not opposed to Foucault's prior elaboration of power; rather, it extends and embellishes it. Whilst Foucault's archaeologies were arguably concerned with the geometries of power/knowledge and discourse, his genealogical project extends his thesis of power/knowledge into the domains of the 'self', and how one may be constituted as a *subject* of power:

> A theoretical shift had also been required in order to analyze what is often described as the manifestations of "power"; it led me to examine, rather, the manifold relations, the open strategies, and the rational techniques that articulate the exercise of powers... I felt obliged to study the games of truth in the relationship of self with self and the forming of oneself as a subject. (Foucault 1990, p6)

Specifically, in this later work Foucault is concerned with the way in which the individual "human being turns him-or-herself into a subject" (Foucault 2000c, p327); the emphasis here is that it is the individual human subject who is inculcated within his or her own 'constitution' as a subject. Subjectivity (the condition of being such a subject) is not wholly and incalculably 'imposed' upon the individual from 'outside' (a state of affairs that would arguably be inconsistent with his views on power, discussed earlier). Rather, the individual is incited to *become* a particular kind of subject, to gain *their* identity through power/knowledge, positions which are, Lawler explains, "available within discourse" (Lawler 2008, p62). Hence:

> This form of power that applies itself to immediate everyday life categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that *he must recognize* and that *others have to recognize in him*. It is a form of power that makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word 'subject': subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge.

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[33] Foucault himself may have disputed the description of his work here as 'causal'; his preferred terminology here may have been 'contingency', as he rejects the quest for the former in his methodology (see Foucault 1981)

[34] A formulation that they borrow from Rose (1996); I consider this later in this thesis.

Both meanings suggest a form of power that subjugates and makes subject to. (Foucault 2000c, p331).

This 'dual' operation of subject formation is described as subjectivation (*assujetissement*),[35] summarised by Foucault as "the way in which the individual establishes his relation to the rule and recognizes himself as obliged to put it into practice" (Foucault 1990, p27). One important implication of this particular formulation of the subject and their relation to power is that it implies a new formulation of what it means for the individual subject to be 'free', particularly in respect of the contemporary liberal democracy and the role of the individual in the workplace. As Nikolas Rose suggests, within subjectivation, subjects may not only consider themselves to be "free to choose" (that is, they can 'become' who they want to 'be') but may be incited to 'assemble themselves' as 'free' *within* discourse; that is, they may be "obliged to be free" (Rose 1998, p100). I return to this important concept and its consequences for my analysis later in this thesis. However, the 'nature' of the subject is also associated with the Foucauldian 'relationship' to ideology, which I now discuss.

DISCOURSE AND IDEOLOGY

I outlined earlier how the notion of Foucaldian 'discourse' is distinct from the notion of 'ideology'. I now explain this further. Foucault finds that he cannot accommodate orthodox definitions of ideology within his theoretical framework, and in particular those of his later 'genealogical' works. To illustrate this, I now compare Foucault's apprehension (and critique) of ideology with his contemporary (and former tutor) Althusser. For Althusser, "ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (Althusser 1971, p162); it describes the way in which people, individuals, 'make sense' of their world. The 'hail or interpellation of the subject 'by' ideology functions as part of this 'sense making' apparatus; that is, it is ideology that *interpellates* individuals as subjects. As such, Althusser argues that:

> [I]deology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects ... or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects ... by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: 'Hey, you

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[35] Within this thesis, I will continue to use the term subjectivation, as this appears to be most commonplace in English-language publications. However, Foucault's use of the term *assujetissement* has been variously translated as subjection, subjectification and subjectivation. Here, my use of the term implies "the production of self-production", and not "domination". See Binkley (2009, p64-5) for further discussion on this point.

there!'...the hailed individual will turn round. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical conversion, he becomes a subject. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was 'really' addressed to him, and that 'it was really him who was hailed' (and not someone else)... [The] one hailed always recognizes that it is really him who is being hailed (Althusser 1971, p174)

For instance, the hail 'Are you disabled?' may be successful (the subject who is interpellated comes to 'know himself' as 'disabled', this 'makes sense' to him), but this may also function to obscure or misrepresent the conditions whereby he has been interpellated: his social class, for instance, or his education, wealth (or not), and so forth. It is this sense that ideology can be understood to 'deny' (or at least obscure) particular 'truths' about the social world; this principle finds expression in Althusser's evocation of the Repressive State Apparatus and Ideological State Apparatus (and his use of the term 'discipline'), with which there are resemblances (and dissimilarities) with Foucault's formulation of sovereign power and disciplinary power/discourse:

> This is the fact that the (Repressive) State Apparatus functions massively and predominantly by repression (including physical repression), while functioning secondarily by ideology...For example, the Army and the Police also function by ideology both to ensure their own cohesion and reproduction, and in the 'values' they propound externally. In the same way, but inversely, it is essential to say that for their part the Ideological State Apparatuses function massively and predominantly by ideology, but they also function secondarily by repression, even if ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed...Thus Schools and Churches use suitable methods of punishment, expulsion, selection, etc., to 'discipline' not only their shepherds, but also their flocks (Althusser 1971, p145)

Whereas Althusser appears to suggest (or maintain) a sovereign and obscuring function for ideology (that is, it functions to obscure what is 'real'), for Foucault, power/knowledge is not ideology and, as I discussed earlier, not (necessarily) forced from 'above':

> Discipline 'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise. It is not a triumphant power, which because of its own excess can pride itself on its omnipotence; it is a modest, suspicious power, which functions as a calculated, but permanent economy. These are humble modalities, minor procedures, as compared with the majestic rituals of sovereignty or the great apparatuses of the state (Foucault 1995, p170)

As such, whereas for Althusser it is his theory of the Ideological State Apparatus that 'makes' (interpellates, subjects) the individual subject, for Foucault it is the 'modern' soul and its correspondence with power that is implicated:

> Rather than seeing [the modern] soul as the reactivated remnants of an ideology, one would see it as the present correlative of a certain technology of power over the body. It would be wrong to say that the soul is an illusion, or an ideological effect. On the contrary ... it is produced permanently around, on, within the body by the functioning of a power that is exercised on those punished ... on those one supervises, trains and corrects, over madmen, children at home and at school ... [This soul] is the element in which are articulated the effects of a certain type of power (Foucault 1995, p. 29)

Hence, whilst for Althusser power might be understood as an *effect* of ideology, for Foucault, ideology is deprecated; it is an effect of power. Foucault's unorthodox view of power, that is, something that is not imposed, 'top down', but enacted and re-enacted within social practice, invites discussion from him in respect of understanding what is meant by 'ideology'. For Foucault, as I outlined earlier, power is not 'centralised' nor 'owned' by the state or one particular group in society, nor does it necessarily "repress and reduce" (Foucault 2000a, p121). Rather, power, knowledge and discourse, and their treatment by Foucault, are *productive*; that is, they assemble what they 'name' to be 'true'. It is from this theoretical standpoint that Foucault offers his critique of ideology:

> The notion of ideology appears to me to make use of, for three reasons. First is that, like it or not, it always stands in virtual opposition to something else that is supposed to count as truth. Now, I believe that the problem does not consist in drawing the line between that which, in a discourse, falls under the category of scientificity or truth, and that which comes under some other category; rather, it consists in seeing historically how effects of truth are produced within discourses that, in themselves, are neither true nor false. The second drawback is that the concept of ideology refers, I think necessarily, to something of the order of the subject. Thirdly, ideology stands in a secondary position relative to something that functions as its infrastructure, as its material, economic determinant, and so on (Foucault 2000a, p119)

In respect of ideology, Foucault offers three related problematizations (see Foucault 2000a, p119). First, he argues that 'science' has no more (or less) claim to the 'truth' than ideology or, stated differently, ideology is no more likely to 'distort' or obscure the truth than is science (Lloyd 2003). Indeed, he is not concerned with the 'truth' or 'falsity' of statements *per se*. Rather, he is concerned with "how effects of truth are produced within discourse which in themselves are neither true nor false" (Foucault 2000a, p119). Therefore, whilst ideology might be concerned with "provid[ing] an account of existing social and political relations and a description of how these relations ought to be organised" (MacKenzie 2003, p2), Foucault's account of (non-sovereign) power undermines the possibility of there being a 'certain truth' that is somehow impressed from 'outside' of discourse.

For instance, in contemporary contexts, the classification of 'dyslexia' may be considered 'truthful' in a 'scientific' sense; that is, there are a selection of statements about (and which name) dyslexia that are 'true' in respect of psychological or pedagogic knowledge. However, such statements were not always 'in the true' as they are today; as unpalatable or unrecognisable as it may appear to the modern reader, the 'truthful' association of dyslexia with a need for 'moral improvement' or its description as a 'developmental' impairment also attained the *status of truth*, albeit in a different period.[36] In this way, Foucault's thesis is not to assign statements such as these the status of being 'true' or 'false' (or, indeed, judge them unpalatable), nor 'set apart' the scientific and ideological as opposites; rather his concern is that the formation and circulation of such statements is related to power and its capacity to accord statements and discourses with the status of truth.

Second, Foucault's position on the subject and subjectivity is also problematic in respect of ideology. Although ideological analysis may deprecate the individual subject by virtue of the attention it gives to systems of political and social thought (Howarth 2002; Mills 2004), it is still possible for the 'individual' to be considered within an ideological conception of the social world. Indeed, the presence of the individual makes it possible to think more readily about the subject who may wish to *resist* power (which I discuss below). Third, Foucault does not privilege economic determinism (Foucault 2000a); that is, he does not afford the economic context(s) of the social world a prime location in respect of 'power'; rather, and consistent with his thesis on power, he argues that economic relationships, although posited as 'ideological', are but one type of power relation amongst many (Mills 2004).

What is common in all three of Foucault's 'objections' to ideology is their consistency with his particular understanding of power. Foucault would appear to posit ideology, with its 'top down' organisation of power, as being inherently repressive or restrictive. Foucault's 'evasion' of ideology is perhaps the inevitable consequence of his imagining of power as not only repressive, but also productive. Foucault's treatment of child sexuality (Foucault 1978), for instance, enables him to displace the 'repressive' treatment of sexuality with a formulation that describes the productive character of

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[36] I do not develop a discussion about literacy or the genealogy of dyslexia as a classification here. However, Mokyr (1985), More (2000) and Humphries (2010) all make contributions to such a discussion

power in the assembly of 'new' forms of sexuality; that is, the 'repression' of sexuality incited the production and circulation of 'new' discourses of sexuality. However, Foucault's deprecation of ideology, and the particular way in which he allows for the assembly of the subject by/within discourse and power (discussed above) appears to deny the possibility for resistance; this is something I now address.

RESISTANCE

It is arguably difficult to Foucault to account for resistance in his thesis, particularly given his commitment, discussed above, to the constitution of the subject *within* discourse and power (Mills 2003; Mills 2004; Lawler 2008). What Foucault styles as 'resistance' is imbricated with power; that is, 'resistance' is inevitability in a relationship with power as power is, for Foucault, not constituted as a "system of domination" with an "inside or outside" (Rouse 2003, p111); rather, resistance is "structurally guaranteed" (Heller 1996, p79) alongside power. As such, his thesis does not allow for the possibility of a subject who might 'resist' doing so 'outside' of power, as it is power that *produces* the subject who 'resists'. Rather, the subject is simultaneous with power (Heller 1996), hence his famous statement:

> Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power...[T]hese points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network. Hence there is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead, there is a plurality of resistances. (Foucault 1978, p95)

Power, as I discussed earlier, is productive, and not (only) repressive. It is this sense that power may be viewed as not simply that which 'causes' social change, but rather as the means by which change is enabled or mobilised (Heller 1996). Hence Foucault's account is able to explain how power may be associated with 'freedom', albeit in a form that is inevitably constrained within the available discourses (see Rose 1998, earlier). Foucault's particular formulation of resistance is, however, problematic. Given the position of the subject *within* power, there appears to be no opportunity for the subject *to* resist. This, Heller (1996) argues, represents reliance upon an orthodox conception of power that presumes, on one hand, 'domination' and, on the other, either an absence of power or 'resistance'. However, as I discussed earlier, Foucault deprecates this

interpretation of power: there is no opposite 'to' power, only *other* forms of power (Heller 1996).[38]

Indeed Sullivan (2000), Mills (2003, 2004) and Youdell (2006) show how both the (ostensibly) 'powerful' and 'powerless' are implicated in local acts of 'resistance' through their recitation of 'power' as it is present in the contexts in which they live and work. For instance, in Youdell's example, she shows how 'minority ethic' (her terminology) students 'resist' their subjection within a white-majority school context through their reciting of 'multicultural' discourses that are already in circulation. Similarly, 'resistance' in this form can be implicated by the worker through their "destabilizing [of] everyday definitions of the boundaries of work" (Austrin 1994, p209). Winiecki (2007), for instance, demonstrates how 'call centre' workers effectively resist aspects of their work from 'inside'; that is, they re-appropriate, modify and re-circulate discourses (administrative systems, performance measurement) to their 'advantage', despite being in an ostensibly 'powerless' position in relation to their 'managerial' colleagues.

DISCIPLINARY POWER AND SURVEILLANCE

Foucault's thesis on power and the 'assembly' of the subject invites consideration of how, if not 'ordered' or 'ruled' by a 'dominant' power, people (individuals) are 'made'. Orthodox conceptions of power collectivise its application; that is, a (hypothetical) leader may impose his or her will on a group or population, a "single uniform mass" (Foucault 1995, p170). Foucault's thesis on power, discussed earlier, demands that he rejects this formulation. Instead, he suggests that it is *discipline* that 'makes' individuals, for it is:

> ...the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise. It is not a triumphant power, which because of its own excess can pride itself on its omnipotence; it is a modest, suspicious power, which functions as a calculated, but permanent economy. These are humble modalities, minor procedures, as compared with the majestic rituals of sovereignty or the great apparatuses of the state. (Foucault 1995, p170)

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[38] This argument is dependent on the meanings implied by the everyday usage of these words. Heller (1996) argues that power and resistance are "ontologically correlative terms" (Heller 1996, p99), and hence might be used to substitute one another. In effect, 'resistance' is a kind of 'power'; he argues that Foucault only makes a distinction in order to foreground his "political commitments" in respect of particular kinds of subject, for instance, prisoners.

As (Foucauldian) power is non-hierarchical, then subjects are considered to be "fabricated [and] not found" (Orlie 1997, p46); that is, the subject does not pre-exist its 'finding' by power, but is 'made' by power. The subject is 'found', in this sense, through three disciplinary means which are outlined by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1995): the *observation*, the *normalizing judgement*, and the *examination*. I now consider each of these in turn. The observation finds its most familiar expression when Foucault describes Bentham's *Panopticon*, and Foucault utilises this architectural model as a metaphor for his thoughts on power and surveillance. The Panopticon represents for Foucault an idealised form of internment or incarceration: a circular building, internally divided, with an unobstructed visual field for one stood at its centre. Yet, through the careful positioning of internal divisions, external windows and venetian blinds, the building impresses on those interned at its periphery a perception of constant surveillance. Thus, Foucault notes, the Panopticon serves to:

> ... induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power [...] The Panopticon is a machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad: in the peripheric ring, one is totally seen, without ever seeing; in the central tower, one sees everything without ever being seen. (Foucault 1995, p195)

This is significant in relation to the 'dispersed' nature of power. Foucault's principal point here is two-fold: that power is inherently produced by the architectural configuration of the Panopticon, and that, due to the particular design of the building (divisions, blinds and the regulation of light) it mattered little to those incarcerated that they may or may not see their gaolers or, indeed, whether the gaolers themselves were watching those incarcerated or not. In this way, the metaphorical Panopticon:

> ... automatizes and disindividualizes power. Power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up [...] Consequently, it does not matter who exercises power [...] The panoptic schema makes any apparatus of power more intense: it assures its economy (in material, in personnel, in time); it assures its efficacity by its preventative character, its continuous functioning and its automatic mechanisms. (Foucault 1995, p195)

The surveillance of the Panopticon thus serves as an allegory through which is revealed the "capillary notion of power" (Cohen 2006, p213) that operates in a social organisation. More subtly, Foucault also notes that the Panopticon also permits the configuration of "power in advance", and that such power "tends to [be] non-corporal"

(Foucault 1995, p195); that is, power is not imposed in response to a loss of order; rather, power operates 'from the inside' by regulating the means by which order is maintained *by* the 'selves' of the subjects therein. In this, Foucault is exemplifying subjectivation (here, 'subjection'), as I discussed earlier:

> A real subjection is born mechanically from a fictitious relation. So it is not necessary to use force to constrain the convict to good behaviour, the madman to calm, the worker to work...He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; *he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles*; he becomes the principle of his own subjection (Foucault 1995, p201-2, emphases appended)

What Foucault describes as 'normalizing judgements' refers to the differentiation of individuals from one another; that is, 'rules' are circulated that mark subjects in respect of their 'meeting' of particular characteristics or thresholds. It is this way that the 'conformity' of individual subjects can be ascertained. The normalizing judgement is diffuse throughout the context in which it applies; it is, Foucault explains, a "perpetual penality[39] that traverses all points and supervises every instant...it differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it normalizes." (Foucault 1995, p183). Hence the normalizing judgement is understood to circulate a form of disciplinary power that sorts, separates, establishes and constrains the 'ideal' character of the individual subjects within its domain. It is in this way that subjects are 'made up' to be either (to use Foucault's terminology) 'incorrect', or "knowable" (Foucault 1995, p172).

The examination incorporates the observation and normalizing judgement; the observation, as discussed above, imposes upon subjects a "compulsory visibility" (Foucault 1995, p187) so that their subjection to/within power is guaranteed. Unlike hierarchical power, disciplinary power imposes itself through the visibility subjects have of themselves: their experience of "always being able to be seen" functions to maintain "the disciplined individual in his subjection" (Foucault 1995, p187). The examination combines with the normalizing judgement to (re)form particular kinds of subject and thereby render them 'knowable'. As such, the examination promotes the individualisation of the subject; he or she is observed (and is incited to observe him or herself) by reference to the 'norms' that available within discourse and which are circulated by disciplinary power:

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[39] A state of constant 'punishment', the working of 'discipline' evoked in response to disorder

> In a system of discipline, the child is more individualised than the adult, the patient more than the healthy man, the madman and the delinquent more than the normal and the non-delinquent... and when one wishes to individualize the healthy, normal and law-abiding adult, 'it is always by asking him how much of the child he has in him, what secret madness lies within him, what fundamental crime he has dreamt of committing. (Foucault 1995, p193)

It follows, therefore, that those for whom 'differences' from such 'norms' may be extant (for instance, the 'sick' patient, the 'disabled' student) then he or she will be subject to more specific forms of observation, normalisation and examination. The (disabled) student, for instance, may be subject to/of further examination. However, this account of power does not appear to directly address the 'power' of legal discourses, to which students (and administrators) are subject. It is therefore important to outline the relationship of the law with 'Foucauldian' power.

LEGAL POWER

Although Foucault does not remove legal power from his analysis, he certainly deprecates it within of his own particular formulation. Effectively, Foucault inverts the conventional view of the power of the state (as, for instance, ordained through the law or monarchy), and locates these forms of power as dependent upon other 'networks' of power:

> To pose the problem [of law and its prohibitions] in terms of the State means to continue posing it in terms of sovereign and sovereignty, that is to say, in terms of law...I don't want to say that the State isn't important; *what I want to say is that relations of power, and hence the analysis that must be made of them, necessarily extend beyond the limits of the State*...The State is superstructural in relation to a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology, and so forth...I would say that the State consists in the codification of a whole number of power relations which render its functioning possible (Foucault 2000a, p122)

Although, for instance, there are laws in operation within my research context (the *Disability Discrimination Act* and its descendant legislation[40]), a Foucauldian conception of power (and hence discourse) would not afford the law total primacy in respect of its influence upon practice. A Foucauldian analysis of power would arguably be critical of analyses that presume that individuals (and organisations) simply 'follow and obey the law'. Rather, Foucault is suggesting that 'the law' only becomes 'visible' and meaningful when practised through those *truths* established by other networks of

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[40]As recently enacted, *The Equality Act* (Great Britain 2010)

power/discourse, for instance medicine or education. As such, legislation such as the *Disability Discrimination Act* (and its successor) is limited or constrained by (other) networks of power/knowledge through which its 'truthfulness' might be established:

> "I am also thinking of the way in which a body as prescriptive as the penal system sought its bases or its justification, at first of course in a theory of justice, then, since the nineteenth century, in a sociological, psychological, medical and psychiatric knowledge: *it is as if even the word of the law could no longer be authorised, in our society, except by a discourse of truth.*" (Foucault 1981, p55)

As such, Foucault is concerned with the *specificity* with which power is articulated, and not necessarily how particular practices may be understood as 'consequences' of the law (for example, that administrators will simply 'adhere to the law', or that such laws function alone to classify those with disabilities). Foucault's concern is to interrogate specific practices in order to reveal the function of power (and knowledge, and discourse) that is in circulation in these local contexts.

It is in this way that a 'Foucauldian analysis' problematizes a consideration of 'the power' of 'legal discourse'. Arguably, 'legal discourses' can (in the contemporary context) only function in relation to other discourses, such as those of medicine, or education, that recognise legal discourses as 'true'. As such, legal discourses may only be maintained 'in circulation' if "they accord with, and fit in with, all of the other statements which are authorised within our society" (Mills 2003, p58), for example those of medicine and education. Therefore, although 'the law' might ostensibly be understood to represent juridical, 'top down' or 'repressive' power, an analysis of administrative practice will need to consider these 'other discourses' , the networks of power/knowledge that they imply, and how they function alongside (and perhaps serve to constrain and reformulate) 'legal' discourses.

APPLICATION

Foucault's work has found expression in the work of disability theorists during the last two decades (for instance, Corker 1998, 1999;Tremain 2005), however contestation persist as to its consistency with the political mission of the 'disability movement' (see chapter three). Although the social model and the 'emancipatory research agenda' have been signposted by some in the 'disability movement' as providing an 'alternative' ontological foundation for disability research than those offered by impairment-configured approaches, these too have been problematized by some observers who have attempted to navigate the study of disability towards 'alternative', post-structural

approaches to disability theory (Shakespeare 1994; Corker 2006; Tremain 2005). The contribution that Foucault may make to this is now further considered.

Foucault's conception of power/knowledge, discussed earlier, arguably places him in a location somewhat at odds with both the medical and social models of disability. Foucault's notion of power is distributive (that is, it permeates the entire social world) and possessing of repressive (restraining), and liberating (emancipating), tendencies. Therefore whilst Foucault's conception of power/knowledge might have utility in explaining the formation and regulation of discourse around disability or impairment, his conception of power/knowledge brings him in direct conflict with juridico-discursive or 'coercive' conceptions of power which appear to form the foundation of 'emancipatory' disability theory. For example, within the 'social model of disability', the subjugation and discrimination of disabled people is understood as a function of their powerlessness (Tremain 2005); that is, 'power' in this sense is understood as hierarchical, repressive and in respect of the disabled person, undesirable – a position that appears at odds with a Foucauldian conception of power/knowledge. Yet for others, somewhat paradoxically, the social modal has itself become a 'new' orthodoxy (Shakespeare and Watson, 2002), and a seemingly 'unchallengeable' and legitimate mode of representation that resists contestation and debate.

By offering a distributive conception of power/knowledge, Foucault might offer the opportunity for liberation from this 'binary opposition' around which much disability theory and research has traditionally been posited and which, some have argued, has served to legitimate and reinforce the very opposition which it aims to overcome (Corker 2006). Instead, a consideration of how these discourses function collectively in the present would appear to be necessary:

> It is clear that a discursive paradigm would problematize the concept of disability as it is conceptualised within the (materialist) social model, since it would seem to emphasise that disability is produced in the relationships between impairment and oppression [...] there remains a sense in which this emancipatory paradigm reinforces existing political and social standpoints and knowledges, and recreates the relationship between elitist discourses of theory-making and disability as a form of social oppression. Disabled people's emancipation will not be complete without the creation of a space where we can ask theoretical questions about disability theory itself. (Corker 2006, p122)

Critics of this approach have suggested, however, that by 'failing' to foreground the impaired, corporeal body (that is, the material, biological basis of the body prior to its

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'contact with' discourse) Foucault lends little to an emancipatory agenda for disability that is reliant upon the notion of the 'embodied' and 'lived experience' of disability or impairment (Hughes 2005). For some, it appears that recognition of the experienced, visceral and 'impaired' body necessitates exclusion from a theoretical standpoint for disability that is constituted in relation to discourse and power/knowledge. Tremain (2005) rejects this, noting that a Foucauldian reading of disability need not reject materiality; rather, its concern is with understanding the historical and discursive practices that enable the constitution of 'the body' as 'impaired'.

Indeed, for some observers it is the social or emancipatory model itself that legitimates the biological 'account' of impairment or disability: its "truth claims" (Campbell 2005, p109) necessarily evoke binary oppositions or 'difference' (able-unable, normal-different). However, whilst Foucault might not privilege the individual bodily 'experience', he does not appear to overlook material form entirely ; for Foucault, the body (and its boundaries) might be considered a site upon which discourse is inscribed (see also Butler 2006), and hence 'impairment' can be recognised by his theoretical approach.

In respect of the contemporary workplace, Foucault's position on power/knowledge, surveillance and discipline are also of significance. Orthodox or 'judicial' modes of understanding the functioning of power and discipline within the contemporary organisation (the prison, school, supermarket, university, etc.) would favour a 'central' or hierarchical conception, privileging for example, the authoritarian power of the prison Governor, manager or Principal. In contrast, Foucault's diffuse and dynamic notion of power (discussed earlier) permits an alternative comprehension. Whilst it is evident that an employee may be employed (or a student may study, or prisoner gaoled) within a particular organisation or, indeed, a specific building, the power/knowledge that configures them, and their sub/super-ordinates will be total. Burrell notes:

> [A]s we sit in our studies, we confront a world organized for us by telephone companies, furniture manufacturers, publishers and clothes designers. The real point is not that most of us do not live in carceral [prison-like] institutions and can therefore escape from their discipline, but that, as individuals, we are incarcerated within an organizational world. Thus, whilst we may not live in total institutions, the institutional organization of our lives is total. It is in this sense that Foucault's comment 'prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, hospitals which all resemble prisons' has to be understood. (Burrell 1988, p232)

The conjunction between disability, organisation and the employee becomes particularly pertinent when considered from this perspective. 'Disability', 'impairment', 'management' and 'administration', for example, are not independent, static, discursive 'patterns' imprinted on an organisation or its employees. Following Foucault, employees (and their superiors) can be understood to be constituted by particular and multiple configurations of discourse; the workplace is not (for most people) a prison but, as Foucault demonstrates, just as discourses serve to constitute the prison as a particular disciplinary environment, then so too perhaps for the workplace. There is not 'more' or 'less' power imbued upon individuals according to rank or status; rather, power/knowledge operates in all places at all times within the organisation.

The apparatus of organisations are multiple. Most visibly, the architectural form of a organisation, its internal 'places', spaces, and other surveillance features might be subject to Foucauldian-informed scrutiny; more subtly, hidden or tacitly understood practices might be elucidated that correspond with different modes of power/knowledge (disciplinary, political, and identity-based) that act to resist the more dominant forms of power/knowledge in their context. Two examples help illustrate this. In her study of 'Academic resistance to management', Anderson (2008) noted how specific modes of bureaucratic surveillance (staff appraisal, location sheets, student evaluations) were utilised by University managers in order to regulate staff performance, and how staff made efforts to resist or oppose these. In this study, 'academic' discourses are (in effect) established in opposition to 'managerial' discourses, and whereas resistance to 'managerial' discourses were tacitly understood, her methodology enabled insight to be gained into how resistance was performed by academic staff and how particular identities and 'truths' were negotiated within the interview context itself:

> These interviews provided an 'off-stage social site' [...] in which the hidden transcript was disseminated—sometimes in hushed tones—to the researcher, who was understood as a fellow academic, and therefore fellow subordinate. (Anderson 2008, p257)

A different example is provided by Iedema and Rhodes's study within a 'spinal injury unit' (Iedema and Rhodes 2010). The discourses they explore relate to intra-disciplinary communication between hospital staff of different professional disciplines, and the surveillance of their practice. Their discursive approach overcomes 'official' (disciplinary or hierarchical) hospital relationships (for example, between Doctor and Nurse); instead they 'recover' those communications which occurred 'between' the

traditional boundaries of practice, thereby revealing greater insight into operation of surveillance in this particular context:

> Our general point here is that the study of surveillance in organizations can be extended by an examination of what surveillance does when it is located in particular sites of practice, and when its deployment does not (just) render people either passive or resistant. (Iedema and Rhodes 2010, p202)

Both these examples demonstrate how Foucauldian-informed 'discourse' approaches can serve to reveal discourses 'buried' in complex organisational contexts where more 'visible' or orthodox discourses are apparent. The challenge of this research project is similar, and so some methodological implications of Foucauldian theory can now be outlined.

LINKING RESEARCH QUESTIONS TO THEORETICAL POSITION

My research questions (chapter one) necessitated my detailed consideration of an appropriate research design. My research aims included a consideration of the 'events' that characterised administrative practice associated with disability, the understanding of such practices as articulated and explained by the administrators, and would necessarily include my consideration of the contexts in which such administrative work was being enacted. Hence I needed to engage directly with administrators, observe their workplaces and practices, and discuss with them their 'response' to the disability experiences of others, their relationships with one another during the conduct of their work, and their relationship with legal and organisational authorities.

As I understood little of the details of the 'administrators' experience' prior to commencing this research, I demanded a research design that could accommodate, with sufficient flexibility, the possibility that I would encounter the indefinite or 'unknown'. My personal location (discussed in chapter one) also arguably necessitated that I embrace a theoretical position that problematized narrow (perhaps disciplinary-bound) notions of 'what it was possible to say' about disability; that is, I wished to avoid a research design that characterised in advance a particular political or ideological standpoint in respect of disability. I therefore sought to develop a research design that did not explicitly characterise in advance a range of responses from administrators. Hence my research design needed to address concerns that were concurrently personal, theoretical, political and practical, and this led me to select a qualitative, ethnographic research design, the further rationale for which I discuss later in this thesis (chapter six).

Translating Foucauldian philosophy into a practical research design was problematic, not least because Foucault offers scant direction to his readership in this regard (Kendall and Wickham 1999; Hook 2001; Mills 2003; Hook 2005); however, some direction may be inferred from his later commentaries (Foucault 1980) where he offers methodological "precautions" (Foucault 1980, p96). First, my use of Foucault invited a consideration of *power*, his unorthodox reading of which I discussed earlier in this chapter. An analysis of power should not necessarily be concerned with "central locations [and] general mechanisms" (Foucault 1980, p97). That is, Foucault is concerned with locating the articulation of power, "the extreme point of its exercise" (Foucault 1980, p97),[41] where power is understood to intervene with a thoroughly 'local' effect. For example, using his theme of 'punishment', Foucault is less interested in the 'requirement' or 'necessity' of punishment; rather, he is more concerned with how this is articulated in terms of specific "apparatuses", for instance, "torture or imprisonment" (Foucault 1980, p97). This means that a feature of my methodology and analytical approach is a concern for practices that are 'local' in their character.

Second, Foucault rejects the analysis of 'sovereign power', that which might be understood to be 'applied' by a dominating individual or state. Rather, he is concerned with power "at the level of ongoing subjugation" (Foucault 1980, p97); that is, how power/knowledge (and hence the presupposition of certain 'truths') serve to constitute, or make, particular subjects. This suggests that a feature of my methodology and analytical approach is a interest in how categories of people are 'made' and 'remade' (see Hacking 2007) in administrative practice. This means that I should not privilege the role of, for example, 'management' in the 'making' of the administrative worker, and nor should I routinely accept, consistent with my personal location (chapter 1), the ideological tenets of the social model of disability; that is, I should reject prior assumptions and instead seek 'alternative' explanations.

Third, and related to the above, although Foucault considers the individual to be an "effect of power" (Foucault 1980, p97), he also argues that power "circulates" (Foucault 1980, p98); that is, power is productive and conductive; it supports the assembly of recognisable subjects and enables their operation. Hence, although I might consider certain categories of individual to be 'made' through their contact with power (for example, the category 'administrator' might be understood to be an 'effect' of power), I

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[41] Douglas (2002) also makes a very similar point

might *instead* consider that (following Hacking 2004, 2007) that it may be the administrators, as an effect of this, who 're-make' themselves, and others: that is, they are both formed through power, and power is articulated through them. This means that I cannot take as 'guaranteed' that administrators are simply 'obeying' the law or policy, and my methodology needs to question and problematize this.

Fourth, I should be interested in the techniques of power (Foucault 1980). This means that my methodological approach needs to be able to describe the 'mechanisms' that are in operation at the 'local' level of practice; for example, such mechanisms might include those that promote the (administrative) categorisation of disability or impairment, and how exclusion or inclusion is practised by the administrative workers themselves. This I also relate strongly to the anthropological theory of Mary Douglas: her thesis (Douglas 2002), which I considered earlier, directly addresses the exclusion and inclusion of categories of people and how such divisions might be understood to be effected and regulated. As such, her invitation to examine specific strategies that serve, for instance, to reduce ambiguity or label practices as 'dangerous' are of interest to my analysis.

Therefore, my encounter with structuralist anthropology (see chapter four) led me to recognise the utility that an ethnographic approach might offer, particularly in respect to the marking of 'divisions' related to notions of disability; the methodological practices (ethnographic in character) are strongly implied within her work. However, my reading of Foucault (in particular Foucault 1995) invited me to consider disability as a notion that was contingent, partial and 'truthful' in certain places, at certain times. I needed to accommodate the play of history, power and contingency that may have served constitute the notion of disability and the subjects to whom this might apply, and recognise the contested nature of this. As such, a qualitative, ethnographic approach appeared to offer me opportunities in these respects, and this is something I discuss in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter describes in detail my methodological position, research design, analytical approach, and also contains a comprehensive account of my ethical considerations. I first provide a rationale for my choice of an ethnographic design. I then discuss gaining access to the research field, and my selection of respondents and places. I then discuss in detail the nature and extent of my fieldwork, including details of the observations and interviews I undertook, and what I gained from these methods. I then discuss my analytical approach, linking this to the theoretical contexts of earlier chapters. I also describe how I selected data for analysis, and issues of data quality. The closing section of this chapter provides a comprehensive account of my ethical position and practices, drawing upon the *Association of Social Anthropologists* (ASA) ethical guidelines (2011), and more recent empirical work.

CHOOSING ETHNOGRAPHY

Ethnography is associated with the discipline of anthropology; that is, 'ethnography' is what practitioners of anthropology 'do' in order to generate understanding (Geertz 1973). Ethnography is understood to have emerged from the coalescing of two anthropological fields: the study of "native peoples" (Turner 2006, p176), which approached a zenith during the nineteenth century, and the study of urban cultures (predominantly in the United States) in the first half of the twentieth century (Turner 2006). However, in the second half of the twentieth century an "assault on Western ethnocentrism" (Vidich and Lyman 2003, p65-66) is seen to emerge that questioned the epistemic basis of anthropological practice, denying opportunities for the study of those characterised as 'alien' or 'other'. Anthropology is then seen to reposition its interests towards immediate localities: people and groups understood to have arisen as 'Other' in the revised social and economic contexts of the second half of the twentieth century (Vidich and Lyman 2003).

A chronology for ethnography throughout this period has been described (Denzin and Lincoln 2008a). A "traditional period" is understood to be associated with the application of positivist methodologies and the production of "colonizing accounts" (Denzin and Lincoln 2008a, p19-20) that locate the researcher as an 'observer' of the (typically non-Western) 'other'. A departure from this position is marked by the

emergence of the 'Chicago school' in the first half of the twentieth century, and an increased attention to issues of race and poverty (Vidich and Lyman 2003) and, critically, the personal location of the ethnographer in the creation of ethnographic 'text' (Whyte 1993; Denzin and Lincoln 2008a).[42]

The 'later' moments of qualitative enquiry ("the modernist phase", "blurred genres", "crisis of representation" and the "triple crisis" (Denzin and Lincoln 2008, p20) mark the consolidation of qualitative research as a recognised sub-discipline of anthropology and a critical 'troubling' of the methods of enquiry used: their subjects, their representational claims, and their authorship. This 'revised vista' for qualitative research invites a discussion on how the notion of 'truth' may be multiply read, how categorical 'knowledge' about groups of people may be problematized, and how ethnography as 'practice' helps to produce (construct) meaning. Clifford's introduction in the key text *Writing Culture* (Clifford and Marcus 1986) neatly outlines the ethnographic vista from which my research has emerged:

> [Ethnography] poses its questions at the boundaries of civilisations, cultures, classes, races and genders. Ethnography decodes and recodes, telling the grounds of collective order and diversity, inclusion and exclusion. It describes processes of innovation and structuration, and is itself part of these processes. (Clifford and Marcus 1986, p2-3)

A study of workplace knowledge and practice concerned with administrators and their involvement with 'disability' necessarily encounters multiple discourses, including those that might be characterised as 'medical', 'bureaucratic' or perhaps 'judicial'. My research interests appeared to be "actively situated between powerful systems of meaning" (Clifford and Marcus 1986, p2) and, following Foucault (2000b), I sought to question the nature of these 'discourses'. However, I was not primarily concerned to elucidate the essential 'meaning' of concepts such as 'disability' or 'administration' in this specific workplace: I was instead concerned with *how* such concepts became meaningful or 'commonsensical' in this time and place for the administrators.

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[42] See Whyte's reflections within *Street Corner Society* (1993, p355-6, 358), originally published in 1943, documenting this change in emphasis.

THE CHARACTER OF ETHNOGRAPHIC INQUIRY

Prior to my description and discussion of the specific methods selected and used within this research, a brief outline of the characteristics of ethnography, as I understand and apply it here, is required. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) summarise ethnography to be:

> [Participation], overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and/or asking questions [...] collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the emerging focus of enquiry. (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, p3)

One key characteristic of ethnography is the seeking of 'thick description', an oft-cited (and variously interpreted) tenet of Geertz's thesis (Geertz 1973).[43] For some, 'thick description' has been understood as the construction of highly detailed ethnographic texts (Atkinson and Delemont 2008). Whilst 'thick description' might be characterised in this way, my reading of Geertz's use of this concept relates to how texts might be multiply read; hence to be 'thick', a description must consider those "multiple codings that generate meaning" (Atkinson and Delemont 2008, p299). For this research, I find that Geertz's reading of 'thick description' coheres with a Foucauldian formulation of power, as I discussed earlier. That is, the 'cultural practices' described might be understood "not [as] power...to which social events, behaviours, institutions or processes can be *causally* attributed" (Geertz 1973, p14), but rather as venue in which Foucauldian (non-hierachical) power relations are described.

Another key characteristic of ethnography is its concern for groups of people, their 'everyday' experiences, and the shared meanings that constitute their culture (Fine 2003; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007; Prus 2007; Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009). However, ethnography's historical association with anthropology might lead to an understanding that it might only be associated with non-Western contexts (Vidich and Lyman 2003). More recently, ethnography's relationship with the study of isolated groups has been challenged, and the emergence of 'multi-sited' ethnography illustrates how contemporary ethnographic theory and practice is attempting to redress its (outmoded) anthropological heritage (Marcus 1998; Gustavson and Cytrynbaum 2003). Applied to this study, I understand the term 'multi-sited' to be apposite, as I anticipated

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[43] Geertz notes that he 'borrows' the term 'thick description' from Gilbert Ryle. A 'thick description' might not in itself be textually dense, as Geertz's summary of Ryle's 'winking' episode demonstrates (see Geertz 1973, p6-7).

contact with groups of people in a contemporary institution (Smith 2006). However, my 'closeness' to such a context brought with it challenges that I address later in this chapter. First, however, I consider my fieldwork methods.

ENTERING THE FIELD

My existing employee role afforded me near-unrestricted access to most areas of the University. Whilst in many respects this was advantageous (for example, I could legitimately dwell in an area without cultivating undue attention), it also made me particularly sensitive of my responsibilities in respect of avoiding undue intrusion and exploitation of my existing workplace relationships and their collegiality, the ethical and epistemological aspects of which I discuss in greater detail later in this chapter. Nonetheless, 'access' to places and people was something I considered, and I now detail my response.

NEGOTIATING ACCESS TO PEOPLE AND PLACES

To gain access to 'junior' administrators (for interview), I initially identified a senior faculty administrator who I felt might act as 'gatekeeper' to individual administrators. I provided her with written information about my research proposal, a copy of the 'consent' form that I planned to use, and evidence of my ethical 'approval' by the local Ethics Committee. I was granted unconditional access to the administrative staff of the Faculty, albeit with the caveat that I needed to be 'mindful' of their workload.[44] In contrast, other staff [45] did not necessitate access through a 'gatekeeper', and I negotiated with them directly. I then provided all potential respondents I had identified with written information and a 'consent' form. All agreed to participate, and no conditions (other than my accommodation of their working patterns) were introduced by them.

For 'staff meetings' I did not need to pre-arrange my attendance, as this would ordinarily be expected at many of these events. I did, however, need to inform gatekeepers (normally an administrator) of my 'research role'; however, as all of those I approached regarding my access to meetings I had previously invited for interview for this research, all were already familiar with the scope of my research, and on no occasion was I refused access. For 'staff training' events, I negotiated access with the

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[44] I discuss later my use of senior gatekeepers to mediate access to members of the administrative staff as part of my ethical considerations.

[45] Senior administrators and those in 'specialist' or leadership roles.

training 'coordinators', outlining my reasons for attending and informing them of my 'concurrent' research activity. I recognised, however, that the role of these gatekeepers was to ensure that sufficient attendees were available to make the event 'viable', and that they would not be facilitating the events in person. As such, I then contacted the event facilitators in order to discuss with them the 'researcher' role I was also practising, in addition to my 'trainee' role. Again, on no occasion was I refused access.

CHOOSING RESPONDENTS

In contrast to quantitative studies, where the sample selection is related to the inferences that may be made to a larger population following gathering and analysis of data, for a qualitative study the researcher is concerned with the relationship between data and theory (Silverman 2005; Bryman 2008). For this research I made selections of respondents based not on the demographic contours of the research field (for example, age, ethnicity, gender); rather, I invited respondents to participate in relation to their workplace roles and relationships, and how these might have related to my theoretical interests. However, as I inadequately understood the administrative 'experience' prior to the fieldwork, my selection, invitation and recruitment of respondents was tentative and always provisional: that is, I could not always be confident at the point of recruitment the extent of contribution an individual respondent might eventually make to my research.

My recruitment to this research was both purposive and theoretical (Silverman 2005; Bryman 2008). A 'purposive' approach is concerned with making respondent selections that "illustrate some feature or process" of interest (Silverman 2005, p.129). This does not equate to convenience or accessibility, but rather suggests selecting participants on the basis of what is already known about the field of enquiry, and how the choice of contact with those already in the field will best realise data most pertinent to the enquiry. A 'theoretical' approach to sampling is closely related: whereas with purposive sampling, the concern is to illustrate some particular activity or characteristic within the field of enquiry, theoretical sampling is concerned with making sampling decisions on the basis of the (early) theorizing that is being undertaken, and how this articulates with the over-arching aims of the research (Silverman 2005; Bryman 2008).

Whilst a (positivist) 'sampling' approach might have inspired me to 'recruit' from those individuals categorised as 'junior administrators', my earliest discussions with administrators themselves helped me identify a more oblique strategy. For example, a

discussion with a 'senior administrator' led to me establishing contact with another administrator involved with the delivery of 'employment support'; similarly, a discussion with a 'junior administrator' about her 'disability training' led to my enquiry into the organisation of these events; a 'sampling' approach based upon institutional 'categories' alone may have failed to locate these respondents. My approach here was not, therefore, "haphazard" (Smith 2006, p33). Rather, it enabled me to trace 'connections' on the basis of my research aims and to identify events and experiences that were 'new' or unfamiliar to me.

I considered four key characteristics when selecting respondents. First, I understood that new administrative roles were emergent within Higher Education (Szekeres 2004; Whitchurch 2006, 2008). I therefore aimed to recruit respondents to my research whose roles might represent these changes. This led me to identify potential respondents who were associated with disability-related 'support', staff training, and the provision of disability resources. Second, I understood that 'administrative work' may be a classification fails to recognise the complex nature of much 'non-academic' work in contemporary Higher Education settings (Dobson and Conway 2003). As such, I aimed to recruit respondents who were employed in (ostensibly) administrative posts, yet whose roles were cross-disciplinary in character, sometimes bridging academic, administrative and management functions.

Third, I understood that some of the administrators worked closely with people with disabilities on a regular basis, or undertook work closely associated with statutory or policy requirements in respect of disability. This led me to identify potential respondents who worked in programme-level administrative roles (for example, student admission and progression) or training and education roles. Fourth, I suspected (following Douglas 2002) that some administrators may have been witness to practices associated with of 'marginal' or 'liminal' classifications of disability or impairment that may have served to problematize the aforementioned policy positions; this led me to identify potential respondents working in areas that undertook the 'initial assessment' of people in respect of disability, for instance university 'support' services.

My first respondents were recruited through my frequent 'office visits': these were administrators I already knew and frequently worked alongside. From this group, I invited the participation of a smaller number of junior administrators, whose work related strongly to my theoretical interests. Using these existing peer networks, I

identified further potential respondents, akin to a "snowball" sampling technique (see Bryman 2008, p184); these were administrators in 'specialist' or 'central' University roles (for example, 'training'). Alongside this approach, I utilised the University's staff 'directory' to contact individuals in core administrative roles with a responsibility for disability and disability policy, for example staff within 'human resources' departments.

Later, I adopted a strategy based on data gathered during my earliest interviews and fieldwork observations: when a respondent identified an activity within the organisation that related to my enquiry, I would then (with the consent of my original respondent) pursue this using electronic mail with the person(s) concerned, for example those in 'employment' and 'human resource' roles. I also monitored the 'all staff' electronic mail system (a daily messaging system, received by all staff), looking for individuals who might offer an opportunity to discuss or observe practices related to disability. For example, an 'all staff' e-mail that communicated a new administrative system relating to disability provided an opportunity for my purposeful recruitment of a senior administrator.

When deciding whether to include a respondent within my research, I considered their "enculturation" or 'embeddedness' within the specific context; their current "involvement" in the field of enquiry; their contact with aspects of the field that were "unfamiliar"; their available time to participate; and their 'insider' status and non-engagement with the "analytic" aspects of the enquiry (Spradley 1979, p46). All my respondents had worked for the organisation for at least twelve months, and a majority a much longer time; all were thoroughly engaged in 'administrative work' and were, as such, 'insiders'; all were engaged directly with 'disability' policy or practice, and all had adequate time to speak with me. In total, twelve administrators, practising various roles, were recruited for face-to-face interviewing; fortunately, once approached, none refused my invitation to participate in my research.

CHOOSING PLACES

I also sought to identify the locations in which administrative activity was being undertaken that related to disability. Whilst my primary goal in identifying these places or contexts was to locate individual respondents, my identification of these places was also of importance if I was to characterise (and theorize from) the physical spaces in which administrators performed their workplace activities. Some areas were included following the invitation of a 'known' administrator who had already afforded me access

to that area. My visits to the personnel office, 'learning support' and employment centres were realised in this manner as a consequence of administrators' agreement to participate in face-to-face interviewing. Conversely, my selection of other contexts, for example the 'programmes' offices, were led by my existing knowledge of administrative activity.

FIELDWORK METHODS

Ethnography is principally empirical work (Taylor 2002), with various modes of observation and interaction with participants providing methodological foundation (Taylor 2002; Silverman 2001). These methods include observation (Taylor 2002; Silverman 2001), interviews (Smith 2006; Alvesson 2003; Denzin 2001), focus groups (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2008; Silverman 2004); participant observation (Smith 2006) and the use of visual imagery or maps (Maher and Dixon 2002; Harper 2008). The fieldwork for this research was undertaken predominantly during the years 2007 and 2009, following the approval of two research ethics committees in 2006 (discussed later) and my selected fieldwork methods were primarily observation and in-depth interview. In describing fieldwork methods, I recognise that a range of ethical concerns may be raised; for ethnography, these are somewhat complex and, as such, I address them more comprehensively later in this chapter.

OBSERVATIONAL FIELDWORK

My observational fieldwork role varied between one that was ostensibly 'participatory' and 'impromptu', to one which was largely 'non-participatory' Bryman (2008). A 'participant-as-observer' role was that with which I most identified, where workers in the research field were aware of my status as a researcher, and I was participating with the 'everyday' activities of the workplace (Bryman 2008). Typical examples of these encounters included my participation in staff training events, staff meetings, and 'ad hoc' conversations with administrators that occurred during the practice of our usual roles. I participated in activities as a fellow employee, whilst also utilising such experiences as opportunities for data collection in the form of research field notes that I compiled following the encounters; I discuss field notes later in this section.

The 'observer-as-participant' was another role that I adopted. This relates to situations where I was unable to "genuinely participate" (Bryman 2008, p410) within an activity as I lacked the relevant knowledge, skills or authority: that is, it was not my prescribed

role in this workplace to do so. I still interacted with respondents by, for instance, asking them to explain their activities to me. An example of where I undertook the observer-as-participant role would be the time I spent observing the role of the employment advisors; in these situations I only observed and, in order to avoid undue intrusion, I only asked *impromptu* questions with the intention of pursuing more detailed questions during planned interviews at a later time. I never, however, acted as a 'complete observer' (Bryman 2008); indeed, whilst it might have been possible to style some of my encounters as 'non participatory' I was, by virtue of my existing role and relationships with respondents always 'embedded' within the research field.

What I gained from undertaking observations

Between mid-2007 and late-2008 I attended *staff training events* bi-annually,[46] using this experience to develop composite field notes. Training events were offered to all staff members; of these, the regular events styled as 'disability awareness training' I felt to be of direct interest to my enquiry. The events I attended were typically organised for a four-to-six hour period; these were structured encounters with clear 'start' and 'end' times that were specified by the organisers in advance. Typically, 'training' events were held in one of the University's 'training suites', and would normally include no more than twenty participants, including at least one trainer or 'facilitator'. From my participation in staff 'training events', I was able to gain insight into the practice of staff training with respect to disability, examine and use training documents, listen to the presentations of the trainers, and interact with other participants. Crucially, these experiences also enabled me to gain insight into the 'folk' or 'insider' vernacular of the organisation (Spradley 1979; Wengraf 2001; Tremblay 2005) in relation to disability, and how this was deployed by them.[47]

Similarly for *staff meetings*: these, too, were variable in length, although normally more than one hour long, and less than four. Some meetings were 'structured' around a pre-

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[46] All employees of this organisation are required to attend these events annually. Since 2010, the organisation has also offered staff the 'opportunity' to conduct this training via an online 'learning environment'. As this did not invite my direct participation with administrators, and as it was introduced somewhat late in my fieldwork, I did not incorporate this into my enquiry.

[47] Although I already shared some 'insider' language with those present at the training events, I was also aware that my professional discipline (health care) possessed its own idiom in relation to disability and impairment (that is, predominantly derived from a medical conception of impairment) and so I could not claim to be familiar with that used within administrative contexts; these insights were invaluable during later analysis.

circulated agenda, whilst others were less formal,[48] with scope for spontaneous contributions. Between mid-2007 and mid-2009 I attended a number of meetings that enabled me to further my insight of programme administration, the provision of 'support' to students with disabilities, the role of training agencies, and 'new' administrative roles. My observations enabled me to gain insight into the relationships between administrators of different roles, and how local policies and national legislation (relating to disability) were comprehended by them. Through these, I also gain insight into both 'formal' (institutionally-prescribed) relationships between staff and more informal "boundaries of communities" (Tremblay 2005, p154; Smith 2006) that I suspected might also have been extant. For example, whilst I understood from my own experience of this workplace the 'hierarchical' staff structures that were in place, at these events I learned about 'informal' and non-hierarchical networks of staff that operated 'across' staff groupings and which contributed to the 'administrative work' of the Faculty.

I also experienced *unplanned, ad-hoc* or *"fleeting" encounters* (Brown and Durrheim 2009; ASA 2011, p1), where administrators would 'engage' me in conversation about a specific issue (for example, 'disability disclosure') whilst we undertook 'everyday' work. These observations would last for, at most, several minutes, and would occur frequently (when arriving for a meeting, for example). I did not, however, commit these conversations to field notes because, unlike our planned interviews, I had not negotiated their informed consent and, by virtue their 'fleeting' nature, I felt it to be inappropriate to attempt to seek such consent retrospectively, as I discuss later. However, as the majority of the administrators with whom I was in regular contact were invited to participate with in-depth interviews, I incorporated, with their consent, some of these 'fleeting' observations into the field notes that accompanied transcribed interview data.

All of these experiences allowed me to observe and re-examine my understanding of the 'practices', 'spaces' and 'places' in which administrative work was conducted. My reading of Foucault (in particular, Foucault 1995) invited me to consider how those places that were ostensibly 'spaces for work' might also be understood as spaces

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[48] I use a broad definition of 'meetings' here. Whilst some gatherings of staff were arranged in advance, formally styled as a 'meeting', and subject to specific procedures (for example, the recording of 'minutes'), others were highly informal, and may not necessarily be styled as a 'meeting': for example, impromptu gatherings of staff when 'discussing' an 'issue'.

constitutive of discourse. For instance, by observing administrators' practices, I could use these opportunities to study administrative apparatus (for instance, the process of disability assessment) which offered to reveal further insights into the circulation of power/discourse and the nature of knowledge that was being used by the administrators.

Furthermore, observations also invited my exploration of the relation between discourse and the 'space' and material/technological forms of administrative workplaces and how these functioned to constitute particular kinds of people, such as administrators or people with disabilities (Foucault 1995; Anderson 2005; Youdell 2006) or, how work, space and technologies intersected to constitute administrative 'selves' or 'disabled' subjects (Goggin and Newall 2005; Winiecki 2007, 2009). In addition, my observations of all of these practices also offered opportunities to consider ritual activities, particularly in respect of the amelioration of risk or danger (Douglas 2002).

INTERVIEW FIELDWORK

Interviewing in contemporary qualitative research is marked by a reappraisal of its function and of the epistemological status of the data sought: whereas traditional (or naïve, positivist) notions of the interview might understand them to represent a neutral attempt to 'gain answers' (Fontana and Frey 2008), the "crisis in representation" (Denzin and Lincoln 2008a, p4) that marked the progress of qualitative research in the later twentieth century troubled the notion that the interview was purely a straightforward 'reception' of knowledge. Instead, the qualitative interview was to be seen as a 'co-production' of knowledge (Heyl 2007) that reflected not only an exchange of words (which might be afforded the status of 'truth'), but in its production, the interview was also to be understood as embedded within concerns regarding authority (of researcher *and* respondent), the context in which 'talk' arose, the ethical nature of the research relationship, and the political or representational ambitions of those who participated.

Locating this contemporary vision of the qualitative interview within a Foucauldian context was challenging. At the outset of my research, I aimed to utilise unstructured interviewing techniques (Wengraf 2001; Silverman 2005), a position I felt to be concordant with a Foucauldian rejection of the 'inevitability' of particular concepts or

practices (Foucault 1995; Hook 2001; Mills 2003; Hook 2005).[49] Wherever possible, I sought to suspend (or, at least, attempt to problematize) "second order judgements" (Kendall and Wickham 1999, p13), that is, "judgements that you have not made yourself" (Mills 2003, p115). For example, I was guarded with my import of preordained 'definitions' of disability into the interview context; similarly, I was cautious not to privilege a position 'on' disability (for instance, the 'social model').

Interviewing is, arguably, the most predominant method of data collection used in contemporary ethnographic fieldwork (Heyl 2007), often selected for their focus upon the elucidation of cultural meaning, as expressed in the language of the respondent (Spradley 1979; Wengraf 2001), and motivated by a "desire to hear from people directly how they interpret their experiences" (Heyl 2007, p370). Motivated by these features, I selected to undertake *unstructured interviewing*, whereby:

> The researcher uses at most an aide-memoire as a brief set of prompts to him- or herself to deal with a certain set of topics. There may be just a single question that the interviewer asks, and the interviewee is then allowed to respond freely, with the interviewer simply responding to points that seem worthy of being followed up. (Bryman 2008, p438)

During the earliest periods of data collection I chose to draft a short interview schedule.[50] The purpose of this schedule was not to itemise specific questions; rather, I used it as a prompt to ensure that my discussions with respondents around certain key areas (for example, disability or administrative work) were incorporated comprehensively (Tremblay 2005) into our conversations. I discovered the utility of the interview schedule varied according to the individual respondent with whom I was talking, and during the later stages of my research I reduced my reliance upon the interview schedule as my confidence grew, and the focus points of my enquiry became clearer. All in-depth and pre-arranged interviews were audio-recorded, with the respondents' consent, onto a portable electronic device, and later transferred into a password-secured electronic archive.

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[49] For instance, in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1995), Foucault questions the inevitability of particular forms of punishment; similarly, in *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault 1978), Foucault rejects presuppositions about the nature of sexuality in Victorian England

[50] See the appendix to this thesis

My in-depth interviews with respondents varied in length between one and two hours; combinations of pre-arranged activities (for example, a visit to a particular office) often comprised a period of observation and 'social' participation (refreshments, casual conversation), observation of work activities (staff meeting or administrative tasks), only then followed by an individual interview, as negotiated. Interviews that were pre-arranged usually took place within the office spaces of the respondents. For the staff who shared their normal working space with others (including the public), I identified a separate area in which we could talk without intrusion. For the administrators within the University environment, these were either unoccupied teaching spaces, or ante-rooms to larger office areas. For those in external roles, interview locations were identified in an ad-hoc manner, and included kitchen areas, unused annexes and (on one occasion) the derelict top-floor room of an office building.

What I gained from conducting interviews

From interviewing respondents directly, I gained insight into the 'use' made by respondents of respondent-vernacular and disability 'classifications'. Asking for the 'local' use of a particular concept or principle *as incorporated within practice* (for example, 'disability policy') enabled me to theorise 'beyond' language-use 'alone', and gain insight into those discourses that might be understood to 'make up' administrative work. I did not wish to 'test' the "translation competence" (Spradley 1979, p20) of respondents;[51] rather, I invited respondents to describe concepts and practices as they would have ordinarily used them within their workplace. I was also not concerned to reveal the 'inner resources' or 'hidden thoughts' of the respondent (a position incongruous with a Foucauldian stance; see Hook 2005). Rather, I was interested in answering the question: "*How* is it that these people are saying what they're saying?" (Didi Khayatt, cited in DeVault and McCoy 2006, p40).

How my respondents were interpreting and valuing (Alvesson and Karreman 2000) disability-related concerns offered insights into how they might not only be simply *reacting* 'to' particular 'disability discourses', but also how they were actively implicated in the production and circulation of these discourses (see Mills 2003). For instance, only by interviewing respondents directly would I ultimately learn about their 'moral' commitment in respect of disability, or the 'fear' they felt of 'saying the wrong

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[51] That is, the propensity for respondents to attempt to 'explain' concepts in terms that the 'outsider' might understand and use themselves (see Spradley 1979).

thing'. My interest in both these examples was not motivated by their (or my) 'moral' standpoint or 'fears' *per se*, but rather what such utterances suggested about their 'making up' as administrative subjects, their subjectivation (Foucault 1990), within discourse.

I also gained insights into the epistemological status of the knowledge I was aiming to derive from my research. For instance, I learned that by conducting interviews I risked explicitly incorporating 'my' own "social science agendas" (Brown and Durrheim 2009, p914) into the data and subsequent analysis (for instance, introducing concepts such as 'the social model'). In addition, face-to-face interviewing of respondents enabled me to more actively consider and reflect upon my position as both 'insider' (fellow employee) and 'outsider' (researcher; academic team member) with individual respondents. Whilst I did not ask respondents about their 'perception' of our relationship, my elucidation of their perception of their 'administrative selves' did enable me to reflect on my own position in relation to theirs, both in respect of the development of our rapport during the conduct of the research and also when I needed to consider the epistemological status of my data, which I return to in a later chapter.

Later, I discovered, this stance became problematic: conversations, particularly those conducted in a 'culturally familiar' environment, necessarily involved the exchange of knowledge which appeared 'natural' or 'taken for granted' in that particular context (Geertz 1993); that is, respondents may have expected me to *know what they knew*. Furthermore, such a stance risked not problematizing issues of 'authority' and 'truth' (who could speak, the status of their knowledge, and how this was framed through discourse); that is, I risked overlooking the epistemological status of the data that I sought and collected, given my 'closeness' to the context; I further discuss my closeness and familiarity with the research context in a later section of this chapter, and I return to a consideration of the epistemic character of the interpretations I make in the final chapter of this thesis.

FIELD NOTES

When undertaking interviewing and observation, it was challenging for me to demarcate between that which was 'casual' observation and that which was 'deliberate' or purposeful observation: I did not purposefully 'start observing' at a single point in time, and nor did I 'stop' observing at a set point in time; I was, to a greater or lesser extent, *always* participating within the field, necessarily varying this in relation to my

intentions and roles at the time (Bryman 2008), and attempting to maintain a "self-conscious awareness" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, p80) of how I was both learning from the experience and 'producing' knowledge through my research endeavours. However, in respect of making *written* ethnographic field notes, I felt the need to differentiate between 'casual' observation and 'active' ethnographic 'engagement'. As such, my written field notes generally commenced during my physical[52] approach to a particular setting or encounter.

The recording of field-notes supported my commitment to 'thick description' (Geertz 1973; Denzin 2003; Atkinson and Delamont 2008), permitting my development of the research data "beyond immediate observations" (Silverman 2001, p140). It has been claimed that less experienced researchers are cautious of using field-notes, for fear that they will compromise a desired-for closeness to the 'data', leading perhaps to the over-use of interview methods alone (Clandinin and Connelly 1998). Indeed, only later in my research did I find my own 'voice' when recording field-notes, understanding that the writing of field notes might become a legitimate and vital part of the analysis itself. Echoing Richardson (1998), my field notes incorporated commentary that was purely observational, and I weaved this with commentary that was methodological (for instance, 'how' I asked a particular question) and theoretical in character.[53]

ANCILLARY DOCUMENTS AND ARTEFACTS

Other texts were included within the data collection, for instance 'policy' documents.[54] During the earlier stages of data collection I privileged these, perhaps naïvely, as 'realist texts', and not necessarily as artefacts of the discourses that I was attempting to scrutinise. Only later would I problematize them as 'official accounts' (Smith 2006) and afford them a different authority in my analysis. More troublesome were texts derived from practices 'internal' to the research contexts, for example individualized accounts

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[52] I also recorded field notes about the process of negotiating 'access' to a particular event or setting; for example, e-mail correspondences that resulted in an invitation, an interview or a 'place' at a training event. These data document my 'approach' to a particular context or event, albeit in a different sense.

[53] I provide an example field note in the appendix

[54] My ethical 'approval' by the local Research Ethics Committee afforded me this access; I did not, however, utilise texts of a personal (student) nature, in order to protect the confidentiality of individual students

from disability-related departments; using these would present ethical concerns (relating to post-hoc identification of individuals); I address these concerns later.

ABANDONED METHODS

During the progress of the study, I considered using participatory mapping (Clark 2008) as an adjunct to my existing data collection methods. Participatory maps constitute a form of visual data whereby respondents are asked to express through drawing or other similar means the understandings that they attach to particular spaces or contexts. These maps are then used to for the insights they offer into social connections and relationships that are unknown and unseen by the researcher. Early in my fieldwork (2008) I asked several of my respondents to undertake this activity, although only two offered a contribution. Although one provided some insight into the spatial configuration of their administrative spaces, and another provided an organisational chart (which also reflected an 'official account'), ultimately this data added little to that gained via other methods, and hence I curtailed my use of this method.

APPROACHING DATA ANALYSIS

SELECTING DATA FOR INCLUSION IN MY ANALYSIS

I felt tempted, perhaps even obliged, to include *all* of the data collected within the thesis. This reflects what Richards has described as the "problem [of] getting closeness" (Richards 1998, p323); that is, once data has been gathered, there is a (self-imposed) demand to 'include everything' in the analysis and reporting. This, she argues, is a misguided although perhaps inevitable consequence of qualitative research, whereby there is reluctance to 'let go' of hard- sought data:

> [Q]ualitative researchers frequently have no problem getting closeness ... we feel a sort of allegiance to our data. We know these people, or care for them, so every word must be appreciated, understood, and retained [...] this imperative to be involved promotes constraints against reducing data, worsening the problem of getting and staying close. Qualitative data are usually both bulky and full-bodied, but methodological tenets (or ideological assumptions) resist data reduction...

(Richards 1998, p.323-4)

The voluminous nature of qualitative data[55] made it crucial for me to select and include only those data necessary for my analysis and the addressing of my research aims. A number of principles governed my response.

First, I was not seeking, as in grounded theory (Silverman 2001, 2005), exhaustive data 'saturation'. Indeed, I accepted that some redundancy (and abandonment) of data would be inevitable (Stake 2008). The nature of data collection (specifically that of unstructured interviews) meant that 'successful' data collection on specific issues could not be assured in advance. To address this, I commenced my analysis whilst *still gathering* data; this enabled me to monitor those data that I had already collected (to ensure coverage of research aims) whilst locating new opportunities that I might not have anticipated (Hatch 2002). I strove to reach an optimum point whereby I had collected *sufficient* data for a *credible* analysis, whilst minimising the collection of data that added little further to the analysis. However, despite my intention, some data were collected that were not accommodated within the analysis as presented here.

Second, I understood that a single interview might be 'put to work' in my analysis in a number of ways (Silverman 2001). Where, for instance, an interview extract might prove illustrative of one theoretical issue, it might also be of utility when discussing another. An extract from an interview with a respondent provides an example of this:

> MG   There isn't a duality of the 'able' and 'disabled' world, there is a world in which people live and that's composed of individuals and groups of individuals that have abilities, so-called abilities and so-called disabilities. And the function of time that affects that as well, those abilities and disabilities change over time. Erm a lot of the debates are informed by the medical model, that we are encouraged to think of disability almost like a disease, and I find that quite offensive

[Ref. Mark/04:32, unabridged]

Whilst I might have chosen this data selection for what it might 'reveal' about discourses of ability-disability, I might have also chosen it to provide an example of the use of 'pejorative' language about disability or, indeed, how my respondent was 'accounting' for what he was saying and how this text might be located (discursively) in relation to the talk of other respondents (DeVault and McCoy 2006). All might have

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[55] For instance, I discovered that a one hour 'transcribed' interview could develop between five and ten thousand words of text, less additional field notes and transcription notes that were also appended.

served as useful selections; nonetheless, I made my final selection of 'what to include' in relation to the theoretical purpose to which it might be applied and its specific location within my analysis.

Third, only including a smaller selection of data would invite me to theorise more precisely; that is, the 'risk' of including a large volume of data within a qualitative analysis is that one may focus overly on *describing* data, and in doing so avoid the theoretical 'work' of analysis (Chamberlain 2000). Therefore I made focused selections from the larger body of data in order to realise a clear commitment to theoretical analysis. Furthermore, particularly in the context of qualitative research (where the demands upon respondents are difficult to specify in advance), *avoiding* data redundancy (by not collecting too much data) was also an ethical issue, in that one should only strive to collect data that is necessarily of use, and the collection of which does not "waste [the] time" (Daymon and Holloway 2010, p355) of both researcher and respondent. As such, my selection of data necessarily needed to balance 'theoretical precision' with the need to avoid the needless wasting of my respondents' time.

Fourth, as I discuss later, it was not practicable to seek informed consent from each administrator I met on *every* instance I met them during my conduct of 'everyday' work; although sometimes I had the opportunity to re-negotiate the nature of their consent, the frequency and regularity of my contact with them made it impracticable to incorporate every contribution from all those I met with during the research. As such, many of my regular conversations with administrators do not appear in this thesis; where topics of relevance arose within our conversations I would (later) aim to introduce them within an interview, when informed consent might be more affirmatively gained.

IDENTIFYING STATEMENTS AND MAKING SELECTIONS

I discussed earlier (chapters four and five) how although Foucault or Douglas provide theorizations in response *to* data, the 'practice' of analysis – what one 'does' with data - is largely only implied in their published work. I also discussed above 'how' I made selections from the data. Hence it remains for me to describe the *techniques* of analysis. I describe specific 'data management' techniques (transcription, organising, coding) in an appendix to this thesis; here I provide an account of my identification of Foucauldian 'statements' (and 'discourses'), and then I describe the principles of the analytic techniques that I designed and utilised. Foucauldian 'statements', as I discussed in

chapter five, were not fully-formed within my data, 'waiting', as it were, 'to be discovered': Foucauldian 'statements' do not equate to sentences (Mills 2003); rather, they are *produced* in/by social narratives that are used by both my respondents *and* myself, both during the interview and during my analyses.

For example, in the interview extract below I illustrate how I located statements within verbatim transcription and field notes, and how I used both types of data simultaneously. Both the respondent and I (in a contemporaneous field note) were *selecting* and *making use of* discursive statements that circulated in the context in order to interpret, or 'make sense' of what was 'happening'; this 'context' was not only the immediate office 'space', but was also one that was marked and delineated by 'policy', 'expert knowledge' and the point in time in which the interview was conducted (the anticipation of the effects of a national 'financial crisis').

> VO   So this is somebody who's trying to find a focus for their anger, it could be about anybody [but] he's choosing to be angry [...] all the time but, you know, has he got a choice in that? And why aren't the mental health services dealing with him? [laughs, expresses incredulity]

Field note:

> At times Veronica appears to saturate her speech with characterisations, not for pejorative effect, but rather to communicate to me the complexity (a word she uses frequently) of the cases with whom she is involved. There is much talk here around boundaries: largely between services and different professional groups. But her talk also centres upon the identities impressed upon her clients as they navigate the disability/employment bureaucracy, and (upon examination) the symbolic enactments that mark or (in effect) ritualise these processes. There is talk around 'boundaries' and the 'blurring of lines' between different professional accounts and accountabilities for practice.

[Ref. Veronica/11:12, abridged transcript and contemporaneous field note]

There are a number of statements and discourses in this short extract, all of which might have been candidates for analysis. For instance, Veronica's formulation of her (unnamed) client's behaviour as 'anger' and her association of this with 'choices' and 'mental health services' represents a complex set of discursive statements that (for Veronica) are 'true' in this context, and which are authorised by either herself (the 'anger') or, perhaps, through other authorities (mental health experts); this is happening in a context, geographically (a particular office), but also politically (anger is posited as

a 'choice'). My provisional field note, too, also inserts tentative theorisation (for instance, my Douglasian use of boundaries/symbolic enactment).

As I discussed both above and in previous chapters, my analytic interest was not concerned with narrating a set of social 'facts', nor was it about representing their 'feelings' or "interior psychological worlds" (Lawler 2002; Mills 2003; Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009, p265). Rather, it was concerned with exploring the "regimes of knowledge" (Rose 1998, p11) that were in circulation in the research field, and how people in this field produced and interacted with classifications of them/their selves and those of others (Hacking 2007). Therefore, this data extract is not (only) a collection of sentences, but it can be understood as a collection of (Foucauldian) statements that are circulated and reproduced within the research context itself, and within my analysis.

In unpacking data (from interviews, observations, field notes and their composite accounts) I sought to avoid what Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009) describe as "linguistic reductionism" (p265), that is, treating data as 'words' and 'sentences'; instead, I viewed data as a complex assemblage of statements and discourses. This perhaps represents the "puzzle" of qualitative enquiry, whereby data "contain different sets of ontological and epistemological assumptions and prescriptions, and will suggest distinct types of social explanation" (Mason 2002, p18). This rejects a linear 'journey through the data'; rather, it invites an exploration 'backwards' and 'forwards' throughout the data (Silverman 2001), a "zig-zag" process of analysis (Wengraf 2001, p320) conducted in order to 'resolve' the puzzle. This puzzle, derived from my research questions, was ultimately concerned with locating problematizations (those that were 'political' or 'moral' in character), their explanations, and the authorities and subjectivities ("kinds of selves") imbricated therein (Rose 1999, p*ix-x*).

IDENTIFYING SPEECH ACTS

Notwithstanding my commitment to avoid linguistic reductionism, I also deployed speech act theory (Austin 1975) within my analysis, as I found it of utility when investigating the avoidance of 'disability-related' talk by administrators, as alluded to in Veronica's extract (above). This is predominantly deployed in chapter nine of this thesis, and a full description of how I am evoking this theory can be located within that chapter. Briefly, however, this necessitated my identification and analysis of *illocutionary* speech acts (acts which 'do something' at the moment of their utterance), and perlocutionary acts, which invite consequences (Austin 1975). The analytic

consequences of this, particularly in relation to the analytical explication of *authority* and *ritual* are addressed in the aforementioned chapter, later in this thesis.

DATA QUALITY

The concepts of validity, reliability and generalizability are highly contested terms within qualitative research due to their origin in positivist epistemology (Golafshani 2003), and some have sought to displace them entirely; for instance, Guba and Lincoln (1989) contest notions of internal validity, external validity and reliability through their 'parallel' criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. I now address these, then outline a response.[56] *Credibility* is Guba and Lincoln's 'parallel' to internal validity. My Foucauldian apprehension of 'truth' as something contestable, partial and contingent (Hook 2005) invited my rejection of positivist conceptions of validity: I was not concerned with the making of 'truth', but rather the "making of critique" (Hook 2005, p8); it was *how* 'truths' were produced and circulated in the research field that was of interest, not my *detection* of 'truth'.

Ethnography can be understood to possess utility in comprehending the relationship between discourses that to regulate and structure the social world and the individuals and groups who, through their agency, make 'meaningful' their everyday lives in these contexts (Blain 1994). In this sense, ethnography can be seen as both 'local', yet also engaged with the 'wider world' in which this 'localness' is located. This is articulated in the 'alternative' concept of *transferability* (Guba and Lincoln 1989), a preference of the researcher to attempt to transfer and apply the results of their endeavour into a wider frame or context than which the study was undertaken. This is, in effect, the converse of the positivist notion of generalizability (Guba and Lincoln 1989): transferability invites a retrospective evaluation of reported data which would permit its later application to other contexts.

The concept of *dependability* suggests constancy or 'soundness' when raising interpretations from data. Qualitative methodologies fabricate data that is capricious: hence for the reader of qualitative research, the (positivist) notion of reliability is moot; what is perhaps of greater importance is that an opportunity be made for the reader to make inferences from the data provided (Silverman 2005) in order for them to express confidence in the representations being made by the researcher. Likewise, the reader of

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[56] I discuss further my epistemological position in the final chapter

qualitative research may be interested in the *confirmability* of the data raised. Whilst affording the reader access 'to' data in order to 'confirm' it may be problematic (not least for ethical reasons), the qualitative researcher may describe and account for the dependability and confirmability of qualitative data by, wherever possible, making their methods knowable to the reader.

Interventions to address these criteria were embedded within my research design, although I found Guba and Lincoln's criteria not to be mutually exclusive; for instance, the interventions introduced for dependability might equally aid in the confirmability of data. First, I utilised between-method triangulation (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007; Bryman 2008), whereby I endeavoured to ascertain the credibility of my observations, and those of my respondents, through the combining of different sources of data. For instance, when analysing data retrieved during an interview with a respondent, I would unite their reporting of a 'staff training' scenario with my own observational data. On some occasions, my own observations preceded those of the respondent; on other occasions my own observations were concurrent with, or came after, those of the respondents. In these situations, my aim was to ascertain the fidelity of my own account or, indeed, that of my respondents.

Second, I employed theoretical triangulation (Denzin and Lincoln 2008b; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007), or "approaching data with multiple perspectives" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, p165). Indeed, my Foucauldian standpoint necessitated this: I could not enter the field of enquiry with a theoretical predisposition about the nature of administrative practice, or an established 'model' of how administrators might 'respond' to disability; that is, I was not empirically 'testing' a theory. Indeed, Foucault's methodology (if styled as such) invited me to reject totalising theoretical explanations (Hook 2001, 2005). Third, reflecting a loyalty to 'thick description', discussed earlier, I undertook persistent observation (Guba and Lincoln 1989; Geertz 1973, 1993) with the aim of supporting the dependability of the interpretations raised and, conversely, to allow for the opportunity to explicate negative or 'deviant' data (Mays and Pope 2000; Silverman 2005), that is, I actively sought inconsistency in order to destabilise a 'generalizing tendency' that I may have subscribed to.

RESEARCH IN MY OWN WORKPLACE: MAKING THE FAMILIAR UNFAMILIAR

This research was conducted in my own workplace, a context "close to home" (Clifford 1997, p67). Whereas 'traditional' fieldwork might be undertaken in 'unfamiliar'

contexts, much contemporary ethnography is conducted in contexts already familiar to the researcher (Jackson 1987; Clifford 1997; Marcus 1998; Griffith 1998; Straight 2002; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007; Bryman 2008), in part due to objections to post-colonial enquiry (Jackson 1987), and also due to an increased emphasis upon revised social and corporate roles, relationships and identities (Marcus 2007). Rather than considering the research field as a 'different place' (Clifford 1997), I instead needed to consider my relationship to/with the 'field' and my respondents as fluid: sometimes I was 'up close' (working closely with a colleague), yet at other times I was 'distant', for instance when thinking 'ethically' about my relationship to my respondents. Hence I understood that I could not 'move into' and 'out of' the field; I was always – physically or analytically - 'within' the field of enquiry.

Hence this research exposed a tension between 'analytical distance' and my existing 'closeness' to my respondents. These concerns are rehearsed in methodological literature (Straight 2002; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007; Bryman 2008) in relation to two 'positions' for the researcher: the 'insider', who has a "lived familiarity" (Griffith 1998, p362) with the research context and its members, and the 'outsider', who "does not have an intimate knowledge of the group being studied prior to their entry into the group" (Griffith 1998, p362). The distinction between 'insider' and 'outsider' served to expose the challenges involved when considering my own position within this study and the 'status' of any knowledge that I might derive from it. In short, I needed to reflect on my 'location' within the 'field', and make account for this in my analytic conclusions. However, as I would sometimes consider myself as an 'insider', at other times an 'outsider', I found these considerations far from straightforward. Although I consider the epistemological status of my findings later in this thesis (chapter eleven), I clarify some key issues here.

First, I needed to be mindful of any 'presumptions' I might have made about the research field and what I thought, as an 'insider', I already 'knew' prior to my enquiry (see Styles 1979).[57] I needed to "fight familiarity" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007,

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[57] See Joseph Styles (1979), and his account of gay 'bathhouses' in the United States. Styles locates his study in a particular moral and legal context, and describes his own transition between his initial research role (non-participant observer) to what became his established role (participant observer). He notes as a "basic failure" (Styles 1979, p150) his inability to recognise that one aspect of his identity (his sexuality) did not afford him the 'insight' into the field he had initially anticipated. In short, he had made

p81) and, following Foucault (2000b) and Geertz (1993), attempt to refute that which previously I had understood as "self evident" (Foucault 2000b, p226; Hook 2005), 'commonsensical', or what "everyone knows" (Geertz 1993, p79). I found this pledge challenging to realise. For instance, I could not leave unquestioned my pre-encounter perceptions of a 'division' between 'academic' and 'administrative' practice, and nor could I presuppose an array of disability 'classifications' that were understood by all. I needed to seek to gain new knowledge and understanding by rendering what was 'familiar, unfamiliar' (see Denzin 1996; Blain 2004) and attempt to examine, reflect upon and refute what I 'took for granted'.

However, I was also cautious to not accord with the "myth" of an uncomplicated division between 'insider' and 'outsider' status, and the "moral rhetoric" (Styles 1979, p148) attached to both positions: a rhetoric that positions the researcher more or less sympathetically according to 'how' their relationship to respondents is understood by others, and how this relates to the 'status' of the knowledge 'gathered' therein.[58] Irrespective of the role that the researcher identifies with or acquiesces to, neither role provides for the 'production' of knowledge of a superior or 'foundational' status; rather, these roles can only afford access to "different sources of information" (Styles 1979; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, p87), neither of which is 'more truthful' than the other. This position I felt to accord with my commitment to a 'Foucauldian' analysis, whereby I sought not to 'uncover hidden truths', but rather aimed to present a critique of how different "truth-effects [are] set in motion by particular disciplines of knowledge" (Hook 2005, p25).

Second, perhaps reflecting critiques of the 'colonial' endeavours of earlier anthropologists (Vidich and Lyman 2003; Shuttleworth 2004), and reflecting the complexities of undertaking ethnographic enquiry in the 'present' where the notion of the 'Other' is problematized (Marcus 1998; Blain 2004), I became critically aware of how my presence as a 'researcher' in a familiar environment might have invited "asymmetric" relationships (Shuttleworth 2004, p46) between myself and my respondents. I realised I could adopt neither a 'novice' role in the field (Hammersley

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presumptions about his 'insider' status; on this, he notes: "It never occurred to me that I might not understand what was going on" (Styles 1979, p151).

[58] That is, being an 'outsider' might be associated favourably with 'objectivity' and a 'detached' moral standpoint; alternatively, being an 'insider' might be associated sympathetically with 'closeness' and 'authenticity'.

and Atkinson 2007), nor could I risk "going native" (Bryman 2008, p412), that is, over-identifying with the interests of those already in the field. Straight's summation of the researcher's "ambiguity", namely, "close to complete trust but not quite reaching it" (Straight 2002, p4) reflects my own experiences when undertaking this research.

For instance, I was recognised by respondents as member of the organisation, and a 'close work colleague' to many of them; in this respect I felt myself to be 'trusted' by them. However, I also came to realise that in juxtaposing a new role (the researcher) onto my existing role, I could not assume that the trust of our existing relationship would be retained. I realised that it was not only *I* who might put my 'new' role under scrutiny: my workplace colleagues might also place 'our' relationship under scrutiny. Whilst I did not experience any responses that appeared overtly 'suspicious', I did sometimes detect subtle moments of interaction that suggested that I had did not have their usual "trust" (Straight 2002, p4) [59]: for instance their unconcealed 'explanation' of work processes provided without prompt, or explicit referrals back to my research ("Perhaps you could write about this", as one respondent stated to me during an interview) when undertaking 'everyday work'. In my research notes and analyses, I attempted to account for these subtle changes in rapport.

Third, I also considered how my 'position' in relation to the administrators could be considered ethically, a matter of great importance that I discuss later. However, I noted the criticism offered by Marcus (1998), namely that although the relationship of the researcher to the research 'field' is a constant feature of enquiry, these concerns are "always referenced in terms of an ethical discourse" (Marcus 1998, p119); that is, discussion about the 'presence' of the researcher is (in contemporary research) fore-grounded in terms of deontological concerns (for example, the right not to be harmed, and my duty to consider this), and not necessarily those that concern epistemology (status of my knowing) or methodology (ways of my knowing). As such, whilst I fore-grounded ethical considerations, I was also aware that such a commitment to respondents, particularly those who I was 'close' to, might subtly change 'what' I had chosen to study, and 'how' this might be done (see Styles 1979).

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[59] Although I also recognised, following Marcus (1998, p121), that undertaking research in 'culturally near' contexts invited "unspoken power issues in the relationship" that might be "far more ambiguous" than those experienced in more orthodox anthropological contexts where 'difference' between researcher and respondent might be more overtly marked.

Fourth, I also understood that for some observers, ethnographic research was characterised by 'an entrance', fieldwork, and then an (inevitable) 'exit'. Emerson et al (1995), for instance, characterise conventional ethnographic encounters as "brief stay[s]" (Emerson et al 1995:4), an artificial engagement that will be 'left behind' by the ethnographer when the aims of the fieldwork have been met. In contrast, I knew that I would remain in contact with the research field, and would not have the opportunity to 'mark' my 'exit' from the field. Although I recognise that physically 'exiting' the research field might invite further learning from the field itself (that is, my 'departure' might have been symbolically marked in some public way of interest to my analysis), I acknowledge that this is something I could not undertake. Paradoxically, however, I learned that by *not* marking a distinct 'departure point' from the field and the respondents I was able to remain constantly mindful of my location 'within' the field, and my ethical responsibilities to the respondents beyond the 'data collection' periods.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Commencing my PhD study included a process of ethical review. I first considered the feasibility of my proposed study, the ethical aspects of which were discussed with my supervisory team. I then explored the feasibility of the research in my workplace, undertaking tentative discussions with potential gatekeepers (senior administrative staff). These discussions were not 'formal' approaches; rather, they enabled me to clarify whether ethical access might in principle be secured, and what formal procedures might be required. These discussions indicated that 'ethical access' was feasible. I then approached the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of my 'host' University, where I was enrolled as a post-graduate student. This required the completion of a research ethics 'proposal' form, upon which my research design was defended. I also provided a sample 'participant information' sheet, based upon a standard University template. This REC approved my research design in early 2006. I then followed a similar route with the REC of my employer (also a university), and I received their approval in late 2006.

Notwithstanding this approval, throughout my fieldwork I ensured that I sought appropriate access and consent from 'local' gatekeepers and the workers whom I aimed to recruit. The gatekeepers were all 'senior' administration staff; the ethical aspects of which I discuss later. Gatekeepers were provided in advance with written information detailing the scope of my research and written 'information' for participants. I received no refusals. I understood, however, that the 'access' afforded to me by the gatekeepers

did not equate to the 'consent' of individual administrators: these individuals I approached separately and all were provided with written information (an information sheet and consent form). However, I continued to monitor meticulously the ethical aspects of my enquiry as it proceeded; in doing this, I adhered to the *Association of Social Anthropologists* (ASA) guidelines of 2011.[60]

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

The contemporary use of the notion of 'research ethics' can be traced back to the period immediately following the Second World War and the criminal trials in Nuremburg of physicians (and others) accused of participating in horrific medical experimentation upon human subjects (Bell and Wray-Bliss 2009). The subsequent Nuremburg Code (1947), concerned with human experimentation, and Declaration of Helsinki (1964), pertaining to medical practitioners and the regulation of research, established a doctrine that remains prime in contemporary research governance, and which is reflected in the 'four principles' approach which includes 'autonomy', 'beneficence', 'non-malfeasance' and 'justice' (Bell and Wray-Bliss 2009; Israel and Hay 2006; Hoeyer et al 2005). Autonomy relates to the decision-making capacity of the proposed research respondent. This foregrounds notions of 'respect' and 'capacity', suggesting that it is vital for the researcher to acknowledge the independence of the potential respondent and their capacity to decide whether to participate (Silverman 2005; Bryman 2008). This principle informs the remaining three 'principles', namely beneficence (deriving the most advantage for the individual respondent), non-malfeasance (avoiding undue harm) and justice (consideration of the advantage or disadvantage that might be accorded to others in society). However, these principles may be understood to be challenging when applied to qualitative, ethnographic research; these issues and my solutions are now discussed.

INFORMED CONSENT

My position in respect of seeking 'informed consent' was that the protection of the respondent(s) should outweigh any 'losses' of data that might result from enacting such protection. All my data collection methods required some scrutiny in respect of this position. Least problematic was my use of face-to-face, pre-planned interviews

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[60] These are revised from earlier (1999) guidelines, extant at the commencement of this research. Notably, the ASA guidelines (2002) were used to formulate the (2002) guidelines of the British Sociological Association (BSA). The local REC standards are consistent with both of these.

conducted in isolated spaces: for this I adopted a 'conventional' consent-seeking approach, which I describe below. More problematic was my use of observation in group or training contexts: this required my careful consideration of the feasibility of 'meaningful' informed consent, and this led to my introduction of further fieldwork and data 'management' techniques which attempted to anticipate harms to respondents, but which may have resulted in a loss of data 'fidelity'. I now discuss my principal concerns, and the decisions I took, in further detail.

My seeking of 'informed consent' reflected a need to ensure that potential respondents either provided consent to participate, or were able to exercise their right not to participate, or withdraw. In contrast with scientific experimentation, where research enquiry may be conducted with individual subjects during specific periods of time, and using specific data collection instruments, qualitative research may deploy a range of data collection methods which might be deployed selectively and varied over an extended period of time (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). Whilst 'scientific' research may strive to 'resolve' ethical concerns *prior* to its undertaking, I understood that I needed to address ethical issues associated with ethnographic enquiry both prior to *and* during its conduct (Bell and Wray-Bliss 2009): the obtaining of informed consent was not to be an isolated 'event' only undertaken at the start of enquiry.

I understood that the 'exploratory' nature of qualitative enquiry may have invited unforeseen consequences. Hence, I found the notion of 'informed' consent problematic because some risks of the proposed enquiry may have only become known during the conduct of the research and, as such, my research methods, as originally posed, may have needed later modification (ASA 2011; Hoeyer et al 2005). Indeed, I could not be entirely confident that my plans would be sustainable in the 'real world', where neither context nor respondents could be regulated tightly over specified periods of time. This is not to say that I should *not* have endeavoured to identify potential harms; rather, my 'informed consent' approach needed to incorporate an acknowledgement that harms, despite external scrutiny, may have remained unknown until they actually arose.

My negotiation of informed consent was least problematic for pre-arranged interviews. I provided potential respondents with verbal and written information about the aims of my research, potential harms that I could reasonably anticipate, information about data security, and the scope of anonymity and confidentiality (which I discuss later) that I could afford them (ASA 2011). I explained to them the 'exploratory' nature of my

research: although I had prepared some guideline topics to incorporate within the planned interviews, I discussed with them the possibility that our interviews might deviate into 'talk' that was not fully anticipated in advance. I also ensured that potential interview respondents were aware of my status of 'fellow employee' and that my research was for the purpose of post-graduate study. I also discussed with potential respondents the possibility of future publication of my analyses, and how I would aim to afford them anonymity in this respect.

The 'consent-seeking' strategies I had deployed for planned interviews would be unfeasible for 'observational methods' as it was difficult to establish with certainty in advance who I might come into contact with (Bryman 2008), and potentially misleading as the character of 'anonymity' and 'confidentiality' outlined for the face-to-face interviews might not be sustainable within such settings. As an employee, I would ordinarily be permitted access to such events, and so I ensured gatekeepers were aware of my research prior to their agreement that I might attend, and written information in these circumstances was provided. However, although I was able obtain the explicit consent of gatekeepers and trainers for the inclusion of *their* 'activity' and 'talk' within my data, I did not presume that I had the consent of the others who would also be present.[61] I understood that 'gatekeeper consent', particularly for mandatory staff events such as 'training', did *not* equate to the informed consent of all those who might attend (ASA 2011).

Therefore, on each occasion I attended a group meeting, I introduced myself to those present as both as a 'member of staff', and as 'a researcher', and provided those present to an opportunity for attendees to question me regarding my research role. However, as my 'introduction' was provided in a 'group' context, was time-limited, and delivered in a context in which some attendees had been compelled to attend, I felt that this 'introduction' alone was insufficient for the purpose of seeking 'meaningful' informed consent from individual participants. I therefore explained to those present that I planned only to make field notes about *my* experience of the meeting or training event, and that I would not identify individual staff members, their roles, or the locations in

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[61] Note, however, that some of the attendees were also those who I interviewed; in these circumstances, I recorded data about the training event as 'recollected' by the individual concerned, and was careful not to record verbatim any contributions by other attendees, unless I also had their explicit permission to do so.

which they were employed in a manner that might have lead to their retrospective identification (discussed later), either as individuals or as a 'group', at a later time.[62]

Renegotiating informed consent

I recognised that the gaining of consent was not a 'one off' process (ASA 2011), and where individual respondents were re-involved in my research at a later stage, their 'consent' required re-negotiation, as consent secured in one context was not necessarily 'transferable' to another. For example, when a respondent had participated in a face-to-face interview within a closed environment, the consent I had secured in that place did not extend to other places, and would require re-negotiation. For observational fieldwork, I recognised that I did not have the same opportunity for 'clarification'. Instead, I sought on each occasion to meet with the 'facilitating' staff following their event to discuss the consent they had provided for me to include their individual contributions (but *not* those of the other attendees). In doing this I sought to anticipate harms that might have arisen from my noting of extemporaneous remarks that may have caused future awkwardness, and for which a 'retraction' might be desirable. However, none of my offers to 'renegotiate' resulted in the retrospective withdrawal of consent.[63]

Such 'renegotiation' of consent can be understood to be distinct from retrospective consent, or consent that is sought *after* the completion of the research for the purpose of appending data. Retrospective consent is understood as being "not meaningful" (ASA 2011) as it invites the possibility for respondents to be exposed to the 'demands' of the researcher and hence an "undue obligation" (Tolich 2010, p1600) to 'give consent' may have arisen. This was a potential harm that I needed to consider. As a fellow employee, some respondents might have felt an 'obligation' to comply with requests that I might have made of them retrospectively in order to maintain collegiality. Whilst this might have enabled me to 'enhance' my data, I decided that the protection of my respondents' interests (autonomy, trust and capacity to give informed consent) *outweighed* any loss of data. I therefore did not attempt to seek retrospective consent at any point.

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[62] In respect of the 'dates' of meetings I have chosen to remove all date references in order to reduce the risk of deductive disclosure at some later time. As such, whilst I did not attempt to 'hide' information that might legitimately and legally be sought by an interested party, the contributions of the 'group', as recorded in my field notes, might not be reliably 'connected' with a specific training or staff event.

[63] Interview respondents were also offered an opportunity to read their interview transcripts and retract any statements they had made, although none of them chose to do so.

I aimed to preserve the confidentiality and anonymity of respondents and their workplaces, as I understood that not doing so might invite present or future harm to them either individually or as a group. As with informed consent (above), I decided that protection from harm outweighed the collection of data. However, I also recognised that affording anonymity to respondents was a strategy that itself was not without challenges, and I learned that naïve or simplistic devices introduced to 'provide anonymity' to individual respondents risked 'glossing over' more subtle risks that my enquiry might have invited.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is concerned with maintaining the privacy of an individual or group and, as such, is related to the preservation of dignity and the maintenance of 'trust' in both their accustomed social relationships and in their relationship with the researcher. What is understood as 'confidential' varies between contexts (ASA 2011). As both a 'researcher' and an 'employee' I was doubly participant within a 'private space', the workplace, and my employee role in this respect already necessitated a commitment to 'maintaining confidentiality' (with, for example, student 'records'). However, there were other 'private spaces' that were at risk from my intrusion, irrespective of my status: the private 'social' conversations of colleagues, sensitive personal information or information that was 'commercially sensitive'.[64] As such, I was working from a standpoint from which I *already* had a degree of 'insider' access to that which might be considered 'confidential' or 'private'; as such, I needed to continually make judgements as to what I already considered 'private', how this related to my research aims, yet at all times remaining committed to protecting respondents, colleagues and students.

I identified a number of specific risks associated with confidentiality; these risks were associated with my use of organisational materials and documents, the capture and storage of data, and the dissemination of research findings. For organisational texts I demonstrated cautiousness by only incorporating into my research those texts that were *already* within the public domain, and not subject to any contractual or other restrictions in their use (Bryman 2008); this was discussed with the local REC. As an employee, although I did have access to many other documents during this research, I did not use

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[64] 'Commercially sensitive' information, in the university context, might refer to enterprise or business activities or statistical data that reports legal concordance.

these within my research, in order to maintain individual confidentiality (for example, student records). Again, I chose to recognise the potential harms that might have impacted on individuals, employees and students, instead of utilising the opportunity I had (as a staff member) to collect data.

I was aware of my duties in respect of United Kingdom law (specifically, the *Data Protection Act*: Great Britain, 1998). To concord with this, respondents were informed of my need to store data during the enquiry and its subsequent analysis. I also informed them that I planned not to store data for longer than necessary. As part of the written consent process my respondents were informed that my supervisory team may have wished to scrutinise interview data in anonymised form, that these data might be later published in a public forum, and that data would only to be used for the purpose for which it was collected, namely scholarly research. Data were stored electronically in a secure (password protected) archive, and anonymised.

ANONYMITY

Anonymity is concerned with "not true-naming participants or sites and not providing information that enables them to be identified" (Kelly 2009, p432), and is associated with the maintenance of confidentiality, the preservation of dignity, trust between respondent and researcher, and the protection from that which might "harm, embarrass, or invade the privacy" (Nespor 2000, p547) of respondents if their identity were known to others: for example, fellow employees, their managers, the public or the media. Arguably, the anonymisation of research respondents has become the 'default' position, fore-grounded as an essential tenet within ethical guidelines and processes. As such, it is often presented as a straightforward 'choice': selecting 'anonymity' or 'no anonymity' (Kelly 2009). This axiom has been challenged by a number of commentators (Nespor 2000; Walford 2005; Kelly 2009; Tolich 2004, 2010; Tilley and Woodthorpe 2011).

The 'close to home' and non-covert character of ethnography, as practised in this research, challenges a perception that anonymity can always be preserved; there is a possibility that respondents will be 'aware' of one another, and detailed descriptions of 'place' invited by fieldwork may also promote possibilities for 'identification' (Nespor 2000).[65] This has been described as "deductive disclosure" (Kaiser 2009, p1632),

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[65] The significance of this in respect of the internet is discussed by Tilley and Woodthorpe (2011).

whereby respondents (or others) are able to 'deduce' the identities of other respondents due to their familiarity with their contexts, roles or other features within the data. Similarly, those 'external' to the research context (for instance, a journalist) may be able to 'deduce' (albeit erroneously) the identity of participants, either through covert surveillance or through interrogation of public domain materials. The likelihood of this occurring is likely to be increased when the researcher is operating in a context already familiar to them, and where respondents enjoy close working relationships (Nespor 2000). This was the case with my research, and so I needed to plan carefully my anonymity strategy.

Anonymity and politicised issues

Anonymity might only be 'protective' if data are considered by the researcher or respondent to be of little 'significance' to a third party, and hence would fail to motivate the "determined sleuth" (Kelly 2009, p432) who might seek to reveal the identity of the respondent (Nespor 2000; Kelly 2009). The perception of 'significance' is problematic. It was difficult to anticipate *all* potential issues of 'significance'; what was not considered 'significant' to either party may, at some future time, become highly significant for someone not associated with the original enquiry. As such, the perceived necessity of preserving or refusing 'anonymity' during the process of data collection is only meaningful *at the time that such a position is negotiated* with the respondent: for instance, comments made by a respondent with the presumption that their utterances were 'unobjectionable' may discover, several years hence, that such comments cause harm to themselves and others.

Incorporating issues of a politicised or contested nature into research serves to problematize data collection and analysis. As my research incorporated respondent 'talk' relating to disability (a topic which invites an array of contestable positions in the present), I needed to consider my ethical location in respect of 'dangerous' (unorthodox) statements, should they have arisen, given my avowal of anonymity. Zavisca (2007) notes how, on hearing anti-Semitic statements 'in the field', she later chose to forward a summary of her data to a Jewish organisation as "evidence on the persistence of anti-Semitism" (Zavisca 2007, p140); she felt that her duty to prevent harm (the utterance of anti-semetic statements being understood as such) outweighed her commitment to anonymity. Although *I* considered none of my respondent's statements to be 'harmful', as compared to Zavisca's experience, this example nonetheless illustrates how apparently unequivocal ethical positions are severely

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problematized when researching in the 'field' and when research questions are associated with politicised topics.[66]

As an employee, I *was* required to comply with equalities legislation[67] and its expression in University policy. If I were an 'outsider' to this context, I may have been able to position myself in an 'ambiguous' position in relation to legislation and policy. However, as an 'insider' I needed to position myself to reflect 'concordance' with legislation where it was commensurate with my job role. This invited the possibility that a respondent would express an opinion which might be interpreted by me *or a future audience* to 'contradict' policy. In response, unlike Zavisca (2007), I selected to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of my respondents. Whilst respondents may have critiqued policy or law, I felt that the potential harm to others did not outweigh the respondents' right to confidentially express an opinion about the application of policy. This said, during the consent-seeking process I felt it necessary (because of institutional ethical guidelines regarding the witnessing of criminal acts) to introduce a caveat: had I become aware of an act that was unambiguously harmful in nature, I may have needed to act differently (involving legal authorities), or sought further counsel.

Anonymity versus fidelity and the loss of data
My protection of respondents' interests outweighed the potential loss of data such a position might entail. This invited a tension between preserving anonymity (and protecting the respondent from harm), and preserving the fidelity of data in order to promote its authenticity and trustworthiness. Indeed, some have argued that the preservation of the ethical character of the research encounter by supporting anonymity should not be progressed so far that the consequence is a *significant* loss in the fidelity of the data collected (Ridley-Duff 2006); that is, if 'ethical' research is also that which is of a 'high quality' (Bryman 2008; Economic and Social Research Council 2010), it is the role of the researcher to consider how the duty to uphold anonymity corresponds with the simultaneous obligation to disseminate research that incorporates data of the highest standard.

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[66] Zavisca (2007) is accounting for her actions in the field of enquiry; she defends her actions in relation to the prevention of future harm, specific features of the research context and her personal history and political beliefs.

[67] At the time of completion, this was the *Equality Act* (Great Britain 2010)

For example, during a pre-planned interview one respondent expressed an 'opinion' about an issue we were discussing, yet they informed me that the comments made were "not for publication". This presented me with a dilemma. In some respects, these 'data' might have offered the opportunity to explore issues that may have been relevant to my research questions. However, my respondent had indicated that the 'opinion' they had expressed should not be incorporated into my research. I had choose between reducing the potential risk of harm to the respondent and others (through deductive disclosure) by wholly observing the request that had been made, or ignoring the request in order to extend the scope of my analysis. On reflection, I chose to remove these data from my report, as I felt the risks to the respondent following dissemination *outweighed* the potential contribution to understanding.

Anonymisation Strategies

I selected to use pseudonyms (disguised identifiers) for individual respondents, to disguise specific employee roles and their locations,[68] and to use composite accounts when representing locations and spaces in their 'typicality'. I also redacted calendar dates from my data display, as these had been 'embedded' into my coding scheme; although I had originally felt that including them would support the dependability of my data reporting, on reflection I realised that including them, may have expedited the deductive identification of respondents or groups (Yin 2011, p264). Some data 'losses' would inevitably occur, but I felt that these were *outweighed by my commitment to protect respondents* from undue harm.

Pseudonyms arguably afford some 'protection' of anonymity. However, I also recognise their use conveys risks that are difficult to anticipate with certainty. If data are in the public realm then, however slight, a risk exists that a 'reader' (be this another academic, staff member, media journalist or member of the public) may choose to attempt to deduce the identities or locations of those described by the research. In addition, the application of a pseudonym may invite harm to the respondent through the erroneous attribution of an utterance to the 'wrong' individual (Tolich 2010). Given assurances in respect of anonymity, it would be difficult for me to refute or deny a false attribution

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[68] In addition, I modified job 'titles' and descriptions to disguise their specificity and underline their 'typicality' within the organisation. For example, I discovered that some administrators (particularly those in 'specialist' roles) held job titles that were unique to the organisation; reporting these directly might have lead to their identification. Hence I afforded them a generic title ('senior administrator') in an effort to represent their roles and positions as being those that were 'typical'.

without this inviting further scrutiny. As such, the application of pseudonyms (or more simply, 'initials', which are also commonly used in qualitative research) *alone* may not necessarily aid anonymity.

Offering respondents the 'choice' whether to anonymise or not has also been suggested, with the intention of promoting 'egalitarian' research relationships (Nespor (2000). However, this may fail to address those situations for which the 'egalitarian' ethos is admirable but incongruent with the context (a hierarchical workplace, for instance). In this research, whilst some individual respondents might have chosen 'non-anonymity', others might *not* have done so. In such circumstances, the risk of deductive disclosure or a breach of internal confidentiality (Tolich 2004; Kaiser 2009) would still persist, and the individual choosing *not* to be identified might not remain 'protected'. A collective decision not to anonymise could be "made by all involved after an analysis of consequences" (Nespor 2000, p556), and might appear to respect notions of 'egalitarianism'; I contend, however, that such an approach might also invite the exclusion of those who might have a preference for retaining anonymity[69] and who may have, if offered anonymity, chosen to participate; this relates to my application of the ethical principle of *justice*.

MY FORMULATION OF COMPOSITE ACCOUNTS

The 'disguising' of places to support anonymity was also problematic. However, only changing the 'name' of a location within an ethnographic report does not remove 'rich descriptive detail', the preservation of which is a central tenet of ethnographic enquiry (see earlier). The preservation of detail within an ethnographic account invites, however, the prospect of 'deductive disclosure' (Kaiser 2009), albeit of 'places' and not 'people', and the committed reader might still be able to identify a workplace by virtue of its full physical description. However, removing these data risks denuding research of the rich description that enables such places to be understood as not only as physical spaces, but also as "symbolic spaces" (Nespor 2000, p554). Given my theoretical commitment (that necessitated the empirical consideration of 'events' and 'spaces'), I needed to identify a strategy that protected the anonymity of my respondents and others, yet still provided a descriptive anchor for my analysis.

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[69] Given that each person will form their own impression of individual 'risk', and concordance with the opinion of the 'group' may also impress on their capacity in such a context

My response to this challenge was two-fold. First, I modified the names of specific departments where these were unique to the organisation. However, I discovered[70] that some departments had titles that were commonplace across the Higher Education sector in the United Kingdom (for instance, 'Human Resources' and 'Learning support') and therefore I considered these as 'typical' and not 'specific' names that might identify a particular organisation. The University itself, and its campus locations, were also disguised; the former with a general geographical descriptor ("Northern England", which might have been used to describe any one of a large number of institutions), and the latter by removal completely, as it added little to the fidelity of data analysis.

Second, when describing 'spaces' and 'places', I adopted a *composite account* approach, akin to that described by Muchison (2010), whereby:

> [E]thnographers sometimes elect to create composite descriptions that combine elements from different parts of the ethnographic record. Composite descriptions allow ... focus on the shared or general characteristics...This composite account does not describe any particular event...Instead, the account represents the best fieldwork-based understanding of the event in general (Muchison 2010, p201)

By building composite accounts (DeVault and McCoy 2006) of my exposure to particular places at specific times, I aimed to reduce the harm that might have arisen from (later) deductive identification and 'de-anonymisation'. This formulation of composite accounts of observational experiences mirrors the use of 'combined', 'fictitious' or 'fabricated' characters as representational devices within ethnographic fieldwork (see, for instance, Ridley-Duff 2010). These "cross-person" narratives (Yin 2011, p254) enable the researcher to "fictionalize a detail in a way that camouflages the actual event but still conveys meaning" (Ellis and Bochner 2003, p241), thereby (in principle) supporting anonymity (Emerson et al 2007).

However, in striving to protect anonymity, a tension is invited between the description of specific contexts and the formation of composite accounts (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). That is, in compositing a cultural experience[71] I risked obscuring the differing accounts and explanations individual members of the administrative 'community' might have held; that is, I did not presume to understand the 'culture' of the administrative context as a unified 'text' that was reducible to a single, linear

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[70] Through an online internet search of similar organisations and job advertisements

[71] As Geertz arguably does in his account of the Balinese Cockfight; see Geertz (1973)

account. Hence by retaining individual (anonymised) interviews, yet compositing the places (and dates) of associated activities, I attempted to retain a commitment to be "at once specific to and general within" (Rosaldo 1986, p100) by first decontextualising, then re-aggregating both styles of accounting within my data (Loizos 1995).

OTHER POTENTIAL HARMS

I needed to remain alert to the possibility that the administrator's close identification with me might also invite their exploitation (Silverman 2001; Ochieng 2010) and, as fellow employees, the administrators could not readily 'choose' not to interact with me in all circumstances, and likewise for myself: as employees, we would necessarily need to maintain a collegial relationship. As such, I needed to reflect upon and consider whether I was maintaining a conversation for reasons of 'work' or 'research'; in many circumstances, this division was not easy to make. For face-to-face interviews, ethical conditions were easily communicated and agreed. For 'everyday' workplace activities when we would work 'together' and a 'data opportunity' arose (for instance, processing a student learning plan, or organising an examination meeting), I would ask the administrator for their permission for me to later (and anonymously) document the activity within field notes.[72]

I also did not assume that research material disclosed to *me* was necessarily 'known' by all respondents, and within interview situations I did not disclose research material gathered from previous respondents. Furthermore, I recognised that respondents might also disclose something within an interview that (immediately or at some later time) they had not wished to share with me. Therefore, I afforded all respondents the opportunity to 'retract' any information they provided to me, and also offered them the opportunity to review my transcription of the interview.[73] I did not feel it necessary to provide additional information about the research to respondents in 'senior' positions; all respondents, irrespective of 'grade', were provided with the same information

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[72] I did need to measure carefully the researcher's 'authority' with collegial 'helpfulness', and issues of consent and complicity. For instance, one staff member, during the earliest stages of my research, would humorously advise me to "*Write this down!*" when we were working together. This, of course, may also be interpreted as an assertion of *his* authority.

[73] No respondents requested any retractions following our discussions, and none of them requested to read their transcribed interview data, although all were offered the opportunity to do so.

regarding confidentiality and anonymity, and on no occasion did any of the respondents enquire about the statements of colleagues or subordinates (see Silverman 2001).

Some of my encounters were "casual and fleeting" (ASA 2011, p1); for instance, meeting a 'new' potential respondent during 'everyday' work. This 'fleeting' nature made difficult the provision of written information and the signing of a 'consent form'. In such circumstances, 'in situ' verbal consent was obtained, although I understood such consent to be temporary and might need to be renegotiated at a later point in time (ASA 2011,p5). However, I remained alert to the problematic nature of seeking consent from respondents retrospectively, and this did on occasion lead to collected 'data' remaining unused, when I was not reassured that informed consent had been unequivocally provided. Similarly for 'chance meetings' outside the work context, for instance when using local public transport, where respondents wished to 'continue' an interview that we had undertaken previously. This raised challenges in relation to maintaining confidentiality (in a public place) and deviation from the initial 'ethical parameters' of my research which limited research activity to *within* the workplace. When such situations arose, I preserved conversational etiquette, steering conversation away from that which specifically related to our earlier interviews, and preserved respondents' dignity by avoiding the embarrassment of an abruptly terminated conversation.

Protecting other people and groups
I also needed to consider the protection of people with certain characteristics (for example, ethnicity, disability status, religion and gender). Whilst my selections were not made on the basis of these characteristics, I had a duty to anticipate the potential for harm to those identifying as such during my research (ASA 2011). Furthermore, as a fellow employee, I was obliged to follow the 'equalities policy' of the organisation; as such, I endeavoured to anticipate and provide appropriate facilities and written and verbal information in order to accommodate the individual needs of respondents. In addition, to avoid undue intrusion, and acknowledging the possibility for unplanned 'personal' disclosures by respondents (ASA 2011), I reassured respondents that I would remove such information from my data if it arose. In addition, although our work was strongly 'student focused' (processing student data, for instance), no individual student information was included within my data collection: this was not the focus of my research, and nor had I requested ethical permission to do so from the University; in this way I avoiding collecting data superfluous to the main aims of the inquiry.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has presented the principal features of my methodological design, including discussion of my selection of ethnography, methods of data collection, respondent selection, data analysis strategy, and research ethics. The following chapters address my collected data directly, and ancillary information supporting these can be located in the appendices.

CHAPTER 7: THE REGULATION OF DISABILITY DISCLOSURE

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter identifies and discusses a number of organisational texts that illustrate how the University represents, within 'policies' and 'guidelines', the administrative response to 'disability disclosure'. I provide a reading of two Foucauldian technologies (technologies of power and technologies of the self) (Foucault 1978, 1990, 1995, 1997) and apply these to my interpretation of texts, including a discussion of the practices of hierarchical observation and normalization. Following Rose (1998, 1999), I then argue that the texts incite the 'confession', by students, of their disabilities. In presenting this interpretation, I recognise that organisational texts only offer a partial and 'official account' of practice. As such, my analysis of these texts serves to signpost the analyses and arguments that I present in my later chapters.

INTRODUCTION

I discovered when undertaking this research that much administrative work within the University was, perhaps unsurprisingly, concerned with the production and circulation of written texts, for instance 'policies', 'guidelines' and 'forms' for completion. This chapter examines a number of organisational texts that 'explain', 'justify' and incite a response from administrators (and students) in respect of 'disability disclosure'.[74] How this disclosure process is 'presented' to administrators (and students) within texts serves to signpost the topics that I consider in my later chapters: for instance, those relating to the use of disability classifications (chapter eight), language-use 'about' disability (chapter nine), and the play of space and ritual in disability 'surveillance' (chapter ten).

This chapter is organised as follows: First, I outline how I am using organisational texts from a 'non-linguistic' and Foucauldian standpoint, and provide an explanation of their epistemic status. I then provide a definition of 'disability disclosure' as I am using it

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[74] I was granted ethical permission to use some internal texts, for instance 'Administrative Guidelines' in respect of disability disclosure. Other texts were freely available within the public domain. Some texts were not made available to me for research purposes, such as the individual PLP or 'Personal Learning Plans' generated for students; in order to protect individual students, these texts are not included here. Recognising the risk of deductive disclosure, I have removed all institutional references from these texts and have abridged and composited some of these data.

here, and speculate upon the contexts from which the practice of 'disability disclosure' may have emerged in the university setting.

Second, drawing upon Foucault's thesis in his 1975 work *Discipline and Punish*, I discuss how features of hierarchical observation and normalization are evidenced with the organisational texts that address disability disclosure. In particular, I discuss the comprehensive opportunity for surveillance that the organisational texts imply in relation to the disclosure of disability. I also discuss normalizing judgements, and the production of knowledge or 'truths' about subjects; I do not discuss in detail here the disability classifications used by administrators: this is addressed in the following chapter. Last, I address Foucault's notion of the 'technologies of the self' (Foucault 1997). After discussing Foucault's position, and contributions by Rose (1998, 1999), I argue that organisational texts incite the 'confession', by students, of their disabilities, and in doing this they also imply a moral obligation for administrators to 'work on their selves' in respect of their disability-related 'attitudes'. This notion serves to signpost some of the key arguments that I make in my later chapters.

THE 'TRUTH' OF ORGANISATIONAL TEXTS

In an earlier chapter of this thesis (chapter six) I discussed in detail, and provided examples of, the identification and selection of 'Foucauldian statements' for analysis, statements that 'make truths' (Mills 2003, 2004). Therefore, in examining the 'texts' of the University, I am concerned with what these texts announce in respect of discourse and power – that is, what these discursive statements are 'doing' – and not their linguistic properties, or 'why' they have been introduced. However, in using institutional texts, I am aware of difficulties in according them with an 'epistemic privilege'. Atkinson and Coffey make a similar argument in respect of 'document analysis':

> [O]ne must be quite clear about what they can and cannot be used for. Documents are 'social facts' in that they are produced, shared and used in socially organized ways. They are not, however, transparent representations of organizational routines, decision-making processes or professional diagnoses. They construct particular kinds of representations [and] are not surrogates for other kinds of data (Atkinson and Coffey 2004, p58)

Hence the methodological consequences for me here are three-fold: first, I need to consider what organisational documents 'accomplish', and not simply what they announce as unequivocal 'truths'. Therefore, I do not claim that the texts included

herein describe the 'reality' of practice (Bryman 2008); however, I argue that they may provide insights into how particular knowledges and practices are selected from discourse, circulated, and accorded the status of 'truth'. Second, my analysis of these documents may reveal something about the actors, or people, for whom they are written; ostensibly, this is the administrator and/or the student; however, as some of these texts are in the public domain, they may also 'speak to' the public and wider audiences and, as such, might only accord with what the organisation identifies to be 'strategically' important (Smith 2006).

Third, my reading of documents does not provide insight into *how* they are interpreted and *used* by the people for whom they are written; for this, I need to deploy additional research methods, as I do in my later chapters. However, as an 'insider', I do argue that I can afford these documents a particular reading (Atkinson and Coffey 2004); it in this respect that my comments regarding the epistemic status of my data and interpretation, discussed in chapter eleven, might apply not only to interviews and observational methods, but also to my selection and interpretation of these texts. In short, therefore, in using these texts I do not claim that they offer a clear and transparent representation of the 'everyday reality' or 'truths' of administrative practice. However, I do claim that a close analysis of them may aid me to gain insight into how such 'truths' are posited, authorised and circulated within administrative practice.

THE REQUIREMENT FOR DISABILITY DISCLOSURE

In this thesis, I define 'disability disclosure' as being a process wherein a student is invited to disclose something 'about themselves' to the University which may (or may not) be accorded the status of a 'disability' by themselves or another person. The 'invitation' to disclose may be understood to be related to a number of circumstances, not least the legal duties impressed upon the universities by disability-related legislation. Earlier in this thesis (chapter one), I outlined this legislative context. To recap, during my fieldwork the primary legislative contexts were provided by the *Disability Discrimination Act* (DDA) (Great Britain 1995, 2005), the *Special Education Needs and Disability Act* (SENDA) (Great Britain 2001), and the concomitant *Disability Equality Duty* (DED).[75] In brief, further and higher education providers were required to *anticipate* disability: the *Special Education Needs and Disability Act* (Great

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[75] I also note elsewhere (chapter one, and in a coda to this thesis) the introduction of the *Equality Act* in 2010.

Britain 2001) placed a duty on providers to take reasonable steps in order to ensure that they did not disadvantage students with disabilities.

Furthermore, providers were also charged with affording students with disabilities 'reasonable adjustments' with respect to their disabilities. If the disability of an individual student is known (disclosed) to a university, then the university is required, where practicable, to afford a student modifications to their programmes of study, their assessments, or other aspects of their student experience (for instance, those that involve administrative practices). In addition, following the implementation of the *Disability Equality Duty*, providers were also obliged to report (publish) their progress in implementing and practising in a non-discriminatory manner, including the promotion of 'positive attitudes' towards people with disabilities.

In addition to the duties arising from legislation, a number of other concerns may be speculated to have created conditions wherein 'disability disclosure' might be considered desirable. First, the 'preparation' of students for postgraduate employment has increasingly become fore-grounded both within the university community and beyond (Boden and Nedeva 2010). As such, high levels of graduate employment are understood to be a key marker of 'success' for a university. Therefore, in the context of a developing higher education 'marketplace', the notion of 'employability' may be an important factor considered by a student (and their parent or carer) when choosing university (Strudwick and Jameson 2010).[76]

Second, the 'preparedness' of graduates for employment is also considered to be important in the context of 'local' higher education provision. Maintaining 'local' credulity (universities being able to present themselves as collegial stakeholders in the local community) is understood to be of significance to universities, and recent research suggests the vitality of employability in this regard (Bourner and Millican 2011). Hence equipping students with the practical, intellectual and affective skills in order to position them positively, both individually and collectively, with respect to graduate employment is understood by universities to be of great importance.

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[76] Indeed, the value of 'employability' is reflected in the construction of surveys presented to the student population. For instance, the *National Student Survey* (see chapter two) is infused with questions that relate to students' perception of preparation by the university for future employment and the perception of 'support'

Third, in the particular faculty in which most of the fieldwork for this research was undertaken, the requirements of professional regulators were also important. In the context of 'public protection', many professional bodies require providers of professional education to undertake 'screening' of individual students both prior to their enrolment onto a programme of study, during their period of education, and at graduation and professional registration. Hence for university departments delivering such programmes, the practice of 'disability disclosure' is of great importance, particularly when seeking 'validation' of their professional programmes (Tinklin and Hall 1999; Morris and Turnball 2006, 2007; Stanley et al 2011).

GOVERNMENT AND 'TECHNOLOGIES'

In his later work, Foucault deploys his theoretical position in order to enact a critical examination of the role of government in liberal, democratic societies with respect to the 'management' of their populations. In addressing this, Foucault seeks to examine the network of relations between "people and people, people and things, [and] people and events" (Rose et al 2006, p87) through which the state may 'govern' its subjects 'from a distance'. Foucault's non-sovereign (non-domineering) formulation of power, discussed earlier, requires different techniques for this 'management' of populations and their people: for this, knowledge and techniques that normalize people within populations with respect to one another are required, a principle he assimilates into his concept of 'governmentality' (Foucault 1997; Rose et al 2006). For Foucault, it is the observation, classification and normalization of individuals (Foucault 1995), and the concurrent subjectivisation of the 'free' individual which attracts his attention.

Instead of governing populations through 'domination', the state governs through attaining 'knowledge' about the population, and through the dispersal of a whole set of 'governing' techniques which are dispersed through a number of disciplines and mundane, 'everyday' practices (Foucault 1997; Rose 1998, 1999; Rose et al 2006). Foucault describes four 'technologies' that he understands to be instrumental in the formation and maintenance this mode of government;[77] of these four, he selects two for closer consideration within his work:

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[77] The remaining two, "technologies of production" and "technologies of sign systems" are not addressed by Foucault, and I do not discuss them further here. See Foucault (1997, p225).

[There are] technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivizing of the subject, [and] technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means, or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality ... [These] types of technology hardly ever function separately ... This encounter between the technologies of domination of others and those of the self I call 'governmentality' (Foucault 1997, p225)

Later in this chapter I discuss the 'technologies of the self' as they are evidenced within organisational texts. First, however, I discuss the 'technologies of power' that Foucault describes, and in this chapter apply this notion to the analysis of organisational texts. The 'technologies of power' relate to the "great technologies" of the panopticon (Rose et al 2006, p89), and in particular the disciplinary administration of space, time, hierarchical observation, examination and the formulation of normalizing judgements (Foucault 1995). However, as Rose and his colleagues also note, 'technologies of power' might also relate to the "mundane, little governmental techniques and tools, such as interviews, case records, diaries, brochures, and manuals" (Rose et al 2006, p89); it is these techniques that I now consider.

HIERARCHICAL OBSERVATION

As I discussed earlier in this thesis, Foucault deprecates the notion of sovereign power and develops his notion of 'disciplinary power'. Disciplinary power does not seek to collectively oppress, nor does it aim to reduce all of those who are subject to it into a "single uniform mass" (Foucault 1995, p170). Rather, the exercise of this type of power is productive: it 'makes' particular kinds of subject that are 'useful', 'knowable', 'malleable': kinds of subject that Foucault describes as "docile", meaning "subjected and practised" (Foucault 1995, p138). What Foucault terms 'hierarchical observation' and 'normalizing judgements' are the principal techniques for the exercise of disciplinary power. On hierarchical observation, he notes:

> The exercise of discipline presupposes a mechanism that coerces by mean of observation; an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power, and in which, conversely, the means of coercion make those on whom they are applied clearly visible (Foucault 1995, p170-1)

Hence subjects are 'made' and rendered 'useful' not through the direct application of force; rather, it is through observation (surveillance) that disciplinary power can circulate and 'make' docile subjects. Likewise, the practice of observation is evoked by

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the circulation of power. Hence disciplinary power is not something that is wholly possessed by a sovereign individual who 'applies' it, and for which 'observation' is the consequence. Rather, Foucault explains, it is something that is "both absolutely 'indiscreet', since it is everywhere and always alert", and yet, "absolutely 'discreet' for it functions permanently" (Foucault 1995, p177). These last points are critical: Foucault is describing a form of power that is 'automatic', always imminent, and which is infused throughout the practice of all who are 'made' and 'sustained' within its "permanent and continuous field" (p177).

As a principal technique of disciplinary power, hierarchical observation, or surveillance, serves to identify, compare, differentiate and order (rate, rank, place in a hierarchy) those bodies that are within its gaze (Foucault 1995). As applied to this research, hierarchical observation might therefore be associated with the total surveillance of disability as it may be present within the student population, and as practised by both students and administrators. It in this way that I consider how, throughout the administrative regime, opportunities for 'knowing' about the 'disability' of a student might be made available. This, perhaps, is the "discovery of danger everywhere" (Armstrong 1993, p407; Douglas 2002); that is, not only might disability, posited as a danger, be understood to be focused 'within' the individual ('disabled') student, but opportunities for 'danger' are dispersed throughout administrative practice.

INVITING DISABILITY DISCLOSURE AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY

Even prior to the recruitment and enrolment of students to the University, administrative activities are prescribed that promote the identification and disclosure of disabilities to the administrative staff, in particular those working in 'recruitment', 'enrolment' or 'student admissions' roles, as this text suggests:

- Advice at pre-entry and admissions stage, including informal visits around the campus to explore any accessibility issues if required.
- Initial assessment of a disabled student's needs resulting in a Personal Learning Plan which is then sent to the student's faculty, library staff, exams officer etc as appropriate.
- Initial screening and advisory interviews for students who think they might be dyslexic – arranging formal dyslexia assessments with an educational psychologist as appropriate.

[Ref. University *Statement of Service Standards*, document]

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The practices described here, if carried out, constitute the beginnings of a 'timetable' for administrative activities (Foucault 1995) aimed at identifying those (candidate) students who may, in the future, be assessed to be requiring 'support' in respect of their disabilities. Whilst for the University this may be understood to offer an opportunity for it to demonstrate the fulfilment of its legal duties in respect of the individual 'assessment' of students, and more generally in respect of the formulation of 'anticipatory adjustments' (see earlier), for potential students this is presented as an 'opportunity' for them to self-disclose a disability, and is something that they are "strongly recommended" to undertake in a timely manner:

> Disabled people are encouraged before accepting a place to explore how the university might be able to meet any additional study support or accommodation needs as soon as possible by contacting the ██████
> ████████████ Service on ███████████ or
> ███████████████████████ All disabled applicants who receive Students often find that their support arrangements are particularly time consuming to organise. We therefore strongly recommend that you make contact with the ███████████████ Service and make an application for Disabled Students' Allowances at least four months before the start of your course. **If you will be starting your course in September, please contact us before the end of May.** This is necessary to allow sufficient time for support arrangements to be put in place.

[Ref. *Guidance for students*, website]

This relates to Foucault's consideration of the formulation of "functional sites" for the exercise of disciplinary power/knowledge (Foucault 1995, p144). The apparatus of disability disclosure serves to create a purposeful 'space' for the assembly and regulation of new identities (the 'student with a disability') and new administrative practices and roles (for instance, 'pre-admission support', 'advisors'). Furthermore, the disclosure apparatus functions to orientate the (newly) disciplined individual to the strategic needs of the organisations (for instance, to comply with the law or to proactively manage specialist resources). It is this sense that I understand that the 'creation' of new 'spaces' in which disability can be observed and ascertained is not only therapeutic – subjectivizing and 'supporting' the individual student – but is administrative, serving the interests of the organisation.

Here, for instance, staff members are advised to observe and communicate their knowledge of a candidate/student 'with a disability' even prior to the offering of a place at the University, and potential students are encouraged to use these opportunities:

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1.2.2 Communication systems will ensure that the
████████████████ Service is notified of any
applicant/student who discloses a disability at any
stage during the applications/ admissions
process.

[Ref. *Disability Support Framework*, document]

A member of staff from ████████████ is often available at
████ Open days and Visit Days to offer advice on disability related
issues. However, you can always phone or email us if you have any
specific queries.

[Ref. *Guidance for students*, website]

As such, a 'useful' space within administrative practice is 'opened up' which forms an extension to the margins of the enrolment-graduation 'life-cycle' of the student, and provides for the exercise of disciplinary power/knowledge, and the 'making up' or subjectivation of a 'disabled student', long before the candidate/student has properly joined the University. In effect, the function of the administrative apparatus is to "isolate and map", then "articulate[e] this distribution [upon] a production machinery" according to "its own requirements" (Foucault 1995, p144-5).

DISABILITY DISCLOSURE IS A CONSTANT OPPORTUNITY

All administrators, wherever and whenever they might be working, are obliged to be 'alert' and conscious of the requirement to seek 'disability disclosure' from a student if the opportunity arises. As such, in this particular University, administrators are presented with a large number of opportunities for them to seek disability 'disclosure' from a student. Whilst seeking disclosure is not exclusively the responsibility of the administrator, a number of occasions do arise for administrators for them to identify or seek disability disclosure:

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It is therefore important that students are given lots of opportunities to disclose their disability once they have joined the university.
Examples of when students may disclose include:
- Applying for accommodation.
- During induction.
- Joining the library.
- Starting a new unit or a new year of study.
- Registering for exams.
- Before going out on a field trip, work experience placement or year abroad.
- Meeting with a personal tutor/ other academic member of staff.
- Experiencing difficulties with their programme of study.
- Obtaining financial, personal or careers advice and support.

[Ref. *Disclosure Guidelines for staff*, document]

The administrative apparatus of disclosure must not 'waste time'; every opportunity to incite the disclosure of a disability by a student must be utilised efficiently. This, following Foucault, would appear to illustrate the formulation of a "positive economy" of time (Foucault 1995, p154), the exhaustive production of numerous 'occasions' for administrative intervention. In this way, occasions for disability disclosure are identified within and throughout the collective 'work' of the University, each one an opportunity to afford the student a disciplinary gaze. The total 'experience' of the student (for instance, the arrangement of accommodation, enrolment, or membership of the University library) is mapped onto administrative practices, securing, Foucault argues, the exercise of power:

> [T]he more time is broken down, the more its subdivisions multiply, the better one disarticulates it by deploying its internal elements under a gaze that supervises them ...The 'seriation' of successive activities makes possible a whole investment of duration by power: the possibility of a detailed control and a regular intervention (of differentiation, correction, punishment, elimination) in each moment of time ... Power is articulated directly onto time; it assures its control and guarantees its use. (Foucault 1995, p154, 160)

Eliciting the disclosure of a disability from a student is a concern for all administrators. Indeed, the organisational texts suggest that securing the initial 'disclosure' of a disability is the interest and responsibility of all staff members, and not only an 'expert' or 'specialist' few. Indeed, this expectation is illustrated in a number of organisational texts that are available to administrative staff. In this text, for instance, the staff member is made "aware" of the action they "should take" if a student discloses a disability. The requirement of the staff member to take "action" is justified in respect of the University's concordance with legislation, and is explained in terms that relate to the

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communication of information about individual ('disclosing') students to the
University's 'disability service':

> All university staff need to be aware of the action they should take if they become
> aware that a student or applicant is disabled. Failure to act on a disclosure could mean
> that the University is liable under the Disability Discrimination Act (2005).
>
> For example:
>
> A student declares that he is disabled on his application form and notes that due to his
> hospital appointments, he may not be able to attend all elements of his course.
> Although the admissions office knows that the student might have a disability under
> the Act, it does not pass this information onto the ████████████, in order that they
> may contact him to discuss it further. In this case, the University cannot claim that it
> did not know about the disability and so is likely to be acting unlawfully

<div align="right">[Ref. Disability Support Framework, document]</div>

For the administrators this invites their practice of the "permanent registration"
(Foucault 1995, p196) of all of those 'with disabilities' who they may see, hear or read
about: a continual circulation and exercise of disciplinary power. It is this respect that
administrators might be considered to be agents or "representatives of power" (Foucault
1995, p197), whereby the knowledge they acquire about people with disabilities is
gathered into the administrative systems of the university: the administrators are
required to complete a form, outlining what they have learned about individuals, and
this information must be both communicated to expert authorities, and reported
centrally. Therefore, it is not only the individual administrator who is permitted to
'know' about the disability of a student. Rather, the knowledge 'about' individuals who
have disclosed a disability becomes the interest and concern of the University; it is this
respect that the organisation would be "deemed to know" about a disability, and hence
culpable in respect of the law:

> It is important to note that if a student tells a member of staff – and only that
> one member of staff – about their disability the University may still be
> "deemed to know" and be expected to make any necessary "reasonable
> adjustments". It is therefore vital to complete a **Disclosure Authorisation
> Form.**

<div align="right">[Ref. Disclosure Guidelines for staff, document]</div>

Hence it appears to matter little 'who' makes an observation or examination of
disability, or who elicits a 'disability disclosure' from an individual student, as long as

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every 'effort' is made by University staff in the meeting of this objective. Therefore all who work in the University are incited to "operate" the "machine" of disability surveillance and disclosure (Foucault 1995, p202). Indeed, it is in this sense that not only is it the student 'with a disability' who is under constant surveillance; it is the administrator, too, who becomes subject to constant and unremitting (self) surveillance of their own 'disability disclosure' seeking practices. This is something that administrators are obliged to assume responsibility for, as they are reminded:

> Staff should be aware that helping students to identify their support needs is an integral part of their responsibility.

[Ref. *Supporting disabled students*, document]

DOCUMENTING AND CIRCULATING INFORMATION

The observation and normalization of applicants and students also occasions the production of written texts that serve to document the 'examinations' that have been undertaken concerning the student. Foucault contrasts the 'historical' documentation of peoples 'lives' with the disciplinary use of documentation. He argues that whereas in the past, the 'documentation of lives' was reserved for the privileged (sovereign) few, documentation in the disciplinary 'present' serves not to accord lives with an elevated status but to record every detail of their lives and practices in their mundane and everyday detail. Hence texts 'about' people no longer function to celebrate the lives of individuals for "future memory", but instead are generated for use in the present (Foucault 1995, p192).

The information collected by the administrators (or submitted by the applicant or student to the administrator) serves to collect information 'about' individual people for the purposes of characterising the whole population in which they are located. For instance, the University supplies a *Disability Disclosure Form* for use by students who wish to make an application for further 'screening' or 'assessment' in respect of a disability. Notably, this form does not serve to 'assess' the student in respect of a disability; rather , it asks for their name, contact details, programme of study, attendance mode, in addition to their 'consent' to store and communicate information. Furthermore, the applicant is asked about 'how' they gained knowledge of the disability support services at the University:

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[Ref. *Disability disclosure form*, document]

This document, if completed, 'inserts' and registers the student as a future subject of disciplinary observation; the intense activity that was mounted in order to secure the disclosure from the student must not be wasted, his or her personal information must not be "lost", and he or she must be locatable at some future occasion (Foucault 1995, p190). Moreover, this information provides the organisation information regarding the disclosure apparatus itself: the student is invited to inform them of the means by which they learned to follow the disclosure procedure. Collecting this information therefore provides the University with a measure of the comprehensiveness and efficiency of its surveillance systems.

In addition, the information provided to students regarding their giving of "consent" to "pass on" personal data serves to place the individual amidst a whole range of disciplinary gazes: whilst, ostensibly, the 'Disability disclosure form' implies a pedagogic imperative, a host of other disciplinary interests are served, each of which functions to generate and use knowledge about individual people, to 'make' them subjects of their own disciplinary interests: the student becomes a subject of financial scrutiny ("funding bodies"), other workplaces ("placement providers") and even

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domiciliary surveillance ("halls of residence"). Hence knowledge 'about' the individual is diffused beyond the disciplinary boundaries within which it was first 'recognised', and is 'taken up' by other areas of disciplinary practice.

Furthermore, this information enables the University to collect (and refine) information about the population of students who are seeking to use its 'disability support' services, thereby supporting the "constitution of a comparative system that made possible the measurement of overall phenomena, the description of groups, the characterization of collective facts, the calculation of gaps between individuals, their distribution in a given 'population'" (Foucault 1995, p190). In short, although the collection of this information from the student enables their future receipt of 'support' in respect of a disability, it also enables the University to calibrate its knowledge of 'the disabled student' against that which is already known about the existing population of students.

Simultaneous with the collection and archiving of information about the total population is the progressive 'individualisation' of the student as a disciplinary 'case', and a subject of normalization; this "case", Foucault notes, "is the individual as he may be described, judged, measured, compared with others, in his very individuality; and it is also the individual who has to be trained or corrected, classified, normalized, excluded, etc" (Foucault 1995, p191). I now consider how this normalization is achieved.

NORMALIZATION

Disability, as I discussed earlier in this thesis (chapter four) might be understood, from Mary Douglas's standpoint, to represent danger; these dangers might be ameliorated through observation, separation, differentiation and the undertaking of normalizing rituals:

> Danger lies in transitional states, simply because transition is neither one state nor the next ...The person who must pass from one to another is himself in danger and emanates danger to others. The danger is controlled by ritual which precisely separates him from his old status, segregates him for a time, and then publically declares his entry into his new status (Douglas 2002, p119-120).

The student disclosing a disability may be understood as a source of disruption and danger: the process of engaging with learning or occupational support marks the entry of the student into a transitional 'state' where their identity (as a student, as a member of the university community) is placed under surveillance; this is marked by practices that are designed to mitigate the 'threat' to the University offered by the presence of

disability: for instance, the potential 'failure' (non-completion) of a student, or the violation of anti-discrimination legislation.

Douglas argues that during periods of transition subjects "have no place in society" (Douglas 2002, p120), they are 'outcast', yet it is their ambiguity that circulates power and the capacity to 'make' particular kinds of subject, to restore order, to reduce ambiguity, to protect 'cherished' boundaries or classifications. However, despite the 'danger' that the ambiguous person may present, their transitional status permits a particular kind of explanation for their actions: they "cannot help [their] abnormal situation" (Douglas 2002, p121), as this text suggests:

> ██████████████████████The University will work with disabled
> candidates to enable them to access programmes and overcome
> substantial disadvantage that they may suffer as a result of their disability.

[Ref: *Prospective students,* website]

This suggests that whilst disclosing students might not be 'held responsible' for the 'danger' they offer, they are still expected to "work with" the University; this 'space', between the liberal, choosing and consuming citizen (which I discuss later), and the danger of an 'undisclosed disability' is a place for the circulation of power/knowledge through ritualised practices, and the production and normalization of particular kinds of people. In short, observation and normalization are vital ritual practices in the 'control' of ambiguity.

The normalizing judgement may be considered to have three facets: the production of subjects that do "not measure up to the rule" (Foucault 1995, p178), the production and circulation of knowledge and 'truths' about such subjects, and a demand for their reform or 'correction'. The normalizing judgement imposes homogeneity or 'likeness' upon a population (for instance, students) and simultaneously separate out or distinguish the individual who does not 'conform'. It is this way that the normalizing judgement *produces* or assembles subjects: the 'non-conforming' individual is 'made up', within disciplinary power/knowledge, as a particular 'kind' of person, for instance, the 'student with dyslexia'.

Within this network of disciplinary power, 'knowledge' is produced and circulated 'about' particular subjects or 'kinds of people' (Hacking 2007). In this way, disciplinary power does not 'hide' or 'obscure' the individual; rather, through normalizing

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judgements, it produces subjects and knowledge or 'truths' *about* subjects, as Foucault notes:

> In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production (Foucault 1995, p194)

For the student disclosing (or contemplating disclosing) a disability, a ritualised set of activities is imagined, each occasion providing an opportunity for their subjectivation within disciplinary power/knowledge. This 'disclosure ritual' describes a series of events, each an opportunity for closer and increasingly focused 'expert' attention. First, there is the student's self assessment. Second, there is an administrative assessment. Third, an expert assessment is described. Finally, if classified as 'having a disability', expert interventions are described. For instance, prior to applying for a place at the University, potential students are guided to seek information about 'disability'. For instance, in respect of dyslexia, this information is provided within a number of University web pages, upon which a student may 'choose' to access further information:

<div style="text-align:center">

About Us

Prospective Students

Disabled Students
I think I have Dyslexia/ a
Specific Learning Difficulty
I have Dyslexia/ a Specific
Learning Difficulty

</div>

[Ref: *Prospective students*, website]

As presented here, there two general categories from which the student may 'choose': 'disabled students', and those who 'think' or 'know' that they may 'have' dyslexia. The candidate who might be 'unsure' of their status in respect of dyslexia is guided further: following the hypertext link, the candidate is provided with further information 'about' dyslexia, information characterises dyslexia in respect of 'strengths' and 'difficulties':

<div style="text-align:center">155</div>

What are the Strengths and Difficulties associated with dyslexia?

It is generally acknowledged and certainly recognised at ▇▇▇ that a person with dyslexia will have a combination of abilities and strengths which may offer certain advantages.

These strengths include the following:

lateral thinking	creativity	motivation
intuition	problem solving	practical
artistic flair	determination	logic

Some of the difficulties a person with dyslexia may experience include some, but not all of the following:

reading	short term memory	spelling
speaking	sequencing	concentration
speed of processing	motor skills	writing organisation

[Ref: *Prospective students*, website]

The manner in which norms are presented here are two-fold. First, positive or affirming personal characteristics are presented as 'strengths'. These are not compared with or differentiated from what might be considered 'normal', although their positing as 'characteristic of' dyslexia is strongly implied and afforded some authority ("certainly recognised") by the University. These 'positive' and 'affirming' statements serve to subjectivise a particular kind of 'dyslexic' subject: a subject who is 'determined', for instance, or who considers him/her self to possess 'artistic flair'. These are presented as ways one can 'be' a person with dyslexia; attributes associated not with deficits, but instead orientated towards self-knowledge, freedom and autonomy.[78]

In contrast, what are named as 'difficulties', however, invoke technical or expert statements, for instance "speed of processing" and "sequencing", neither of which are afforded any context or explanation within this text, other than their presentation as individual (pathological) absences or deficits. All these 'difficulties' are statements available within psychological/pedagogic discourse; that is, these are 'truthful' characteristics that an individual may by understood to 'possess', and which might be subject to further differentiation and 'measurement'. As for the 'positive' statements above, these too assemble a particular kind of subject, or 'way to be' a person with

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[78] I return to the subjectivation of the person in respect of these characteristics, how these too might be pathologized, and their association with Foucault's notion of the 'technologies of the self' (Foucault 1997) later in this chapter.

dyslexia. That is, expert power/knowledge 'about' certain kinds of people functions here to subjectivise the 'person with dyslexia', and to incite his or her self-recognition of this status.

The normalizing judgement also announces the reform or 'correction' of the subject. That is, in identifying deviation, difference or non-concordance, disciplinary power also evokes the transformation and 'improvement' of individuals; this is Foucault's "double effect" of normalization. Applying this principle to schooling, he notes:

> [the normalizing judgement] distributed pupils according to their aptitudes and their conduct, that is, according to the use that could be made of them when they left the school; it exercised over them a constant pressure to conform to the same model, so that they may all be subjected ... So that they might all be like one another (Foucault 1995, p183)

The 'difficulties' that are described in relation to dyslexia imply the possibility for remedy or restoration, something that the student is suggested to engage with. In another text, this process is described to the student:

2. Contact the ████████████████ Service (███) to book a dyslexia screening appointment where you will find out information about dyslexia.

You will either be invited to attend a group dyslexia Screening or an individual screening depending on the time of year.

3. Once you have attended your screening appointment, the adviser will then either refer you to an **Educational Psychologist (EP)** or a ████████████**Support Officer (FSSO)**:

⇩	⇩
EP The dyslexia screening has shown that you have dyslexic tendencies you will now need to see an educational Psychologist. Please move on to **Step 5**	**FSSO** The dyslexia screening has shown that you do not have any dyslexic tendencies at this time. Please move on to **Step 4.**

[Ref. *How do I find out if I am dyslexic?*, document]

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The initial dyslexia 'screening' is undertaken by administrative staff who have received additional training to undertake this role.[79] The administrative participation in normalization here is exemplified by students' subjection to a process of observation ("screening"), a comparison with a norm; a classification ("dyslexic") and a ranking ("tendencies"). That the (newly assembled) subject might then be subject to expert scrutiny and the possibility that normalcy might be "returned to them" (Rose 1999, p76), is suggested by the naming of an expert agent, the Educational Psychologist, and the potential ambiguity of a failed dyslexia classification is reduced by referral for 'study skills support'.

TECHNOLOGIES OF THE SELF

The 'technologies of the self' relate to the incitement and cultivation of obedience, in order to meet the demands of government, albeit in a manner that addresses the 'selves' of people. Instead of dominating or forcing people to 'believe', 'think' or 'act' in prescribed ways, 'technologies of the self' incite the cultivation of self-knowledge and 'freedom', albeit in ways that are constrained within power/knowledge and selected from discourse. It is in this way that, in liberal democracies, individuals might be incited or obliged 'to be free' (to possess self-knowledge, to make and enact choices, or refuse), albeit in ways that remain constrained within disciplinary power/knowledge (Rose 1998, 1999).

FREEDOM, AUTONOMY, CHOICE

Nikolas Rose suggests that although practices of government, such a those implied in the above texts, *might* be understood as directive or oppressive, he argues that they can also be enabling and productive discursive techniques that 'make up' subjects who can assume responsibility for their 'selves' and their lives; that is, the 'making' of one's self becomes a personal project, albeit one constrained within disciplinary power and knowledge. Indeed it is the practices of the mundane, 'everyday' world that have:

> [B]een transformed into 'life events', remediable problems of coping and adjustment. Each is to be addressed by recognizing forces of a subjective order (fears, denials, repressions, lack of psychosocial skills) and similarly subjective

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[79] See my respondent's comments about this in chapter eight. This text also suggests that there are certain periods within the academic year when demand for the screening service offered by the administration staff is high. The possibility of 'group screening' further suggests the comparison of the individual student against a set of norms or 'threshold' standards, non-concordance with which invites expert scrutiny.

consequences (neurosis, tension, stress, illness) ... [these] have become the occasion for introspection, confession and management by expertise. Although this may appear to entail precisely the forms of dependency to which the spirit of enterprise is opposed, this opposition is misleading. For therapeutics, here, impels the subject to 'work' on itself and assume responsibility for its life (Rose 1998, p159)

Rose extracts from Foucault his consideration of the 'psy function' (Burchell 2009), and how the 'psy' disciplines (for instance, psychology, psychotherapy) have "grafted themselves" (Rose 1998, p87) into many other disciplines and social practices in 'everyday' life, and 'psychological knowledge' now serves to describe and authorise a whole range of practices, imbuing them with a "psychological coloration" (Rose 1998, p87). As such, he argues:

> [P]ractices by which individuals seek to improve themselves and their lives and the aspirations and norms that guide them ... Psychological languages and evaluations have transformed the ways in which we construe and conduct our encounters with others – with our bosses, employees, workmates, wives, husbands, lovers, mothers, fathers, children, and friends. Each mode of encounter has been reconfigured in terms of personal feelings, desires, personalities, strivings and fears. (Rose 1998, p95)

Rose argues that psychological techniques, 'taken up' within a range of social 'places' (for instance, the workplace) are "intimately tied to the liberal aspirations of freedom, choice and identity" (Rose 1998, p97). That is, in the contemporary world, to be a 'free' and autonomous person, one who expresses choice, are posited as desirable and achievable ways to 'be a person'. Hence it is not only a professional 'gaze' that works to 'make up' people, but also a *gaze upon the self* which functions to approximate and calculate what it is to 'be' a person in the contemporary world.

Significantly, in the context of governmentality, discussed earlier, the 'arms length' functioning of government implicates 'psy' techniques within its operation. Although the state (usually) does not demand 'strict obedience' from its citizens, Rose (and his peers) argue that the incitement of individuals to be 'free' and 'autonomous' helps "produce the ends of government" (Rose et al 2006, p89) by inciting citizens to be autonomous and self-regulating. Hence liberal democracies govern by:

> [C]onstructing a kind of regulated autonomy for social actors. The modern liberal self is 'obliged to be free', to construe all aspects of its life as the outcome of choices ... The technologies of psychology gain their social power in liberal democracies because they share this ethnic of competent autonomous selfhood, and because they promise to sustain, respect and restore selfhood to citizens ... the individual who is 'free to choose' (Rose 1998, p100)

Therefore the obligation to be 'free' is not subject to authoritative forms of power/knowledge. Rather, and following Foucault's notion of 'productive' (and not oppressive) power (Barrett 1991; Mills 2003), it is in the context of power/knowledge that individuals, subjects, become *obliged* to 'produce' themselves as free, autonomous and 'choosing' people. In short, Foucault's deprecation of sovereign power reverses the terms of its relationship with 'freedom'. Power, in the Foucauldian sense, does not quell freedom. Rather, to be 'free', one must always be located within power (Lawler 2008), albeit power of a non-sovereign kind.

CONFESSION

Confession is a key technique of the 'technologies of the self' (Rose 1998; Burchell 2009). Although in his earlier work Foucault obliquely considers the formation of the 'self' as a disciplinary subject,[80] in his later work, notably the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* (1978), Foucault develops an interest in confession as a key technique for subjectivation in Western society, complementing the techniques of 'power', for instance hierarchical observation, as I discussed earlier:

> [N]ext to the testing rituals, next to the testimony of witnesses, and the learned methods of observation and demonstration, the confession became one of the West's most highly valued techniques for producing truth. We have since become a singularly confessing society. The confession has spread far and wide. It plays a part in justice, medicine, education ... in the most ordinary affairs of everyday life ... one confesses one's crimes, one's sins, one's thoughts and desires, one's illnesses and troubles; one goes about telling, with the greatest precision, whatever is most difficult to tell (Foucault 1978, p59)

It is in this respect that the technique, or practice, of confession has become a key technique that has achieved ascendency in contemporary, disciplinary, societies, and has been accorded with a privileged status in respect of its capacity to 'produce' the 'truth' about human subjects. This is not only confined to the practice of experts: confession, as a technique of self-improvement, has 'escaped' tight disciplinary confines, and can be witnessed in many familiar aspects of everyday life, for instance "the therapies and counselling [in] countless books", and "television chat shows" (Burchell 2009, p160).

Hence confession is a technique that is 'familiar' to many in contemporary society. Confessing one's 'ills', for instance one's 'suspicion' of one's disability, is an important

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[80] For instance, in *Discipline and Punish*, he discusses the "promptness" and "zeal" of disciplinary subjects (Foucault 1995, p174), personal characteristics against which one might be judged and normalized.

technique in these 'technologies of the self'. Confessing one's disability, or overcoming the 'fear' of disclosing one's disability, is not only to subject oneself to disciplinary power/knowledge, to be interpellated as a particular category or 'kind of person' (Hacking 2007); it is also a way in which one can strive to improve oneself or, as Rose comments, a way in which 'we' can be understood to be "working on our selves" (Rose 1998, p95); that is, to want to seek self-improvement is *desirable*, and confession a means by which such desires might be satisfied.

OBLIGED TO MAKE CHOICES

In the guidelines for 'disability disclosure' provided for students (and administrators) by the University, students are 'encouraged' to disclose their disability to an agent of the University. In many circumstances, this will be a member of the administration staff: the opportunity to disclose a disability is afforded to the student at many points, for instance when making an application to the University, attending for an interview, or during the enrolment process, as I discussed earlier. Within these texts, the rhetoric of choice may be seen in respect of disability disclosure; for instance, in the following text, the decision to disclose one's disability is posited not as a demand, but something one might *choose* to do:

> Below is information on what happens if you disclose to the University through your UCAS application
>
> - Disclose the disability/mental health Condition or Specific Learning Difficulty on the UCAS form
> - This information is shared with ███████████████ who then send you an information pack
> - You can then make a choice about what support you would like to access from the University

[Ref: *Prospective students*, website]

For the student, therefore, their decision to disclose a disability is framed as an appeal to their self-improvement, and the receipt of the promised 'support' framed as a 'choice'. Moreover, such a decision is posited in terms that are desirable. The disclosure of a disability might, the organisational texts suggest, accord "positive benefits" to those who choose to do so, a 'preference' that one might choose to assert. For instance, the procedures that the administrator is obliged to follow when documenting a disclosure of a disability characterise the accomplishment of disclosure in terms of 'benefits' for the individual student; however, this text also illustrates how the refusal or denial by the

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student of the 'opportunity' for one to disclose, and hence 'improve oneself', might also be pathologized:

> [1] Explain the *positive* benefits of disclosure [...] to meet their needs [...and] encourage them to contact [the disability support service] or allow you to do so, on their behalf [...]
>
> [2] If the student *agrees* that you can contact [the support service] on their behalf [...] ask them to sign section 1A of the Disclosure Authorisation Form [...]
>
> [3] If the student *prefers* to contact [the support service] him/herself, ask them to sign section 2A of the Disclosure Authorisation Form [...]
>
> [4] If the student does not *wish* the information to be shared [...] then ask the student to sign section B of the Disclosure Authorisation Form [...]
>
> [Ref. *Disclosure Guidelines* for staff, abridged text of full document]

It is difficult to overlook the rhetoric of choice that is infused within this particular text. The student is not presented, ostensibly at least, as a 'dependent' subject of disciplinary power; that is, there is no suggestion that one 'must' disclose or confess one's (suspected) disability. Instead, they are positioned – and hence invited to consider themselves – as a 'consumer' of the specialist disability support services that are tendered by the University, a service that they may or may not choose to use. My inference from this text is that the (notionally 'disabled') student 'should' or 'ought' to choose to disclose: that is, one ought to 'want' to improve oneself, and to seek 'support' in the pursuance of this desirable aim. This desirable aim is further substantiated by the citation of the law; although the student is under no legal duty to disclose a disability, the inference in this text (supplied to students) is that support, if required, might not be offered *unless* a formal disclosure is made:

> However, under part IV of the Disability Discrimination Act, it is illegal for a university to discriminate against a student or prospective student for a reason associated with a disability, and if you choose not to disclose, the university would not be legally obliged to make adjustments to support you.
>
> [Ref: *Prospective students*, website]

Hence, the 'refusal' of the offer to 'improve oneself' is pathologized. Not only must the student declining the offer of support put their signature to a document 'confessing' their refusal of 'support' (a document that will, nonetheless, be incorporated into the

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administrative archive, and might be circulated more widely) but the consequences for their self-development are spelled out clearly:

> I do not wish that any action be taken as a consequence of my disclosing a disability. **I accept that this may prevent or limit disability-related support that I would be eligible for.** I understand that this form will be retained by the ███████████ Services in accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act. I am aware that I can review this decision and can choose to contact ██████ ███████████ at a later date.
>
> Student signature.. Date...........................
>
> **If this section is completed; please return in a sealed envelope marked "strictly confidential" to:** ███

<div align="center">

[Ref. *Disclosure Authorisation Form/Section B*, document]

</div>

This 'request' to disclose is not, for the student, enforceable by legal means, although the law is cited directly by the University when making such a request of the student. For instance, the extract below illustrates how disclosure is explained to the student with direct reference to the extant disability legislation. However, in another 'explanatory' text, the student's notional disability is framed as *their* 'uncertainty', or lack of knowledge about themselves. Not only is this something that they are invited to 'confess', it is also furtive knowledge, necessitating a promise of 'confidence' (here, alluding to a private dialogue):

> Under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 1995), a person is considered to be disabled if they have a 'physical or mental impairment which has a
>
> 1. substantial
> 2. adverse
> 3. and long term [i.e. lasting, or expected to last, for 12 months or more] effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.
>
> In the context of Higher Education this definition includes a person with dyslexia or other specific learning difficulties.
>
> If you are unsure about whether or not you would be considered disabled, an adviser in ██████████████████ will be able to advise you, in confidence. If you would prefer to discuss this with someone outside of the University,

<div align="center">

[Ref: *Prospective students,* website]

</div>

This extract illustrates how the (sovereign) law and disciplinary power can function simultaneously, and how both function to incite the 'disclosure' of a disability. Although sovereign (legal) power is still cited and potentially exercisable (for instance,

the University may still be prosecuted if the law is not adhered to), it is in the circulation of disciplinary power/knowledge that the 'truths' of the subjects and practices of disability administration might be understood; that is, following Foucault (1981), the 'truth' of the law is no longer wholly predicated on the notion of justice or 'rights'; rather, it has "moved towards the externally guaranteed 'truth' of sociological or medical knowledge" (Barrett 1991, p142).

As such, in this extract 'the law' is deployed and authorised by networks of disciplinary power/knowledge with which it accords in a particular discursive context (Mills 2003).[81] It is through these networks, and the normalization of the 'disabled' subject, that the incitement for the student to disclose or 'confess' their disability is explained, formulated and presented. Indeed, this second extract, located later within the same text, suggests how techniques of normalization are implicated in the seeking and obtaining of the student's disclosure of a disability; here, the student's 'psychological' character is queried with respect to disclosure:

> From experience, we know that some students or prospective students are reluctant to disclose a disability because they fear that it might prejudice their application or result in them being treated differently by university staff.

[Ref: *Prospective students*, website]

In this text, the student's 'psychological' character is pathologized with respect to their reluctance to disclose: it is suggested to students that they may "fear" disclosure; in this sense, their 'character' is subjected to scrutiny: feeling fearful or apprehensive are 'problems' that the individual student is incited to 'work upon'; that is, to achieve 'successful' disclosure (with the commensurate rewards it might bring), such fears must be overcome by the student. Students are encouraged to confess these fears, and are also encouraged to gain the requisite knowledge and skills to overcome them. They are subject to normalization: it is their individual character, their capacity for "coping and adjustment" (Rose 1998, p159) which is presented as problematic. These characteristics are detrimental in respect of the successfully gaining, by the University, of 'disclosure'. As such, these 'problems' are presented as occasions for disciplinary 'support': one may disclose or confess a disability to an "advisor" or one may seek information; in short, one can work to 'improve' oneself.

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[81] See my related comments and explanation in chapter five.

Foucault, in *The Use of Pleasure* (Foucault 1990), relates the moral character and practice of the individual subject directly with their subjectivation within disciplinary power/knowledge. Just as for crime, health, disability, or a whole range of other human experiences and practices, Foucault argues that not only are the requirements for 'moral conduct' (for instance, speaking or acting in a certain way, or defending 'rights') plainly announced within authoritative 'laws' or doctrinal 'teaching',[82] but these requirements, statements of moral 'truth' selected from discourse, are circulated in a more "diffuse manner", folded into the practice or "real behaviour" (p25) of people:

> [E]very morality, in the broad sense, comprises ... codes of behaviour and forms of subjectivation; if it is true that they can never be entirely dissociated, though they may develop in relative independence from one another-then we should not be surprised to find that in certain moralities the main emphasis is placed on the code, on its systematicity, its richness, its capacity to adjust to every possible case and to embrace *every area of behaviour...*

> [T]he important thing is to focus on the instances of *authority* that enforce the code, that *require it to be learned* and observed, that penalize infractions; in these conditions, the subjectivation occurs basically in a *quasi-juridical* form, where the ethical subject refers his conduct to a law, or set of laws, to which he must submit at the risk of committing offenses that may make him liable to punishment (Foucault 1990, p29-30)

Foucault's formulation, the "quasi-juridical form" (Foucault 1990, p30) is important in the university context, for both students (and their incitement to 'confess' a disability) *and* for administrators, in their obligation to practice in ways that are 'correct' or 'appropriate' in respect of disability and disability-related 'attitudes'. Although later in this thesis I discuss how the administrators I interviewed narrated and accounted for their 'moral work', the organisational texts that they are required to read and 'follow' also offer an indication of how they might be subjectivised as moral 'kinds' of person.

For instance, administrators are obliged to demonstrate or practise a range of affective, 'anti-discriminatory' or 'psychological' communication skills with respect to disability; that is, they are obliged to perform in a way that is 'correct' or 'appropriate' to the administrative context. For instance, in this text, administrators are required to ensure that 'positive statements' are included within publicity material produced for the University. There is, however, no specification here as to what constitutes a 'positive

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[82] Which is something I return to later in this thesis when I discuss disability 'awareness training', particularly that reflecting the tenets of the 'social model' of disability

statement'; the reader is presumed to possess this information, or simply 'know' what this might entail:

> Ensure that all your publicity (prospectus, websites) contains positive statements on disability which would encourage applicants with disabilities and support early disclosure.

[Ref. Staff guidelines: *Admissions Processes and Procedures*, document]

Other guidelines oblige administrators to possess a particular range of communication skills, the possession of which is, once more, explicitly linked to the securing of a 'disability disclosure'. Here, for instance, the cultivation of a 'good rapport' with an individual member of staff is posited as instrumental in the gaining of students' 'confidence':

> Not all disabled students feel able/ confident about disclosing their disability on their UCAS/ application form. Some will only do so when they feel confident that the university will understand and support their needs or when they have established a good rapport with a particular member of staff.

[Ref. *Disclosure Guidelines for staff*, document]

However, the concern of the organisation is not only associated with the eliciting of disability disclosure from a student or applicant. The University is also obliged to concord with the requirements of legislation, in respect of both 'monitoring' its policies and practices with respect to disability (and other equality areas) and providing a workplace environment supportive of anti-discriminatory practice.[83] As such, the 'moral' and anti-discriminatory practices of individual workers are implicated in the meeting of legislative requirements and, relatedly, in controlling the legal and 'reputational risks' that the conduct of discriminatory practice might also invite. For instance, in the extract below, in addition to the thinly-veiled suggestion of the dangers and 'risks' for the University that might arise if staff chose not to practise in the prescribed manner, personal 'non-concordance' with anti-discriminatory practices is coupled with the individual 'character' of the employee:

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[83] At the time of this research, this directly related to the University's obligations in respect of the *Disability Equality Duty*, as discussed in chapter one.

It is vital that the University's commitment to equality and diversity is reflected across all communications. This includes everything from letters, faxes, printed publications and marketing materials to websites, videos, emails and even telephone and face-to-face conversations. The language used in these communications has an impact on the recipient, their perception of ███████ and may be repeated to other people. The use of discriminatory, prejudicial or exclusive language indicates a lack of professionalism and encourages the exclusion, devaluing and stereotyping of groups or individuals.

[Ref. *Guidelines for inclusive communication*, document]

Indeed, Foucault discusses this in *Discipline and Punish* (1995), whereby not only does surveillance incite homogeneity (all staff are obliged to act in a uniform way), but is also concerned with the possession of the 'correct' attitudes and 'nature', and articulate the same affective qualities:

> [Surveillance] exercised over them a constant pressure to conform to the same model ... So that they might all be like one another ... [It] hierarchizes in terms of value the abilities, the level, the 'nature' of individuals. It introduces, through this 'value-giving' measure, the constraint of a conformity that must be achieved (Foucault 1995, p182)

Hence surveillance in the administrative context might not only be concerned with the 'rational' and 'procedural' aspects of the University's aims; surveillance here might also be concerned with the affective or 'emotional' selves of workers; this is an important issue that I return to in my later chapters.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

First, my interpretation of these texts suggests that administrators, in most circumstances, are not required to formally 'assign' disability classifications to students. Rather their role, as proposed by these texts, is ostensibly one of eliciting the disclosure of a disability from a student, and, with the student's consent, facilitating their 'referral' to a specialist member of staff in a central University location. As such, whilst administrators are normally not charged with making disability classifications themselves, they are guided towards developing an understanding of the 'expert' disability classifications so they may support these processes. What these texts do not (and cannot) show is how administrators use and circulate disability classifications in their everyday work practice: this facet of the administrators' role is considered in the following chapter.

Second, for the administrator, my interpretation of these texts suggest that not only are they obliged to 'follow the rules' of disability disclosure and administration (concordant with the law, following University policies and procedures), but they are also incited to self-scrutinize their affective skills and 'moral' sensibility with respect to disability. This, however, might not be a concern that is related to the 'self awareness' of the administrator. Instead, I posit that it relates to the "self-formation" of the administrator as an "ethical subject" (Foucault 1990, p28). In his interpretation of Foucault's thesis, Nikolas Rose identifies what he terms "a neuroticization of social intercourse", wherein "our 'relationships' with lovers, friends and colleagues are discovered as key functional elements in both our personal happiness and our social efficacy" (Rose 1999, p249). This subjectivation of the administrator as 'moral' or 'ethical' person is something I return to, and develop more substantially, in later chapters of this thesis.

Last, my interpretation of these texts suggests that the 'presence' of disability within the administrative context represents danger and 'risk' to the University (in terms that are both legal and pedagogic), and that these dangers and risks produce opportunities for observing, classifying and 'judging' those with disabilities, opportunities in which the administrators are implicated. Relatedly, my interpretation of these texts also suggested that the range of 'circumstances' in which disability may be 'identified' is an opportunity for 'everyone', not just 'expert' or 'specialist' agents, to maintain a "network of observation of caution" (Armstrong 1993, p407). Later in this thesis, I extend my contemplation of this 'network' of disciplinary surveillance to a consideration of the physical and aural 'spaces' in which administrative practice, relating this to Foucault's allegoric *Panopticon* (Foucault 1995), which I introduced in chapter five. Furthermore, following Douglas (2002), I consider the role of ritual practices in the amelioration of these 'risks' within administrative work.

CHAPTER 8: MAKING DISABILITY CLASSIFICATIONS

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter considers how discourses associated with disability circulate through the practice of administration in the context of Higher Education, and how administrators assemble particular 'truths' in relation to disability. I explore how particular subjects are assembled by or 'selected from' these discourses. The concept of subjectivation, introduced in an earlier chapter, as deployed by Foucault (2000c), is also addressed in this respect, as are juridical (legal) discourses. In addition, the work of Mary Douglas is discussed, particularly her thesis of anomaly and ambiguity (Douglas 2002). I also consider how administrators may be obliged to 'work on their selves' (Rose 1998), and how they are incited to 'become' and recognise themselves to be workers of a particular 'moral character'; the insights I gain within this chapter contribute to my later chapters.

INTRODUCTION

Although there is research that considers the student and academic staff experience of disablement (most recently, Storrie et al 2011; Jacklin 2011) there is a paucity of literature that considers the role of the administrative staff in Higher Education, particularly in respect of how these staff assemble, or 'make up' (Hacking 2007) disability-related classifications in their everyday work. The roles of administrators working within Higher Education, as discussed in an earlier chapter, are undergoing considerable changes. These changes, some of which are in response to legal and political (and politicised) demands, include their increasing involvement in critical work that links the experience of individual students with disabilities with the practice of other professional or 'expert' groups (academic staff, or those in consulting roles). Hence enquiry into how administrators participate in the 'making' of disability classifications is important, and this chapter aims to add to the understanding of this.

This chapter has a number of specific aims. First, I am interested to learn how the practices of administrators contribute to the assembly of certain kinds of people, specifically those who become named as 'having' a disability (or not). To do this, I investigate the role of expert power in the formation of the 'disabled' subject; that is a subject who is governable, or "subjected, used, transformed and improved" (Foucault 1995, p136). Second, if both students and administrators are be understood to be imbricated within disciplinary power, then there is also the possibility of resistance

(Mills 2003; Youdell 2006); I consider this in respect of the spectre of failed or repudiated disability classifications, particularly those of dyslexia and mental disabilities.

Third, as a departure point to my later chapters, I consider how the administrators themselves may be incited to 'become' particular types of administrative subject. In considering how administrators may be incited to 'work on their selves' (1998), I consider the possibility that not only might administrators be subject *to* disciplinary and expert power but also, following Foucault (2000c) and Rose (1996, 1998), how they may also be incited to 'become' and recognise themselves as workers of a particular 'character'; the insights I gain in this respect within this chapter contribute to the later chapters of this thesis.

DISABILITY AS 'NEGATIVE ONTOLOGY'

Prior to my consideration of the 'making' of disability classifications, I consider what Campbell (2005) has described as the 'negative ontology' of disability. From the earliest stages of my enquiry, I found the category of 'disability' to be 'written into' the talk of the administrators and the texts that they used in their everyday work. Although my respondents felt able to classify disability and impairment 'kinds' *within* a general category of disability (and their talk around these I address throughout this chapter), the possibility of the 'essential' category of disability was ever-present within their talk, and none of them explicitly questioned the ontological character of this broad category.

It is in this sense that I found the administrators (and, admittedly myself, as a co-participant within the research field) to be ensconced within what Campbell (2005, p110) describes as "the rein/reign of ableism", a useful dyad which here I understand to be the premise that both the administrators and myself are subject to (reign) and ordered by (rein) a principally bio-medical conception of disability-ability that forms an essential ontology of our present time, as I discussed earlier (chapter three). In this respect, I ask Stefan, a junior administrator, what the word 'disability' means to him and how he might use this word in his workplace:

> SA   Not normal or usual [...] initially when somebody says to me 'disability' I think 'handicapped', because of the age in which I guess I was brought up in ...I think it's a term that's not really used any more. I guess visual impairment, deaf, and I suppose now, from working here, err, 'mental'

[Ref. Stefan/35:21-37:17, abridged]

I find that his initial characterisations of 'disability' demonstrate a firm differentiation between that which he considers to be 'normal', and that which he considers to be otherwise. Stefan substitutes one general category ('disabled') for another ('handicapped'), cautiously qualifying the historicity of the latter prior to his differentiation of some specific terms: 'visual', 'deaf', and 'mental'. Although Stefan's rejection of the word 'handicapped' suggests that he is attentive to variations in preferred language-use in respect of disability (and this is something I return to in a later chapter), he rehearses effortlessly two classifications, and tentatively names a third ('mental') in respect of his more recent workplace experiences.

Janice, also a junior administrator, identifies similar classifications. Like Stefan, her description of disability is described in terms of deficit or inability, and she explains these as obstacles to 'everyday' living. There is also the explicit mention of 'help'; that is, a requirement for assistance. She also differentiates individual impairment experiences ('can't walk') from the introduction of enabling technologies ('wheelchair'), although the latter is still posited in terms of 'otherness' and deficit ('*they* can *still* get around'). Although she suggests a general category of 'mental', she expresses uncertainty about how this category may function; similarly for 'learning disability', which she tentatively (and with much uncertainty) classifies within the same ('mental') domain:

> NC   If I say the word 'disability' to you, what does that mean to you?
>
> JR   Erm [...] Someone...it can be physical or mental...erm, not being able to do something, or something affecting ...Oh I don't know! Erm... Not having the ability to do something. That's not a very good [way of putting it] is it?
>
> NC   Can you give me an example?
>
> JR   Erm, not being able to see, being blind, that's a disability...Because you can't see and you can't necessarily get on with everyday things...you might need help with things. Erm, yeh not being able to do something...
>
> NC   Can you give me another example?
>
> JR   Wheelchair users can't walk. Then [although] I suppose they can still get around. Erm [...] I don't know [...] Is depression a disability? Erm, or maybe a learning disability? That's 'mental' isn't it? Erm, not being able to take on information like other people can. Erm, yeh.

[Ref. Janice/53:55-56:38, abridged]

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Although there are variations in the meticulousness with which Janice and Stefan articulate the classifications they name, there are consistencies between their accounts: both of them associate disability with, in some way, 'deficit', 'loss' or 'inability', both make selections from bio-medical and pedagogic discourse, and both of them, more fundamentally perhaps, tacitly accept the ontological precept or 'truth' of my question: that is, that disability 'is' a category that 'can' produce further differentiations or classifications. It is in this sense that I find that these administrators are formulating *normalizing judgements* (Foucault 1995), that is, the delineation or 'marking out' of individuals from one another in a context in which disciplinary (expert, bio-medical) power is in circulation, and within which a transgression has been identified. This relates to Foucault's notion of disciplinary punishment.

For Foucault, disciplinary 'punishment' comprises two related forms: a juridico function, whereby 'punishment' equates to action or application of a 'sanction' for a transgression of a particular norm (for instance, a penalty for not passing an exam, meeting a standard, or breaking a law), and second, the "reducing [of] gaps", a counteractive function, whereby "punishment is exercise" (Foucault 1995, p180). That is, to 'be punished' means to both identify a transgression (for this, Foucault identifies transgressions in 'time', 'activity', 'behaviour', 'speech' and 'the body') and to take measures to remediate, or provide remedy for, the transgression identified. The relationship here to disability can be made apparent: a classification of disability may be enounced in response to transgressions of time, activity, behaviour, speech or some particular articulation of the body. These thresholds or norms (but not the classification itself) are established in law (that is, that there is such a thing as 'disability' is parameterized in law), are described and classified by expert agents (doctors, psychologists or social workers, for instance, whose role is to classify) and are subject to correction or remediation.

For example, the student who cannot complete a (verbal, written) task within an expected time is subjected to juridical inquiry ('Does he have a disability?') , is subjected to expert inquiry ('Does he have dyslexia?'), and may then be subjected to remediation ('This is what we can do to improve matters'). The key Foucauldian notion here is that disciplinary 'punishment' is not that which invites retribution from those observing, or a penance from the subject himself; rather it incites him to engage with "the mechanics of training...exercise" (Foucault 1995, p180) in order that the 'gap' that

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has been exposed or uncovered can be closed or addressed in some way; hence forth, the intended effect is to *normalise*.

As such, my interpretation of these data suggests that the notion of 'disability' is formulated by the administrators as an individuating experience; their descriptions 'make up' an individual (human) subject cast against, and differentiated from the field of 'normality'. What constitutes 'normality' here is delimited within the field itself: our conversations relate to the university context and the threshold by which one can successfully perform as a student (those who are 'normal') and those who, in contrast, 'cross the threshold' of normality, and are henceforth classified as 'disabled' in terms of the deficits that they are thought to (individually) possess, as something "inherently negative" (Campbell 2005, p109).

However, also embedded within these two examples are intimations of 'non' bio-medical conceptions of disablement. For example, Stefan's candidness in 'correcting' his phrasing and Janice's mention of 'everyday activities' (albeit in respect of a need for 'help') suggest that these administrators are assembling classifications of disablement that are not exclusively incited by expert (bio-medical or pedagogic) discourse. Although I discuss language-use specifically in a later chapter, a more detailed examination of the functioning of discourse and the circulation of expert power/knowledge is now indicated, as is an application of the concept of subjectivation. For clarity, I now select 'dyslexia' and 'mental disabilities' for scrutiny, as each offers a focused opportunity to discuss administrative concerns (or not) in relation to their classification, and also because these classifications were those most often cited by my respondents (the significance of this is something I return to later in this thesis).

MAKING CLASSIFICATIONS

I do not strive here to question the 'truthfulness' of contemporary statements 'about' dyslexia, and nor am I engaging with the 'diagnosis debate' that has characterised debate around this classification elsewhere.[84] Rather, I am concerned with exploring *how* such statements have gained the *status of truth* in the particular setting in which I am undertaking research. That is, I am, following Hacking (2007) concerned with

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[84] This echoes Ian Hacking's remarks in respect of the "heated but pointless debates" about the historical 'reality' of multiple personality disorder (Hacking 2007, p299). See also Davis (2008, p446) for a related discussion.

investigating how classifications of dyslexia (and mental health) function to 'make people' and are put to work in the Higher Education environment, specifically by administrators. However, in considering dyslexia (and, later, mental health) in this way, I am aware that I am entering contentious territory by appearing to 'question' the 'truth' about an experience that is familiar to so many. It is not my aim to be contentious at the individual level, however, and I do not dispute the 'real' experience of dyslexia (be it be understood as disabling barrier or a gainful characteristic for living). Rather, following Foucault, it is the *constitution of the subject* 'as someone with dyslexia', and not the individual person's 'experience of dyslexia' that I am here concerned with (Mills 2004).

Hacking (2007) reviews the classification of 'human kinds', and develops a thesis on classification that functions beyond "straightforward medical" systems of distinction (Davis 2008, p444); his primary work is particularly concerned with the classification of Multiple Personality Disorder (Hacking 1998), although his work also explores (reflecting an indebtedness to Foucault) others who function 'at the margins' of society, for example those who harm others or are classified as 'criminal' (Hacking 2007; Davis 2008). Central to his thesis is his notion of 'making up' people (Hacking 2007). For Hacking, the notion of 'making up people' refers to how systems of classification "may bring into being a new kind of person, conceived of and experienced as a way to be a person" (Hacking 2007, p285). That is, not only can particular types of subject be constituted through discourse and power/knowledge (a clearly Foucauldian notion, relating to the concept of subjectivation, discussed earlier) but also that in becoming a particular subject or 'kind of person', the person makes use of those classifications that are 'available' to her/him; as Lawler notes:

> [T]he kinds of knowledge produced within discourse do not simply concern sets of 'facts' about the external world, but are about what kinds of persons we are. Thus they are bound up with our sense of self…What this line of questioning opens up is the possibility that *who we (and others) are* is an effect of *what we know ourselves (and others) to be*, that knowledges have produced categories of person and that this is how we understand ourselves. (Lawler 2008, p59, emphases as original)

As such, it is not only the discourses that are of possible interest to an analysis of (in respect of the examples I provide in this thesis) dyslexia or mental health, but also those "interactions between classifications of people and the people classified, and who are altered by being so classified" (Hacking 2004, p279). Invoked here is Hacking's second

"slogan" (Hacking 2007, p285), which he styles as 'looping', or the cyclical interaction between the person(s) who is classified, and the classification itself:

> [T]hose who are classified, and who are altered by being so classified, also change in ways that causes systems of classification [to] be modified in turn...Classifying changes people, but the changed people cause classifications themselves to be redrawn. (Hacking 2004, p279)

Classification, Hacking argues, is not 'new', and may be discovered in (historical) contexts where sovereign power (that is, power that is hierarchical) is prime. 'Making up people', their classification, he argues has often been performed in order to realise administrative and legal aims. On the conquest of Mesopotamia, for example, he notes:

> We can well imagine that Darius's captains chose to categorise his subjects for the convenience of administration. The subjects were not classified in exactly this way before they were conquered. Geography, language, allegiances, previous social cohesion, bodily structure, and skin colour would all have been grounds for forming classifications, and in some cases those kinds of people would not have existed, *as a kind of people*, until they had been so classified, organised and taxed. Others were cemented as kinds of people by classification and administration, and also by revolt, for a people has to solidify in order to throw off the imperial yoke. (Hacking 2007, p288, emphases as original)

However, whilst Hacking (following Foucault) does not reject the possibility for sovereign power (see Foucault 1995), noting how classifications may aid those who wish to 'resist' the "yoke" of sovereign power (Hacking 2007, p288), he also considers how classification may serve to 'make up' people in the context of a Foucauldian type of power-relationship, whereby individuals are not 'made up' wholly through exposure to "brute power" (Hacking 2007, p290), but who are subject to disciplinary power that "makes" them (Foucault 1995, p170); this does not, however, revoke the possibility for resistance; this is something that I return to later.

Hacking proposes a framework of five elements: the "classification into kinds of people"; the individuals within the classification (including those who are 'borderline' or liminal); the institutions that "firm up the classifications"; the knowledges about those who are subjects of classification; and the experts in the "administration" of classification (Hacking 2007, p288-9). These elements, in the present context, necessitate my investigation of the classifications (for example, 'disabled', 'non-disabled', 'dyslexic'), including 'uncertain' classifications; the organisations who support (or require) the enacting of classifications; the knowledges that are in

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circulation (lay, expert); and consideration of those who 'can', or are 'able to' classify (experts, and others).

What is particularly noticeable in respect of this thesis is how 'dyslexia knowledge' appears to circulate within some contexts and not others. Within the United Kingdom, for instance, dyslexia is legitimate 'classification' for 'debate' in educational contexts and amongst other individuals and groups for whom education is a concern.[85] Of further utility in this respect is Hacking's notion of 'administrative kinds' (Hacking 1995), 'kinds' of people, classifications, that reflect a "bureaucratic imperative to distinguish, enumerate, control and improve deviants...an administrative problem" (Hacking 1995, p380); Hacking's particular phrasing here ('distinguish', 'improve') can be seen to be reminiscent of Foucault's description and discussion regarding disciplinary power and its imperative to observe, judge, normalize and examine (Foucault 1995), as I discussed in an earlier chapter.

THE CLASSIFICATION OF DYSLEXIA

The classification of dyslexia invites my consideration of how disciplinary discourses are in circulation within the administrative context. Disciplinary discourses, following Foucault, can be understood not only to delimit what it is possible to 'know', but also serve to describe how the power/knowledge from which they are assembled is circulated and reproduced. It is in this sense that discourses can be understood as "vehicle[s] for the construction of meaning and 'truths' in specific socio-historic circumstances" (Blain 1994, p524). For Foucault, such constraints on 'truth' are described in terms of 'internal exclusions', as Sara Mills explains:

> Disciplines work as a limit on discourse, because they prescribe what can be counted as possible knowledge within a particular subject area. Because they have strict methodological rules and a corpus of propositions which are

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[85] At the time of writing (Autumn 2011), for instance, the UK internet discussion forum *Mumsnet* contained over four thousand individual discussion 'threads' that included 'dyslexia' as a topic. My rudimentary review of these entries indicated many were associated with education, 'support' and (parental) knowledge and skills. This single internet resource alone provides a potent example of the circulation of knowledge(s), and the establishment (and disestablishment) of particular 'truths' around 'dyslexia' practices, although it is of interest to note that the (expert) category of dyslexia itself is rarely questioned: dyslexia is a 'truth', at least within this specific context, and this in itself perhaps deserves further investigation beyond the present study, particularly in relation to the parental obligations that appear to be incited.

considered to be factual, disciplines allow for the production of new propositions but within extremely tightly defined limits. (Mills 2003, p60)

Therefore an examination of the techniques and apparatus of classification, as used by the administrators, is of utility here as it will facilitate a reveal of the discourses and power/knowledge relationships that are at work and in circulation; that is, "what can be truthfully said" (Foucault 1981, p60) about first dyslexia, and later, mental disabilities.

FOLLOWING PROCEDURES

Stefan explains that he identifies dyslexia as a 'disability' because it is included upon a 'list' of disability classifications that are inscribed within the student enrolment documentation. The student enrolment system is an electronic database which functions as a centralised repository for all student information, and is accessible by all the administrative staff.[86] Whilst it is the 'responsibility' of the student to provide information about 'disability', it is Stefan's responsibility to ensure that the information collected for later inclusion within the database. The 'list' is presented to the student in a manner that foregrounds the 'benefits' the disclosure of such information may convey. Here, I ask Stefan to describe how and why he undertakes this process, and (humorously) he explains how he relies on this 'list':

SA   We have to ask students when they enrol whether they have a disability

NC   How do you do that?

SA   When they fill in the enrolment form, there's a tiny little box 'yes or no', 'do you have a disability?'

NC   So you say 'have you got a disability?'

SA   Well, no. We give them the form, and then they fill it in.

NC   Do they ask you about that [part of the form]?

SA   [laughs] Occasionally!

NC   What sort of questions do they ask?

SA   They might have something that they're not sure is a disability or not

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[86] At the time of data collection, this database contained information about student names, addresses, disability status, enrolment dates and funding arrangements. Since the completion of my data collection, the database has been significantly extended and now contains information regarding student assessment results. When this research was conducted, only administrators could gain access to the database, although recent innovations (2011) have enabled limited access to this information by academic staff.

NC   Can you give me an example?

SA   Dyslexia

NC   So might they say, 'I have dyslexia, is that a disability?' What would you say?

SA   [laughs] Well I would pull out my form that says [lists] what 'are' disabilities. If the student ticks 'no', we just ignore it. If the student ticks 'yes', we have to give them a separate form which says...well, it has about six tick boxes and a list of disabilities, 'please tick the one that applies to you' [...] That's my understanding of it, *to prevent discrimination.*

[Ref. Stefan/40:59-43.18, 53:00 abridged]

This technique of classification, presuming the task is completed, does not require the administrator to explicitly elaborate or explain 'expert' knowledge about dyslexia. Although expert (bio-medical or educational/psychological) power and knowledge 'about' disabilities is embedded within the list of classifications that Stefan reproduces, and is circulated throughout the administrative environment by the technologies of the database, these remain 'silent' (Douglas 1987) within administrative discourses and their classifications. Expert power 'exists', is imminent, only in the moment of student/administrative classification, obscured ''behind' an administrative task, yet (following Foucault 1995) its effect appears to be to support the differentiation and normalization of the 'disabled' subject. It is in this way that I find that Stefan's explanations of his work reflects Foucault's notion of the *dispositif*, or apparatus (Foucault 1980):

> [That] apparatus of control which produces submission and compliance to the demands of governance. The dispostif is more than the discourse, more than the knowledge which is an essential prerequisite for the organisation and the management of populations, because it combines discourse with practices and effects and, most importantly, relates all of these to a strategic function. (Jackson and Carter 1998, p60)

Stefan's examination ('checking') of the student in this context is justified in relation to the 'benefits' it might offer to the student and the moral worthiness of the activity which, in his words, is 'to prevent discrimination', and it also concurs with an (ideological) 'truth' about disability that delimits what it is permissible to 'say' about disability. That is, 'preventing discrimination' is the *right and proper* action to take. However, the 'checking', as he describes it, serves to meet the demands of an administrative regime that desires increasingly minute kinds of knowledge about the

individual; these are collated in the centralised enrolment database as 'student data'. This junior administrator cannot himself act on this knowledge. Rather, the collection of this information functions to assure the organisation that "order is being maintained" (Jackson and Carter 1998, p52). Hence although the justification here is to produce knowledge about the disabled subject (so they can be afforded 'support'), its function is (also) to "produce obedience" (Jackson and Carter 1998, p61) through both the technologies and apparatus of an administrative regime, *and* by inviting (indeed, requiring) a moral obligation from the administrator.

Although there *is* dialogue with the student (the student must be offered the form, and in doing so they 'talk with' or 'advise' the student how to complete the form), the 'counsel' offered by the administrator is not mandatory; rather, their official role is only to ensure that the form is completed. Any further communication (or "help"), with the exception of their 'signposting' of other departments or authorised sources of 'help', is initiated at the bequest of the administrator at the moment of their interaction, and is unsanctioned by the University. The use of a prescribed form functions to limit what can be 'known' about the student completing the form; in completing the form the student is invited to produce (indeed, they can *only* produce) a partial account of themselves or their experiences (Pence 2001), an account that has been framed or delineated by the organisation using largely medical or pedagogic descriptors, and which is reduced to a simple 'tickbox' designation.

The actions of the administrator in the 'handling' of student information are orchestrated to 'move' the assessment of the individual subject, their 'case', on to "the next occasion for action" (Pence 2001, p201). Hence the practice of administration in respect of disability and 'student information' is mediated by the reception and (re)production of this particular text. It is in this way that both the individual administrator and the text are "doing something" (Pence 2001, p202; Smith 2006). Therefore, although the what can be truthfully 'said' about disability *can* be understood to be discursively constituted, imbricated within professional or expert power, it might also be argued that, in processing 'student information' in the way they do, Stefan and his colleagues are also performing *ideological work* for the University: filling in the form is the 'natural' response, and their 'knowledge' that this will 'prevent' discrimination (or at least initiate future practice with this aim) appears commonsensical.

Another reveal here is that it is the student *themselves* who becomes inculcated in an act of self-surveillance: it is they (and not Stefan) who is obliged to choose from a limited range of 'disability' classifications. In principle, it would be entirely feasible for the administrators to make this classification themselves; indeed, that Stefan sometimes needs to facilitate the 'self classification' illustrates how he, too, is (to some extent) an agent in this process. However, the administrators understand clearly what the level of their participation *should* be; that they sometimes need, in their words, to 'guide' the student in this process is an uncomfortable disclosure for them to make: the administrator is obliged to support the student, but with the understanding that their role is to facilitate choice, and not undertake the assessment themselves, 'on behalf' of the student.

Dyslexia, as explained by the administrators with whom I talk, is an uncomplicated classification to record, and on the form that Stefan uses, it is reduced to a simple 'tickbox': the administrative classification of dyslexia is either 'yes' or 'no'. However, if the student is 'unsure', then Stefan describes how he advises the student to 'check' elsewhere;[87] if this is not successful, then he ensures that *some* data is collected, using the 'unseen disability' classification as his default selection, and thereby ensuring that (his) concordance with the administrative procedures is maintained, his moral obligation to support anti-discriminatory measures is met, and that the data collection is 'total':

NC   How informed are you to advise the student how to fill in that form?

SA   The disability form? Not really.

NC   Are you given any guidance?

SA   No, because *they* have to fill it in [stressed]. Yeh, but the awful thing is that if they're not sure, and they don't fill it in, then it's missed. I can't really intervene...But I guess we *do* [stressed, hesitantly] sometimes

NC   How?

SA   If someone says 'I've got dyslexia, is it a disability?' I tell them 'you need to tick that box'

NC   [Can you give] any other examples?

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[87] Administrators in this situation would typically guide the student to read the organisational texts that I described in the previous chapter

SA   They might say 'I've got this...is this an unseen disability?', but I wouldn't know. I advise them to either check then come back, or put it as an 'unseen disability'. Because there's a space on the form for you to write in what your disability is...

[Ref. Stefan/43:50-45:12, abridged]

In respect of the student's self-classification, it cannot be said that expert power/knowledge has 'vanished'; it is still clearly present, albeit in a form that has been incorporated into the administrative apparatus, and it still functions to 'make possible' the disability classifications that are used by the administrators. However, what is also perhaps happening here relates to what Nikolas Rose (1996) has described as 'revising distinctions':

> Fundamental to this...is a re-coding of dividing practices, revising the distinctions between the *affiliated* and the *marginalized*. By the affiliated I mean those who are considered 'included'...to remain affiliated, one must 'enterprise' one's life through active choice, within authoritative terms and limits that have become integrated within all the practices of everyday life... (Rose 1996, p340, italics as original)

Rose is imagining a revision, in liberal democracies, of the dividing practices and their classifications, which, as Mary Douglas reminds me, is something that occurs subtly, and often without notice (Douglas 1987). Drawing upon Foucault's thesis on dividing practices (Foucault 1995), it follows that at the centre of such a revision must be power/knowledge and, specifically, the functioning of these in relation to expert authorities. However, Rose also makes a second point. He does not argue that the traditional 'experts' have disappeared; they are still present (above, styled by Rose as 'authoritative'), yet the mode of subjectivation emphasises the individual: it is *they* who are obliged make choices about *themselves* and in doing so, they are also obliged to identify as *consumers*, albeit within the constraints of an (obscured) expert authority. It is in this sense that I understand the individual student becoming *obliged to make a choice* about themselves (in terms of their classification; in terms of their 'disabled' identity), notwithstanding the presence of expert power-relationships that are circulated through the administrative apparatus of enrolment.

In making this choice, the individual subject recognises *themselves* in the process of becoming 'named' and classified (Lawler 2000, 2008; Youdell 2006, 2011). My conversation with Kirsteen provides a good illustration of this. Whereas Stefan's role affords him frequent but brief moments of direct interaction with students, Kirsteen's

role of 'Disability Support Manager' [88] affords her protracted contact. Here, she describes the complex negotiation of 'dyslexic identity' that occurs at the 'event' of her intervention, which includes the provision of financial and technical resources for students who have disclosed a disability and who, following their subjection to 'expert' assessment, have been granted support:

KP   I think it's just easier to be sensitive I think, you know, in a ... *you don't want people to think that you're making judgements* and I think that sometimes people put judgements on their own disability [...] Because for some people it comes down to 'well, I have dyslexia and that makes it difficult to process this information, that information, but for the difficulties that I have I also have things that make up for it'. So they might be very creative or very skilled in some other area [...] But then, and this is going to sound a bit negative, I think that disability gets a bit more proudly used as a term when somebody is entitled to something

NC   [Right

KP   *There's a lot of power behind it* [...] if you are a student that has a disability you know [...] that you are entitled to your rights, then you [be]come a little more open about using the word 'disabled'. 'My disabled student's allowance', er, you know, it becomes a little less hidden.

NC   [Is that] ever an issue for the student [...] identifying themselves as disabled?

KP   I think that some people are just accepting and don't think too much about the, you know, dictionary definitions behind the words, they just know that 'look, I'm having a hard time, I've come here for support, it's called the disabled student's allowance, I may not think of myself as disabled, but this is what I need', and 'blah blah blah'... But I think it probably is difficult, and this is just me putting you know my thoughts on it because *I can't speak for the students*, but I think that some people, especially when they're diagnosed later on in life with something like dyslexia [...] *it's like, 'I'm disabled? Oh, how interesting'.*

[Ref. Kirsteen/16:56-20:32, abridged]

This extract demonstrates how both expert power/knowledge (the subjectivation of the individual subject as 'dyslexic') circulates simultaneously with another form of power/knowledge (the student as a 'consumer') in the practice of facilitating student support. The student is incited to make the *choice* to identify as a student who is 'dyslexic', even though this choice is constrained within the apparatus of expert power/knowledge (for which she is acting as an agent) and is subject to the parameters

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[88] I have disguised this role title, affording it a 'generic' nature, to preserve anonymity

of expert knowledge that Kirsteen feels confident to rehearse during our conversation: expert pedagogic knowledge that those with dyslexia may find it 'difficult to process information'. The (subjectivised) 'dyslexic' subject who, in recognising themselves as such, is now able to reinstate their expert-assembled 'needs' as both commodities ('entitled to something', 'support allowances') and reiterate them as choices; indeed, for Kirsteen, their subjection to expert power appears secondary, a vestigial moment ('how interesting', she tells me) that deserves little comment.

Kirsteen, too, is a participant in her own subjectivation. Although she recognises herself as one kind of subject (an administrative subject who arbitrates expert-prescribed interventions), she also recognises herself as a subject to the *same* discourses of 'consumerism' and 'choice'. Like Stefan, an outcome of her subjectivation is her (self) assembly as a 'non judgemental' individual, and one for whom a (personal) scepticism of consumerism or positive assertions of 'entitlement' in the context of disability incite a little discomfort ('this is going to sound a bit negative'). It is in this sense that Kirsteen can be seen to be publicly *resisting* her identification with what she styles as 'old school' approaches to the work that she does; that is, discourses that appear to sustain as 'truthful' the bio-medical nature of disabilities. For example, when I ask her to compare the service she provides with those of other universities, she reveals her preference for classifications that are not 'pathological' in their style:

> KP   I think that [names a university] calls their office the 'Learning Support Office', and [names another] calls theirs the 'Equality and Diversity Office, and [names a third] sticks to that die-hard 'Disability Support Office'. It's not shocking, but it is kind of *'Wow, that's old school!'*

[Ref. Kirsteen/15:16]

It is through this that Kirsteen's resistance to expert power/knowledge is most marked. Not only does she desire her students (customers) to be 'free' (and in doing this, subjects herself to discourses of service/consumerism), but she refuses for *herself* identification with 'expert' (particularly medical) power/knowledge. That Nikolas Rose's thesis in respect of 'choice', as discussed above, may also apply to the administrators is something that I felt to be a possibility, and so I consider this in greater detail later in this thesis, where I consider the obligation of administrators to 'make themselves up' and identify as 'consumerist' agents.

The re-coding (Rose 1996) of dyslexia from medical classification to pedagogic-administrative classification (as discussed earlier), and its insertion into the apparatus of Higher Education, appears to be highly regular: during my fieldwork, few administrators were sceptical as to 'truthfulness' of dyslexia as a disability classification, and most felt able to rehearse with clarity the interventions that they were obliged to introduce in response to its classification. This regularity was something I explored further with them. Indeed, the frequency with which the administrators encounter dyslexia in their everyday work was commented on by all my respondents. For instance, both Morag (a senior administrator) and Kirsteen describe dyslexia as being a commonplace disability classification:

> NC   [At] what points in your work as an administrator do you come across that word [disability] and use that word as part of your job?

> MB   It would be in regard to students who… have … learning, learning disabilities 'i.e.' dyslexia … which is one, which I think is one of the main areas of disability I've come across in my role

[Ref. Morag/ 05:09—5:50, abridged]

> KP   I think nowadays, people are coming forward and discovering unseen disabilities that they may have and it surprises me the number of dyslexic people who come through [this office], I mean I've had about five hundred since April [eight months] which is a pretty big number when you consider [...] These are changing times nowadays, more people must know somebody who has something like dyslexia…

[Ref. Kirsteen/43:34-44:27, abridged]

Janice, too, experiences the classification of dyslexia frequently in her work. Unlike Kirsteen, however, she rarely finds it necessary to communicate directly with individual students. Rather, she tells me, her interaction is with the *classification* and the *specific practices* that it invites: she is working with "information", as she explains to me, "about" students, and not necessarily 'with' the student themselves. She identifies a range of specific administrative responses (extra time for examinations, for instance) that she knows might be indicated within the student's Personal Learning Plan (PLP).[89]

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[89] The Personal Learning Plan, or 'PLP', is a text describing the 'reasonable adjustments' that should be offered to a student with a disability. These are formulated following an assessment, normally by an Educational Psychologist, and circulated by

Janice can describe these explicitly, and in some detail; her familiarity with these reflects the frequency with we she is required to respond, and the regularity of the interventions themselves. Indeed, she explains, the text of the PLP incorporates a distinct section detailing with 'adjustments', and Janice informs me how she navigates directly to this information when planning an administrative response:

NC   The majority disability that you are working with is dyslexia?

JR   [Yeh

NC   Are you dealing directly face-to-face with students?

JR   Well, I suppose it's more 'about' them erm, yeh, it's more about them rather than...yes, it's less face to face

NC   What do you do with them that's different?

JR   Erm they get separate...they get extra time for their assessments, so they have a different hand-in date, erm they get extra time in exams, and they're usually in a different room, and they might get rest breaks, they might have to have a reader...

NC   How do you know what to do?

JR   Erm they'll have a personal learning plan made up by learner support, so they've had an assessment, and then we get just this assessment through

NC   And you have access to that [learning plan, PLP]?

JR   Yep

NC   And what are your thoughts when going through it?

JR   Erm, 'What do I need to do?' [laughs, gestures feigned confusion]

NC   How do you get the information you need from the PLP?

JR   Erm I just look at ...there's a heading [in the text] for assessments or examinations, erm, I'll look at that [to see if it says] for extra time...students normally have twenty-five percent [extra time], it might say erm 'provide a computer', 'provide a scribe', 'provide a reader'

[Ref. Janice/1:00:23-1:04:43, abridged]

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the 'disability support' administrators. My research design did not necessitate access to individual learning plans, and hence I did not seek ethical approval to use them, and nor are they included as data here. Rather, for this research I was concerned with the practices of administrators, and *how* they use/circulated the PLP. These discussions did not invite the disclosure of sensitive personal information.

Janice is describing a range of normalizing responses to dyslexia that, in a highly regularised and anticipated form, have become part of the administrative apparatus: the administrative procedure describes dyslexia in terms of a set of practices that support the "reducing of gaps" (Foucault 1995, p180); that is, the effect is to normalize the (dyslexic) subject through specific interventions, relating mostly to 'time', that function to ameliorate an organisational-pedagogic risk, the "danger of being unable to learn" (p180). The juridico-natural reference, which I described earlier in this chapter, here relates to what is both observable, and what is established through regulation and law (Foucault 1995). What is observable is defined by expert knowledge of dyslexia, and expressed here as norms of 'literate ability' and 'concentration span'; these knowledges permeate the administrative apparatus, and serve to describe explicitly the corrective or remedial responses that are necessary to restore 'order', that is, the successful and 'competent' student.

In respect of the juridical function, legislation which describes a requirement for the 'reasonable adjustment' of pedagogic practices is extant in this context,[90] hence the administrators might be understood to be responding to the law in their application of prescribed pedagogic interventions aimed at ameliorating 'differences' between those with dyslexia, and those not classified as such. The law, however, cannot act without the expert-pedagogic power and its (administrative) apparatus that are in circulation here. The discourses of 'truth' (that assign who is dyslexic, who is not, and what the correct interventions are) are described in the knowledge of experts, and the law can *only* be authorised on this basis (Foucault 1981). Although (ostensibly) the administrators might be understood to be responding to *legal* discourse, their practised responses are subject to the disciplinary power of 'experts', and may be styled by administrators as 'help':

> MB   [D]yslexia is not black and white and there are various degrees of dyslexia and there are different resources that different students need. And I first became aware of it when I worked at another education institution [...] where the student, because of the vision problem[91] [...] they needed a different coloured paper [...] black on white would make it all jumble together whereas cream was softer and I do know some people for who need[ed] different colours...[My knowledge has] come from

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[90] The *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act* (Great Britain 2001) and, as recently enacted, *The Equality Act* (Great Britain 2010)

[91] Morag is referring here to difficulties in reading text, which she explains as a 'visual' difficulty

looking at information about dyslexia, and just getting a broader knowledge 'cos *I like to be in a position to say or to know or to be able to help*

MB   Some staff [are] now in key roles. And I think that it's staff in key roles that have the knowledge ... If the student disclosed that they have dyslexia erm then we would find out, they would provide their ... psychological profile, their assessment. And that always specifies the kind of support that the student would find helpful... So we would try and find where possible provide that student with the resources to *help them*

[Ref. Morag/09:28-11:16, 24:24, abridged]

The administrators are subject to those expert and juridical discourses that are in circulation, and their interventions (although ostensibly to 'help' the student, as Morag recounts) function to maintain the boundaries of 'safe' pedagogic practice, and in doing so, ensure that concordance with the law is also maintained. This explanation, however, implies that the administrators are somewhat 'passive' in this process. I am therefore interested to learn whether administrators simply 'follow' the instructions of others, or whether they are active agents in respect of the provision of dyslexia 'support'. I ask Janice whether the information provided in the PLP is sufficient for her to undertake her role (organising adjustments). She describes the prescribed level of involvement that she *should* have, in respect of the parameters of her role, but then explains how she sometimes finds it necessary to deviate from this:

NC   Does it [the PLP] provide all the information you need?

JR   Erm...not always.

NC   Can you give me an example when it's not provided you with the information you need?

JR   Erm...there was one person, I think we needed to ask her what she needed...I can't remember what it was...I think she needed extra time. No, it said 'rest breaks', but it [the PLP] didn't say anything about 'extra time'. So we had to ask her. Yeh, there was something that we needed to check with somebody [else

NC   Who did you check with?

JR   Well, I'm not supposed to be too involved in PLPs, but sometimes I have to be, just to check up on stuff. But it's mainly the 'Exams Officers'[92]

NC   When you say 'I'm not supposed to be involved' what do you mean?

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[92] The Examination Officer is an academic, not administrative, role

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JR   Erm, I think it's supposed to be an academic thing, that they organise it. Because it's a PLP and it's about disabilities, everything's very confidential, so the less people who know the better type of thing. I *think*. And so it shouldn't be my responsibility. It should fall on an academic.

NC   For what reason do you think?

JR   To blame...so we can blame somebody! [laughs]

NC   You're saying that for PLPs you have most of the information you need most of the time, but occasionally some things aren't clear, so you go back to the Exams Officer and [they

JR   [and then *they* query it with learning support, Yes.

NC   So generally you get involved in it only to the degree you need to in order to do the aspect of your role?

JR   Yeh

NC   So would you ever need to communicate directly with a dyslexic student in terms of clarifying what they need?

JR   Erm, yeh I have done in the past, but I... yes, I would [again]

[Ref. Janice/1:04:43-1:07:21, abridged]

There is little evidence here that supports the assertion that administrators in this particular institution might perceive themselves to be 'invisible' workers (Szekeres 2006; Allen-Collinson 2009), and nor is there strong evidence of the 'exclusion' of administrators (Allen-Collinson 2009), that is, that administrators perceive themselves to be viewed as subservient. Rather, my interpretation suggests that administrators speak constructively about their workplace relationships with colleagues, although they do recognise notions of accountability in respect of academic staff, and Janice's humour ('blame somebody') perhaps reflects her identification of the comedic potential in subverting commonly held or dominant ideas (Douglas 1975) about administrator/academic relationships. Hence although the relationship between administrators and their academic colleagues is not viewed unenthusiastically, their explanations rehearse the boundaries that demarcate administrative 'work' from that of their academic colleagues.

Indeed, rather than feeling 'excluded' (Allen-Collinson 2009) and inconsequential, I consider these administrators to be *obliged*, and subjectivised within a pastoral/service role: they express an obligation to 'help' the individual student, and demonstrate a

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concern for the juridico-ethical character of their work. Janice, for instance, recognises the preservation of that which is 'very confidential' to be an important characteristic of her work, perhaps reflecting an association between 'need', vulnerability, and the disabled subject (see negative ontology, earlier), an 'expert' discourse that has been inserted into a juridical discourse on 'ethics' and 'personal data' (and is articulated in data protection legislation[93]), and which is incorporated into the apparatus of administrative work in this setting.

More obscured here is, perhaps, the 'danger' that dyslexia presents to the organisation. In the Higher Education context, dyslexia appears to be what Douglas has described as a "cherished classification" (Douglas 2002, p45). The classification of dyslexia functions to assemble particular subjects (as 'students with dyslexia' or, in the vernacular of a majority of my respondents, 'dyslexic'); these subjects symbolise what is important (and hence what is at risk) in the educational context: literacy, writing, comprehension, and the ability to organise oneself. Beliefs about pollution are one way in which cherished classifications may (symbolically) be afforded with 'protection' in this context. The unequivocal manner in which the administrators are able to describe the techniques of normalization (at least as applied to student with dyslexia) indicates how firmly these expert knowledges are maintained in circulation through administrative and pedagogic practice. I now address some aspects of dyslexia and its administration where these 'dangers' are articulated more evidently by the administrators.

PROBLEMATIZING DYSLEXIA: MORAL THREATS AND POLLUTION BELIEFS

Not all the administrators' classifications of dyslexia were as uncomplicated as those of Stefan, Janice and Morag. Although the classification, 'dyslexia', was routinely accepted by many administrators, some of my respondents did question *how* the classification was effected. Whilst none of my respondents rejected entirely the *possibility* for a legitimate classification of dyslexia, some expressed concerns about the precision with which such a classification might be made. I explore this with Rena (a senior administrator) who, in an earlier conversation, had expressed 'concerns' about the classification of dyslexia. Within this extract, I provide her with an opportunity to further discuss this with me, and in doing so explain the status she affords the classification of dyslexia.

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[93] This university, as with similar organisations in the UK, has formal policies that instrument the Data Protection Legislation

Rena's concerns are not with the classification of dyslexia in isolation, and she expresses to me no difficulties in explaining dyslexia in ways that legitimize its 'truthful', medical-psychological classification. That there is an (psychological) assessment that one may 'scrape through' suggests her recognition of particular set of truths 'about' dyslexia that are made 'thinkable' through expert discourses, and the examinations and differentiations that such discourses may imply (see Foucault 1981, 1995). However, her statement also suggests that she does question for *whom* the apparatus of classification 'works'. For Rena, this is a question of 'fairness'; her sense of injustice is palpable (*'nice* disability label') although this perhaps obscures her conviction that dyslexia and dyslexia support *are* important:

> RL   [I]f somebody ...manages to *scrape through* an Ed Psych [Educational Psychology] assessment as having 'mild dyslexia' that they then get access to extra time in exams and [funding] from their local authority. Anyone else who is struggling for other reasons, if we can't manage to find a *nice disability label* to put on them, it's going to be 'paddle your own canoe'...
>
> ...[A]nd one of the worries that I have...[is] that somebody's who's labelled as having 'mild dyslexia' [...] gets exactly the same consideration [and] more or less the same concessions and exactly the same right to access their Disabled Students' Allowance from the Local Authority as somebody who's got moderate to severe dyslexia

[Ref. Rena/10:20-13:09, abridged]

Her sense of injustice arises from her view that one classification group (people with dyslexia) is afforded a uniform level of 'support', irrespective of the nuance of the individual experience of dyslexia, whereas others who she argues are also 'in need' of support are not recognised as such. That is, the expert classification of dyslexia authorises pedagogic and financial interventions, whereas those who she perceives to be in greater 'need' (she refers to 'socio-economic background') are not 'recognised' by the University as being 'in need', and do not receive 'support':

> RL   And [...] my personal view is that you should only come under the DDA if you're dyslexic and it's like moderate to severe
>
> NC   If you're needing some kind of intervention or some money spending on that intervention?
>
> RL   Yeh
>
> NC   So that's what you're basically saying?

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RL   Yes, because I can come back to my original point ... I then can't see how it's different for somebody with *mild* dyslexia, why they should get all that support when somebody who is from a lower socio-economic group, no background of being in higher education, no background of knowing how to study...

NC   [Won't get these things?

RL   Yeh

NC   Just to illustrate that, erm and obviously it's anonymous, could you give me. [...] a typical case study, that would illustrate that point?

RL   [Erm, yeh

NC   [Or... a made-up one if you like [to] illustrate your point?[94]

RL   [Yeh

RL   I think what we find is ... if somebody is *genuinely* dyslexic...they would have to [seek support] either before starting at [the University] or very soon afterwards because they really wouldn't be able to function, they wouldn't be able to cope with the demands of this level of study. [But] you then get another group of students who *are* dyslexic and it's just that it was never picked up at school and very often it's only when they start working at the higher level of study...

[Ref. Rena/12:02-14:20, abridged, key words emphasised]

This is a morally ill-defined set of circumstances (Douglas 2002). Rena's perception of 'unfairness' and her sense of outrage is arises in a context where she feels dyslexia to be 'over classified'; her specific utterances here (*'mild* dyslexia', 'students who *genuinely* dyslexic') serve to underline her belief that there are students who 'deserve' a dyslexia classification (and the support that such a classification might bring), and there are those who do not. In effect, Rena appears to be rehearsing a pollution belief: a protected classification in this context (dyslexia) is at 'risk' from those who may not be (to use her words) 'genuinely' dyslexic. Douglas (2002) is of utility here:

> When moral principles come into conflict, a pollution rule can reduce confusion by giving a simple focus for concern...When action that is held to be morally wrong does not provoke moral indignation, belief in the harmful consequences of pollution can have the effect of aggravating the seriousness of the offence, and so of marshalling public opinion on the side of the right. (Douglas 2002, p165)

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[94] *Methodological note*: I do this as recognition of issues associated with anonymity and confidentiality

Rena's moral principle relates to her (personal) belief that those individuals who experience social and economic inequalities in respect of access to education are in a disadvantageous position when compared with (some) students with disabilities. Her utterance of a pollution belief (she says there are people who are 'probably trying to play the system', below) functions to ameliorate this 'danger' through her aggrandising of the perceived threat; that is, a pollution belief functions to 'cancel' a 'moral' threat (Douglas 2002). Her commitment to support all students is unambiguous here, although she remains cautious about how the classification of dyslexia is used:

> RL   Erm there's another group which we...*I have* ...concerns about which I
>   think are ... [they're] probably trying to play the system a little bit.
>   They're struggling. They've probably got general learning difficulties
>   [...] It's not their fault, and I've no criticism of that, I strongly believe
>   that once somebody is in the University we have to do everything we can
>   to support them [...] And there is a feeling sometimes that is a group of
>   students who are basically doing everything they can to try to mitigate
>   the fact that basically they're just struggling. And you know, trying to go
>   down the dyslexia route may be one element of that, but there may be
>   other ... and that's the worry that I have [...] So we're getting increasing
>   cases, you know, of people disputing their degree classifications

[Ref. Rena/15:35-16:31, abridged]

Rena's comments in relation to the incorporation and normalization of the dyslexic subject within Higher Education arguably 'makes sense' in a context where reading and writing ability are key markers of individual achievement, and where such 'achievement' is subject not only to local expression (in respect of students completing qualifications with 'good' grades), but is also subject to national and international surveillance in the context of national performance indicators and quality appraisals, and the 'marketability' of a strong academic profile for the University. Mark,[95] for instance, expresses reservations about the purposefulness of the expert classification of dyslexia in the context of a (national) political strategy, and he verbalises discontent in the collective subjectivation (Youdell 2006) of 'dyslexic' subjects:

> MG   Dyslexia itself is an extremely complex erm term, which attempts to
>   describe the indescribable, because dyslexics are different from each
>   other, as erm, everybody else. So to try and frame a group of dyslexics,
>   I'm being very loose about my ... that's why I was really talking about it

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[95] Mark functions in an academic leadership role, but supported (at the time of this interview) the formulation of the disability policies that are used by the administrators.

in terms of the National Literacy Strategy,[96] the way that we might respond to that. And you know *we can only talk about it in those terms.* Erm, to try and group together dyslexics is like herding cats, it's just not going to work in the same way that, say, you could group together people who had the top of their finger missing.

[Ref.Mark/37:53, unabridged]

Mark recognises the need to make a classification of dyslexia, explaining this in terms of literacy (and its strategic role in national policy). However, he also expresses some doubt in the homogeneity of the classification ('herding cats'), with the (non-physical) nature of dyslexia marking it out as being different from physical impairment ('finger missing'). For Mark, the individual student-subject is subjectivated, or named (Youdell 2011), *as* 'a person with dyslexia'; this he does not appear to question. However, he feels that this is not a homogenous group: for Mark, all 'dyslexic students' are not alike, yet still they are afforded a collective subjectivation (Youdell 2006), at least within pedagogic-administrative discourse; that is, students either 'do', or 'do not' experience dyslexia: there is no gradation.

Mark's assertion that the classification of dyslexia is contingent upon national 'policy' (which itself reflects political and economic discourse in relation to employment and educational achievement) suggests that the *need* for a classification of dyslexia is not manifestly formulated through medico-psychological 'expert' power/knowledge relationships; indeed, he is unequivocal about this ('we can *only* talk about it in [national policy] terms'); for him, this is how the classification of dyslexia is made intelligible, or 'truthful'. Hence, although expert discourses about dyslexia are in circulation here (and are reproduced and re-circulated through the apparatus of enrolment and assessment) and provide an 'essential' mode of classification, these have been 'folded' into political-administrative discourses on 'achievement' and 'quality' (the National Literacy Strategy) and their pedagogic apparatus.

MENTAL DISABILITIES

With dyslexia classifications my respondents made only implicit reference to the expert authorities who might make such classifications; the classification was only obliquely challenged by some, and was 'accepted' by many. In short, the administrative knowledge and practices of dyslexia were, in general, highly regular. This was not

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[96] A strategy introduced in 1997 by the (then) Labour Government, with an aim to raise standards of literacy within schools

always the case with mental disabilities, and this was something I chose to explore further.

For mental disability, some respondents made unequivocal links between 'mental disabilities' and expert authorities. For instance, Paolo [97] characterises mental disability in terms of an experience or 'event' which would incite an (expert) disciplinary response. This response would appear to necessitate further surveillance and, ultimately, a classification. Paolo does not refer to the possibility that an individual may 'disclose' a mental disability; rather, he argues, mental disabilities are an essential characteristic of the individual, and manifested in behaviours that are subject to the observation and differentiation (from that which is 'normal') by himself and others, and then subject to intervention (medical, quasi-medical or psychotherapeutic 'counselling'):

> PT   I suppose that if someone has a mental health issue then [it] is [either] pre-diagnosed, or it emerges. And if it emerges, then somebody would recognise differences in behaviour or attitude or personality and then bring it to somebody else's attention, and then that person would be referred to an appropriate authority...probably a Doctor or Occupational Health, or counselling or whatever... [to seek] an actual 'diagnosis'

[Ref. Paolo/13:52-15:00, abridged]

Paolo's response was not, however, typical amongst the group of respondents. More often, whilst expert classifications were markedly utilised by respondents in respect of mental disabilities (when compared with dyslexia, for instance), more complex modes of classification were in evidence. Both Rena and Mark, for instance, find both dyslexia and mental health problematic in respect of 'resources', although they offer different rationalisations for each. Dyslexia is problematic for Mark due to the high frequency with which he encounters it (which, he explains, has 'resource' implications), yet mental disabilities he finds problematic due to the 'shifting' definition of what mental disability may mean in the educational context. Relatedly, mental disabilities challenge Rena's confidence in the 'mental health experts' who are charged with making the 'classifications' which are necessary for her (administrative) work:

> MG   There are the shifting sands about what defines 'mental health'. We all at some point have mental health issues, it's the consequences of those mental health issues for, you know, in the context of university, for

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[97] Paolo's role I style here as a 'Faculty Academic Manager'; although ostensibly a member of the academic department, his role is largely administrative and necessitates close work with senior administrative colleagues.

performance. It's a mental health issue if they're asked to do something and they can't do it.

[Ref. Mark/01:06:44-01:07:36]

RL   Erm, yes. Erm well, the two disabilities which cause the University or make the University most 'shaky' are mental health and dyslexia. Erm and I have to say that in terms of the student resources for supporting students that those are quite ... quite demanding. Erm [...] and how expert are we at that? Not very. And I would actually say that I don't think that even mental health experts are very 'expert' at that

[Ref. Rena/31:43-32:54, abridged]

Mental disabilities do not appear to be straightforward classifications for administrators to make. Although 'expert' discourses in respect of mental disability are 'used' by the administrators and (for Paolo) are explicitly linked to the apparatus of disciplinary expertise (for instance, the medical examination of individuals, their naming and classification, their referral for 'corrective' interventions), amongst the majority of my respondents there persisted some uncertainty regarding the precision by which such classifications can be made within the regime of medicine-psychiatry. This contradicts the (limited) evidence that suggests, in respect of mental disabilities, there may be a propensity for experts to be more willing to loosen the classification systems they use than the lay people who apply them with more rigour outside the confines of expert practice (Ahn et al 2006).

AMBIGUITY AND ANOMALY

For some of the administrators, mental disabilities represent both ambiguity and anomaly (Douglas 2002). Douglas notes that although these may be considered different concepts (ambiguity, the carrying of multiple interpretations; anomaly, that which does not 'fit' established classifications), there "is very little advantage in distinguishing these two terms" (Douglas 2002, p47). I adopt a similar position here: mental disabilities are ambiguous for the administrators as their presence may incite different explanations (and no singular 'truth'); similarly, however, 'mental disabilities' are also anomalous as, despite being assigned this prototype classification, they are understood not to be easily accommodated within established schemes of disability classification, 'expert' or otherwise.

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In respect of ambiguity, for instance, Veronica[98] explains how mental disabilities may be understood as 'unstable'; that is, in contrast to physical disabilities (here, 'wheelchair users'), mental disabilities are problematic. Although Veronica deploys medical (expert) classifications in her talk (and in doing so, tacitly subscribes to the 'truths' that they imply), what subjects a person here to a 'disabled' classification is not only their medical character, but a complex range of social, economic and employment issues:

> VO   Yeh, so there's erm, there's sort-of obvious barriers, and there's the not-so obvious barriers. There's the complexities in people's lives that become a barrier to them being sustained in employment, you know. The fact that people do get these set-backs, if people's condition isn't one of stability, like you know, the kind of condition that comes and goes, and that is another big problem, because a lot of the time, people don't get DLA [Disability Living Allowance] because it [their disablement] isn't every day.
>
> And erm so people who are disabled, there's so much more to prove to an employer. Employers are really happy with people who are wheelchair users, they think that's fantastic, YES! *Look at the kudos here*, but when it's mental health, or something that's got that instability factor, or it's more of a hidden disability like epilepsy, you know, even if people are on medication that keeps them maintained, you know that can be, it can be, a real problem [...] [So] what they're doing is, is making things fit their business needs...

[Ref. Veronica/01:03:03-01:06:35, abridged]

A number of statements that identify particular 'truths' about mental disability are in evidence here. For instance, Veronica finds that people afforded a classifications of disability relating to a physical impairment (she describes 'wheelchair users') appear to be 'preferred' (by employers) to those classified in respect of what she describes as "mental health", or "something that's got that instability factor". It appears that, in this context, the 'wheelchair user' is a 'safe' category in the employment domain: it is ubiquitous in respect of visual symbols of disablement (Hughes 2004), it suggests (perhaps erroneously) a stable and unchangeable classification; it articulates readily (through architectural design) with legal requirements in respect of 'access', and as a metaphor for loss or difference, it is inserted frequently into the rhetoric of 'inclusion' and 'anti-discrimination'. Kirsteen and Rena provide further examples of this:

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[98] A senior administrator whose role is concerned with what is styled locally as 'Employability'; achieving a high level of graduate employment is important to this University, as it is for others in the Higher Education sector. Veronica's role is particularly concerned with facilitating the transition into employment.

KP   [...] that kind of cloying 'after school special' kind of thing, where it's like 'In a very special episode of *Back To Life* [a television programme], Natalie's wheelchair-bound cousin shows up', and the kids have to learn how to behave sensibly with someone in a wheelchair, and 'Hey so we're not so different after-all' [...] And even when I talk to students on the 'phone and I say, 'this is in regard to your disabled student's allowance', I feel I hope they're not going to be sensitive about me using the word 'disabled'. Erm because in my mind, I feel that they're going to think that I think that they're in a wheelchair or that you know, they are something that they're not.

[Ref. Kirsteen/12:28-15:56, abridged]

RL   The experience of a student using a wheelchair, they don't have to keep constantly explaining themselves...they might find it hard to get into some of the buildings, erm use the lifts in [names campus], but they're not constantly having to...explain themselves

[Ref. Rena/37:49, abridged]

In addition, these classifications also serve to provide easily-referenced and familiar representations of disablement which function to reiterate and circulate particular 'truths' about the *moral* character of those who would seek to employ a person with a (physical) disability. Cynically, perhaps, Veronica suggests that the employment of a person with a disability ("Look at the kudos here"), conveys 'moral' capital (Kane 2001) to the potential employer as it might be expressed through their concordance with an set of beliefs in respect of 'inclusion' and the amelioration of (physical) 'disabling barriers' to employment; that is, those statements, perhaps associated with the 'social model' of disability, are considered morally 'sound'; I explore this aspect of the administrators response to disability in a later chapter.

RESISTANCE

Individuals who fall 'outside' the discursive limits of what 'can be named' as a disability in these contexts risk being labelled as "dangerous", and invite avoidance and 'explanation' in other ways (Douglas 2002, p48).Veronica illustrates this when she unpacks and explains a complex set of circumstances regarding a client who has been "making threats" during his contact with the administrators:

NC   Have they said at the [other] office that ... they 'moved' him to you?

VO   Well, no. *he* moved [himself] *here* [laughs]

    [...]

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And I sent him some information just on voluntary work because the discussion that I'd had with the [placement] provider that he's under was that he needs more proof that he's employable.

And erm now I know his history, I think he's unemployable, you know, no employer could risk taking him, because he can't be stable for more than a few days, if that.

[...]

VO   Well I don't understand why he's not just being told at [the other support office] that 'we can't help you any more' [...] And that is it, I've done what I needed to do, I don't need to keep seeing you [...] He's phoned up today and spoken to our manager. And the [only] reason for speaking to our manager was because he couldn't get through to the manager at [the other office].

[...]

So this is somebody who's trying to find a focus for their anger, it could be about anybody [but] he's *choosing* to be angry about something, which is nothing, but he's choosing to be angry all the time but, you know, has he got a choice in that? And why aren't the mental health services dealing with him? [laughs] [...] We can't meet his needs at all.

[Ref. Veronica/04:03-10:30; 11:12-11:45, abridged]

Veronica's 'ambiguous' individual serves to destabilise "everyday definitions of the boundaries of work" (Austrin 1994, p209), and he resists subjectivation as an administrative subject. As this individual is 'without' a clear classification within the administrative domain, he arguably represents a source of danger, a threat to order (Douglas 1996, 2002). In an attempt to ameliorate the danger his presence brings to the administrative environment, and to restore and strengthen the classification systems she *can* use, she attempts to assign him an existing classification (Douglas 2002) which she styles in her talk as either 'mentally ill' or having 'mental health needs'. This attempted classification is also not successful: as an administrator, Veronica is not authorised to make this assignment. As such, he is instead labelled by her as anomalous, perhaps even dangerous (Douglas 2002), and his 'mental health needs', as she understands and explains them, cannot be 'met'.

In discussing here the resistance (or subversion) of power 'by' the student, it is important to recall Foucault's particular position 'on' power. Power, in the Foucauldian sense, is neither 'possessed' by Veronica, the administrator, nor by her 'client', the student. Rather, *both* of them are imbricated, folded into, relations of power. Hence although I might talk of the prospect of the student 'resisting' power, I may also

consider him as invested/inaugurated in/by the circulation of power. His identity and practices are 'made' by power, as are those of Veronica. Power, in this sense, is the *medium* of social practice (Heller 1996), and not its essence, not something that is 'possessed' by either Veronica or the student. These relations of power are complex: there is not a singular power that Veronica uses to 'oppress' the student, and which he then attempts to 'resist'. Multiple variations of power are in circulation here, the techniques and character of which are selected from the array of discourses that are available to *both* of them.

Veronica, for instance, provides explanations (narrated as 'truths') that are selected from medical and pedagogic discourse, and too from 'psy' discourses (which I discuss later). Her student, conversely, is making selections that are (ostensibly) chosen from other discourses (acting as/like a consumer, for instance) and that are inaugurated by the power he uses (he can expect, or demand, to receive a service). Both forms of discourse/power function to position Veronica and her student in a particular relationship to each other. However, as Heller (1996, p86) points out, although a Foucauldian conception of power does not provide an individual (or group) 'total' power over an individual, certain "structural positions", as he styles them, enable the evoking of power to be more successful for some than it is for others: these 'structural positions' are characterised here by Veronica in terms of medical power and, as she describes them, "the mental health services".

Foucault argues that resistance does not have to be 'singular', that is, a 'response' to or revocation of sovereign power. Rather, he argues for a "plurality of resistances" (Foucault 1978, p98) that reflect the multiplicity of power relations in a given context, and of which resistance is an *effect* (that is, resistance is constituted 'within' power, not outside of it). He continues:

> [T]he points, knots or focuses of resistance are spread over time and space at varying densities, at times mobilizing groups or individuals in a definitive way, inflaming certain points of the body, certain moments in life, certain types of behaviour...more often one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings. (Foucault 1978, p96)

As such, although power, to use Foucault's phrase, "is everywhere" (Foucault 1978, p93), this does not mean that its application is "equally distributed" (Heller1996, p86); it only means that it is not 'held' or 'applied' by a single person or institution. These

relations of power are multiple and complex: power does not guarantee that 'something will happen' in a particular way (Foucault 1978); it is this lack of guarantee that affords an opportunity for the unintended to occur, and also invites the possibility for resistance or subversion; it is this way that 'resistance' or subversion can be considered as enacted from within the relations of power/discourse, not from 'outside' of them,[99] as Foucault explains:

> We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance [...] Discourse transmits and produces power, it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it. (Foucault 1978, p100-1)

In Veronica's narrative, such circumstances can be inferred. Although Veronica expresses that she 'knows' what she is doing (and what she can't do, or is prevented from doing), and she can provide an 'explanation' or 'rationale' for what she is doing (selected from the discourses that are available to her), she cannot guarantee the consequences. That is, the power she 'uses' is, despite her intentions, not a reckoning of her subsequent 'success'. Hence 'unintended' outcomes are scripted into the administrators' performances, irrespective of their individual intentions or 'belief' in what 'should' happen. As such, the discourses that Veronica (and her colleagues) uses produce and circulate power; by the same token, however, other forms of power and discourse can do likewise, and can serve to make power "fragile", to "thwart" it (Foucault 1978, p101; Knights and Vurdubakis 1994, p178).

Conversely, Rena's example shows how resistance and subversion can act in a reforming way. In this extract, she explains to me the difficulties she and her (junior) peers experience when they feel obliged to offer a service (here, in respect of mental health) that they are unable or do not have the requisite expertise to offer. Furthermore, although 'counselling' services are, she explains, available for students to access, her team sometimes feel obliged (or are, through circumstances, required) to support individuals in the absence of timely support from other services that might, in her view, be more 'fitting' to the individual students:

> RL [But] how do [we] measure the impact that something like mental health is having on a student at any given time, and how expert are we at that?

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[99] That is, following Foucault's thesis of subjectivity/subjectivisation (discussed earlier in this thesis), individuals can only make selections from *within* discourse

Not very...And I would *actually* say that I don't think that even mental health experts are very 'expert' at that!

So now we work very closely with counselling services and we're very clear on... that there's a difference in our role to their role. Our role is very much about assessing the student with mental health issue[s] in light of what support they need for learning and teaching

NC   *Just* the learning and teaching?

RL   Well counselling obviously takes a more holistic approach to support...But sometimes I have to say that we find [working with some students] difficult because the students themselves can be very challenging...

We do have a number of students who are here at the moment who I think are genuinely far too ill to be here...and we do have some concerns that some psychiatrists are actually recommending University study almost as therapy, which you and I know is just disastrous...

[Ref. Rena/31:43-33:26; 34:13, abridged]

Although the current situation she narrates (students not using her service 'appropriately') is unintended and, she reports, has been problematic for her and her team, her depiction of certain forms of (mental health) practice as "challenging", as markers of subversion, also provides some "purchase on its reform" (Knights and Vurdubakis 1994, p178). Although the inopportune seeking of 'support' from Rena's administrative team by students who have been hailed as particular kinds of subject elsewhere (counselling, psychiatry) is problematic, her administrators practise amidst a number of disciplinary power/knowledge regimes ('counselling', 'psychiatry', 'teaching and learning'). The subversion (of the students) can, in this sense, can be seen as elaborating different forms of power, and can be understood to opportune, produce and circulate 'new' forms (and explanations) for administrative practice, [100] those that incite a therapeutic role for the administrators.

Indeed, following Lawler (2008) I might argue that Veronica's narrative also tells me something about how this 'failure' to normalize and subjectivize - the failure to adequately 'make' or account for this 'kind' of person – is *explained* by Veronica in terms of "personal [and] psychological failure" (Lawler 2008, p75); that is, Veronica's accounts (and what Rena implies) are selected from, and authorised by, 'psy' discourse:

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[100] Mills (2003, p40) offers a similar formulation

this formulation, and how the administrators explain their *selves* in respect of this (and drawing upon the work of Nikolas Rose) I discuss in a later chapter.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

My findings suggests that discourses of '(dis)ableness' that are rehearsed by the administrators in their descriptions of the impaired body: their insertion of the disabled body into their 'normal' social world, and their tacit circulation of bio-medical power/knowledge that assembles particular subjects as 'disabled' together function to describe a "constraint of conformity" (Foucault 1995, p183) that necessarily (and vitally) places the disabled subject in "a place [of] liminality" (Campbell 2008, online citation). Irrespective of their commitments to 'emancipatory' or 'safe' talk (of which I have more to report in the following chapter), that is, a commitment to inclusion, representation and freedom of choice, their narratives remain bound to a 'negative ontology' that describes disability in terms of loss, deficit or an opportunity for expert intervention. This said, despite being posited as a 'loss', disability is never absent or excluded entirely from discourse: rather, my findings suggests that for administrators, disability is assembled as the ontological 'mirror' to 'ability' or 'ableness' (Campbell 2005, p109; Campbell 2008).

Second, it is the responsibility of some of the administrators to maintain a centralised database that includes information about the disablements of individual students. 'Truthful' narratives contained therein correspond with 'expert' (educational psychology, occupational health) knowledge 'about' disabilities. Administrators therefore have a role in maintaining an apparatus (*dispositif*) of control (Foucault 1980); this apparatus combines discourse, knowledge and practice, and functions to assemble particular types of disabled subject, elicit and record individual information about them, and also serves to circulate and reproduce the expert discourses that sustain their classification as 'disabled subjects'. Administrators, particularly in respect of dyslexia, circulate these expert classifications in their practices. Although these are known to be expert classifications, some administrators explain their particular role in 'moral' and normative terms, for example, to 'prevent discrimination'.

Third, administrators can describe the classification of the disabled student in terms that are consistent with Foucault's concept of subjectivation. The student is both constituted *by* (expert) discourses, and are incited to recognise themselves as people with disabilities. Their self-recognition, arguably, constitutes a choice. This echoes Nikolas

Rose's thesis on obligation and freedom in liberal democracies; that is, their freedom, in this context, is "intrinsically bound to a regime of subjectivation in which subjects are not merely 'free to choose', but "obliged to be free" (Rose 1998, p17). Administrators tacitly recognise this obligation in respect of freedom through their 'discretion' in the disclosure and self-classification process; however, they also work to ensure that knowledge (data) about individual students is 'total', thereby maintaining a system of administrative surveillance (a proxy for expert surveillance).

Fourth, administrators also subjectivised within the same liberal/consumerist domain. They are obliged to offer choice to students, and to act as agents of this choice. Indeed, I formed the impression that to strive to facilitate the student 'voice' was a commonsensical principle, shared by all the administrators in this context: it was, in most circumstances, described in ways that suggested that it was the 'right thing to do'. Similarly, although they are using expert discourse/knowledge in their everyday practice, they sometimes narrate 'resistance' to these discourses, particularly where the effect of such discourses is to produce a medicalised disabled subject: a type of subject that does not concord with liberal conceptions of disablement, and is suggestive of restrictions of freedom and choice. Although the administrators are required to follow (administrative) rules and procedures, and hence enact medicalised/expert classifications, their subjectivation as liberal/moral subjects endows them with the capacity to 'name' their students in these terms (Youdell 2006).

Fifth, my interpretation suggests that the administrator's constitution of dyslexia as a 'threat' is calculated in respect of the risks they understand it to present in regard to the 'pedagogic mission' of the University and the 'success' of students; administrators describe how they seek to 'protect' this classification (Douglas 2002). For mental disabilities, the 'danger' is ambiguity and 'failed' attempts to classify. Administrators attempt to ameliorate the 'danger' it presents through re-classification and exclusion (Douglas 2002), a circumstance that I return to later in this thesis. These practices also invited an interpretation of Foucault's explanation of resistance; here, I concur with the reading of Heller (1996), whereby resistance is operating as a form of power that is embedded in a complex array of competing and contestable 'power' positions.

In my next chapter, I address more specifically the 'talk' of administrators in respect of disability, particularly in respect of what might be considered 'dangerous' talk about

disability, and I provide further discussion about the conveyance of 'talk' that is concordant with 'preferred' (and ideological) positions on disablement.

CHAPTER 9: TALKING ABOUT DISABILITY

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The aim of this chapter is to discuss how administrators formulate 'disability talk'. Using Austin's speech act theory (Austin, 1975) as an analytic device, I find that administrators strive to perform 'disability talk' that is consistent with a 'moral' identity, characteristics that are selected from within discourse. I also find that when 'working with' disability, administrators are both obliged to both follow rules (for instance, the 'law'), yet are also obliged to work on their 'selves'; this links to my later consideration of the work of Nikolas Rose (1996, 1999). My findings also suggest a role for ritual in respect of the repetition/rehearsal of acceptable speech acts, and, following Douglas (2002) and Butler (1997b), I argue that these rituals serve as controls for the successful performance of such acts, and the avoidance of the 'taboo' of 'unacceptable talk' (Douglas 2002).

INTRODUCTION

Although there is literature that addresses concerns related to the 'political use' of language in respect of disability, and the reactions to this by people with disabilities themselves, there has been negligible empirical attention given to the *reception* of these standpoints by the (notionally) 'non-disabled' fraternity,[101] such as the administrators who I consider here. Following wide discussion focussing on pejorative language use 'about' disability or people with disabilities, negative or harmful media portrayal, or questionable representation within policy (Casling 1993; Drewett 1999; Corker 2000; Sayce 2003; Beresford 2005; Haller et al 2006), it has been suggested by some that it is those who are 'non-disabled' who are most likely to use words 'about' disability that 'harm' those with disabilities, and that it is 'non-disabled' people who "need to be reminded" (Titchkosky 2001, p131) about their 'language-use' in respect of disability. This chapter aims to add to the existing knowledge about this proposition, as it relates to administrative workers in the university setting.

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[101] See also my earlier discussion (chapter three) about the role of 'non-disabled' people in disability-related research (Stone and Priestley 1996; Drake 1997; Branfield 1998; Tregaskis 2000; Tregaskis and Goodley 2005; Danieli and Woodhams 2005). I understand that these terms are problematic, and I am not discounting that an administrator may identify themselves as a 'person with a disability', and nor I am suggesting that there are polarised communities of people 'with/without' disabilities.

As such, there are two somewhat contentious propositions that might be made: first, that there *are* words that are understood to 'harm' (as illocutionary, that create and act upon particular 'kinds' of disabled subject at the moment of their utterance) (Austin 1975; Mason-Grant 2004) and second, that administrators might be *obliged to anticipate* the harm that such utterances may incite and, in doing so, 'work on their selves' (Rose 1998) to develop a 'moral' (and 'correct') way to 'be' and 'act' in respect of disability. Within this chapter I explore these prepositions, and show how the administrators authorise, adopt, or reject particular styles of 'disability talk'; this exploration enables further discussion to be made about the subjectivation of the administrators themselves, both as constrained subjects (within law and policy) or when 'obliged' to become 'moral' subjects. As I discussed earlier (chapter eight), disability discourses not only describe 'what' disability is, but they are implicated in the *production* of particular forms of (social) subject; here, disability discourses are understood to incite the utterance of particular forms of 'acceptable' talk and which reflect their constitution as 'moral' or 'ethical' workers.

First, I outline speech act theory and Austin's (1975) outlining of those conditions within which such acts might be successful (or not). Hence, within this chapter I consider how administrators are incited to 'talk' about disability, how such 'talk' is located in discourse, what the parameters are for such talk (what is 'possible' or 'wrong'), and under what conditions or circumstances this might happen. Second, I use my data to illustrate features of authority as it is implicated in the successful performance of administrators' talk. Here I question whether all felicity conditions need be met in order to make a performance successful, and I consider the role of infelicities, particularly those styled by Austin (1975) as 'abuses'. I also examine the nature of authority in the performance of successful speech acts and in doing this, I consider the nature of knowledge/power that is in circulation in the administrative context.

Third, I investigate the use of 'inoffensive', 'politically-correct' and 'person-first' language by the administrators. Here, I aim to investigate the choice and obligations of the administrators in respect of language that might be considered 'dangerous' in their workplace context. I also examine whether there is evidence for administrators' resistance to 'politically correct' talk. To investigate the adoption of a shared 'preferred' way of talking about disability, I also illustrate the role that ritual may arguably play in practice. Fourth, linking to the two proceeding sections, I discuss how administrators

are obliged to be 'moral' and 'free' subjects, how this is reflected in the words they choose to use about disability, and how this also relates to the choices administrators make when 'following the law'.

SPEECH ACT THEORY

I first outline Austin's (1975) speech act theory as I am using it here. Austin (1975) introduces the notion of the 'performative', which are utterances which depart from statements that "merely say something" (Austin 1975, p25). Rather, Austin considers those utterances which *do* something in the *act* of their saying, that make "something happen" (Lawler 2008, p113). Austin (1975) distinguishes between different types of performative utterance. There are those that serve to describe or convey meaning (which he terms *locutionary*), those which describe consequences (*perlocutionary*), and those which *perform a deed* at the moment of their utterance (*illocutionary*). Judith Butler uses the (judicial) example, "I sentence you" (Butler 1997a, p17) to illustrate illocutionary acts: in uttering the words 'I sentence you', the recipient (the defendant) is immediately subjected to *naming* as a particular type of juridical *subject* (for instance, a 'criminal'). In contrast, perlocutionary acts are those which presume that "'saying something will produce certain consequences,' but the saying and the consequences are temporally distinct" (Butler 1997a, p17). Hence, the 'sentence' prescribed by the judge (perhaps imprisonment, or a fine) are *consequences* of the judge's utterance.[102, 103]

FELICITOUS (FELICITY) CONDITIONS

Felicitous (or 'felicity') conditions are "conventions" (Mason-Grant 2004, p72) that ought to be satisfied in order for an utterance to be 'successful'. If these conditions are not met (or only partly) then the utterance will be unsuccessful, or, as Austin styles this, "unhappy" (Austin 1975, p14). Austin presents a classification scheme for describing different types of *in*felicitous conditions, although in his description of his classification scheme he goes to great length to describe how his classifications of infelicities are not mutually exclusive, how they may be combined, "and that it can be more or less an

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[102] Butler is also incorporating Althusser's concept of interpellation, which I outlined in chapter five; the act of 'being named' and 'recognising oneself' also links to Foucault's (related) concept of subjectivation, which I also discussed in chapter five

[103] Austin (1975, p162) outlines five classes, or styles, of utterance, each of which I argue is illustrative of a particular mode of authority: verdictive (judging); exercitives (exercising power); commissive (obliging); behabitive (attitudinal); expositive (clarifications). I infer the operation of some of these styles in this chapter.

optional matter" (Austin 1975, p26) how they are applied in practice. Significantly, Austin also notes that whilst his principle of infelicities can be applied to verbal acts, he does not discount that they may also apply to non-verbal practices, and specifically social rituals; his comments here are of relevance to this thesis, given the 'non-verbal' nature of the (Foucauldian) discursive practices with which I am concerned; that is, "infelicity is an ill to which *all* acts are heir which have the general character of ritual or ceremonial" (Austin 1975, p18-19, emphases as original).

Austin (1975) distinguishes between two classes of infelicity. The *misfire* refers to a verbal performance that does not achieve that for which it was "designed" (Austin 1975, p16). In contrast, *abuses* refer to those performances wherein the verbal act is completed, but the act is "hollow" (Austin 1975, p16). Misfires are divided into *misinvocations* and *misexecutions*, and these too are further separated into *non-plays*,[104] *mis-applications*, *flaws* and *hitches*. In order to avoid a 'non-play' *misinvocation*, established procedures for 'conduct' must be established (Austin 1975; Pearson 1998). For instance, using Judith Butler's example of a court judge sentencing a defendant (Butler 1997a), the conduct of the court in which her 'judge' is presiding will be subject to particular ceremonial procedures that render as 'felicitous' the utterance; outside the context, the words of the judge are not illocutionary in their effect, and the defendant cannot be sentenced or acquitted.

The utterance of certain words and phrases by "certain persons" (Austin 1975, p14; Mason-Grant 2004) is also of importance here. Butler's judge, for instance, would be expected to use the "fixed phraseology" (Pearson 1998, p106) of legislative protocol when passing sentence. If the judge did not use these particular phrases, then the speech act might be considered infelicitous. Applied to the administrative context, my analysis will address those situations where 'non-plays' occur. For instance, administrators are only incited to 'classify' disability when operating within the workplace, within established policies and procedures, and using the vernacular of disability legislation. Relatedly, there may be forms of speech and written text that are necessary conditions for the successful completion of their 'speech act', and, therefore, forms of speech that are not.

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[104] See the Editor's note in Austin (1975, 31*n*): in his main text, Austin states that he has 'no name' for this type of misinvocation, although his editors note that he previously referred to this as "Non-play"

Even if the speech act does concord with an established procedure, the "particular" (Austin 1975, p15) persons must be appropriate. That is, the felicity condition to be met here is that the person uttering a statement must be the *appropriate* person to do so (thus implying some particular authority), and the circumstances in which they do this must also be appropriate; the judge's utterance, as discussed above, would be considered infelicitous if the person presenting themselves as the 'judge' was not either not qualified or incapable of passing judgement (Austin 1975). Applied to the administrative context, if the administrator does not possess the authority to "invoke" (Austin 1975, p15) a particular procedure (for example, they have not received training, or it is outside their prescribed job role), then the felicity conditions may not be met.

Yet, even if the 'correct' people are speaking, and they are doing so in an appropriate context, their utterances must be concluded; that is, the speaker must not "muff the execution" (Austin 1975, p17) causing a *flaw* (Austin 1975), nor must the procedure be discontinued (a *hitch*, Austin 1975). This implies the following of established or ritual practices. For example, it would be peculiar for a judge to sentence a person to a prison term prior to the deliberations of the prosecution counsel. The constitution of a person as a 'criminal' by the judge requires a procedure, the presence of particular people, authorities or knowledge, all applied in the correct order. Applied to the administrative context, the 'disclosure' of a disability invites a prescribed procedure. This procedure necessitates the use of certain terminology, a sequence of events or activities, and specific people accorded with authority.

A final felicity condition of relevance to the present context concerns the "thoughts, feelings and intentions" (Austin 1975, p15n) of the speaker; the infelicitous conditions here are termed *abuses*. Although a performative might be successful (the defendant is convicted or acquitted), utterances can still be insincere, or "hollow" (Austin 1975, p16, 17). Applied to the present context, this raises intriguing questions regarding the administrators' use of 'disability talk', and their sincerity (or not) in this regard. Whether, for instance, administrators 'agree' with a 'correct' way of 'talking about' disability (as it is presented within the University, or circulated in authoritative texts), or voice opinion in respect of 'discrimination' or 'inclusion' is of significance here, and deserves exploration.

Successful (or unsuccessful) speech acts do not, however, operate in isolation; they require a context from which they may derive their *authority* and (in the case of illocutionary acts) the extant rituals that support their operation (Austin 1975; Langton 1993). In the examples given above, different forms of authority were implied: the juridical (sovereign) authority of the law (as embodied in the judge), the ritual conduct and fabric of the court setting, and the 'historic' authority conferred by the presence of a jury, for instance. Hence what confers 'authority' may be understood to be *already* in circulation, as Butler describes:

> If a performative provisionally succeeds...then it is not because an intention successfully governs the action of speech, but only because that action echoes prior actions, and *accumulates the force of authority through the repetition or citation of a prior and authoritative set of practices*. It is not simply that the speech act takes place *within* practice, but that the act is itself a ritualized practice. What this means, then, is that a performative 'works' to the extent that *it draws on and covers over* the constitutive conventions by which it is mobilised. In this sense, no term or statement can function performatively without the accumulating and dissimulating historicity of force (Butler 1997a, p51, italics as original)

This is an important argument that ties together the transience of individual acts of speech and their felicity conditions (Austin 1975) with their intelligibility and familiarity as might be ascribed either within present-day *ritual* or historic practice. Hence, what makes a speech act successful (or not) is the necessary evocation of practices that have already acquired the status of 'authoritative', which are already cited/circulated in practice, and the obscuring effects of discourse, which permeate and 'make' practice intelligible or 'truthful'. Therefore a successful speech act will necessarily evoke a "history of speakers" (Butler 1997a, p52); that is, following Foucault (1981) the individual who 'speaks' is citing an already circulating 'history' of discourse, knowledge and practice. The authority of speech acts can also be related to what Austin terms their "illocutionary force" (Austin 1975, p150) and their "sensitivity to the speaker's authority" (Langton 1993, p305). These are important considerations for me to make: as applied to the administrative context, my data will necessarily explore the nature of these 'authorities' as they find expression in the talk of the administrators and, perhaps crucially, may provide insights into how the administrators assert and *resist* such authority in the context of disciplinary power and constraint.

Learning and Using the Correct Terminology

A Disability Training Event

Disability 'training' for staff resides in a contemporary legal context, both internationally (Walker 2004) and within the United Kingdom. At the national level, the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act (Great Britain 1995, 2005) and, more recently, the Equality Act (Great Britain 2010) requires educational establishments to undertake an assessment of their commitment to eliminating disability discrimination. Many organisations now provide training in respect of disability to ensure their compliance with this legislation, with descriptors such as 'disability training', 'disability awareness training' and 'disability equalities training', or permutations thereof, with some organisations choosing to service these training needs 'in-house' (by their own staff), whilst others choose to use an external training provider (Charles 2005; Walker 2004).

Amongst the very few empirical studies of 'disability training', a qualitative inquiry into the content of disability awareness training, undertaken by Walker (2004), found that the core themes addressed in 'traditional' approaches to disability training were "awareness exercises", "role play", "didactic input", "communication skills" and "application to practice" (Walker 2004, p709) and, as such, failed to articulate liberating or 'emancipating' discourses on disability within their curricula. Others have reflected this difficulty when designing training programmes (Charles 2005). Arguing for better involvement of disabled people themselves in disability training, Walker also recommends that disability training should be customized to suit the individual or group needs of those being 'trained', and that the symbolic authority that language conveys ought to be highlighted within disability training (Walker 2004).

Parkinson's small qualitative study of student counsellors undertaking disability equality training (Parkinson 2006) raised issues regarding the perceived visibility or non-visibility of disabilities, undesirable personal attitudes, and the deployment of 'personal tragedy' discourses on disablement. Both Walker (2004) and Parkinson (2006) overtly voice their commitment to training methodologies supportive of critical, emancipatory positions in respect of disability. Both therefore provide a good illustration of how particular representations of disability may be seen to have permeated into training methodologies and may be posited by the trainers as being the 'required' approach. For others, however, it is the outcome of training that is of more

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significance. Whilst noting that that whilst training might be positively evaluated by trainees, and that trainees may gain knowledge from their exposure, Clarke's review of Social Services' training (Clarke 2001) also suggests that the impact of in-service training on workplace practice is poorly understood, noting that "social desirability" and "pleas[ing] the trainer" (Clarke 2001, p763) may be important factors at play.

To further explore this, and to add to the existing (scarce) knowledge about institutional disability training, I now discuss the administrators' experience of what they styled as "Disability Awareness Training', and how they responded to this, particularly in respect of how such experiences may shape their use of 'disability-related' language. A number of the respondents in my research recounted their experiences of attending disability 'training' sessions which were offered by the organisation, and so I too attended a number of these sessions.[105] This provided me with an opportunity to describe and problematize the experiences of administrators in respect of the 'correct' language one should use in respect of disability. Below I provide extracts from my composite field notes[106] compiled following my attendance of these events, in addition to interview material gained when discussing their attendance at disability training events with individual administrators.

Here, I recall how the 'trainer' is introducing the session, 'advising' attendees about disability-related language use, and identifying 'the social model of disability' as a key component of the session:

> Following the "ice breaking" exercise[107], the trainer outlined a set of "boundaries and ground rules" that were expected for the session, and a firm but polite warning about the use of "acceptable" and "unacceptable" language and tolerance of other participants [...]
>
> The statement of "boundaries and ground rules" ... includes specific "acceptable" and "unacceptable" language-use (thus establishing limits of acceptable language). There is also a request to "share experiences", and to show "tolerance of other people's views".

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[105] As an employee, I was required to attend at least one session every year; my additional attendances, and the ethical issues arising, were discussed in chapter six.

[106] See my earlier methodological discussion (chapter six), where I discuss in more detail the production of composited accounts in respect of ethical considerations

[107] The 'ice-breaker' is typically an activity undertaken to familiarise participants with one another at the commencement of a formal learning or other type of event.

The trainer asks: *"Can we go 'round the room and everyone say where they work, what they do, and whether they have any experience of disability...this could be at home or at work or somewhere else, like someone you know or something else like that, it's up to you"* [...]

I am surprised at the level of disclosure that was shared with the group, ranging from intimate family experiences, self-disclosure of specific disabilities, and workplace anecdotes that had resulted in a negative outcome for the employee and a disabled person [...]

The trainer outlines the sessional aims: *"...which will include you learning about the Social Model of disability...we'll really be looking at barriers... We'll be talking about making adjustments for students and staff, that's what we'll be talking about...It's all about barriers."*

The words 'barrier' and 'barriers' are used at several points throughout the introduction, each time enounced with a deliberate stress that evoked the well-practiced manner of a teacher or trainer. A training activity is then commenced, consisting of trainees needing to match the *"correct"* disability language with 'equivalent' but *"old fashioned"* terminology.

On completion of the activity, the trainer explains the origins of the "old fashioned" words, explaining carefully to the audience why such words were *"definitely not recommended"*. To do this she draws on historical, folklore and 'natural-world' images of disablement in order to explain why they *"should not be used"*.

The trainer informs us that, *"The word lunatic...comes from 'Luna', at a time when people believed that the phases of the moon influenced mental health"*. This is not explained further, although the implication of this statement, in addition to others drawn from folklore and historical language – she specifically names *"handicap"*, *"cripple"*, *"bedlam"* - was that their use had no legitimacy.

The *"Social Model of disability"* is introduced and explained, and contrasted with the *"medical model of disability"* through the use of provocative images: the nature of the images (showing historical images of psychiatric treatments) and their style (black and white or medieval-style woodcuts) serve to underline their historicity. Her opinion appears clear:

"[this was about] segregation...and now we have the social model of disability, which is a much better way of discussing disability"

[Ref: Fieldnotes, *Notes on disability training workshop*]

A short 'class exercise' followed the trainer's 'introduction', and this related to the 'disabling barriers' to which she had alluded. Attendees (those present) were asked to complete a paper 'handout' upon which a table had been drawn; this table provided space for attendees to write or describe those 'physical barriers', 'policy barriers', 'resource barriers', 'learning barriers', and 'attitudinal barriers' that they perceived to exist in their workplaces. Attendees, including myself, were given the opportunity to

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discuss this between themselves, and then were invited by the trainer to provide 'feedback' to the whole group; this provided her with an opportunity to provide commentary on the responses that were forthcoming.

The disability training offers an overt example of how administrators are normalized (as having 'good' or 'undesirable' attitudes) and thereby subjectivised within these discourses. The experience of training articulates with Foucault's thesis on 'correct training' (Foucault 1995) and the formulation of normalizing judgements (discussed in chapters five and eight). In this place, attendees' were required, following instruction, to articulate their understanding of the Social Model principles. The trainer presented the notion of 'disabling barriers' as a 'truth', and the 'history' of disability (prior to a specific event, presented by the trainer as the 'introduction' of the 'Social Model') was described in largely negative terms. There was, it appeared, a 'correct' way in which attendees were obliged to comprehend and conceptualise disability, and the concordance of attendees' in respect of this 'correct' knowledge and attitude was openly demonstrated to all those who were present. This was, perhaps, the "perpetual penality" of surveillance of which Foucault speaks (Foucault 1995, p183): attendees' knowledge and attitude in respect of disability was, following exposition of what these 'correct attitudes' were held/meant to be, something to be witnessed, appraised and judged by all of those who were present. However, these normalizing discourses were also extant outside the training context, within the 'everyday' realms of the workplace; this is something I now explore.

THE CORRECT WAY TO SPEAK OF DISABILITY

Having described the 'training experience' that all administrators are obliged to engage with, I can now discuss more deeply the narratives of individual administrators in relation to preferred styles of 'disability talk'. During their 'disability training', attendees were encouraged to use what has been described as 'people-first' language (Titichkosky 2001), for example, using the phrase 'people with disabilities' rather than the phrase 'disabled people'. They/we were also encouraged to avoid speaking words or phrases that might cause 'offense' in their use; that is, some expressions or phrases were 'not recommended' (above, field notes). My interpretation of these data suggests that administrators are alert to the significance of 'language use' when undertaking disability-related activities, and often they referred to such styles of talking and writing

using the cover term (Spradley 1979), 'politically correct', which was usually contracted to the acronym, 'PC'.

AVOIDING INFELICITY

As this extract from an interview with Janice illustrates, administrators subscribe to a belief in the illocutionary effects of speech; that is, the principle that 'saying' a particular phrase incites the act of discrimination in its 'saying'. There is little talk of the 'consequences' of using such phraseology here, although Janice's 'cautioning' of a colleague may be understood as such; rather, it is the *act* of using particular words that is perceived by her to be harmful:

> JP   I think people do know [that they might be saying something deemed offensive], I think that most people who say something offensive *know* that they're being offensive...Like [for example]...we were talking today about the PLP students. Somebody [in the office] said 'Special Needs', and at one time you *could* say that, but now it has connotations with *being stupid* or something [108]

> NC   So what do you say instead?

> JP   Well, in the disability training they [the trainer] said that you could say 'additional needs' instead [...] *But* ...I mean, even just saying 'Special Needs' today shows that, that you *know* that it's an offensive word. You know, [a colleague] once *innocently* wrote on a PLP folder [the words] 'special needs', and I said [to them] *'You can't call it that anymore!'*

> JP   So we just call them 'PLP students' now. But I guess that even that is *bad*. Maybe we should call them 'students with PLPs'. *I don't know to be honest.*

[Ref. Janice/1:07:25-1:13:00, abridged]

Janice illustrates how she moderates her use of particular phrases that might otherwise have conveyed an illocutionary force; that is, words or phrases that 'do' something in their expression. Here, her suggestion is that using the phrase 'special needs' may be injurious in some way (although she doesn't specify in *what* way it might be, or to *whom* it might be applied). She expresses that she is keen not to implicate either herself or her colleague within the practice of 'unacceptable' talk ("*innocently* wrote", she stresses), although she does identify what she understands to be its injurious facility, which she then acts to circumvent and 'correct'. Furthermore, her uncertainty in respect of the phrase 'PLP students' perhaps also illustrates her anticipation of (future)

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[108] 'PLP', a Personal Learning Plan. These

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infelicities and her concordance with the use of 'people-first' language (Titchkosky 2001) within the administrative vernacular.

The deployment of 'people-first' language, ostensibly introduced to refocus attention on the individual 'person' for whom disability may be a concern with the aim to 'neutralise' language and ameliorate perceptions of 'difference' (Titchkosky 2001; Sayce 2003; Beresford 2005; Campbell 2005) is, my findings suggest, found problematic by some of the administrators in practice. Indeed, it is perhaps the deletion of 'impairment' from the 'language of disability' that functions to problematize (and render uncomfortable or confusing) their experiences. Sayce elaborates these concerns:

> [T]here is an almost inherent contradiction between arguing a non-discriminatory position, which would suggest that having an impairment can be positive, and downplaying impairment, as though it is something to be minimised [...] 'Why would we not want people to notice the impairment (or disability)?' disabled people understandably asked. Women and black people do not try to reduce discrimination by saying they are 'people with female gender' or 'people with black identity' ...The 'people first' language presupposes that being a 'person' is preferable to being a disabled person, leaving one guessing as to whether this ungendered, neutral 'person' is, in fact, non-disabled, male [and] white (Sayce 2003, p634)

As such, it appears that the minimisation or excision of disability and impairment within the administrators' talk that I argue is authorised by those discourses that position inclusion or 'emancipation' within their tactics. Here, for instance, I discuss with Jackson what he had gained from attending a 'disability training session'. In this interview, he has already described to me the 'disabling barriers' precept of the 'Social Model', and now he explains to me how the use of the words 'disability' and 'impairment' might, as a consequence of this knowledge, be different. However in attempting to explain this to me within our interview, he feels compelled to retract language that he feels to be inappropriate, a 'hitch' in his talk (Austin 1975), and one that he quickly endeavours to ameliorate:

> JB   [In the training session] I got the sense that 'disability', although they used it a lot, seemed almost like a word that shouldn't be used, like 'impairment' should be used to describe the specific personal things that were wrong... Er, NOT 'wrong', *I shouldn't have said that, that's terrible!* Erm not kind of, you know what I mean, erm *I don't know how to kind of put it into words.* I guess you could say 'wrong', because *they've* kind of got problems erm...

[Ref. Jackson/42:08-43:40]

Jackson expressed considerable difficulty in finding what he felt to be 'correct' form of words to use in respect of disability; further, he recites the notion of pathology and 'difference' here, too: "they've got problems", he exclaims. Stefan, too, reports a similar experience in respect of his formulation of the 'correct' language: here, he describes a discussion that took place during the training event (the "course", as he describes it here) that he attended in respect of how 'language' might be received. He expresses caution in his selection of words and phrases to use, claiming that the 'preferred' terminology appears to change frequently, and that formulating the 'correct' talk is a distraction:

SA   I guess I'm quite measured about what I say

NC   Why's that?

SA   [A] fear of offending someone

NC   How do you think you could offend someone?

SA   Erm, everything seems to be....we seem to be in an age of political correctness, and you don't want to call someone the 'wrong' thing, or, like, to say 'handicapped' when you should say, 'physically disabled', or...I don't even know the right terms to use, they change so often...and I've just been on course [training] for it! [laughs].

SA   I guess that it's because of those kinds of reasons that I try to be careful what I say.

SA   I spend too much time thinking about 'how' I am going to say something, and not concentrating on the actual message that I need to get across.

[Ref. Stefan/45:10-46:23, abridged]

I understood these administrators to be striving to avoid the use of language that they perceived to be 'inappropriate'. However, neither administrator was able to explain to me succinctly how they had come 'know' what was 'acceptable' to say, and what was not. Although both of them allude to their 'disability training', their experiences within the training session did little to modify their 'fear' of erroneously performing particular speech acts. Whilst Janice did attempt to address this within her training experience (for instance, in the extract above she asks the trainer about the substitution of the phrase 'special needs'), Stefan's concerns related to the stability of 'acceptable' language, and in this respect his 'training' appeared to offer him little. Uttering what is perceived to be 'inappropriate' language violates what I understood to be a moral norm in this context;

using such language is, in Janice's words, a "bad" thing that one might do. This suggests, therefore, that it is 'good' to use the 'appropriate' language; Stefan expresses this understanding, too, although he is sometimes unsure what he 'can' say.

As Janice's talk illustrates, some administrators express 'anxiety' about what they perceive to be the 'correct' forms of language to use in association with disability. There is also a degree of censure occurring within/between the administrators themselves: Janice 'corrected' her colleague, for instance. Yet, as Janice implies, the 'problem' of selecting the 'correct' language did not cease following the authoritative suggestions of the 'expert' who delivered the 'disability training'. Irrespective of the training they have received, these administrators have formulated their *own* descriptor ('PLP students'), where the 'naming' of a specific impairment or disability is circumvented or removed entirely (although remains implicit). This, however, is also problematized: Janice questions whether she should use the 'people first' equivalent, suggesting that she is sensitive to (and cautious of) the effects of the words that she utters, and the *context* in which she uses them.

It therefore appears important for administrators to be able to discriminate between different *ways of talking* in the workplace context. To explore this further, I discuss with Jackson, who has also recently attended a 'disability training' event, his use of disability-related language in the workplace and the choices he makes. Jackson performs 'non-judgemental' talk, albeit with some uneasiness. He discusses with me his use of the word 'mental', but rapidly qualifies this as a word that might not 'acceptable' to use in certain contexts:

NC	Have you any particular recollections about [language you've used or heard]?
JB	Erm...not really, I mean...with the exception of describing someone as 'mental', which I know we're probably not supposed to, but I probably do that now and again
NC	How do you use that word?
JB	Er, ...just if someone's flying off the hook, really, going a bit crazy[109]
NC	And why shouldn't you use the word 'mental'?

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[109] Ironically, in attempting to explain and justify his use of words that might be understood to convey pejorative force, he utters several more that might also be considered to be 'offensive'

JB   Because it is being used in a derogatory way...I mean, I know that it's not acceptable to do that.

NC   And so what would you say instead?

JB   I probably *would* say 'mental', but I'd know that it was wrong.

NC   But hasn't the word got different meanings?

JB   Yes, I suppose so, but in that context, if you're describing someone as going a bit crazy, then you think they should be put in an asylum...that's what you're *implying*, but obviously...the term is supposed to say that they should be 'taken away' and stuck in a padded cell. That's the kind of... that's the *implication* of what you're saying. Just things like that, saying, you know, lots of things you hear people saying but you...you know...you're fully aware that it's not acceptable, but you 'kind-of' do it...maybe I'm being a bit too over-sensitive

[Ref. Jackson/54:32-57:49, abridged]

Jackson describes how he understands particular words and phrases to convey particular effects in their utterance: saying 'mental', for instance, locates the 'subject' to which one is referring in manner which Jackson understands as pejorative and harmful in the workplace context; like Janice, he articulates some understanding of the illocutionary force of the words that he may utter. I am interested to learn how (or who) might 'judge' what he is saying; he explains that the 'correct' talk is associated with having the 'right' intentions; again, a 'moral' position that I am attempting to elucidate and explain:

JB   But I think [that] I'd have good intentions, but they might not necessarily be, er, the 'right' intentions.

NC   What makes a 'good' intention, a 'right' intention?

JB   Erm, I guess a 'good' intention is trying to treat the person with a disability just like someone else, but maybe I would be slightly judgemental, you know, *maybe*. That was one of the things I learned in the training last week, what you would do in certain situations, and I don't know. It would depend again on the situation and the person. I like to think that ...I *would* be fair, but I think it would always be ... it would depend on the situation, I think I would be quite self-aware, *more concerned about myself more than anything, saying the right thing, acting in the right way*

[Ref. Jackson/58:15, abridged]

In this workplace (but not necessarily within this particular interview, as his other utterances suggest), Jackson is concerned (and keen to be seen to *be* concerned) to 'say' the correct words in respect of disability and, as such, be seen to be practising in a way

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that he describes as 'self aware', that is, *knowing himself* to be a particular kind of 'non-judgemental' and 'moral' person. Within his workplace, Jackson is narrating his practice of self-censorship, albeit one that selects for particular contexts (Duranti 1997) and, like Janice (earlier), he expresses a particular understanding of the 'injurious' effects of speech, and works to prevent their utterance in his everyday work. In short, therefore, I find that administrators articulate a 'fear' of using speech that they understand may be 'harmful' if uttered, and that there is a 'time and place' for 'correct talk'; that is, it is context-dependent. The administrators I speak with also express concerns about what using the 'wrong' speech says about themselves and their moral sensibilities. I the following section I further explore the nature of their utterances, discuss the authority with which they imbue such speech, and provide an example of how infelicitous speech acts are narrated and explained by the administrators.

AUTHORITY AND INFELICITY

Applied to the administrative context, the 'discussion' of disability may invite the invocation of specific phrases or sequences of words about disability that are, if a speech act is to be successful, are necessarily to be used in specific ways (Austin 1975); that is, there may be a 'particular way to talk' about disability that is obligatory if infelicities are to be avoided. As illocutionary speech acts (acts that perform a deed in their very 'doing', for example, *naming* a person or group) are considered to be conforming to 'convention' (Austin 1975), a notion of established or ritual practices related to 'speech acts' is implied and deserves exploration. Furthermore, even if the 'correct' people are speaking, and they are doing so in the appropriate (workplace) context, their utterances must be concluded successfully; that is, the speaker must not "muff the execution" (Austin 1975, p17).

My fieldwork suggests that although it was always possible for administrators to 'speak of' disability, 'what' and 'how' they may talk of disability appeared to be constrained; that is, the administrator's capacity to talk about disability sometimes necessitated authorisation by others, and the meeting of felicity conditions, as discussed earlier (Austin 1975). For instance, Kirsteen describes to me a situation where she was attempting to 'refer' a student for specialist support that she alone could not provide.[110]

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[110] One of the activities Kirsteen will do is circulate the details of a particular student to a list of peripatetic support staff who she feels may be able to 'offer support' for a student. She calls this 'putting out', meaning, 'inviting expressions of interest' via an internet e-mail 'list' that she keeps.

I unpack this short but complex extract in two places, and in doing so selectively describe a number of speech-act sequences that illustrate how Kirsteen and her (unnamed) respondent negotiate their different authorities:

> KP I think it's just easier to be sensitive I think, you know, in a ... you don't want people to think that you're making judgements and I think that sometimes people put judgements on their own disability.
>
> NC Can you give me a negative case where people are [doing this]..?
>
> KP Oh sure, yeh. Well I think that one is with students that come through for support with mental health difficulties [...] So you know, in a case where I've been putting the feelers out for support for a student, and for a student with mental health issues I put out that *'this student's disability is depression'*, and I got feedback from someone on that mailing list that said *'that's more of a difficulty, it's not really a disability'* and 'blah blah blah'. And I said *'that's OK, I'm sorry, I didn't mean anything by it'*.

[Ref. Kirsteen/16:56-18:11, abridged]

Kirsteen's initial utterance to her respondent ("this student's disability is depression") is, I argue, illocutionary: although this *does* convey meaning, and might also (later) invite a consequence,[111] in the time and place in which she utters *these words* to this *specific person* her utterance serves to assemble the (unnamed) student as a person 'with' a disability, and a person who is 'in need' of intervention. This is how Kirsteen would usually, as a convention, (Austin 1975) establish dialogue with an (expert) respondent. Although Kirsteen has not made this 'diagnosis' herself, it is used by her with the assurance of a prior authority; this diagnosis will have been made previously, by a medical or psychological practitioner, and is here conveyed *by* her. In this way, Kirsteen attempts to establish, for her respondent, her use of 'appropriate' disability-related language, apparently deployed remind her listener of her competence and authority in this situation, although this, ultimately, is not entirely successful.

Wieland (2007) notes that Austin's (1975) theory might be problematic in circumstances where the nature of 'authority' is not openly agreed, and this interaction illustrates this possibility. Ostensibly, both Kirsteen and her (unnamed) respondent both have authority as they "possess status in their local domains" (Wieland 2007, p439);

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[111] That is, it might also be understood as *perlocutionary*; Austin discusses this (1975), although here the possible consequences are not spelled-out or stated by either respondent, although 'causing offense' is implied. As such, I locate this as an illocutionary act, and concordant with the conventions (rituals) of administrator-expert dialogue in this particular context

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that is, Kirsteen, as an administrator with no 'expert' qualifications, is responsible for the recruitment of support staff, and her respondent is responsible for delivering this support; and so neither can act without the other. However, her respondent's reply incites Kirsteen to issue an apology; and although some felicity conditions are *not* met (for example, Kirsteen may not be *sincere* in her apology), the act (the 'naming' of a disability, and the referral of the student) is still fully completed successfully. Hence this provides a good example where some facility conditions can remain unmet, yet the overall act (naming, referral) is completed successfully.[112]

Although Kirsteen has attempted to 'name' depression as a 'disability' in a style she feels conforms to the usual conventions (rituals) for this type of dialogue in this context (that is, her statements might be accorded the status of 'truth' within legal and medical discourse), her respondent nonetheless issues a verdicitive (judging, normalizing) utterance (Austin 1975) which invites Kirsteen's re-classification of her student ('depression', from 'disability' to 'difficulty'). Kirsteen receives this as a reprimand, and it serves to establish the respondent's 'expert' authority, a capacity to 'name' disabilities that Kirsteen does not possess. Outwardly, Kirsteen does not resist. Her response is to retract ('sorry'), albeit in a manner which later appears insincere ('blah blah blah') or *hollow* (Austin 1975). As such, her response is felicitous in respect of its commissive (obliging) properties (Austin 1975), as she appears to express willingness to concord with this expert classification, yet it perhaps remains infelicitous in respect to its sincerity.

Kirsteens 'talk' here falls under Austin's general category of 'misfire'; although the procedure (referring a student to an 'expert' authority) eventually succeeds, it is marred by a *misexecution* or *hitch*; both are types of infelicity condition (Austin 1975). However, there is another infelicity of a type that I further consider: Kirsteen recalled 'apologising' to her respondent, but in her later explanation to me she described her uneasiness with particular forms of disability 'talk', for example those that invite the replacement or substitution of 'outdated' forms of address with more 'favoured' terms. Although Kirsteen does not express her disagreement openly to her respondent, her infelicitous utterance, her *insincerity*, appears (paradoxically) to be the way she works to maintain collegiality in normal circumstances:

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[112] See Austin (1975, p135) on the partial meeting of felicity conditions

KP　You know, instead of listening to what people are saying these days, they just immediately jump on buzzwords, and instead of trying to discern what the intention was behind the statement, they'd rather just, you know, come out as the PC police [113] and say *'No, no, don't call it that anymore'*. I can understand, I mean back [where I live], people still call disabled people 'handicapped', and it's *not* scowled at [...]

KP　I'm going to come off [you might perceive me to be] as completely...err..! [laughs]

NC　[Are] people confused by this?

KP　Well I think it can put people in a kind of uncomfortable scenario where they always feel like they are walking on egg-shells, and when they actually do wind-up meeting somebody who's disabled, it's kind of 'Ooh, OK, can I shake your hand, or what do you do normally?', and so I think there is a kind of adverse side-effect [...] you know, [impersonates the voice of her respondent] 'Don't call depression any kind of disability...they're not suffering, they're 'experiencing' depression'.

[Ref. Kirsteen/36:56-38:43, abridged]

Although the administrative procedure (the 'referral' of the student) was completed successfully, and Kirsteen did not challenge her respondent openly, Kirsteen's insincerity does, I argue, serve to both illustrate her resistance to particular modes of speech and a modest attempt to subvert of the authority of her respondent, albeit not directly. Following Foucault, the possibility for resistance is simultaneous with power (see chapters five and eight). Power, in the Foucauldian sense, is dynamic, unstable and constantly invoked and circulated through/within discourse, and it is this instability, its lack of 'guarantee' that makes resistance or subversion possible (Foucault 1978; Mills 2000). The power that 'enabled' Kirsteen's subjectivation as a disability administrator has also 'folded in' a potential for her resistance or subversion: hence she is able to formulate a subversive act.

The argument I make here is that resistance (subversion) and power (the commissive utterance of the expert) are not, in a Foucauldian formulation, ontologically opposed: whether an act is posited as 'resistance' or an expression of 'power' is dependent upon the local (discursive) context (Heller 1996). Hence neither Kirsteen nor her respondent had 'more' or 'less' power, but they did convey different forms of authority. As such, her modest act of resistance and how it was *received* (and perhaps unnoticed or ignored)

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[113] Meaning, 'politically correct'. Kirsteen further distinguishes between language-use in her 'home' (distant) community, and that used in this context. This research does not explore such variations.

by her expert respondent questions the nature of 'authority' that Kirsteen may or may not possess in these circumstances. Although (as I felt) Kirsteen may have considered herself to acting with some authority (and was bemused, if not vexed, by the response of her respondent), this short interaction illustrates what Lawler has posited as the tension between "'speaking with authority' and 'being authorized to speak'" (Lawler 2004, p123); although Kirsteen *was* able to act in a manner that she considered authoritative, she was *not* 'authorised to speak'. Lawler explains:

> Authority cannot simply be claimed by the speaker: it must also be granted by the listener. This is not a question of individual choice...there must be significant legitimation granted to the speaker. (Lawler 2004, p123)

As such, I consider that it is 'expert' disability and pedagogic discourse that is in circulation here, and this functions to assemble Kirsteen's respondent as an 'expert authority' and, more subtly, it *pathologizes* Kirsteen's 'talk' (she said the 'wrong' thing, used the 'wrong' words); in this way, it also incites Kirsteen to assemble *herself* as a subject who is *obliged* to use the prescribed 'correct language', irrespective of what she might feel outside this context. In her response to the verdicitive 'judgement and correction' of her expert respondent, Kirsteen both re-circulates the expert power/knowledge to 'name' disabilities (through her recognition and restatement of the expert utterance and its vernacular) and yet she *also* subverts it through her deprecation of the 'advice' she was given. Hence I argue that it is also the local, contextual, and discursive field that shapes authority and guarantees (or thwarts) the functioning of power and invokes/revokes the agency of the administrator. It is this sense that, despite her vociferous (but well humoured) account, Kirsteen's words ultimately 'counted' for little when in her dialogue with her 'expert' respondent.

THE ROLE OF RITUAL IN PREVENTING INFELICITOUS SPEECH

Mary Douglas's thesis (Douglas 2002) suggests that ritual is deployed in circumstances where a risk of moral threat or uncertainty is extant. Applied to the administrative context, and the uttering of 'disability talk' by the administrators, my interpretation suggests that it is the *repetition* and deployment of 'politically correct' talk as a form of *ritual* that aims to protect against the moral uncertainty that is understood to accompany utterances 'about' disability (Douglas 2002). I contend that administrators frequently rehearse a cautiousness around disability language, although from *where* this 'caution' arose was something that was difficult for them to describe, and hence for me to locate. For instance, I asked Morag from 'where' she believed she learned the 'preferred'

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language to use in respect of disability. Her response was somewhat ambiguous; although she alluded to a legislative context, she also expressed uncertainty about whether her practices in respect of the 'use of language' were wholly associated with 'following' the law:

NC   Just going back to 'words' and 'language' that you use around disability, do you think you're speaking or using the 'correct' language?

MB   I hope [that] the language I use it not disparaging or condescending ... I wouldn't want to cause offense ... because I think if that's 'correct' well then, yes, I hope I do

NC   Do you share the same language with people at work at the moment, in terms of disability?

MB   I would say yes

NC   Why is that?

MB   Why... I think with...as I said before...I suppose part of it as well is the language that's used is ... what's become acceptable... so people use that language in order not to be detrimental in how they talk about people with disabilities. *And in a way I suppose that language has been dictated to by what's acceptable and what's not acceptable ...and the change in phrases that's come in as a consequence of ...I don't know whether it's legislation or the way that ...people who work, the way it's been communicated*

[Ref. Morag/42:13-48:29, abridged]

Janice, too, is unable to locate a specific origin for her (anti-discriminatory) disability talk. She 'knows' that some words and expressions might be considered to be 'wrong' in certain situations and contexts (here, the workplace), but cannot explain clearly from where she has learned this, although she alludes to the media, 'family' and then, broadly, what she describes as 'society'; however, although she describes her commitment to 'PC' (politically correct) language, unlike Morag she does not cite the law or legislation:

NC   Can you describe the language you use around disability?

JP   It depends upon the way you're using it, it depends. If I'm using *the wrong words* and someone has a disability then, you know, it depends on the context. Because I know that I might use some words that could be [considered to be] offensive

JP   And this does happen sometimes because in general I'm quite PC about things

NC   [Right

JP   Like I'll say to someone, 'You can't say that!', but yes, disability-wise I like to think that I use the correct terminology

NC   How do you know what that correct terminology is?

JP   I don't know, er, culture?

NC   I meant, how you know [that...

JP   [... I'm not being offensive?

NC   Where does that come from?

JP   Erm Maybe the news, maybe TV, erm, family maybe

NC   What makes [your words] acceptable or unacceptable?

JP   If they're offensive? [uncertain]

NC   How do you make that judgement?

JP   Well, its society...*Oh, I don't know!*

[Ref. Janice/1:07:25-1:13:00, abridged]

I argue that although legislation (and its incorporation into written policy) may provide the administrators with specific terminology that one may directly incorporate into everyday practice, I find that it is also the diffuse and circulatory *reiteration and rehearsal* of 'non-discriminatory' and 'inclusive' talk within and throughout the administrative context that is also of significance when considering administrators' use of language. That is, it is not (only) the law and policy which requires/obliges the administrators to talk/act in non-discriminatory ways, but that it is also their adoption of these 'ways of talking' that are illustrative of a *ritualised set of speech acts* that function, in respect of disability, to "shut in desired themes", and serve to "control [their] performance[s]" (Douglas 2002, p79).

Austin (1975) outlines an association between the rehearsal of social rituals and the felicity (or infelicity) of speech acts/performances: that is, a ritual may 'fail' (be incomplete or become flawed) by, for instance, using the 'wrong' words. Butler (1997a) extends this thesis, arguing that if a speech act does succeed (that is, it meets felicity conditions) then this does not happen simply because the act of speaking *in itself* makes it so. Rather, Butler argues that successful speech acts echo *prior* actions. In echoing them, the authority of the speech act *is accumulated through repetition* or recitation of

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prior authorities (Mills 2000). This means that speech does not 'act' in isolation. Rather, it is embedded within and a constitutive of *ritual*, as I noted earlier in this chapter when outlining speech acts. Hence 'successful' (felicitous) speech acts can only be 'successful' if they are able to derive authority through their ritual repetition. Furthermore, as constituents of ritual, their nature is necessarily obscured. On "racial slur", for instance, Butler argues:

> When the injurious term injures...it works its injury precisely through the accumulation and dissimulation of its force. The speaker who utters the racial slur is thus citing that slur, making linguistic community with a history of speakers. What this might mean, then, is that precisely the iterability by which a performative enacts its injury establishes a permanent difficulty in locating final accountability in a singular subject and its act (Butler 1997a, p52)

However, whilst Butler discusses the utterance of 'injurious' speech, my data is representative of the converse, that is, the administrators in this context are predominantly *avoiding* the use of language that they perceive to be injurious, at least 'in public' or workplace contexts. However, I contend that this *too* is bound into ritualistic 'ways of speaking' that are subject to felicity conditions: that is, for the 'ritual' avoidance of 'offensive' talk to be successfully enacted, then certain felicity conditions ought to be met. My data suggests that administrators recognise and comprehend the illocutionary and perlocutionary (consequential) potential of 'unacceptable speech' and, selecting for the context in which they are located, they work to make their speech appear 'inoffensive'. In order to achieve this, they strive to rehearse and meet felicity conditions, for instance, the 'correct' selection and application of words, their use (as Janice, above, notes) in an appropriate (workplace) context, and their use of these terms with the appropriate persons. These, I argue, constitute the 'rituals' of 'safe' disability talk within the workplace.

However, whilst some of the felicity conditions for 'appropriate' disability talk may be met, other felicity conditions may not be. For instance, although Kirsteen (above) facilitated a successful speech act (which involved her accepting and responding appropriately to the verdictive utterance of her 'expert' peer), she (during our interview) 'disagreed', and hence the 'moral' felicity condition (sincerity) was not met; however, the ritual (to guard against the taboo of causing offense) was completed. This is perhaps a situation whereby, as Douglas (2002) notes, a ritual is enacted to settle an uncertain moral position. How one 'feels about' or 'acts upon' disability is a moral concern. In this particular workplace context, there is a need to both maintain collegiality and

concordance with the disability legislation, and one must be 'seen' to be protecting a preferred position 'on' disability, irrespective of one's personal viewpoint. Hence a pollution ritual (Douglas 2002) is enacted to manage this uncertainty: this obligates certain ways of *knowing* and *being* to be publically articulated and, if completed successfully, then the 'risk' of 'offensive' and (notionally) legal sanction is ameliorated.[114]

SUBJECT TO FORMAL RULES (THE LAW)

An uncomplicated explanation of the 'authorisation' of their talk (that I will partly refute shortly) is that the administrators are simply 'responding to' and 'reflecting' legal requirements; that is, in 'choosing' to speak (hence, act) in a manner that they understand to be non-discriminatory, they are complying unwaveringly with the extant legislation,[115] or with the institutional policies that reflect legislative requirements. That is, in 'saying' something 'injurious' about disability, they might risk legal sanction or, by proxy, institutional sanction through local policies. However, in Foucauldian terms, such an explanation can be problematized. Whilst Foucault does not reject entirely the possibility for 'sovereign power' that is 'imposed' on the individual, his thesis, as I discussed earlier (chapter five), privileges the operation of disciplinary power. The law, in this respect, can be seen as a "codification of a whole number of power relations which render its functioning possible" (Foucault 2000a, p122). Hence, although 'legal power' is in operation in this context, this might only be 'put to work' by disciplinary power that is already in circulation.

My fieldwork suggested that administrators, whilst very concerned not to be 'discriminatory' in their 'talk', did not strongly associate doing so *directly* with an obligation to comply with disability discrimination legislation. Rather, they associated concordance with the principles of 'anti-discrimination' with what they understood to be 'good practice', and the 'insertion' of the law into administrative practice was understood by them to confirm or consolidate existing practice. However, the codifying, in law, of 'anti-discrimination' did incite 'anxieties' about 'discrimination' that, perhaps, they had not previously felt. For instance, Andrea, a senior administrator, has

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[114] See also Douglas (2002) where she discusses the role of ritual in "marshalling moral disapproval when it lags" (p162)

[115] At the time of this research, the *Disability Discrimination Act* (1995, 2005) and the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act* (2001) and, as recently enacted, *The Equality Act* (2010)

lengthy experience working in administrative roles (both in this University and others, and also in other public sector positions) and her role at the time of this research included, like many of the senior administrators in this place, the recruitment of staff. This provided me with an opportunity to ask her how she 'received' the introduction of anti-discriminatory legislation in respect of this. She explained to me how, prior to the introduction of the *Disability Discrimination Act* (Great Britain 1995, 2005) she had, in her words, 'just dealt' with disability; now, she explained, 'anxiety' was 'created' for people (staff members) as the presence of a legal framework had resulted in an increased emphasis upon the responsibility of the individual staff member to interpret and concord with legal requirements:

> NC   [W]hen you first 'saw' the DDA [Disability Discrimination Act], what did you make of it?
>
> AR   I can't remember! [laughs] I think it's been more worrying compared to what I did before [prior to the DDA]. What I did before, we dealt with disability because it was there, and not because it was a legislative requirement. But having the legislation has certainly made me more anxious [...] now there is [the law], and that's more anxiety-creating for people

[Ref. Andrea/10:52-11:14, abridged]

Morag, who manages a small team of administrators, also recognises the influence of legislation in the administrative context, but she locates this in a deeper historical context, something she describes as a "climate change" in disability-related attitudes that has occurred over the period of her career. Indeed, she is reluctant to directly associate the use of language 'about' disability to the legislation; rather, the 'appropriate' use of language, something she believes to be shared by her colleagues, reflects her concern to be seen and understood by others to be practising 'ethically':

> NC   There's [a phrase] you've just used, 'Climate change'
>
> MB   [Mmm
>
> NC   What climate has changed?
>
> MB   I think I mean ... we're becoming more ... I think it's because ... it's an old-fashioned word, but the stigma's not like it used to be, like there used to be with lots of things in the 50s and the 60s you know...people are more accepting, more understanding [and] I would hope less judgemental. I mean things that would have been a stigma twenty years ago, ten-fifteen years ago... I don't judge and I think more people are less judgemental, more accepting of people as individuals

[...]

MB   [And] legislation, in a way… in [my administrative role] you have to be very aware of being 'ethical' [and] not being discriminatory [...]

NC   Do you share the same language with people at work at the moment, in terms of disability?

MB   I would say yes

NC   Why is that?

MB   I suppose part of it … is the language that's used is … what's become acceptable… so people use that language in order not to be detrimental in how they talk about people with disabilities. And in a way I suppose that language has been dictated to by what's acceptable and what's not acceptable …and the change in phrases that's come in as a consequence of …*I don't know whether it's legislation or the way that it's been communicated*

[Ref. Morag/26:24-28:26/33:17-33:19/47:25-48:29, abridged]

Stefan, too, has difficulty recalling in detail the specific requirements of the law, but he is able to offer a précis of how he understands it to apply to his junior administrative role. In his explanation, he is unequivocal about the 'moral' duty that he believes to characterise his administrative work: he tells me that he 'can't' and 'shouldn't' discriminate 'against' someone, and this includes his use of 'negative language' about disability. He recalls attending a 'disability training course' where he was provided with information about the law, although he understands his attendance to have served only to 'confirm' what he already knew (and practised); these practices, he says, are the 'correct' ones to follow:

NC   Do you know what policies the University has around disability... about the Law for example?

SA   [Laughs] Now we *were* told, but to be honest, I can't remember off-hand. I can't tell you now, no.

NC   And do you know about the laws?

SA   Again, only what we were told [in the training session], and we did get some information given, which I have in my drawer downstairs. Erm, if I try and remember now, I'd probably get it wrong. But as far as I can remember, *the policy says* that as a University we are law-bound [not to discriminate]

NC   Does that affect you?

SA   I think it does affect me, or I am affected by it, I mean. I *need* to be accommodating to people. I *can't* discriminate, in my role, I *shouldn't* discriminate against someone

[...]

SA   One thing that always stuck in my mind from the first ever training session I went to was that they had this big introduction about how you should treat someone with a disability. And the *correct* answer was 'How they would want to be treated'. And that's always stuck with me

NC   Can you give me an example?

SA   The [disability training] course confirmed a lot of the things you were doing but it gave you the theory behind it ... Erm, I suppose an example is the use of 'negative language' when you're talking to [a person with a disability] ... they *could* be offended by that. I don't think that's something I lose sleep over, but I have to think about it

[Ref. Stefan/53:00-55:24, abridged]

Stefan's explanation, 'the *correct* answer' is of interest here. This he does not directly associate with concordance with the law; rather, this appears to reflect his selection of statements from an 'inclusive' discourse of disability within which certain utterances are 'acceptable' whilst others are 'not acceptable'. Although he notes (in answer to my question) that the 'University' is 'law bound' to prevent discrimination, Stefan is not citing 'the law' in order to authorise the statements he is making; rather, he is citing, variously, the University's disability policy, the 'correct' statements that he gained from the 'training session' and, more equivocally, 'inclusive' statements 'about' disability that are 'in circulation' in the talk of administrators in this context, and for which, like Morag (above), he does not account for their origin.

Stefan's explanation suggests that the 'risk' of 'causing offense' when using 'inappropriate' disability-related language is in part monumentalised within local policy texts and the 'training' that administrators are obliged to attend. He implies that the utterance of particular words or phrases 'do something', are illocutionary, in their utterance; that is, they a posited as forms of practice or 'conduct', conduct that he is obliged to avoid. Obligations such as these can be located in texts that convey legal authority. For instance, in the United Kingdom, the EHRC (Equality and Human Rights Commission) guidelines (deployed in response to the *Equality Act* 2010), aggregate 'undesirable' speech with other harmful practices (for example, 'sexual abuse'); both of these categories of conduct are deemed to constitute the *practice* of 'harassment', and

these risks, they suggest, might be ameliorated through programmes of training and education for employees, which would include training on:

> The law covering all the protected characteristics and what behaviour is and is not acceptable...The risk of ignoring or *seeming to approve* inappropriate behaviour and personal liability...How discrimination can affect the way an employer functions and the impact that...*inappropriate language* in day-to-day operations can have on people's chances of obtaining work, promotion, recognition and respect (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2011, p12, my emphases)

Winifred, whose responsibilities include the dissemination of 'disability policy', states that she may ultimately need to 'remind' her staff that they will be required to concord with its requirements. What is particularly interesting here is her discussion of 'fear'; although an abject 'fear of the law' may, she explains, afford her with the authority to 'speak for' anti-discriminatory practices, this is something she seeks to take advantage of. However, perhaps of greater significance to her is how disability/anti-discriminatory practices are incorporated successfully into the administrative and disciplinary architecture of administrative practice, and the 'business imperative' of doing so:

> WX We need to get up to speed with legislation, but we also need to put that into practice in a way that people can respond to it, er, positively, rather than seeing all of this as a 'tick box' exercise, and [then] get quite miserable about having to apply this bit of legislation. We want people to *embrace it positively* and see it as a change...that's the challenge...[Although] I wouldn't want people to think that all of staff 'need' to be convinced [...] we almost have to do a bit of the 'frightening' tactic [...]
>
> NC Ultimately will you remind them that it's a legal requirement?
>
> WX There is, but do you know what, though...that's what frightens people the most. Whereas I would think people would say 'well OK, this is a legal requirement [...] and it just be accepted [but] you do really need to consider it from the point of view of being a *business imperative,* that we have a full, broad range of staff and students that reflect the equality bases and *our policies are approved in order to help our retention and progression.* And so now I am coming in with a bit of a heavy hand, and it sounds a bit... like I have to force [staff to comply]
>
> [Ref. Winifred/01:31; 01:07:47-01:10:43, abridged]

Winifred describes her response to the legal requirements in vaguely authoritarian terms: whilst she would prefer her staff to 'embrace' anti-discriminatory practices in a principled and 'positive way', she also realises that she can, if necessary, refer to the (sovereign) power of the law to realise administrative aims.

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It is in this way, I argue, disciplinary discourses that are extant in this context are *enabling* the law to function; that is, rather than being understood as wholly 'repressive' or 'preventative', in character, these discourses are *productive* – they 'make' practice. For instance, Winifred identifies as important the "business imperative" of anti-discriminatory practice. Although she does not discount altogether its 'moral' aspects, practising in a manner that is 'non-discriminatory' confers benefit to the organisation in respect of the 'consumerist' discourses of Higher Education, both in terms of attracting students and staff to join the organisation ('recruitment'), and in ensuring that students are successful ('progression'). Hence 'success' corresponds not (only) with legal compliance, but instead with 'local' business interests. In effect, it is not 'good business' to act in a manner that is understood to be anti-discriminatory. As such, although the law *may* be understood as 'repressive' (and Winifred could, she says, cite this to authorise her actions), the (sovereign) law is codified and authorised (Foucault 1981) through the disciplinary discourses that are in circulation in this context; that is, although 'the State' (and its laws) are important, they are inaugurated within a myriad of locally-circulated disciplinary discourses, a possibility that Foucault considers:

> I don't want to say that the State isn't important; what I want to say is that relations of power, and hence the analysis that must be made of them, necessarily extend beyond the State...*because the State can only operate on the basis of other, existing, power relations...* [the power of the State] only secure its footing where it is rooted in a whole series of multiple and indefinite power relationships (Foucault 2000a, p122)

As such, a number of power relations might be understood to 'make up' the law that the administrators are 'responding to'; and so, in effect, it is possible to conceive of the administrators as *not only* being required to 'follow the law', but also as people who are assembled and imbricated within the disciplinary power relationships which are, in this context, codified within the legislative framework of the *Equality Act*. These power relations are circulated through the administrator/student realm by a "micro-economy" (Foucault 1995, p27) of disciplinary knowledge, power and practices: not only 'disability training' events, but also those practices of disability assessment and administration (chapter eight), medical and psychological assessments and the audit of administrative practices associated with disability. Hence, the administrators are not only 'responding to the law'; they are also subjectivised within an ecology of disciplinary power relations which function to authorise the law, and not simply 'follow' it (see Foucault 1981, p55).

However, what was most compelling about these administrators' accounts of the legislation is how they, as individuals, voiced their *obligation* to 'comprehend' the anti-discriminatory *principles* of the legislation. Their expressed 'anxieties' about uttering 'acceptable' speech about disability were only indirectly referenced 'legal compliance'; rather, their concordance with 'non-discriminatory' talk was, for some of the administrators, more strongly associated with understanding themselves (and, for some, being seen by others) to be acting in a 'moral' or 'ethical' manner that was concordant with notions of 'inclusivity'; this aspect I now consider.

OBLIGED TO BE A MORAL PERSON

Another felicity condition of relevance to the present context concerns the "thoughts, feelings and intentions" (Austin 1975, p15*n*) of the speaker; the infelicitous conditions here are termed *abuses*. Although a performative might be successful, utterances can still be insincere, or "hollow" (Austin 1975, p16, 17). These may be difficult to ascertain: for example, although (continuing the 'judge passing sentence' example provided earlier) a particular judge may think a law to be 'unjust', this does *not* prevent the completion of the legal task: the illocutionary act is still 'completed' and the person named as a 'criminal' at the point at which the judge utters the word, 'guilty'. However, this is *still* considered an infelicity, as the judge might not possess the 'correct' thoughts, feelings or intentions demanded or expected of a judge. As I outlined earlier, this raises 'intriguing questions' about the administrators' 'obligation' to practise what they understand to be the 'correct' ways of talking about disability; these obligations I now explore more fully.

Winifred's role requires that she consults 'disabled students and staff' in respect of developing and reviewing disability policies. This aspect of her role is of strategic importance to the organisation, as it is concerned with the organisational 'response' to the *Equality Act* (2010) which, at the time of conducting this fieldwork had been proposed, but not yet enacted into UK law.[116] In doing this, she experiences three primary concerns, namely the necessity to consult other people and groups, the 'fear' of causing 'offense', and the presumption that individual administrative staff *will be obliged* to hold a moral position about disability when that is expressed in their 'talk':

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[116] I outline the nature of this Act in a coda to this thesis

NC   You've ... talked about "fear", "scary", "painful" and "tension", what do you think those things mean in relation to disability, and why are you choosing those words?

WX   [...] In terms of doing consultation with our disabled students and staff, we're only just starting to get to grips with that, and I think that's where it will become interesting in terms of whether people feel 'comfortable' or 'confident' to talk about people's disabilities openly and honestly [and] in a way that isn't going to offend those people. *We are so frightened of offending some people* by not being 'politically correct' [she flexes her index fingers either side of her head]

NC   And do you think that is the nature of the fear?

WX   Yes. Yes, I do. I think it is, and if you start to look at people's personal views, it's an area where *we do have ethical and personal and moral standing* that is sometimes difficult to 'park' before you start to enter a discussion [...

       [Ref. Winifred/24:23-28:14, abridged]

Although her role is styled (by her, by the organisation) as 'consultation', what this appears to incite is a particular mode of surveillance, that is, a particular way of observing and normalizing the experience of 'disability' (Foucault 1995); indeed, her words, '*those* people' (my emphasis) suggests that the people with disabilities with whom she is 'consulting' are, necessarily, determined *in advance* as 'disabled' (her styling) by the legislation that she is obliged to 'consult upon'.[117] In effect, therefore, although people with disabilities are ostensibly 'consulted', they are still subject to a particular form of disciplinary power; that is, they are 'made' legitimate administrative subjects through legal/medical discourse. Furthermore, the invitation to participate in the 'consultation' suggests that, as 'people with disabilities', they are obliged (or should oblige themselves) to participate, to express an opinion, to 'be' a subject who is (or should be) consulted.

Winifred is subject, too, to disciplinary power: she is obliged to become a subject *who consults*, an identity that, she describes, implicates her in the formation of a particular type of moral and consulting 'self' who is committed to the anti-discriminatory tenets that are monumentalised in the text of the law. Winifred is obliged by the university to reconcile juridical prescription (the law) 'with' local policy and, as a senior administrator, she is understood to possess the requisite 'professional expertise' and

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[117] It also might suggest 'Othering', or the recalling of 'difference'

authority in respect of the formulation of policy.[118] However, in doing so, she is obliged to invite the participation of others ('disabled students and staff'), who too are obliged to make *their* contribution. Hence these choices (about policy) are constrained, both by the specific legal requirements of 'the state' as to 'who' a 'disabled person' is understood to be, but also by/through what Nikolas Rose has described as the "ethicalization of existence" (Rose 1999, p263) which, he argues:

> [H]as intensified the demands that citizens do not devolve responsibilities...upon 'the state', but take responsibility for their own conduct and its consequences in the name of their own self-realization. The well-being of all...has increasingly come to be seen as a consequence of the responsible self-government of each. (Rose 1999, p263)

Administrators cannot 'work behind' the moral and legal authority of the 'state', but rather, they are *obliged* to disclose and 'present' their own moral positions as they undertake, in this example, disability-related work. The apparatus of the University makes this possible: the 'new' disability policy, which she is charged to formulate and enact, necessarily invites her to undertake 'consultation' with 'disabled staff and students'; that is, they (as 'consumers' of the new policy) and she (as the 'expert') are obliged to participate and 'give voice' to the policy which they are writing and enacting in response to legislation. This consultation, however, she associates with feelings of 'fear', the 'risk' of being seen by others as 'not being politically correct', and the trepidation of those who are participating being unable 'to park' (her words, meaning either to 'set-aside' or 'conceal') their personal beliefs or convictions about disability.

Paradoxically, notes Rose (1999), the nature of the 'freedom' that has obliged Winifred to 'consult' is accompanied and bounded by two further features in this "contemporary regime" (Rose 1999, p266): an extension of the possibilities for conduct which are deemed excessive,[119] and conduct that is non-consensual, "where the freedom of another is violated". These, he notes, "define the limits" within which contemporary freedom can operate. It is in this latter case, the violation of 'another' through an act of speech, that I locate the 'problem' of 'unacceptable' disability talk, particularly that 'talk' that might be understood to subjugate or violate at the moment of its utterance.

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[118] Winifred has previously undertaken 'policy making' roles in a number of organisations. She was a member of a team of senior staff who were, at the time of fieldwork, undertaking this exercise. To preserve anonymity, there are some specific details of her role that I cannot detail within these data and the analysis.

[119] That I do not consider further here, but might include 'drug use' or sexual conduct

This is not only a problem of 'who' has authority to speak and listen (see Alvesson and Skoldberg 2009), but it is, Rose argues, a problem of authenticity, too:

> This is a form of 'speaking out' in which certain intimate, personal or 'private' aspects or features of human existence and conduct are articulated, put into discourse. These are usually in the form of first-person reports, but can, of course, take the form not of 'speaking out' but of 'outing' where the shameful, hidden or secret aspects of the person are revealed by another...these are the dangers of freedom...The ethic of authenticity is tied to a certain axis of evaluation: authenticity versus hypocrisy. The celebration of authenticity thus generates hypocrisy as its privileged form of pathology and is linked to self-righteous macro- and micro-politics of disclosure – the 'outing' of closet homosexuals, the expose of the outwardly respectable...It is authorised by those who hear. (Rose 1999, p266-7)

Talking *with* (consulting) people with disabilities is a necessary part of Winifred's role: she reasons this in terms of collegiality and 'involvement' (it is 'good' to consult people); however, she is also compelled to do this (she needs to demonstrate the organisation's legal compliance). However to achieve this, some form of authority is necessary, yet she rehearses a fear of 'being authoritative' in respect of disability. Winifred is obliging herself (and others) to be morally 'responsible': not only must one possess a 'moral' character, but *in addition* one must be able to suspend this 'moral position' in certain circumstances in order to promote collegiality and ameliorate the risk of 'causing offence'. Hence although her role is ostensibly to support legal compliance (that is, she is following formal 'rules') in enacting 'consultation' she is both subject to a 'participatory' and 'moral' way to 'be' an employee, whereby one is obliged to participate (the presumption being that it is desirable to be consulted) and one is also obliged to both hold and simultaneously suspend a moral position 'on' disability.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The 'new' discourses 'about' disability (as inculcated in the training sessions, as inscribed in the law, as framed by the Social Model, as circulated within University texts) whilst ostensibly virtuous – the 'right way to think about disability' – serve to re-inscribe the pathologizing (and arguably oppressive) nature of medicalised discourses. Obliging/requiring administrators to resist "old fashioned" sensibilities (as they are styled within their training) in respect of disability, not only requires something of their 'selves' (which I discuss further in the next chapter), but also functions to recite the notions of 'difference' and the necessity of an 'extraordinary' response to disablement: erasing, for instance, discourses of 'impairment' from within disability training not only

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invites the confusion of the administrators, but reassembles new subjects of 'difference', albeit in a different formulation: not impairments (or 'madness'), but as subjects of 'barriers' and 'adjustment'. Whilst these may, in the present, be understood as virtuous practices to rouse, these discourses continue to mark some people as 'different', and 'requiring intervention'. It is this way that resistance to outmoded practices in respect of disability, including ways of 'talking', necessarily re-inscribe and reformulate discourses of exclusion and difference in their practices.

Explaining the expressed "confusion" of the administrators is challenging. I suggest that the language of impairment, that they are incited to reject, cites a particular form of authority (medicine). The 'new' discourses of disability, those that 'make up' subjects who have disabilities, deprecate expert authority, and require something of the 'selves' of those to whom they are a concern: people with disabilities, of course, but in this context also people, such as administrators, who are required to 'work' with these classifications. The ideology of the Social Model (as presented within the 'disability training') deprecates the status of expert power/knowledge and its capacity to 'name' and interpellate [120] subjects (people with disabilities). Yet administrators are *required* to use these classifications (the student 'has dyslexia' only if it is diagnosed by an expert, for instance), yet they are simultaneously *incited* to respect the authority/capacity of the student to 'name' their disability, and they are also required to 'work on their selves' in respect of possessing the 'correct' attitudes with respect to disability. It is therefore perhaps not unsurprising that administrators find themselves 'confused' as to the 'correct' way to talk/act in respect of disability.

In 'working with' disability, administrators are obliged to both follow rules (for instance, the 'law' or local 'policy' that reflects the legal requirements), yet are also obliged to work on their 'selves'; that is, to be a 'good' administrator/worker/colleague, one must possess and/or be seen to demonstrate the 'correct' attitude in respect of disability. As the 'correct' disability language is (in general) not prescribed,[121] administrators are obliged to make individual choices about 'how' they 'talk' about disability in the workplace. These are choices informed/framed by exclusion: my earlier

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[120] See chapter five, where I relate Althusser's use of this concept with Foucault's concept of subjectivation

[121] The disability training outlined the language that one should 'not use'; only Janice (see earlier) could recall an episode where she was she was advised to use a specific formulation of words

reporting illustrates that what one "cannot" say, or "should not" say, is accorded privilege in the administrators' narratives. Hence although these revised discourses 'of' disability (and administration) incite/obligate the administrators to 'make choices' (and be 'free') in respect of 'how they talk about' disability, these choices are constrained within the discourses that are available to them. The disability training offers an overt example of how administrators are normalized (as having 'good' or 'undesirable' attitudes) and thereby subjectivised within these discourses. However, these normalizing discourses are also extant outside the training context and within the 'everyday' realms of the workplace. Janice's castigation of her colleague who used the 'wrong' vernacular ("You can't call it that anymore") illustrates how administrators both work on their selves (their subjectivation as 'moral' workers), and work on the 'selves' of others, too: that is, they are agents in the circulation of these discourses.

Causing 'offense' (which may arise from using the 'wrong' language in respect of disability) is not only a *consequence* of talk; rather, my interpretation suggests that uttering the 'wrong' words is considered in itself an injurious act, and is *taboo*. My findings suggest that the repetition of 'politically correct' talk (as it is styled by the administrators) may also be considered as a *ritual* act which, following Douglas (2002), I argue is deployed to protect against the moral uncertainty or ambiguity that may arise during 'disability talk'. I find that not only does the law and policy oblige administrators to use the 'correct' language when talking 'about' disability, but that their ritualised acts of speaking serve as controls for their performance of such acts (Douglas 2002). These (felicitous, 'acceptable') speech acts are not uttered in isolation: they derive their authority through their repetition and recitation in the context of the workplace; talking 'correctly' about disability in the workplace is 'what one does' (or what one 'should' do). These rituals are performed in the social arena of the workplace: I find that administrators, although (to a greater or lesser extent) are aware of the 'law' and anti-discriminatory 'policy', they also feel obliged to disclose and practise their 'moral' positions in relation to disability, if only in the workplace. In the following chapter, I further explore and develop this thesis, particularly in respect of Rose's thesis on 'psy' expertise, Douglas's appreciation of ritual and, before this, a further application of Foucault's thesis on power.

CHAPTER 10: SPACE AND RITUAL

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter addresses three inter-related areas, the first of which I have not yet considered, and two of which relate to findings of my previous chapters and which are further developed here. First, Foucault's (1995) notion of panoptic space and power is explored in relation to administrative work, and I discuss how the material and spatial form of administrative places function to constitute the subjectivities of those who work and visit these areas. Second, deploying the thesis of Rose (1999) and others, I discuss how administrators are incited to (and perhaps incite others) to work on their moral or 'therapeutic' selves in relation to disability. Third, guided by Douglas (2002), I consider in more detail how some administrative practices associated with disability may take on the character of ritual, particularly in relation to the administrative response to risk and danger.

INTRODUCTION

I discussed in an earlier chapter how speech acts may be considered central to administrative performances (successful or otherwise) in relation to disability. I also discussed earlier how administrators are 'made' (and work to 'make themselves') within discourse, again in relation to disability and administrative discourses. This chapter extends these ideas further in relation to disability and the contexts (places) in which the administrators are working within the University.

Although there are Foucauldian-inspired studies that examine, for instance, the spatial configuration of office and business spaces (Winiecki 2007, 2009; Briviot and Gendron 2011), places for education (Gallagher 2010, 2011), hospitals (Prior 1988) and, less frequently, disability 'spaces' (Anderson 2005), the few empirical enquiries that attend *specifically* to university administrators have largely been concerned with their specific work practices, knowledge, and 'attitudes' (McInnis 1998; Hockey and Allen-Collinson 2009). Moreover, whilst collaborative and inter-professional aspects of the university administrator's experience has been discussed (Hockey and Allen-Collinson 2009), there has been little attention paid to how, from a Foucauldian standpoint, administrators working with disability are obliged to 'work on their selves' (Rose 1998), their identities (and those of others), particularly in respect of the disability-

related work they undertake. In order to add to the knowledge of these concerns, this chapter addresses three inter-related themes.

First, the 'spaces' in which administrative practices unfold and are performed is described; specifically, I present a composite account[122] of a Disability Support Centre. My interpretation first examines how different kinds of administrative 'space', and their material effects, incite the assembly of different kinds of people (both students and administrators), the character of which is selected from within discourse. Foucault's notion of technologies (Foucault 1997) find utility here, particularly his discussion of *technologies of power* (for instance, the *Panopticon*) and, later in my discussion, his consideration of *technologies of the self*, which are concerned with the "thoughts, conduct, and way of being" (Foucault 1997, p225) of human subjects.

Second, I elaborate and discuss Nikolas Rose's Foucauldian apprehension of *psy expertise* (Rose 1998, 1999) and, in doing so, consider further the questions that I raised earlier in this thesis in respect of the 'moral' practice of administrators, namely their incitement to undertaken work of a quasi-therapeutic character. Specifically, in 'taking up' psy discourses, I consider how, despite the ostensibly individualised and unsanctioned manner in which their moral conduct might be understood, they nonetheless remain constrained within discourse: both those of psy (as they are obliged, as Rose (1996) argues, to be 'free') and yet also imbricated within juridical and disciplinary power, such as anti-discriminatory legislation and 'medical' authority.

Third, I consider how the administrators formulate and respond to the 'risk' that disability may present to the university, and how such responses may be afforded the status of 'ritual'. This connects both to the thesis of Douglas (2002), and her consideration of risk and danger, Foucault's commentary on the function of ritual in respect of power (Foucault 1981), and later debates (Lupton 1999; Rose 1999; O'Malley 2004) that consider the obligation of the individual administrator to recognise and respond to these, some of which connect directly to the work of Foucault. As such, in evoking ritual, I explore the extent to which the administrators are not only 'following rules' (for example, local 'policies' and 'the law') but how they may also be incited to act "emotionally and socially" (Howe 2000, p63) as they constitute particular kinds of 'administrative selves' in response to the administration of disability.

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[122] See my earlier discussion (chapter six), where I discuss in more detail the production of composite accounts in respect of ethical considerations

A CONSIDERATION OF SPACE

PANOPTIC SURVEILLANCE

A discussion of 'space' and 'place' clearly evokes Foucault's panoptic metaphor (Foucault 1995), which I introduced and discussed in chapter five. Foucault's use of the panoptic metaphor has been understood by some to suggest that the operation of power/knowledge is 'automatic' (Elmer 2003). That is, the concept of the *Panopticon* is "predicated on a hierarchical view of control" (Briviot and Gendron 2011, p136) whereby, within the 'closed' spatial (visual and architectural) confines of the institution (prison, school, clinic), there is a presumption that one is 'watched', a presumption that incites the docility and conformity of those contained therein. Foucault, however, made claims for the generality of the panoptic device: it was not *only* concerned with, for instance, the 'prison', but was a metaphor for "the entire social body" (Foucault 1995, p298).

However, concerns have been voiced about the continuing efficacy of this metaphor to explain surveillance practices in contemporary workplaces (Elmer 2003; Brivot and Gendron 2011), particularly in contexts where the presence of a singular authority is unknown or not guaranteed, and in institutional contexts where the agency of the subject is of necessity in dialogue with (and not in total subjection to) disciplinary power. For instance, although panopticism suggests that subjects, in their 'subjection', are incited to 'give up' knowledge about themselves, the institutions of 'consumer' society (for instance, the university) invite such submission 'in return' for individual benefits (academic awards, the receipt of a 'service', the capacity to evaluate that service); that is, the 'consumer' is *obliged* to practice choice/agency in respect of their subjection (Foucault 1995; Elmer 2003).

My position here is that interpreting Foucault's panoptic metaphor as a strictly hierarchical conception is problematic, particularly in relation to his later work (for instance, Foucault 1978), where his interests in subjectivity (and his concept of subjectivation) are fore-grounded. The application I make here is two-fold. In respect of the student (with a disability or not), the notion of 'total' panoptic discipline is problematized. Although I discuss later how the university context has some panoptic characteristics, the context also obliges student to recognise something about their *selves* and, in doing so, invites from them (in most circumstances) a *choice*. Similarly for the administrators: as my previous chapters suggest, administrators (including those

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in 'junior' positions) are incited to practise 'control', can imagine acts of resistance and can deploy expert knowledge in their practice. Hence, not only can administrators be understood to be 'made' by their spatial (panoptic) environment, but they may be understood to interact with this spatialisation; that is, they are both made 'by', and perform to 'make up', the places where they can both 'be' administrators, and 'do' their work.[123]

That is, the delineation between those who calculate and convey 'knowledge' (about disabilities), those who circulate and practise this knowledge (the administrators) and those who are (in principle) are subjectivised by/within such knowledge (students) is perhaps more complex than a 'simplified' interpretation of Foucault's panoptic metaphor might otherwise suggest (see Brivot and Gendron 2011, p145, 151). It is in this sense that I partly reject arguments that anticipate the 'death' of the panoptic metaphor in contemporary workplaces (Mathieson 1997; Elmer 2003; Briviot and Gendron 2011) My reading and use of Foucault suggests that his thesis permits significant latitude in interpretation; that is, his use of the panopticon was/is an "ideal model of power" (Gallagher 2010, p262), a metaphor that might be understood as antecedent to his later interest in subjectivities, and how "visibility to the self" (Briviot and Gendron 2011, p153) and the notion of subjectivation remains in dialogue with his panoptic vision.

AURAL PANOPTICISM[124]

Although Foucauldian-inspired studies of panoptic surveillance have, perhaps inevitably, focused upon the visual/spatial character of discipline, recent studies in respect of technology exploit its potential (and reveal its limitations) as a surveillance device in ostensibly 'non visual' contexts (Elmer 2003; Brivot and Gendron 2011). The 'panoptic' quality of *aural* surveillance is, however, less well explored in empirical inquiry, although it has received consideration across a range of disciplinary contexts. For instance, aural surveillance has been explored in relation to 'production' of the public library (Kelman 2001), as a transformational technology in Neolithic ritual

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[123] I borrow this formulation from a different context: see Blain and Wallis (2007, p54)

[124] The Panopticon -literally, the seeing (-opticon) of all (pan-) – is a visual metaphor, leading to the suggestion of a more appropriate alternative, 'panauralism' (Kelman 2001) when considering aural surveillance. Here, for clarity, I continue to use the word 'panoptic', retaining its Foucauldian useage, although recognising its application in contexts other than those that are wholly 'visual' in nature.

(Watson 2001), musicology practice (Garnett 2009), the school classroom (Gallagher 2010, 2011), and a wide range of studies in spatial geography and 'soundscape studies' (see Kanngieser 2011).

Although recent studies do address the electronic/aural surveillances of office workers, particularly in areas with a ready 'panoptic' quality, such as the 'call centre' (for instance, Winiecki 2007, 2009), there appear to be no empirical studies that specifically address the aural surveillance of 'support' areas akin to those addressed in this thesis; this is something that I now attempt to address. Therefore in this section I offer an interpretation of the productive character of aural discipline within the administrative workplace, and in doing so argue that silence, docility, total visibility and aural sobriety are "scripted into" (Kelman 2001, p37) the successful performance of those visiting and working in this space. This relates to my later discussion of ritual, as I find that the aural discipline that is assembled in this place functions to constrain or promote the occupation of particular spaces by particular people; that is, unwanted sound (Kelman 2001) may be inviting of a *ritual* response that coheres with Douglas' thesis of "matter out of place" (Douglas 2002, p44).

THE SUPPORT CENTRE: A PARTICULAR KIND OF ADMINISTRATIVE SPACE

The Support Centre represents one of a number of campus-based offices that have been introduced by the University in response to legislative requirements related to the assessment and 'support' of students with disabilities. The Support Centre is predominantly staffed by administrative workers (some of whom undertake initial screening and assessment roles in respect of disability) although, if indicated, specialist disability support workers (for instance, those trained in Educational Psychology) also practise in these places. Students seeking 'assessment' and 'support' can refer themselves directly to the Support Centre, or may be invited to do so following their initial assessment (see chapter seven). My visits to these areas were concerned wholly with the work of the administration staff, and were organised in advanced through various gatekeepers, all of whom occupied senior administrative positions in the University.[125]

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[125] These data are constructed from fieldwork records and interview accounts, and for ethical reasons some of my descriptions are composites of two or more accounts (see chapter six for discussion of this), and the local 'names' afforded to these places have been substituted with pseudonyms. A list of sources is supplied in the appendix.

The ground floor of the Support Centre is uncarpeted and affords free access throughout its space; a large sign positioned over the entrance area informs me that this place is referred to as 'The Plaza'. There are no administrators regularly present on this floor; the employees who are present are 'assistant' staff who can observe the entrance and exit of visitors, and their position near the entrance affords them a gaze across the entire ground floor. Distributed around the Plaza areas are single desks or 'work-stations', each equipped with a computer display and keyboard. Some of the work-stations are located at 'standing height'; these are organised in neat rows across the centre of the floor space, and are afforded no seating. Others have a lower 'desk area'; their lower level and signage (a 'disability' symbol, portraying a wheelchair, is affixed to each) suggests they have been introduced for the use of people using wheelchairs.[126] Here, visitors are invited to access information about the various support services the University can offer them, view information about disability and learning 'support' topics, and can access information about related matters, for instance, employment.

Visitors can gain unimpeded access to this place. Those visiting appear to engage hurriedly in individual, purposeful activity. Indeed, this appears to be what is required: their height and (for non-wheelchair users) the lack of seating suggests that only a temporary stay is anticipated or welcomed.[127] The individual desk areas appear to be for single-person use, and they are partially screened, at 'shoulder height', effectively forming 'cells' for individual, independent use; two or more people attempting to occupy a cell would likely be an uncomfortable experience. The partitioning also affords the user with a degree of privacy: the computer display screens cannot be seen by the occupant of the adjacent cell, suggesting that information displayed therein is of a personal nature; however, the low height of the screening also affords a partial 'view' of the individual's presence therein.

The noise from traffic on the road outside, the opening and closing of the external door and the hard floors and regular foot traffic of the visitors creates an aural 'character' of purposeful activity befitting of its 'Plaza' title. Whilst it might be possible for visitor's voices to be overheard in this space, the configuration of the cells invite individual

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[126] Or those who are unable or choose not to stand for extended periods, although I notice that there is no alternative seating immediately available

[127] See Silverman (2004, p255) for a similar application in a retail context

activity and non-interaction. The configuration of this space invites 'total' activity: all work performed in this space is individualized, autonomous and, save for the essential use of public conveniences (which are located adjacent to this space), offers no respite from the primary activity that is expected of the visitor. In addition, for those visitors not using a wheelchair, the near-absence of a place to be seated suggests a time-limited stay is anticipated.

SELF-SURVEILLANCE

Foucault's panoptic metaphor (Foucault 1995, see chapter five) suggests that it is *self-surveillance* that is of significance in this place; that is, the occupant of the 'cell' may be uncertain as to whether they are being 'watched', or not. The presence of surveillance by others is, for the occupant, a 'possibility', albeit one that they cannot verify with certainty; in essence, their (potential) visibility "is a trap" (Foucault 1995, p200). Individualised work in this space is intensified, individualised, possibly time limited (the requirement to stand, not sit), and articulated with its architecture. In short, this place is designed for a particular type of (Foucauldian) 'training' and 'self-scrutiny': one must learn independently how to support one's self. Interaction between occupants of the cells is discouraged, and time is not to be 'wasted'. Hence, a particular form of power is in circulation in this place: not a sovereign power (an individual who watches all those who are present), but an "automatic" and form of power-relation (Foucault 1995, p176) that ensures that:

> [S]urveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers. (Foucault 1995, p201)

The visitors to this floor become "the principle of [their] own subjection" (Foucault 1995, p203); they are not (simply) subjected *to* power; rather, the spatial characteristics of this place imbricates the visitor within a set of power-relations that incite their subjectivation, and in doing so, particular kinds of knowledge 'about' those present – for instance, in relation to disability - are approximated and established. These knowledges 'about' the individual are two-fold. There is knowledge that is concerned with consumerism and the exercise of 'choice' and 'self-discovery'; that is, one must recognise oneself, come to 'know oneself', as having the facility to make a choice about one's use of this service, and one must perform independently in the realisation of this.

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Yet for the organisation, this also represents an apparatus of classification, albeit one not facilitated directly by an expert-agent. Rather, the visitor is incited to learn about a specific 'need' (an anomaly, or deficit) so that they may to come to 'know themselves', that disability is something 'they (might) possess'.

This interpretation approaches consistency with recent empirical work undertaken in corporate contexts, albeit in places of a different character to the university setting. For instance, in their Foucauldian study of legal practice in a large contemporary organisation, Briviot and Gendron (2011) find that an understanding of panopticism that 'names' subjects without dialogue with the subjects themselves is inadequate explanation for their subjection/subjectivation. Rather, the processes of disciplinary power are somewhat more obscure:

> [H]ierarchical panopticism downplays the subtlety and complexity of real-life situations…The boundaries between the agents and targets of surveillance are more blurred that ever…To sustain our point further, in [the panopticon] subjects are classified in ready-made cells. In [our study], on the contrary, the subjects participate, to a significant extent, in the very construction and institutionalization of the virtual cells that are used to categorize them (Briviot and Gendron 2011, p152)

The visitor/student does not 'create' the cell; this is installed by the organisation. But these cells must be selected, occupied and used *by* visitors; unlike Foucault's prisoners in his panoptic gaol (1995), 'residency' in a cell is a *choice*, albeit one calculated and constrained through disciplinary power/knowledge. Hence I argue that this is a venue for the augmentation and circulation of power-relations: not only does it minimise the requirement for specialist agents to be present (specialist administrative staff, and others), but the number of individuals to whom it may be applied is maximised, limited only by the availability the of space and equipment available (Foucault 1995). As such, the panoptic qualities of this place serve not only to excite (self) knowledge about the individual subject, but it also serves to enhance the "efficiency of the panoptic process itself" (Elmer 2003, p233). This place also foretells anomaly, risk and 'unmet' need in *advance* of their realisation elsewhere in the University and, since these apparatus are 'controlled' by those who are invited to use it, power is silently reproduced and circulated without inviting the risks of refusal or disruption, possibilities which I return to later in this chapter.

Prior to entrance into the Support Centre space, there is a mezzanine level through which one must pass. As such, for the visitor here there is nowhere to 'sit' or 'wait', and visitors can choose to browse the wall decorations (or collect one or more of the numerous 'information leaflets' that are arranged in racks or placed upon tables), enter the Support Office itself, gaze through the large class windows that afford a view of the street outside, or leave the floor via the stairs or lifts. The main Support Unit is a glass-partitioned office space which is effectively screened from outside view through the application of brightly coloured posters of 'famous' people that are affixed to the internal windows facing the corridors. The styling of the posters draws my attention: above these is a sign which reads, *"The gift of dyslexia"*, and the portraits below depict a range of notable public figures, including scientists (the older Einstein, as portrayed by Arthur Sasse in 1951), media personalities (Robbie Williams), business entrepreneurs (Richard Branson) and historic-political figures (Winston Churchill).

The images are rendered in the 'Pop Art' style, epitomised by bold, bright colours and superimposed text; although these subjects are named (suggesting the vitality of popular images in respect of the creation of 'role models'), their rendering as 'Pop Art' also functions to incite a certain type of observing subject: the student who is not (only) a consumer of political rhetoric (that is, the 'rights and wrongs' of disability representation) but as a consumer of media, within which 'appealing' disability imagery is embedded. These images further an "interest in disabled people: not as benefit recipients...but as style icons" (Kuppers 2002, p187). For instance, dyslexia is presented as a 'gift' that attributes the individual person with a range of affective and practical characteristics, and these characteristics are realised within visual imagery that provokes admiration of "individuality" and "confidence" (Olney and Kim 2001, p581-2; Skinner 2011), yet simultaneously invite the interrogation of expert disability classifications that present "difference as pathology" (Olney and Kim 2001, p582).

These images do not, ostensibly at least, reference 'disability law', 'rights' or 'support'; that is, they do not directly reflect organisational aspiration, rhetoric and tactics, hence nor do they directly address the student as a legal or pedagogic 'subject'. Rather, they cite a different kind of subject: a subject who is perhaps scientifically curious (Einstein), a subject who is creative and possibly lascivious (Williams), a subject with acumen and wealth (Branson), and a subject with leadership and authority (Churchill). However,

although these are presented as optimistic and affirmative images of particular individuals, they nonetheless function to circulate particular forms of expert knowledge in respect of the 'deficits' that the experience of dyslexia might bring to the individual: that is, it is the *necessity* of literacy and numeracy, the cultivation of creative skills, and the deployment of organisational skills and communication skills that appear to have framed the selection of particular images.

THE OBSERVING SUBJECT

These images extend to the observing subject a questioning and *self-scrutinizing* dialogue: the observer is both subjected to expert power/knowledge through these images (that is, they support the 'making up' of a 'dyslexia identity'), and in doing so the observer is incited to subject themselves to the other discourses that are also in operation and 'become' other 'kinds of subject', namely those successful in the acquisition of status, wealth, knowledge and the ability to influence others. However, despite their affirming and 'liberating' tactic, these images arguably also support the reiteration and re-circulation of particular (expert) knowledge in relation to *deficits* (that is, these are individuals who may have already been classified as 'having dyslexia', a deficit in the pedagogic regime), yet these images aid in the (self) assembly of subjects of choice and success. These visual techniques are illustrative of Foucault's thought in relation to what he terms the 'Technologies of the self' which are described by him as:

> [P]rocedures, which no doubt exist in every civilization, suggested or prescribed to individuals in order to determine their identity, maintain it, or transform it in terms of a certain number of ends, through relations of mastery or self knowledge...no longer, however, through the divisions between the mad and the non-mad, the sick and non-sick, delinquents and non-delinquents, nor through the constitution of fields of scientific objectivity giving a place to the living, speaking, laboring subject; but , rather, through the putting in place, and the transformation in our culture , of 'relations with oneself' (Foucault 1997, p87-8)

Ostensibly, the 'authority' here is the University, the Support Office and the administrators therein who have selected these images for display. However, this does not alone explain how these 'authorities' have themselves been authorised (Rose 1998, p27); the 'authority', as it were, of the Support Office and the University is dependent upon particular claims to 'truth', available within discourse, that are in circulation in this place. These 'truths' are available within the "cultural repertoire" (Burchell 2009, p175) of this place: the 'truth', for instance, that dyslexia is a 'real' and individual

characteristic that one may 'possess', or that dyslexia may be understood to be a desirable characteristic (Olney and Kim 2001; Kuppers 2002; Skinner 2011).

By inviting students' 'dialogue' with and recognition of 'oneself' as 'a person with dyslexia' through these images, the student is incited to confess their 'self'. Although this is, ostensibly, a 'private' confession, it remains a dialogue *with* authority: an "implicit transaction" (Burchell 2009, p166) and "avowal" (Foucault 1978, p58) of mutual recognition: the student is *obliged* to *recognise themselves* within the images that are presented to them. These images, describing the "gift of dyslexia", and its embellishment in the faces of the 'famous', function as a 'technology of the self', an incitement to the viewer to 'acknowledge the truth' of their disability through comparison of their private selves with public standards -the "staple fare" of the mass media (Rose 1999, p193) - and in doing so, strive to achieve 'perfection' (Duncan 1994), posited here in terms of success, popularity and wealth; this, I argue, is also a form of panoptic gaze, albeit one that fabricates the (disabled) subject in terms of consumption and 'reward', and not, ostensibly at least, by way of the 'negative ontology' (Campbell 2005) of disability and 'loss'.

THE CENTRAL OFFICE SPACE

The visitor can choose to leave the mezzanine and enter the 'closed' office space of the Support Centre. Access to this area is, I learn from the staff, normally arranged in advance through an appointment system. Access to the first floor is afforded to those visitors who are, or might, be subject to specialist intervention; my visits had been arranged for me to learn more of the 'majority' group who attended this floor, those individuals with disabilities or 'long term' health concerns. This area is quiet, the only regular sounds being low-volume telephony and subdued conversation. The floor is partially carpeted and there are 'leaflet racks' (detailing disability, medical and work/'benefit'-related information) present near the entrance which, their placement suggests, are for visitors use within this place. At the rear of the room there are separate glass-partitioned areas. These areas appear to afford acoustic isolation from the main floor space, and serve as 'consultation' rooms where visitors can talk 'privately' with the senior administration staff or visiting 'expert' practitioners. Entry to these areas is facilitated by a 'coded lock'; hence unrestricted movement around this space is regulated for some and not others.

Individual work spaces for administrative staff are located around the perimeter of the room, with desks and chairs orientated to face the central carpeted strip. Although the spacing and pattern of the arrangement appears to be partly due to architectural expediency (located around the structural pillars are electrical sockets and computer network connections) the direction of sight for seated administrators is towards the centre of the room. Conversely, 'visitor' areas are situated longitudinally through the central carpeted space. Low-level seating is provided for visitors in this space: two rows of softly-furnished chairs (in muted, 'natural' colours) orientated 'back to back' divide the space into two. This area also affords visitor transit throughout the length of the room, and visitors can move without impediment across the carpeted area in order to locate a seat without them entering the 'staff' areas.

Desk areas for staff-visitor interaction are partially demarcated with floor-standing screens, at approximately chest-height when both are in a sitting position. These 'modesty screens' afford partial visual (but not aural) isolation from administrative peers when used in the sitting position. The staff areas are further demarcated into left- and right-hand areas; the areas on the left side are, I learn, for 'junior' administrators, whilst those on the right are for 'senior' administrators and other professional staff. All desks appear, irrespective of staff 'grade', in various states of décor, with some personal decorations visible (photographs, small plastic toys, food and drink). During my visits, the staff appeared to remain seated most of the time: there appears to be little casual or purposeful movement between desk areas when administrators are within 'conversational' distance: they do, however, rise occasionally and walk to another desk to converse directly with colleagues.

Visitors are invited into the (junior) administrative space by the calling of their name; they then rise and move to sit in the 'open' desk area or, if invited, the 'glass walled' areas. These movements illustrate the different work roles of the two staff groups. The activities of the junior administrators appear to be predominantly 'routine' and task-orientated: answering telephones, booking appointments, dealing with 'routine' enquiries that invite a regular response and, perhaps crucially, gate-keeping access to their 'senior' peers: my initial telephone conversation with a (senior) administrator was received by one of the junior administrators, and I am 'greeted' by this individual at each visit I make to this place. In contrast, the work of the senior administrators is 'visitor' or 'client-centred'. Referral is made 'to' the senior administrators by the junior

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staff, and each of the former carries a 'case load' of individual 'visitors'. Hence, junior administrators potentially make contact with 'all' visitors whilst their senior peers interact only with those whom they are specifically assigned.

A PLACE FOR CLASSIFICATION AND CONSUMPTION

The administrative 'place' is a site of classification, and its arrangement "imbued with meaning" (Herod et al 2007, p249), both to those who visit the administration office, and those who work therein. That is, although it is a 'space' in which administrative work is undertaken, it is also a 'place' in which meaning is constituted, or 'made up', and circulated by those therein. The administrators (and, indeed, the visitors to this place) may be viewed as "spatial agents" who "actively produce" (Herod et al 2007, p252) the places that they inhabit. As such, not only are administrators (subjectivised) agents who produce felicitous 'talk' (chapter nine) or who circulate expert knowledge (chapter eight) or policy (chapter seven), but through their performances they constitute and assemble both themselves and, in doing so, produce the 'places' of administration.

For the staff members who work in this place, hierarchical relationships are 'made' and articulated in the spatial distribution of their individual work areas. The desk areas for junior administration staff are arranged down the left-hand side of the room; those of their senior and 'professional' colleagues (for instance, peripatetic support staff) are arranged on the right-hand side. Junior administrators perform work that may be characterised as 'routine': telephone calls are taken, appointments are made, and letters are typed. In contrast, the 'senior' staff members located on the right-hand side of the room engage in either 'managerial' duties (work that is concerned with the delivery of the service and the coordination of resources) or, as I discuss in greater detail later in this chapter, undertake specialist 'face to face' consultations with some of those who visit here.

Between these left- and right-hand side 'administrative' space is the seating, a waiting area, for the visitor. Although administrators cannot always see one-another (due to the 'modesty screens'), the visitor, depending where upon the length of seating they have chosen to sit, can observe and hear the work of the administrators (both 'senior' and 'junior'). The installation of seating for the visitor invites a consideration of the relationship between two categories of people, the visitors and the administrators. The arrangement of visitor seating affords both categories of person a gaze: the administrator can observe (and hear) the visitor, and the visitor can observe (and hear)

the administrators. Hence those who (ostensibly) exercise power, the administrators, are also "caught" within this surveillance "machine" (Foucault 1995, p234); nobody is excluded from this, and it appears that each person creates for themselves a particular kind of space which they can legitimately occupy.

There is little room for the visitor to stand and dwell; he or she is 'invited' to sit whilst waiting for attention. Their movement is freely orientated in one direction (from the entrance to the rear of the room), and only permitted in the lateral direction by verbal invitation from the staff who are positioned at their desks. The provision of 'comfortable' seating invites visitors to remain located in one area, perhaps for some time: the aesthetic 'texts' of the furnishings (natural colours and soft fabrics) cohere with the aural discipline already established by the provision of carpeting (the softening of one's footsteps). The availability of 'leaflets' also suggests to the visitor that there will be period, a wait, in which they will have time to read the material: time, it appears, cannot be wasted by the visitor who waits, and it must instead be used productively (Foucault 1995). The incitement to 'silence', or at least something approaching it, is productive, serving to assemble a visiting subject who is invited to sit, observe, listen, read and wait, affording their obedience and a "better economy of time and gesture" (Foucault 1995, p148) in advance of their interaction with the administrators.

Therefore the visitor is not encouraged to talk or make noise; rather, one must be quiet and perhaps industrious, and, if one is going do 'work' whilst waiting to be seen, then one is invited to *consume* those materials that are *made available* by the University: perhaps a leaflet selected from the leaflet rack, or the perusal of visual images (discussed earlier). The 'leaflet racks' are familiar cultural symbol and they resemble those installed in places where 'specialist' information is to be conveyed (the doctors' surgery, the museum, the bank), thereby locating the visitor as 'recipient' of such services. However, not only does the leaflet function to 'impart knowledge' about this place and the 'service' that is offered, but the invitation to read texts that are provided by the University invite individual productivity and participation in the 'making' of this place and those therein (Kelman 2001); that is, reading, learning and contemplating one's 'self' during the 'waiting period' is not only a way in which (expert) power is circulated in this place, and subjectivities 'made', but the aural discipline incited by the invitation to read and wait is constitutive of the place itself.

Foucault's panoptic metaphor suggests that surveillance should be 'automatic'; that is, the "exercise" of surveillance by others should be "unnecessary" (Foucault 1995, p201). However in this place, unlike those places that I considered above that are 'outside' the office, 'direct' visual and aural surveillance is in operation. The administrators can observe (and hear) those entering the space, and those entering the space can observe (and hear) the administrators. The administrators can also observe one-another: although 'modesty screens' render discontinuous the visual observation of colleagues, the performance of 'work' may be inferred through aural surveillance: it is difficult in the 'open' areas of the office for an administrator have more than a whispered conversation, type on their computer keyboard, or turn the pages of a paper document without being overheard by the committed listener, including those who 'wait' in the centre of the room. Therefore, for the administrators working in the 'main' office area, although surveillance by peers and visitors is discontinuous in the visual domain, it is near-total in the aural domain; one must 'be heard to work', even if cannot always be 'seen' to be doing so.

For the administrators, the background noise – their subdued conversation with visitors and peers, the muted clatter of computer keyboards, the stifled ripple of turning paper – function not as 'unwanted noise', but as aural performances that indicate that appropriate work is being undertaken in this place; these sounds do not upset the discipline of this space; rather, they are implicated in the assembly of this place as a place for administrative work. It is not the 'place' that 'makes' the subjects therein; rather, the (aural) performances of the administrators 'make' this place a 'place to work'. Although administrators cannot (necessarily) see one-another, due to the installation of the 'modesty screens', an aural discipline is evoked: one may easily 'eavesdrop' on a colleague, and the nature (or absence) of sound in itself exercises power; that is, sound (or its absence) functions to produce the "spatialities" of the administrative workplace (Gallagher 2011, p50).

Hence, panoptic forms of surveillance are not necessarily 'spectatorship' and nor do they require those in authority 'to be there', bearing witness to *all* activity (Elmer 2003). Indeed, in the 'ideal' (Foucauldian) panoptic workplace, not only would 'supervision' by those in authority be unnecessary, but it would be non-hierarchical in nature: the techniques of 'panoptic power' being exercised by all of those present (Foucault 1995).

In this office there appears to be little visual surveillance of the administrators by their 'management' colleagues. Indeed, Simon, a mid-level administrator, explains to me that he only needs to check that (junior) colleagues are present and 'on time':

> SR   I look up [from my desk] and make sure everyone in the team's there, or
>   that they're on time... then I just get on with [my] job

[Ref. Simon/33:04-33:20]

Simon does not, however, emphasize his new 'supervisory' role when we talk, conveying to me an impression that he feels that this workspace does not require 'direct' observation; rather, he believes his role is to be 'supportive' (later, same interview), although he also *expects* his peers to "get on with the job". Although Simon's desk position does permit him to view the occupancy of the desks of his administrative peers, it is not a 'primary' position (he sits in a remote corner space) and his peers/subordinates can view his presence with equal ease. Hence his visual surveillance of the main office area is (at most) reduced to ascertaining 'presence' and 'location' alone; it does not reveal what administrative work is being undertaken, or its precise nature.

For the 'junior' administrators, although being 'on time' is known to be important (their tardiness, Simon implies, might be something that will become 'known' by their supervisors), this does not necessarily mean that they always arrive 'on time' or that they will undertake the administrative activities that their roles suggest. Rather, what appears to be of importance is the individual responsibility they take for their work. Janice, for instance, reports that although she is sometimes 'late' for work, and this might be noticed by her supervisor, this is not something that unduly concerns her. Furthermore, although she identifies that there are opportunities for her and her colleagues to 'avoid' work (vernacular, "slacking"), this does not normally happen, she explains, due to a collegial 'commitment' and what she describes as a sense of 'accountability' for one's own work:

> JP   I get to work. I'm usually about five minutes or so late [laughs]. I put my
>   computer on. The first thing I do is check my e-mails. Check my
>   voicemail. And I probably have a list of things to do left over from the
>   day before. Erm, have a chat...! [laughs]
>
>   [...]

JP	I feel quite lucky in this job, there's a lot of nice people, yeh. They get on with what they do, and there's not a lot of erm, slacking…well, there probably is, but not as much as in other jobs
NC	What do you mean by 'slacking'?
JP	I think people just knowing what they can get away with. Maybe it's a maturity thing, maybe when I was a bit younger, people who I socialised with at work, now people have grown up a bit and matured they might find themselves more accountable

[Ref. Janice/09:10-12:18; 15:57-17:41, abridged]

Although there are architectural and technological features that appear to 'make' this place a 'place for work', it is the administrators themselves, in their interaction with these spatial forms, who are complicit in the 'making' of their work. The 'spatial' aspects of this place are not privileged; rather, "the social and the spatial inextricably realise one another" (Kanngieser 2011, p12). For instance, for all grades of administrator, the computer and telephone are considered essential tools for administrative work and, when combined with chair and partial screening, forms a 'cell' in which they may perform their work. The administrators are dependent upon technology to complete their work: indeed, their working day is structured principally around electronic communication: staff correspondence is conveyed by electronic mail, and (I am informed by them) many students choose to contact the office using the telephone or electronic mail. Jackson, for instance, undertakes 'routine' activities using the computer (booking and arranging appointments and monitoring disability disclosure applications and health 'screening'), and he explains to me the centrality of this technology to his administrative activities:

NC	What do you use the computer for …why is it [turning on the computer] the first thing you do [at the start of the working day]?
JB	Erm…I don't know, really. It's kind of force-of-habit I suppose. It's…I kind of begrudge it a bit, I do have to do everything by e-mail …I think it's quite a nice ease into the morning, you turn on the computer and wait five minutes for it to log in, get a drink of water, and settle down
NC	Could you do your job without the computer?
JB	Erm I think…I think I could, be it would be a lot more time consuming. It would be a lot more writing down of things, and chasing things and people up on the telephone or in person, which obviously takes a lot more time and effort, trying to catch people. Also it's a like a sense of relief when you send an e-mail, because you can think 'well I've done that job', and 'that's it'…

Although he finds the act of activating the computer tiresome, Jackson uses this time to prepare himself for the work he has to complete, an "easing in" period. Once established, however, the computer enables him to regulate his work and, in particular, reassure himself ("a sense of relief") that he has accounted for that which he needs to achieve. For Janice, too, 'turning on' the computer is her first workplace activity and, like Jackson, she 'enjoys' the short time that the computer takes to "boot" (activate):

NC   Why is turning the computer on the first thing you do?

JP   Because that's the main purpose, er, the main tool of my job is the computer

NC   Why is the first thing to do, though?

JP   Because it's got to boot up. If I do that, then I can maybe make a cup of tea, and so it's [turned] on and booting up

The personalisation of their desk spaces by the administrators (personal photographs and soft toys appear to be popular) suggests some permanence in the allocation of space and the freedom to mark these areas as such. Unlike, for instance, a 'hot desk' system (where staff only occupy desk space for the time period and activity which is required, and have no permanent claim to a specific space), for these administrators 'their' desk is not only a place for work, but also one for rest or refreshment, ("have a chat", earlier) and is also a place where the rituals of work-commencement and orientation ("time to settle down") are enacted. The sluggish response of the computer system without which they cannot perform their duties has, perhaps unintentionally, enabled them to 'claim back' a period of the working day, albeit one that is spent in 'work readiness' activities and (for Janice) socialising.

Unlike those working, for instance, in the 'call centre' (Winiecki 2007), the administrators working in this setting are not subject to discrete 'surveillance technologies' (their telephone calls, for instance, are not moderated, and their 'time' on the computer is not recorded), hence there are no technological 'blind spots' or systems to circumvent or resist; that is, they cannot "shadowbox" (Winiecki 2007, p370) with the technology with which they engage. However, their dependency upon the use of information technology illustrates how these administrators can still be understood to be 'attached' to their individual workspaces, not through physical restraint or barrier, but

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through the "conduits" of the technological systems that are adjuncts to the undertaking of their roles (Winiecki 2007, p357). In short, I argue that their desk space, technology, personalisation, and regulation of time incite forms of self-regulation that are deployed by the administrators in order to 'make' this place a space for work.

TECHNOLOGIES OF THE SELF

In the first part of this chapter, I discussed how panoptic surveillance functioned as a *technology of power* whereby, through the creation of particular kinds of spaces (and their material effects), human subjects were submitted to "certain ends, or domination" (Foucault 1997, p225). Specifically, I outlined how panoptic (and aural) technologies incited the assembly of particular kinds of administrative (and student) subject: the observed subject, the classified (normalized) subject and, perhaps, the working and consuming subject. However, concurrent with the functioning of these technologies of power, Foucault also outlines his interest in what he describes as *technologies of the self*; these, he argues, operate simultaneously with technologies of power (Rose et al 2006), in respect of the "thoughts, conduct, and way of being" of human subjects (Foucault 1997, p225).[128]

This concern with the 'soul' of the individual subject was inferred earlier in this thesis when I discussed the moral obligations of the administrator and their practices in respect of 'doing good' (for instance, not 'causing offence'). For Foucault, in addition to disciplining the human body directly (as in the panopticon), power is also implicated in the 'making' of the human soul:

> It would be wrong to say that the soul is an illusion, or an ideological effect. On the contrary, it exists, it has reality, it is produced permanently around, on, within the body by the functioning of power that is exercised on those punished – and in a more general way, on those one supervises, trains and corrects. (Foucault 1995, p29)

In this section, I examine how technologies of the 'self' are made available to the administrators, and are party to their subjectivation as moral, 'therapeutic' and 'helping' subjects; in doing so, I examine how administrators 'take up' opportunities for them to 'work on their selves' and work to imbue their work with a psychological character (Rose 1998), specifically in respect of their incitement 'confession', and their obligation

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[128] A more detailed description is provided earlier, in chapter seven

to provide 'help' and, perhaps, work that is 'therapeutic' in character. First, however, I outline Nikolas Rose's thesis on 'psy' expertise, which is helpful to this discussion.

PSY KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE

Nikolas Rose elaborates Foucault's commentary, in *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1995), in which Foucault argues that the 'psychological' disciplines have provoked the formation of what he terms 'individualizing mechanisms', wherein 'historical' and 'ancestral' characterisations of status have been displaced by 'scientific' knowledge of the 'normal' individual:

> [W]hen one wishes to individualize the healthy, normal and law-abiding adult, it is always by asking him how much of the child he has in him, what secret madness lies within him, what fundamental crime he has dreamt of committing. All the sciences, analyses or practices employing the root 'psycho-' have their origin in this historical reversal of the procedures of individualization (Foucault 1995, p193)

For Rose, such 'psychological ideas' are not simply "ways of thinking" about people, but they help constitute *technologies*, or "ways of making the world thinkable and practicable in certain ways" (Rose 1998, p83). Moreover, Rose argues that psychology is a "generous discipline" (Rose 1998, p87), whose 'psy' expertise and authority has infiltrated into 'everyday' social life; that is, 'psy' has been 'taken up', exploited, modified and re-circulated by a range of disciplinary agents in numerous contexts, for instance those of professional health and social services, 'counselling' services, 'management' roles, childcare, and in the advertising and marketing of consumer goods (Miller and Rose 1997; Rose 1998; Rose 1999; Lawler 2008). In this way, 'psy' knowledge and expertise has escaped its host discipline (psychology), and now functions to *authorise* a range of disciplinary practices elsewhere. However, psy expertise not only provides a 'knowledge base' that is borrowed and translated into a different disciplinary context; in addition, Rose argues, psy also functions to "ethicalize" authoritative power in a manner quite different from, for instance, the disciplines of medicine, the law and theocracy (Rose 1998, p92).

Through its imposition of an 'internal truth' about the individuated 'selves' of human subjects, psy offers to the subject a form of disciplinary power that is concerned with the calculation of individual subjectivity. For instance, no longer might the 'disruptive' student be described wholly in terms of moral hazard, medical aberration or misconduct. Rather, he might be described in terms that are psychological in character: his behaviour

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explained in terms of his motivation, perhaps, or his 'self-awareness' or 'emotional well-being'. These characteristics of individual subjectivity are calculable, rendered 'knowable', through psy discourses. Hence psy expertise, and the authority and obligations it confers on the individual subject, is arguably imbricated within juridical or sovereign forms of power, and vice versa. In the context of this research, the deployment of 'psy' expertise by administrators in their calculation of 'risk' in respect of disability is also important, as it connects my previous discussion about disability classification to the practices of the administrators and, in particular, their response to 'risky' or anomalous circumstances.

A PLACE TO 'CONFESS'

The glass-screened or, as they are named by the administrators, "consultation" areas are used when 'work' with students is of a 'personal nature': a phrase that I learn from my respondents that is sometimes used as a euphemism for 'emotional' or 'mental health' concerns, although may also be used when 'talk' is anticipated that may provoke embarrassment or disquiet. The use of the consultation areas is usually the 'choice' of the (senior) administrator: visitors are normally 'gestured' courteously into the areas by either the junior administrators or their senior peers, although on one occasion I heard the 'use' of the consultation room being offered as a 'choice' for the visitor.

Unlike the 'main office area', the occupants of the consultation rooms can be viewed by all present across the entire floor space (although not from outside the office). However, their glass-walled nature affords total aural isolation to those within; hence the use of the consultation room incites, in contrast to the main office space, a complete visual – and not aural – spectacle; that is, surveillance of those individuals within isolates the 'aural' character (and confidences) of their practice, yet allows their physical presence (and actions) to be viewed by all. As such, what is 'said' in this space is ostensibly 'private', although its performance, the ritual spectacle of 'doing private talk', is rendered visible to anyone who may choose to observe from 'outside'.

These areas provides aural isolation, close surveillance, and suspension of the 'normal rules' of the first floor space: a context that, rather than removing the individual from the gaze of others, draws attention to the 'special' activities enacted therein. This space, I argue, is a space for the production and performance of *liminality*, a concept first

proposed by Arnold van Gennep,[129] and which is notably associated with the work of Victor Turner (2008). Often associated with the symbolization of a particular 'time' and 'space' (Czarniawska and Mazza 2003), the liminal subject is located amidst a process of transition, and it:

> [C]omprises symbolic behaviour signifying the detachment of the individual or group either from a fixed point in the social structure, from a set of cultural conditions... During the intervening 'liminal' period, the characteristics of the ritual subject...are ambiguous; he passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state...[then]...the passage is consummated...he is expected to behave in accordance with certain customary norms and ethical standards (Turner 2008, p94-5)

The student visitors invited into these spaces are usually those who are undergoing disability assessment, or who are experiencing what are typically styled by the administrators as 'issues' that are related to disability, for instance the provision of appropriate pedagogic 'support', or practical or emotional concerns arising from their individual experiences. Hence the administrative interventions introduced here are concerned both with transitions –the 'making up' of subjects with a disability that I described in an earlier chapter –or potentialities (Turner and Turner 2011, p3), their deliberation on what 'may happen' in the future.

This illustrates how technologies of power (panoptic surveillance) can combine with technologies of the self. The 'consultation' areas are not only places for visual/aural surveillance (of different forms), but are also places where the individual is also invited to talk, disclose and, in respect of disability, confess "who one is and what one does" (Rose 1998, p96). Although confession, Foucault argues, was once a technology wholly deployed within theological regimes (Foucault 1997), Rose (1996) elaborates Foucault's thesis, arguing that, as an 'ethical' technology, confession has become implicated as a key technique in the circulation of psy expertise beyond the 'psychological' disciplines and, as such:

> Not only does confession in this sense characterize almost all of the proliferating systems of psychotherapy and counselling. It also provides a potent technical form that has come to install itself in a range of other practices where the conduct of personal life is a stake, from the doctor's surgery to the radio phone-in, from the social work interview to the frank interchange of lovers...the words and *rituals* that govern these confessions are those prescribed by an *authority*,

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[129] *Les rites de passage* (The rites of passage, 1909), see Turner 2008, p94.

albeit one who has replaced the claims of god and religion with those of nature and the psyche. (Rose 1998, p96, emphases appended)

OBLIGED TO HELP

The 'confession' is one form which the technologies of the 'self' can find expression.

The confession is also implicated in the self-identification of the subject, whereby:

> Each person has the duty to know who he is, that is, to try to know what is happening inside him, to acknowledge faults, to recognize temptations, to locate desires; and everyone is obliged to disclose these things either to God or to others in the community and, hence, to bear public or private witness against oneself. (Foucault 1997, p242)

Administrators use these liminal and confessional spaces in a number of ways that incite the 'confession' of their student visitors. For instance, I found that administrators sometimes felt obliged to position themselves as mediators between the expressed needs of students themselves and the academic staff; this serves to demonstrate how students may 'seek out' a service which is not formally provided by the University but which they may expect to receive. In the extract below, for instance, Morag recalls how in her previous role[130] she felt obliged to deliver 'support' to students that departed from her formal (University-prescribed) administrative role and which, perhaps, resided 'in between' those roles performed by other disciplines; she implies here the potential 'risk' of disharmonious relationships that may result if she chooses not to intervene:

> MB   It helps in our role if there's any issues that come up... students sometimes...they all have personal tutors and they will go to academic staff for support in certain issues but sometimes – and again this was more prevalent in my previous role – there were some times when they would come and talk to me because they didn't think that I could influence the perception that a member of the academic staff may then have of them if they were to go and speak to them...
>
> NC   So you weren't seen as part of the...[academic staff?
>
> MB   But what I could do *was listen*, and then I could go and *speak in confidence* without any names, without any indication to a member of staff that I knew had knowledge of that area, and in that way *I could find out from them what I could do to help* that student. That's how I thought it was helpful [...]
>
> [Ref. Morag/36:04-36:52, abridged]

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[130] Morag had been recently promoted to a 'senior' administration position in another location

Morag is choosing to undertake an activity that reflects a particular moral or ethical position that she feels is important, namely a 'negotiation' or 'counselling' role enacted to ameliorate potential disharmonious relations between the 'student' and her 'academic' colleagues. Her practice arguably illustrates a 'psychologization' and problematization of the 'mundane' and everyday practice of administration (Rose 1998, 1999); this is not a moment of 'strife', or one that is palpably hazardous or 'out of the ordinary'. However, hers is not an officially sanctioned role: there is no written policy (for administrators) that requires administrators to, using Morag's phrase, "help" students in the way she does.[131]

Such practices are, I argue, illustrative of the administrator's response to the circumstances of changing authorities within the University setting. No longer are administrators obliged to simply 'service' the authoritative (ruling) demands of their academic peers. Rather, they are working in a context where the student 'voice' is privileged, where interdisciplinary relationships are more complex, where the spectre of 'consumerism' is extant (McInnis 1998; Conway 2000; Whitchurch 2006; Hockey and Allen-Collinson 2009), and, I contend, 'new' discourses of identity (disability) are in circulation. It is in this context that administrators, such as Morag in her 'everyday work', are striving to establish an 'ethical' character and authority for their work. Here, psy knowledge is not simply 'taken up' and 'used' by the administrators; rather, the folding of psy expertise and practice into their everyday work functions to authorise 'what one does' as an administrator and, perhaps, also provides a statement of 'who one is' (or should 'be') in this context. Indeed, Morag's 'making' of a 'special' time and place to 'talk' with a student, and her incitement of them to confess their needs or difficulties ("I could find out from them what I could do to help") serves to illustrate how administrators have incorporated ethical technologies (Rose 1998), features of psy expertise, into their practice.

OBLIGED TO PRACTISE THERAPEUTICALLY

The 'consultation' rooms are also used by the administrators for work that more affirmatively 'psychological' in character: practices that, although not styled as 'counselling', do invite their performance of a particular range of interpersonal skills.[132] Rena's experience illustrates this. As a senior administrator, she manages a group of

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[131] Although there *is* a policy for academic staff, in regard to 'pastoral' support

[132] Rose (1996) refers to these as 'psycho-technologies' (p97)

junior administration staff who work predominantly 'face to face' with students who are fielding enquiries or making requests for 'support'. In this extract,[133] she explains to me how she 'advises' her staff to use particular formations of 'therapeutic' words and phrases when undertaking their 'student support' role, although in doing this she also appears to be conscious of how this style of verbal intervention is *already* in circulation within the vernacular and practice of this workplace. She also, however, establishes limitations to the use of these 'psycho-technologies' (Rose 1998), and encourages her staff to 'refer' to expert (medical, psychiatric) authorities if expected (administrative) parameters of a conversation (with a student) are transgressed:

> RL   [We're not] mental health experts [but...so] I've been saying to my team:
>
>> *"Look, it's very much about* [setting] *a contract* [with the student] *at the beginning in terms of 'this is what we can talk about, this is what we can't ...you know,* [for example, uttering] *'I can hear what you're saying'"*
>
> I know that sounds very clichéd... [suggests irony]
>
>> *"'But I hear what you're saying, it must be very distressing for you, but all we can do today is...' or 'are you seeing your CPN?'"*[Community Psychiatric Nurse]
>
> You know, that kind of thing, that's the kind of approach we take

[Ref. Rena/33:42-34:13]

This provides an example of how psy expertise has subtly, and without celebration, been inserted into administrative practice; yet it also illustrates how medical discourse also remains extant in administrative discourse/practice. In promoting this practice, Rena is not only concerned to identify the 'psychological' needs of her 'visiting students', but she is also inviting her (junior) colleagues to work on their own 'psychological selves' by encouraging them to acquire and use a range of psycho-affective communication strategies that she feels are necessary for them to possess in order for them to successfully 'cope with' and conduct their everyday administrative

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[133] *Transcription note*: This is a complex set of clauses that I reproduce here. These words are uttered in an interview within which Rena is paraphrasing another conversation which itself contained sub-clauses. I use italic emphases here to highlight what she recalls saying to her peers, and the exemplars she encourages them to use when talking with a student seeking 'support'.

work. These strategies are authorised by psy discourses that describe 'appropriate' ways in which one 'should' communicate with students in this context.

Rena's 'advice' to her junior colleagues in respect of their 'counselling' role recalls Judith Butler, and her suggestion of the possibility of the subjectivation of others by one who is already 'named' or subjectivised within discourse, a happenstance that Butler (1997a) styles as 'discursive agency'. It is this sense that not only do I understand Rena herself to be subjectivised by the (productive) psy discourses of 'counselling' that are in circulation and available to her, but she is also implicated in their reciting and recirculation and, perhaps, the subjectivation of others. That is, Rena is both named/subjectivised as a 'quasi' therapist, and in performing this identity, she can chose to name others:

> The scene of naming appears...first as a unilateral action: there are those who address their speech to others, who borrow, amalgamate, and coin a name, deriving it from available linguistic convention...And yet, the one who names, who works within language to find a name for another, is presumed to be already named, positioned within language as one who is already subject to that founding or inaugurating address...the very possibility of naming another requires the first one to be named. The subject of speech who is named becomes, potentially, one who might well name another in time. (Butler 1997a, p29)

Hence, although Rena is apparently acting 'freely', in explaining this to her junior peers (and explaining it to me[134]) Rena is rehearsing, reiterating and circulating the discourses that enable her to both 'become' and maintain this particular identity; it is this way she can act both freely, albeit still constrained within discourse, without, as Youdell explains, "exist[ing] outside subjectivation" (Youdell 2011, p27). That is, she is exhibiting agency whilst remaining subjectivised by/within psy discourses.

In these particular circumstances Rena is 'aware' of the psy expertise she is conveying; her (ironic) comment, "I know that sounds very clichéd" suggests to me that not only does this form part of her individual repertoire of knowledge and skills, with a suggestion that she is also rather suspicious of their deployment, but that such expertise still has currency in the present context, and that such expertise is necessarily limited.

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[134] In the context of her narrative interpretation as explained to me within the interview; in effect, Rena is 'rehearsing' and 'practising' her identity during our interview, too. Furthermore, her comment, "I know that sounds very clichéd" also suggests that she is constructing her 'story' for me, a particular audience: during her previous conversations I had revealed my prior experience of practising this type of therapeutic work. I discuss the *epistemic character* of these types of interaction in my final chapter.

For instance, the example she provides, "are you seeing your CPN?" recalls and defers to (medical) authority. As such, these interventions are not only concerned with, as Nikolas Rose notes, doing "a good job" and "doing good", but in 'advising' her junior colleagues to incorporate "psychological vocabularies" (Rose 1998, p93), she is also inciting them to work on their 'selves', to 'become' and know themselves as quasi-therapeutic workers, identities whose character is authorised by psy discourse and knowledge.

Veronica,[135] too, uses this space to 'counsel' student visitors, and her experience serves to illustrate further how both psy expertise and medical/psychiatric discourses of 'mental illness' proliferate in the administrative context and are used (albeit, not always successfully) by administrators in their calculation of 'risk'. For instance, when I ask Veronica to provide me with an example of a 'typical' student who she might elect to 'advise' in the aural isolation of the 'consultation' room, she describes a "complex case", a young man who she tells me has not been "medically diagnosed" with a mental disability, but she feels is requiring of her focused attention. Veronica acknowledges a lack of authority in respect of the establishment of a medical or psychiatric diagnosis ("I can't say it's a mental health problem"), but she attempts to assemble (hence authorise) a calculation of her client's 'risk' using 'psy' knowledge, for instance what she styles as "anger management issues":

> VO   [It's] incredibly complex, you know, in terms of... well, I can't SAY it's a mental health problem, but in its way it does become a mental health issue, because of, 'say', the *anger management* issues... So not being able to contain situations, the *social difficulties*, erm so, you know it's a nightmare

[Ref. Veronica/41:23, abridged]

Individuals such as Veronica's student (above) and who are 'liminal', without firm disciplinary category, present risks to the safe performance of administrative work. The administrators are necessarily located at the boundaries of other disciplinary activities (mental healthcare, social work, judicial services, for instance) with whom the administrators are obliged to collaborate. When attempting to operate at these

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[135] Veronica's role is concerned with supporting the (future) employability of students, a role she describes as 'advising'. I am witness to a number of these 'advisory' meetings, although in order to protect the anonymity of individual students, I do not discuss them in detail here. For our recorded interview, I asked Veronica to provide 'typical' (perhaps composite) characterisations.

boundaries, the senior administrators sometimes find that they are required to perform what they describe as "therapeutic" roles and are faced with deciding, for instance, the 'nature' of individual disability or impairment, something for which they sometimes feel that they are not professionally 'qualified' to undertake. This is a challenge that is unique to the administrators as they attempt to regulate a (discursive) space 'in-between' professional disciplines:

> VO   We do have a 'therapeutic environment' [...] we feel overwhelmed with difficulties, and you have problems deciding what the priority is, and when people have been 'ill',[136] and maybe become disabled through that illness and become recognised as a person with a disability, then it's an ongoing thing, it's not something that's going to go away [...] so [we] are up against it, in terms of finding out about themselves, through the medical services ...*We can print things off for them and give them information, we can give them information on erm you know societies and organisations that could give them support and help. But you know a lot of that* shouldn't *really be us, and by taking on that, I think it blurs the lines.*

[Ref. Veronica/13:08-22:01, abridged]

In response to policy initiatives that promote the inclusion of students with disabilities within education, these administrative staff find themselves located at the centre of "new working territories" (Whitchurch 2006, p163), those that are no longer 'purely' administrative (coordinating the provision of services and providing information), but approach one that is 'therapeutic'. However, these territories are permeable at their margins: for example 'excluding' is not entirely practicable without legal censure; administrators can attempt to 'avoid', but their gate-keeping role makes this troublesome; and they can 're-categorise' ('student' to 'disruption', then to 'victim' of poorly configured health services), although they have no control over the external services (or the professionals therein) with whom they rely upon and, indeed, no specialist training that supports them in this respect.

These extracts describe ways in which administrators are selecting, modifying, deploying and circulating 'psy' expertise; as such, they are implicated within what Rose

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[136] A number of the senior administrators had prior employment experience in 'health care' contexts, and used the word 'ill' when referring to people with mental health disabilities. My own prior experience in the health services had led me to understand that the term "ill" was often used in a casual and familiar manner by professionals and 'service users' as a euphemism for 'severe or deteriorating mental illness. All my respondents were aware of my clinical experience (prior to working in the University), and so perhaps deployed this term to authorise their own narratives.

describes as "new ways of construing experience as problematic" (Rose 1998, p94), experiences that are rendered 'knowable' within psy discourse. They are also, I argue, invariably deployed in response to dangers and risks with which the administrators may come into contact with in their 'disability' work. This invites a discussion of danger, risk and ritual ways of 'knowing' and 'responding to' disability. Indeed, in an earlier chapter (nine) I suggested that, in respect of the 'speech acts' that the administrators performed, such acts were demonstrative of situations whereby 'ritual' was enacted to settle an uncertain moral position. Furthermore, in my discussion of disability classifications made by the administrators (chapter eight), I also suggested that ritual responses may have been invoked in their response to anomalous or uncertain situations. In this section, I more fully develop the notion of risk and ritual, and ritual is deployed by the administrators in both 'everyday' and 'challenging' circumstances.

DANGER, RISK AND RITUAL IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONTEXT

A revised attention afforded to the calculation of 'risk' in the contemporary context arguably displaces previous concerns with what might be considered 'dangerous', or what might otherwise be subjected to exclusion, incarceration, 'special' treatment, or avoidance (Douglas 1994; Lupton 1999). Indeed, Mary Douglas argues how the contemporary notion of risk both displaces and renders calculable that which might previously have been described as 'dangerous':

> To perform well in a new culture, a word must have a meaning consistent with the political claims in vogue...Whereas originally a *high risk* meant a game in which a throw of the dice had a strong probability of bringing great pain or great loss, now *risk* refers only to negative outcomes...The language of risk is reserved as a specialized lexical register for political talk about the undesirable outcomes...The charge of causing risk is a stick to beat authority, to make lazy bureaucrats sit up...For these purposes *danger* would once have been the right word, but plain *danger* does not have the aura of science or afford the pretension of a possible precise calculation (Douglas 1994b, p24-5)

Whilst discourses that make 'truthful' notions of 'risk' may be understood to be *productive* of particular kinds of subject and particular types of practice (for instance, the subjects of disability assessment), it may also be argued that notions of 'risk' also function as *ideology*: that is, the assertion that it is *always* possible to predict and calculate risk, no matter how infrequent or impossible they might seem; it is in this way that ideology "masks the politically destabilising truth" (O'Malley 2004, p2) that not everything *can* be known, and that the (social) world is sometimes unpredictable. Indeed, the legislative context within which this research was conducted reflects this:

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administrators responding to legal authority in respect of anti-discrimination are obliged (when, for instance, facilitating the completion of a disability assessment) to make calculations of 'risks' (about disability), and are correspondingly incited to outline (or at least support) future practices that are 'reasonable'; that one *can* and *should* assess or consider risk is fore-grounded in local policy.

RISK AND RITUAL

The identification of 'risk' and the exclusion or amelioration of 'danger' also invites a consideration of *ritual*. Given that ritual serves to delineate space and time that is of significance to a particular social group, then in performing ritual one is inevitably in contact with some form of danger (Douglas 2002). Ritual may aid in the translation of 'danger' into (knowable, calculable) 'risks', be this the 'risk' of disease or sickness, the 'risk' of adolescence or, in the administrative context (and as I discussed in earlier chapters), the 'risk' of causing offence, or making a 'wrong' disability classification (Geertz 1973; Dirks 1994; Howe 2000; Douglas 2002). Ritual also involves risk, I also argue, because it foretells a 'threat' to subjectivity: if identity is something that is 'done' (see Lawler 2008), 'acquired', 'made' or 'lost' through the performance of ritual, then there is both a risk to the 'self' and/or the identity of others in the performance of ritual, including those evoking ritual (here, the administrators). The rituals of 'disability assessment' or 'disability support', therefore, may not only invite a person to identify themselves as a 'person with dyslexia' or 'depression', but may also incite the administrators to "gamble [their] status" (Howe 2000, p69). This is a possibility I now explore in respect of 'low' and 'high' risk administrative encounters.

A LOW-RISK PRACTICE: THE PERSONAL LEARNING PLAN AS RITUAL

As I discussed earlier (chapter eight), the production and use of the Personal Learning Plan (PLP) was an important role undertaken by some of the junior administrators in this research.[137] The PLP was used by the administrators for the purposes of 'risk assessment', a technology that invites the translation of (unknown) 'danger' into calculable 'risk'. Some of these dangers/risks were 'legal' in character: for instance, non-concordance with the anti-discrimination legislation might invite litigation; others were pedagogic, for example the 'danger' of non-achievement or student 'failure'; some were related to the consumerisation of the education service, wherein a student may

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[137] It is something that senior administrators do not normally do, although Winifred (a senior administrator) explained that she sometimes "helped out" when required.

make a complaint, or provide a poor evaluation if their needs are not met; and some were related to the provision of resources, namely the time and expense of providing staff training in respect of disability, and the time taken to deliver specialised disability support.

Rena describes her knowledge of these dangers, and she explains how the provision of the PLP is the central intervention utilised to ameliorate these 'dangers':

> RL   Absolutely in terms of provision of Learning Support, we're put under pressure in terms of attrition and [the] widening participation agenda
>
> [...]
>
> RL   We're getting increasing cases, you know, of people disputing their degree classifications. It's much more litigious if that's the word...I suppose the other way we get around it is by being *very clear* that the personal learning plan [PLP] which is basically the University's *main way of demonstrating* that you're meeting the DDA [Disability Discrimination Act] really
>
> [...]
>
> RL   I have to say that in terms of the student resources for supporting students ...are quite demanding
>
> [Ref. Rena/16:31, 31.43, abridged]

This suggests how the invocation of the PLP may be understood as possessing the character of a *ritual* practice. For the administrator who uses it in their everyday work, the PLP functions not simply as an *aide-memoir* for a series of prescribed administrative practices (although this, of course, is one of its functions, and this is how its purpose is expressed in their talk), but it also incites the administrators to *constitute particular types of subject*. The PLP circulates and renders expert knowledge 'knowable', 'familiar' and 'legitimate'; in short, it expresses particular 'truths' about disability and who can legitimately 'be' understood as a 'person with a disability'. As indicative of a ritual practice, the completion of the PLP by the administrators:

> [P]rovides a focusing mechanism, a method of mnemonics, and a control for experience...the marked off time or place alerts a special kind of expectancy, just as the oft-repeated 'Once upon a time' creates a mood receptive to fantastical tales...Framing and boxing limit experience, shut in desired themes or shut out intruding ones...Not only does ritual aid us in *selecting experiences for concentrated attention*. It is also creative at the level of performance... it changes the *selective principles*...It can permit knowledge of what would otherwise not

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be known at all. It does not merely externalise experience, bringing it into the light of day, *but it modifies experience, so expressing it.* (Douglas 2002, p79)

Formulating a PLP assembles an apparatus of identification and classification, and brings those disclosing disability under "the control of an external sign" (Douglas 2002, p79), namely the knowledge of the 'disability' experts. The ritualised act of writing, speaking or communicating in some way the contents of the PLP will not in itself realise 'good practice' or 'make things happen'; that is, it does not guarantee the subsequent 'realisation' of, disability 'policy'. Rather, the PLP functions to aid those who read and use it in their practice to recognise particular subjects and their experiences as legitimate and 'knowable', and in doing so calculate the 'risks' that the presence of disability brings to the university context. The practice of undertaking and using the PLP can therefore be seen to be a vital technology in "the control of discourses" (Foucault 1981, p61), a practice which 'fixes' and delimits the functioning of discourses:

> Ritual ... defines the gestures, behaviour, circumstances, and the whole set of signs that must accompany discourse...it fixes the supposed or imposed efficacy of the words, their effect on whom they are addressed...the limits of their constraining value. (Foucault 1981, p62)

Indeed, Stefan indicates this when describing to me what happens following his completion of the PLP 'form'; although he understands his completion of the PLP form as instrumental in the identification of 'disability' (I discussed this in an earlier chapter), he nonetheless feels obliged to 'trust' that the PLP will "do something":

SA   And then it [the PLP form] goes out of my office and then I don't see it again.

NC   Where does it go?

SA   Somewhere at the [main campus]

NC   That's it?

SA   Yep, that's all I know. My only hope is that [the University] actually do something about it, and don't just shove it in a file somewhere

[Ref. Stefan/43:50-45:12, abridged]

As such, although the successful completion of the 'PLP ritual' might be understood to require the "confidence" (Douglas 2002, p86) for those who use it, for the PLP to be useful and purposeful, the administrator is also *obliged* to have both faith in the text of

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the PLP and the classifications and processes it prescribes; that is, it must have both credible symbolic value and 'practical' resilience in order to function successfully as a ritual, and must be understood as that which 'anyone might do', a natural or taken-for-granted practice (Geertz 1993), one that a person using it would not, in most circumstances, question. The PLP therefore, in short, helps affix (disability) classifications and, through its techniques (observation, interview, judgement), so circulate knowledge/power. Ostensibly 'visible' in practice as an *aide-memoir*, the ritual of PLP observance also functions invisibly to constitute particular types of 'disabled' subject. Likewise, the PLP also serves to position the administrators in respect of the authoritative 'experts' whose classifications are being applied; in this way, the PLP is one of a number of apparatus that incite the assembly or 'making up' of the administrators themselves as agents of expert knowledge.

A HIGH-RISK PRACTICE: THE 'DISRUPTIVE' STUDENT

Less frequently, students present acute challenges to the administrative staff. Such an 'event' occurred immediately prior to one of my 'research visits' to the 'support' office. Veronica was 'verbally threatened' by a 'student' during a telephone call, an (unnamed) student who she characterised as someone who was "totally off their head".[138] Following this, a member of the junior administrative staff suggested to Veronica the she might vacate her normal desk area whilst the nature of the 'threat' was more fully ascertained, as she explained:

> VO   [This is] somebody who is totally off their heads, and really is a danger to anyone on the street because he can't control his anger and he's actually stated to [my] manager in a conversation that erm when he's in a bad mood, when he's feeling angry, he's got two *choices*: he either goes next door and beats up the old man, who he doesn't like very much, or he [instead] annoys us here... and threatens the staff.

[Ref. Veronica/10:30, unabridged]

My conversation with Veronica on this occasion lasted nearly ninety minutes, and during this time we were intermittently diverted by one of her junior peers wishing to

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[138] *Transcription note*: there is heavy use of dialect within some of these data; this is characterised by use of specific expressions, some of which I recognised to be hybrid terms commonplace within vernacular English (for example, "lost the plot", "going down that road"). Whilst her phrase, "off their heads" might be understood by some as an utterance with pejorative force, it might also, in this particular locality, be understood as an element of 'everyday' vernacular, particularly in the context of a personally stressful, threatening or perceivably 'dangerous' event, as my respondent recalls here.

"update" Veronica in respect of the threats that were made and the actions that had been undertaken to prevent the individual concerned from meeting directly with her. Although there appeared to be no immediate physical threat to Veronica (the individual making the threat would be unable to access the area to which we had moved without staff intervention), the junior administrator appeared concerned for Veronica's safety. Veronica, in response, appeared to confidently 'dismiss' the threats that had been made, although she did express to me (later) that this had "only ever happened once before" to her. Nonetheless, she concurred with her junior colleague's advice to remain in the 'staff only' areas until her safety was assured.

It is the junior administrators who control access 'to' the senior administrators and their workspaces. In 'normal' circumstances, this regulation of access to the senior administrators is accorded with subtlety and a lack of urgency. Through this 'gate-keeping' role, the junior administrators offer the senior administrators a 'protective' function: it is they who, in general, interface directly with the 'visitor' (usually a student), and contact with 'senior' administrators normally only occurs once visitors have been rendered 'safe' through the provision of an 'appointment', the regulation of movement across the office floor, and the imposition of a waiting period, all of which operate alongside the 'pacifying' spatial configuration. My observation of the 'intrusion' of a 'disruptive' visitor serves to demonstrate how all of the regular disciplinary apparatus can be subject to violation, and illustrates how both junior and senior administrators act to restore safety; these constitute their 'boundary activities':

NC   [You're not able to meet his needs?

VO   We can't meet his needs at all [...] and I don't think that ... I think the
       tragedy is, that the NHS [National Health Service] is not capable of
       taking this forward either, the dismantling of the services has meant that
       the state is assuming that the [University department] can help these
       people [...]

[Ref. Veronica/11:12-11:52, abridged]

The 'disruptive student' represents an anomaly in this space: his particular (mental health) concerns are "attributed [with] danger" (Douglas 2002, p49) and this justifies his exclusion; this functions to (remedially) provide the administrators with physical safety, and also serves to both consolidate the 'moral' text that is also in operation here (collegial working relationships, a safe working environment); it also serves to authorize the presence of the existing gate-keeping systems. The senior administrator

attempts to 'explain' this happenstance by affording it a particular (and local) *interpretation* (Douglas 2002); that is, 'explaining' the anomalous or threatening in terms that are justifiable, or 'common sense'. In this particular circumstance, for instance, the 'disruptive' visitor's behaviour is understood by Veronica to reflect long-standing problems in the local coordination between health and educational services.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

I now offer a summary of this chapter's findings. First, in respect of the 'panoptic spaces' of administration, I find that the "historical imagination" (Crewe 2003, p356) of the visitor (the student) is of importance when considering the 'making' of the 'places' of/for administration. As I indicated in my earlier chapters, the administrative context is evolving in response to extra-disciplinary social changes, not least the 'rise' of consumerism in Higher Education. Such changes incite administrators to enact "spatial fixes" (Herod et al 2007, p259) that are illustrative of their arbitration between the historical (a place for the articulation of academic power/knowledge) and the contemporary (the student as 'consumer'; the requirement to perform 'moral' work). This place references both types of heritage: the appointment system, the requirement to productively 'wait', the controlled access to staff, the reciting of expert knowledge and, not least, the spatial division between groups of people, recalls the hospital clinic or the doctors' waiting room. Simultaneously, these provisions also recall the retail environment: the *choices* one can make within the 'Plaza' area, the incitement to identify oneself as a consumer of services, the provision of a comfortable place to 'wait', the choice of an appointment, and the invitation to consume inspiring 'art'; distinctive places where one can choose and consume.

As such, this space recalls a "temporal imaginary of how things once were" (Crewe 2003, p356), fusing the characteristics of the expert space (the doctors' surgery, for instance) with more contemporary features (the modern retail environment) that announce 'choice' as a possibility. However, whereas within the ideal 'retail' context the subject is the (liberal, autonomous) consumer, the administrative space I encounter operates both as a space in which the visitor can understand themselves as a 'consumer', and a disciplining context more reminiscent of 'clinical' contexts. I therefore argue that the administrative 'place' functions as a venue for the rehearsal and reciting of disciplinary heritages and subjectivities (the clinic, the hospital, the expert, the docile 'patient'), approximating and monumentalising them in the present, whilst they are

simultaneously being eroded and displaced by 'new' discourses on consumerism, for instance those selected from the 'retail' environment. As such, administrative 'places' are:

> [N]ot simply idiosyncratic 'boxes' or 'arenas' for social life but are continually reconstituted by the broader social relations within which they are embroiled and, in turn, constantly shape how such social relations play out as a result of such 'places' historical 'geographical path-dependence' – that is to say, how what has happened in that place in the past shapes its future characteristics and possibilities (Herod et al 2007, p255).

Second, I find that disability, in respect of this University's administration, has been transformed from a declaration of 'incongruity' or 'danger' to a calculation of the 'risks' which these classifications may present, risks to be identified and averted (Rose 1998). It is in this (Foucauldian) sense that 'risk' might be considered as a "strategy of regulatory power" (Lupton 1999, p87), whereby those people (and practices) considered to be 'at risk' are "rendered calculable and governable" (Lupton 1999, p87). Hence risk is:

> ...a *kind of knowledge* about potential hazards...a way of ordering their magnitude...To be assessed *at risk* is to become an object of surveillance and a site of intervention...Adopted as a practice by individuals, risk technology is a more sophisticated form of regulation, all the more effective as a form of rule to the extent that it is chosen and that self-monitoring, risk-conscious and risk-calculating subjects are constructed (Crawford 2004, p513-4, emphases as original)

However, I argue that the administrators, through their provision of 'rituals' (such as the PLP, or the ritualistic affording of 'therapeutic' communication) circulate an (ideological) conceit that all risks can and should be 'knowable' (Lupton 1999; O'Malley 2004), and that psy expertise is deployed by the administrators in respect of this calculation. Indeed, psy expertise can be seen in operation in both of the places I have described above. On the ground floor, 'psy' was incorporated within the technologies that the student-visitor was invited to use: computerised self-assessments (the incitement to 'know' ones disability), information ('about' ones disability) and resources (seeking 'support' for ones disability) are all available for the student to 'choose' and use. On the first floor, prior to entry into the main suite of the Support Unit, the student was invited to both acquire further knowledge (the 'leaflet rack') and to 'question' themselves about possibility of (their) disability through the *promise* of self-transformation (McLaren 2002) that is excited by the visual images of 'famous' people 'with the gift of dyslexia'.

Paradoxically, however, I found that these statements of 'truth' also functioned to deprecate and/or obscure other 'truths' about dyslexia that are extant in the university context. In particular (and rather striking, given the strategic aims of the University), the 'truths' of dyslexia that explicitly cite notions of (for instance) 'literacy' are absent. The obscuring of medico-pedagogic 'truths' about dyslexia, and their displacement with appealing and 'consumerist' statements were instead authorised by 'positive' discursive statements (dyslexia as 'gift'; disability as 'style') which served to assemble the 'student with dyslexia' as a 'chooser' and consumer of (expert) services, statements that were, in turn, themselves authorised by *'psy'* knowledges of 'self-esteem', "self-enhancement" and dyslexia (Humphrey 2003, p135).

Third, in evoking ritual, I contend that the administrators are not only 'following rules' (for instance 'policies', 'the law', or even the 'text' of the 'social model' of disability) that possess steadfast 'meaning', but they are also acting "emotionally and socially" (Howe 2000, p63). In this sense, the ritual performances of administrators are not only the repetitious 'adherence' to 'scripts'; rather, their rituals are *specific* performances (Howe 2000) that are located in a *place*, and which may invite the participation (and 'making up') of their (moral) 'selves' (and others). For example, Stefan's "hope" that "something will be done" with the PLP he has undertaken, Veronica's perception – despite her experience of 'threat'- of the unfairness experienced by her student ("the tragedy" of a confused and inadequate response to his needs) and Rena's concern for "social exclusion" all serve to demonstrate how their work of disability administration is accorded moral, and not only bureaucratic, standing.

This chapter completes the main sequence of data presentation and interpretation within this thesis. In the following, final, chapter, I provide a further summation and discussion of my findings.

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CHAPTER 11: CONCLUDING DISCUSSION AND DEPARTURE POINTS

Following the recommendation of Silverman (2005), this chapter does not present a bare and somewhat reduced 'summary of findings'; such summaries, styled as 'concluding remarks', are appended within my earlier chapters. Rather, in this chapter I return to my original research questions, and explain how they have been addressed and, in the context of an ethnographic enquiry, necessarily reformulated during the progress of my fieldwork and analysis. I then discuss some key theoretical themes (resistance, 'psy' expertise, and ritual) which, I argue, are key to understanding the evolving practices of administration, particularly in 'specialist' or 'evolving' areas, such as 'disability administration'. I then provide further discussion about the epistemic character of the interpretations I have made, outline some limitations of the research, implications for administrative policy and practice, and discuss avenues for further research.

However, I do make some claims regarding the innovative contribution to knowledge that this thesis offers. First, I found that there was a paucity of research relating to how university administrators participate in the 'making' of disability classifications; my research adds to the existing understanding of this area. Second, the 'spaces' in which administrative work is undertaken are also poorly attended to within empirical literature; this research makes a contribution to knowledge in this respect. Third, I found that despite present and continuing contestation in respect of 'language use' in respect of disability, little empirical enquiry had been undertaken; this research makes a contribution to the understanding of this, as it relates to administrative workers in the university context. Finally, this research adds to the existing knowledge of how, in the absence of specific direction from Foucault and Douglas themselves, their theoretical standpoints (and those of others) might be 'put to work' within a qualitative research study.

Although I have remained faithful to the principal goals and character of the research, my fieldwork experiences - that is, what administrators and I actually explained or did, as opposed to what, before undertaking fieldwork, I had anticipated they *might* say or do - necessitated some reformulation of the character of my original aims. However, for an ethnographic enquiry, such a reformulation is not, perhaps, to be unexpected (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007; Bryman 2008). Indeed, my further theoretical reading

of the work of Foucault, Douglas and, later, Nikolas Rose, lent a different accent to my ambitions for this research.

My original aims were three-fold. First, I aimed to describe how notions of disability were expressed by administrative informants in the Higher Education context through their individual or collective work practices. This aim was addressed within my analysis: therein, I described and discussed practices of disability assessment, disability 'talk', and disability-related workplace ritual. However, these analyses furthered and deepened my discussion: at the outset of the research I had (perhaps naively) not recognised fully the implications of such a question in respect of a Foucauldian conception of discourse and power: as such, my exploration of ostensibly 'mundane' administrative practices (for instance, 'supporting' a disability assessment) later developed into a consideration of expert and psy discourses, ritual and resistance.

Second, I aimed to explore and interpret how policy, governance arrangements and bureaucratic practices enable administrators to render meaningful their work. Within my analysis I addressed aspects of policy, institutional 'governance' and 'bureaucracy', for instance the 'assessment' of disability, the different authorities invoked in these assessments, and how policies (and the law) were understood by administrators. However, as for my first research question, both my further reading and fieldwork experiences incited me to consider not only 'what' these policies 'meant' to administrators; rather, my Foucauldian approach invited me to consider the 'truths' that substantiated administrators' explanations of practice. As such, in investigating 'meaning', I did not explore the 'inner thoughts or feelings' of administrators, but explored how their explanations of practice were discursively assembled.

Finally, I aimed to problematize the methodological approaches used to elucidate that which is 'taken for granted' and 'commonsensical' in the everyday practice of administrative workers. My deployment of a Foucauldian-inspired methodology, has necessitated my deeper consideration of what is 'taken for granted' (for instance, disability classifications, or uttering the 'correct' language, the organisation of spaces) and how these may be problematized. Although I discussed the methodological challenges invited in undertaking such an enquiry earlier (chapter six), I summarise some of the principal concerns later in this chapter.

My research suggests that it is the performance of resistance or subversion by administrators (and how this finds expression in their disability related practices) that may be instrumental in the formation or reconstruction of 'new' administrative identities. Earlier in this thesis, I noted how some commentators had argued that administrators were the 'invisible workers' (Szekeres 2004). It would have been tempting to conclude from such a remark that the administrators were in some way 'oppressed' or 'excluded', by 'powerful' authorities within the university context. However, whilst the orthodox notion of 'oppositional' resistance necessitates a subject who is oppressed 'by' a sovereign power; this is not the reading of resistance or subversion progressed by Foucault (Foucault 1978; Cooper 1994; Heller 1996; Mills 2003; Youdell 2006). Foucault's formulation of resistance (and its relationship to power), in addition to my own findings within this research, invites my consideration of how resistance is (productively) implicated in 'new' administrative roles.

To recap, Foucault's conception of power argued that it is something that is exercised (not 'held'), productive (not 'repressive'), dispersed (not 'centralised'), and it cannot "simply be overthrown" (Cooper 1994, p437; Mills 2003). Hence it is important, from a Foucauldian standpoint, to consider how –in the commonplace and everyday practices of administration – how power/resistance might be understood, particularly if the notion of sovereign power is deprecated; indeed, focusing purely on 'non-Foucauldian' and absolute forms of power may invite the overlooking of the subtle machinations of power/resistance in 'everyday' life (Cooper 1994). Hence "a more useful approach" to attending to resistance may be to understand it "as a motivation for power's deployment" (Cooper 1994, p442); that is, for administrators, forms of power that might be transformational: the questioning of how one has been classified, for instance.

Recalling my earlier discussions (specifically, chapters five and nine), I noted that in its Foucauldian conception, resistance occurs simultaneously with power; indeed, following Heller (1996), Youdell (2006) and Winiecki (2007), and their application within my analyses, I demonstrated that resistance and power might need not necessarily be conceived as ontologically opposed, and that the operation of resistance was 'folded into' the operation of power, and vice versa (Foucault 1978; Cooper 1994;

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[139] See chapter two for my use of this phrase

Mills 2003; Youdell 2006). As such, resistance, from a Foucauldian standpoint, was not considered symptomatic of 'constraint' or 'oppression', which would imply the attendance of a sovereign or hierarchical power. Instead, the *productive* character of power to constitute particular types of subject was seen as coupled with forms of resistance that restore power "in the very process of subversion" (Mills 2003, p253); that is, where there are power-relations, there is always the possibility for resistance or subversion (Foucault 1978).

In advancing conclusions from my research, this standpoint is important. In the university context, an assumption might made that there are "totalizing and absolute" (Knights and Vurdubakis 1994, p177) regimes of power/knowledge; for example, those which are represented by the 'academic' disciplines or, as with the administrators in this research, the 'experts' who 'name' disabilities. However, what I found the administrators to be resisting or subverting was somewhat intriguing and surprising: they were typically *not* directly resisting 'sovereign' power (as I had perhaps anticipated); rather, they were resisting or subverting particular practices from *within* discourse: for instance, constructively questioning the 'correct language' that one might use in respect of disability; offering opportunities for themselves to practise 'therapeutically' in the context of their routine administrative work or, indeed, attempting to renegotiate a position for themselves in an challenging and confusing situation of interpersonal (and interdisciplinary) conflict.

It is in this revised sense that I am considering Foucault's conception of resistance: by locating my attention *away* from deterministic and hierarchical conceptions of power (for instance, 'manager-worker', or 'academic-administrator'), and instead considering how practices of 'resistance' might instead be understood, from a Foucauldian standpoint, as located *beside* power, "at the point where relations of power are exercised" (Foucault 1980, p142), I am arguing that administrators *do* enact practices of resistance. However, I found that these were not rebellious or revolutionary 'acts of resistance'; rather, they were more subtle moments of resistance that "play the role of continually provoking extensions, revisions and refinements of those same practices that it confronts" (Knights and Vurdubakis 1994, p180). It is this way that I considered the administrators to be resisting: subverting, as I discussed in an earlier chapter, "everyday definitions of the boundaries of work" (Austrin 1994, p209), and in doing so, *producing* new or revised possibilities for administrative work. Two features of administrative

practice that I argue are instrumental to the understanding and reformulation of administrative work are its relationship to psy expertise and knowledge (and the productive qualities of power), and the rehearsal and reiteration of practices in the form of ritual (which invite the circulation and reiteration of power/knowledge and discourse); these notions frame my further concluding remarks.

THE ROLE OF PSY KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE

My findings suggest that administrators are incited to facilitate 'choice' (for the student) in the disability 'assessment' process. In doing so, they are sometimes obliged to enact discretion and judgment, for instance, in respect of the 'advice' they may offer to the student who, in the context of their own subjectivation, is incited to 'choose' to 'disclose' a disability. My fieldwork also suggests that the practices of students are, on occasion, pathologized in terms of 'psy' discourse: 'non-concordance' with administrative procedure, for instance, was explained by some administrators in terms of psychological 'failure', for instance 'not coping' or 'not making the correct choices', rather than patently 'medical' explanations, for instance, 'depression' or 'mental health difficulties'.

Relatedly, I also argued that administrators were subjectivised as 'moral' workers, for instance, in respect of their performance of what are understood to be the 'correct attitudes' in respect of disability. Their performances in this context were correlated with 'talk'; that is, specific modes of talk (for instance, saying something understood to be discriminatory) was understood to possess an illocutionary force (Austin 1975, p150); that is, discrimination was held to be 'done' through the performance of 'talk'. Indeed, my fieldwork suggested that the 'non-possession' of the 'correct attitudes', as expressed through 'talk', was pathologized, both explicitly in the 'disability training context', and tacitly in the 'everyday' work context (in conversations between peers, for instance). I propose that psy expertise is folded into the calculation of risk in the university setting. This supports the assertions of Rose (1996) and Lupton (1999) in respect of the emergence of 'risk' (and the displacement of 'danger') as a "strategy of regulatory power" (Lupton 1999, p89); I now discuss further Rose's thesis as it applies both to the subjectivation of the student-subject, and to the practices of the administrators themselves.

Nikolas Rose argues that the successful infiltration and proliferation of psy expertise in contemporary (Western) societies reflects a "crisis of authority" (Rose 1998, p92) in these contexts. For those choosing to practise authority, its imposition can be 'explained' in terms that do not reference a sovereign power (such as the state or monarchy), and can be justified in a manner that is congruent with the 'ideals' of liberal democracy:

> With the infusion of psy into the training and credentializing of professionals of conduct, the possibility emerges that the decisions that are made by such authorities can be conducted in a way that appears to be in the best interests of those whose lives they will affect – be they worker, prisoner, patient or child. This ethical-therapeutic transformation is one aspect of the force that binds diverse authorities to psychological expertise and makes it so powerful...It is not merely that it 'professionalizes' them, by supplying them with a knowledge base and so forth. It gives a new kind of human and moral worth and legitimacy not merely to the gross and evident wielding of power over others, but also to the mundane activities of daily decision making in the factory or in the family (Rose 1998, p93)

Rose argues that an important aspect of the functioning of 'psy' expertise is its incitement of 'self' knowledge, and the inferences of freedom and autonomy – or self-determination – that this suggests. As it has 'escaped' the disciplinary boundaries of psychology, knowledge about ones 'self' is no longer bound tightly to the reigns of 'expertise'; rather 'the self', and the embracing of the (psy) techniques through which one can come to 'know oneself', has become an essential characteristic (and indeed, perhaps a requirement or demand) of personhood in the (Western) present.

The appealing and ostensibly 'egalitarian' discourses of psy have invited a recalibration of the conduct 'of conduct', moving from that which is 'imposed' by authoritative outsiders to that which is 'taken up' by the individual themselves. However, these are not necessarily unconditional invitations to self-determinacy; rather, they are "regulated acts of choice" (Rose 1998, p98) that do not preclude the imposition of sovereign or juridical power. Lawler (2008) elaborates this point in relation to parenting in England and Wales: she provides an example of the 'obligations' incited by psy discourse (the incitement to 'choose', the application of 'counselling and guidance') and their relationship to juridical authority:

> Parenting contracts are voluntary, and there is no penalty for their breach, but if parents of children who are seen to be deviant do not co-operate with a youth offending team...they are likely to be subject to a parenting order. Parenting orders involve counselling and guidance, as well as the requirement to supervise

and monitor their children to the satisfaction of the youth offending team. *The parenting contract turns out not to be voluntary after all*. (Lawler 2008, p74, my emphases)

In a similar manner, I argue that the import of psy knowledges into the administrative domain incites "new ways of construing existence as potentially problematic" (Rose 1998, p94); that is, psy knowledge and expertise locates fresh opportunities for the depreciation of the notion of 'danger', and incites the calculation of risk. This relates to Foucault's understanding of normalization (Foucault 1995), which I discussed earlier (chapter five) whereby, as a technique of discourse and power, normalization can be understood to establish what can be truthfully 'said' about human 'kinds', circulating and investing these 'truths' in social practice, and establishing techniques by which these norms may be 'made knowable', and regulated. As such, following Foucault, the calculation of risk may be considered to be a normalizing technique, an effort to 'order reality' (Waldschmidt 2005).

In the contemporary administrative context, therefore, to understand 'risk' is to invite an opportunity for its systemised identification, regulation and control, perhaps through the installation of specific procedures (disability assessment procedures, chapter seven), the incitement for one to 'self-assess' personal risk (the invitation to disclose, chapter eight) or, indeed, the obligation for administrators to talk 'of' disability in a 'correct' and 'moral' manner; these are all opportunities for the calculation and control of 'risk'. In the case of dyslexia, for example, a diffuse array of individual characteristics (pertaining to literacy or communication skills, for instance) are codified, through the use of expert knowledge, as 'risks', at least in the educational context. This codification, as I demonstrated in earlier chapters (seven, eight), makes dyslexia 'knowable' as a 'risk', and hence a legitimate target for administrative and pedagogic intervention, and also as an opportunity for the individual to self-scrutinize and 'work upon' their selves.

Hence, in respect of the person 'disclosing' a disability, the identification of that which is 'normal' (or not) is no longer *only* tied to some essential (impairment) characteristic; instead, the geometries of 'normalcy' are calculated in relation to the risks they volunteer; their advance identification enables interventions to be introduced to "take action to prevent" the risks to normalcy that they imply (Rose 1998, p94). Rose argues that it is psy expertise that is implicated in this calculation: the deployment of psy knowledge in the calculation of risk functions to "turn chance and happenstance into certainty and predictability" (Rose 1998, 94). Hence, 'dyslexia' (or mental impairment)

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may be expressed in terms the 'risks' they present (for instance, to literacy and academic success, or, as Veronica explained, customary expressions of mood and thought), and it is the identification and amelioration of these risks, through the deployment of psy knowledge and expertise, enables the "production and protection of normality" (Rose 1998, p95).

However, this argument relates not only to the student disclosing a disability; it also relates to the administrators themselves. In respect of the 'speech acts' made by administrators (my analyses here drawing upon the work of Austin 1975, and Butler 1997), and the 'risk' of using the 'wrong language' in respect of disability, my findings concur with Nikolas Rose's thesis (Rose 1998, 1999) by illustrating how administrators are obliged to follow both formal rules (such as those inculcated during training and the following of policy, both of which are understood to correlate with the law), yet are also incited to 'work on their selves' as subjects of 'psy' discourses. It is this sense that the cultivation of the 'moral selves' of the administrators is not directly facilitated by 'experts' (such as counsellors or 'psychological' professionals). Rather, I find that the administrators are subjectivised within/by psy discourse; that is, performing (speaking, acting) in a manner consistent with 'anti-discrimination' is specified as a way 'to be', and is instrumental in the assembly of a 'moral' administrative 'identity'.

THE ROLE OF RISK AND RITUAL

My findings also suggest that, in the contemporary university context, the 'student with a disability' is hailed (subjectivised) as autonomous, collegial and, perhaps, a willing 'customer' of university services. Simultaneous with this, I also found that administrators, too, were 'made up' (and work to make themselves up) as collegial, moral, productive workers with a 'customer-aware' sensibility; Stefan and Morag, for instance, described the efforts they made to meet the 'needs' of students (chapter eight). In respect of disability, some 'kinds' of students were understood by the administrators to be 'safe'; in this thesis, for instance, I described how students with dyslexia were understood by administrators in such a way, their 'making up' (subjectivation) as 'students with dyslexia' typically perceived by administrators to be uncomplicated.[140] In

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[140] Although there were exceptions: Rena, for instance, whilst not challenging the classification of dyslexia *per se*, did question the classification of those experiencing what she described as 'mild' and 'severe' dyslexia; see chapter eight.

contrast, other individuals were considered unsafe, even 'dangerous', as my interpretation of Veronica's narrative in chapter ten suggested.

In working to 'tame chance' (Hacking 1990), my findings suggest that administrators work to protect the 'internal lines' and "cherished classification[s]" (Douglas 2002, p45) of disability categorization and its associated administrative practices. In doing this, administrators strive to avoid anomaly and the risks these might invite to the regular functioning of administrative practice and, following Douglas (2002), I found (in chapters nine and ten) that *ritual* was instrumental in respect of this: the completion of a PLP (Personal Learning Plan) for instance, the aural isolation of 'difficult' students or, indeed, the utterance of particular words (or their avoidance) are all markers, I argue, of ritualised administrative practices that were evoked in response to a perceived anomaly or disruption, posited as 'risks', to administrative work.

What constitutes a 'risk' (with respect to disability) in the administrative workplace is ostensibly selected from expert discourses: the 'student with dyslexia', for instance, is 'made up' as a 'kind of person' within medical/pedagogic discourse as a person whose 'vulnerability' conveys a 'known risk' within the educational context. Furthermore, in the 'consumerised' context of Higher Education, 'risks' may also be correlated to the 'student experience'. Although failing to meet the requirements of disability legislation (or University policy) is a 'risk' in itself, and inviting of particular rituals (for instance, the PLP), the possibility that a student may be 'hurt' or 'offended' by, for instance, the use of the 'wrong' language was, my findings suggest, also understood by the administrators as constitutive of a 'risk' and hence inviting of (speech and other) ritual. Indeed, the individualisation of the 'student experience' and the avoidance of risks in this respect support Rose's argument that discourses of consumerisation have created wider possibilities for 'risk' (see Rose 1999).

However, if rituals are not (only) the reciting of authoritative texts (such the law, or the tenets of the social model, or local policies), but instead describe "location[s] of continual negotiation and inscription of fluid meaning" (Blain and Wallis 2004, p249) then ritual can also be understood to possess an changeable or unpredictable quality (Howe 2000), and an opportunity for the continual 'making', re-making, and transformation of meaning and subjectivity. As such, apparently static 'inscriptions' of authoritative ritual 'texts' are:

[A]lways provisional and always in the process of change as they are inscribed anew. Text is best construed, then, not as a fixed entity with definite meaning, but as a struggle about who can get what inscribed. This introduces ideas of risk, stake, claim, strategy and competition, and it is thus pre-eminently a political process... By excluding alternatives, what is inscribed becomes authoritative, legitimate and even obligatory; but not permanently so, because established texts are always open to subversion and revision. (Howe 2000, p65)

Such a position is correlative with the Foucauldian reading of statements/discourses that I discussed in an earlier chapter (five). There, I argued that statements/discourses were always 'provisional' and never 'guaranteed'; that they were subject to authoritative claims that might be eliminated, deprecated or resisted and subverted, and that, through social practice, they were assembled, circulated, re-assembled, and re-circulated (see Foucault 1981; Youdell 2006). It is in this sense that statements and discourses can be seen to be constitutive of ritual performances, and vice versa. That is, rituals are the practised manifestation of discourse, they function to inscribe power, and are often improvised (Howe 2000), and not only the static 'presentation' of either law or cultural 'values and beliefs'. Catherine Bell neatly summarises this interpretation:

> Hence, rather than ritual as the vehicle for the *expression* of authority...ritual is a vehicle for the *construction* of relationships of authority and submission...ritual as a part of a historical process in which past patterns are reproduced but also reinterpreted and transformed...[this is] explicitly concerned with what rituals do, not just what they mean, particularly the way in which they construct and inscribe power relationships. (Bell 1997, p82-3)

Indeed, my findings suggest that administrators do not simply 'adhere' to ritualised scripts for practice, reflexively reciting and repeating of (expert) authority. Rather I argue that, in the administrative context, rituals are dynamic performances that 'make' and 'remake' the identities of administrators. This assertion evokes the idea of performativity: that is, ritual is not only concerned with the 'acting out' or imitation of 'meaning' and the protection against moral uncertainty and 'harm', but it is also *constitutive* of 'who one becomes' through such a performance (Butler 1993; Howe 2000; Mills 2000; Denzin 2003; Youdell 2006).

The administrators 'work' in avoiding infelicitous and 'offensive' speech acts provide a good illustration of this: although there are few 'fixed' (inscribed, written) scripts that specify 'how one ought to speak', I argue that 'unwritten' rituals of 'correct' speech which are constituted and performed (and repeated) in the everyday performances of administrators function not *only* to protect against moral uncertainty (and harm to others), but *also* to aid in their constitution as 'moral' and 'non discriminatory' workers.

Kirsteen's castigation by an (authoritative) peer, and Janice's censure of a colleague, are two examples of ritualistic formulations of talk and practice (see chapter nine) that appeared to serve this purpose. However, such an account does not necessarily recognise the way 'lay' actors use "their own situated knowledges of the world" (Lupton 1999, p108) when ascertaining risks and formulating appropriate (ritualistic) responses.

Hecht's study of nuclear industry workers, for instance, illustrated how despite ostensibly authoritative (scientific) knowledge about the damaging effects of ionising radiation, workers in different workplaces calculated 'risk' differently according to their localised identities; their ritualised responses to risk incorporated both a rehearsal of 'official procedures' (derived from expert knowledge) coupled with local enactments of their own 'identities' as co-workers in a specific site (Hecht 1997). In this research, whilst the immediate personal risks to the administrators (and students) are somewhat less life-endangering than Hecht's example, my findings reflect her assertions that ritualistic responses to 'risk' are *not only* 'rehearsals' of expert knowledge (Mills 2000); rather, they are also contingent upon how individual actors in specific settings use, 'take up' and articulate expert knowledge, and incorporate these within their 'local' knowledge, as circulated by administrators in their everyday utterances.

THE EPISTEMIC CHARACTER OF INTERPRETATION

Earlier (in chapter six) I outlined a number of epistemic and methodological positions, including a focus on the productive character of discourse and its elucidation (rather than a concern for the 'inner resources' of the individual respondents), the nature of positionalities within the research context, the authorities that may have been excited in the interview context, and my selection and use of Foucauldian (discursive) statements; all of these concerns were discussed in relation to my own 'closeness' to the field of enquiry. As such, I did not consider, nor claim, that the 'data' I presented were an unfettered 'representation' or 'reflection' of my fieldwork experience. Rather, following Geertz (1973), my 'data' was itself an *interpretation*:

> [A]nthropological writings are themselves interpretations...They are, thus, fictions; fictions, in the sense that they are 'something made,' 'something fashioned' – the original meaning of *fictiō* – not that they are false, un-factual, or merely 'as if' thought experiments...The ethnographer 'inscribes' social discourse; *he writes it down*. In so doing, he turns it from a passing event, which

exists only in its moment of occurrence, into an account, which exists in its
inscriptions and can be re-consulted. (Geertz 1973, p15, 19, original emphases)

Hence, the 'data', and its 'interpretation' and 'analysis' that I have presented in this thesis are not "raw" recollections that hold a mirror to practice; rather, they amount to a "construction of the empirical conditions [that serve] interpretative work" (Alvesson and Skölberg 2009, p284). The question for qualitative research therefore appears to be concerned with what 'counts' as knowledge: its *epistemic character* or status. The means by which such knowledge is made knowable (and is circulated) is central to Foucauldian analysis; similarly, 'who' can make such claims is also of importance. There are several ways in which I might attempt to account for the epistemic character of my interpretations, in addition to those (such as the interpretations made by the reader themselves) that would be not possible for me to locate. In this section, I have selected three features for closer consideration. First, I discuss the nature of the interview and the 'interview society'. Second, I consider the role of memory (Douglas and Wildavsky 1983; Hacking 1994, 1995; Lawler 2002, 2008) in the formation of interpretations. Third, I also consider the notion of common sense (Geertz 1993) as it may apply here. Extracts from my data are used to illustrate the arguments made.

INTERPRETATION WITHIN DISCOURSE

A Foucauldian approach to qualitative analysis, as I have applied it in this thesis, does not strive for the "making of truth" (Hook 2005, p8). Rather, its Foucauldian character suggested that 'truths' were selected from discourse, and were constituted and sustained in a "circular relation" with power (Foucault 1980, p133). As such, the analyses presented within this inquiry may be understood as a *critique* (Hook 2005), an exposure and exposition of these discourses. It is in this respect that the knowledge 'produced' therein was not wholly 'about' the administrators themselves; that is, I did not seek to gain access to their 'inner resources'.[141] Rather, by inviting their narratives (and my observations), and incorporating a selection of these within my analysis,[142] I aimed to provide a critical account of the 'truths' that served to produce and authorise accounts of

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[141] This is not to say that the administrators' personal feelings were not important, and nor does this debase the interpersonal relationships and rapport that we enjoyed, or the significance of those issues that relate to the lives of people with disabilities. However, I did not, as Gary Fine notes, "imagine my subjects as heroic or oppressed" (Fine 2003, p54), and nor did I attempt to assign or correlate the interpretations that they presented to me with any particular moral or political standpoint.

[142] I discussed my methodology for the selection/inclusion of these data in chapter six

the constitution of disability in the administrative setting. As such, the 'knowledge' presented is *my* interpretation of how administrators interpret their practices, in addition to those interpretations I made during observational fieldwork.

As such, my interpretation of the administrator's narratives does not strive to represent them as either 'true' or 'false' accounts; rather, I have interpreted their accounts as *produced* (and constrained) within discourse, as practices that are rehearsed and circulated in the contexts in which they work. Following Hook (2001, 2005) and Foucault (1981) for methodological direction, I argue that the administrators (nor I) did not author, or originate, their narratives of disability, university 'life' or administration; rather, they/I made selections from those discursive statements that are in circulation in the administrative context (and from the wider social context). It is this way that I strove to interpret administrators' accounts in respect of what these might 'say' about the *means of their production*, and how what was said (and seen) came to 'count' as 'truth' in the research context.

THE INTERVIEW SOCIETY

The interview remains a key method for eliciting information from and about people and their lives in the present (Atkinson and Silverman 1997; Denzin 2003; Chase 2008). However, the notion of the 'interview society' is not only concerned with its practical techniques; rather, the interview society foregrounds the interview as a "technology of biographical construction" (Atkinson and Silverman 1997, p306), a means whereby subjects are incited to 'produce' and 'confess' narratives about their 'selves', and to do so in the public realm (Denzin 2003). Crucially, the interview is presumed to permit access to the 'real' person, hence interviewers are presumed to "have access to this real self" (Denzin 2003, p86), a 'self' whose accounts are presumed to be 'authentic'. Furthermore, the interview has become institutionalised: although 'experts' may use the interview in methodological contexts, the practices of interviewing are now widely dispersed through Western society, and its "rules and roles are known and shared" by many (Fontana and Frey 2008, p120).

Such characteristics are highly problematic in the context of (Foucauldian) qualitative enquiry: such an enquiry, debasing and problematizing the notion of there being an essential 'truth' about social life that may be 'discovered', is necessarily concerned to question the epistemic character of the 'knowledge' that is 'produced' through the

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interview method. Furthermore, the premise of the interview society, that there is an authentic and private 'self' that can be rendered public, has also been problematized:

> Of course, there is no essential self or private, real self behind the public self. There are only different selves, different performances, different ways of being...These performances are based on different narrative and interpretative practices...There is no inner or deep self that is accessed by the interview...There are only different interpretative...versions of who the person is (Denzin 2003, p86)

I did not consider unencumbered or 'raw' data to 'exist', 'in the field', as it were, 'awaiting' my 'discovery'. Rather, the texts (interview transcriptions, field notes, documents, observations) that I identified as 'data' had already been exposed to 'primary interpretation' Alvesson and Sköldberg (2009); in the context of this research, such interpretations related to my theoretical reading, my prior experiences of particular kinds of people, places and practices (in the University and beyond), my understanding of social etiquette and local vernacular, and my naturalized (Western, legal-medical) apprehension of ethical principles. All of these served to shape the selections I made in respect of 'methods' and 'data', and fashioned that which was necessary in order to construct a recognisable and legitimate empirical and scholarly enquiry.

Hence, even in advance of my written analyses, the epistemic character of the 'data' which I was gathering, and the methodological techniques I was using, were themselves products of (and sustained by) the discourses already in circulation in the research field and beyond. For instance, the formulation of a 'consent form' and my performance of 'information provision and consent seeking' prior to direct face-to-face interviewing illustrates my citation of particular (discursive) statements about how one 'should' conduct research in this context: 'truths' about the 'vulnerability' of research participants; the 'appropriate' manner in which information might be conveyed; the autonomy of the respondents and, indeed, the deployment of particular technologies for the collection of data (the interview, the sound recording device, my use of notepad and pen); all of these positions and practices were available to me: I was, like my respondents, positioned within discourse.

It is also in this sense that, following Butler (1993), Denzin (2003) and Youdell (2011), I considered the interview to be performative; that is, it was my utterances, as researcher, during the interviews that 'made' the subject(s) that it named, namely the

'researcher' and 'respondent'.[143] Furthermore, as bodily practices are also performative (Youdell 2006; Butler 1993; Denzin 2003), then my bodily recital of the interview – the placing of a microphone on a desk, arranging a room to create a 'place' suitable for interviewing, the utterance of 'information', and the ritual offering of a consent form – all functioned to assemble particular kinds of subjects and their relationships (the 'researcher', the 'researched', the 'listener', the 'storyteller'), and incited the production of particular kinds of knowledge.[144] That these positions and practices might be considered dependable means through which one might 'gain knowledge' arguably relates to the privileged status that is accorded to the interview in 'the interview society' (Atkinson and Silverman 1997; Denzin 2003, 2008a,b; Fontana and Frey 2008).

THE AUTHORITY OF THE RESEARCHER

It has been suggested that, in the context of 'postmodern' (here, a Foucauldian) inquiry, qualitative accounts are 'polyphonic' in nature, whereby interview accounts privilege the voices of respondents and are not presented as the singular interpretation of the researcher (Fontana and Frey 2008). I reject this: rather, my position is that interpretations are *produced* by/within the research encounter, both as respondents narrate their own experiences and 'selves' (thereby effecting their own interpretations), and as I, the researcher, accord these accounts *my* interpretation. As such, I am cautious in claiming to afford a privileged 'voice' to my respondents, as doing so would deny the possibility for understanding the interview as an "accomplished story" (Fontana and Frey 2008, p141); that is, the 'truth' that emerges from an interview as a 'meeting' of history, context and narrated 'selves'.

Here, therefore, I concur with Atkinson and Silverman (1997): whilst the thoughts, feelings and 'experiences' of individuals (here, administrative workers as they narrate their encounters) are, of course, important, these considerations alone do not automatically provide for what Atkinson and Silverman characterise as "an adequate methodology" (p319), and might even serve as a distraction:

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[143] For Butler, performativity "appears to produce that which it names" (Butler 1993, p. 107)

[144] Ethnographic observation, too, might be considered in such a way: the empirical gaze of the researcher, as opposed to the differently purposeful gaze of the fellow employee or user of the service. The practice of standing and gazing (and, later, the recording of field notes) assembles an 'observing' researcher-subject.

There would be, however, an ironic and unintended consequence if the proper attention to the voices of ethnographic representation were to reintroduce an uncritical view of the subject. In rejecting the authorial monologue of the classic monograph, we should not adopt the monologue of a privileged speaking subject... We should not allow a renewed sensitivity to the narrative organization of everyday life to result in an untheorized and uncritical endorsement of personal narratives themselves. They are not, in other words, any more authentic or pure a reflection of the self than any other socially organized set of practices. An emphasis on interview-narrative performance is an implicit endorsement of contemporary culture, and does not offer a vantage point from which to question its taken-for-granted modes of reproduction... There is clearly the danger that in concentrating on speaking voices, and narrating selves, current sociological and anthropological research may ground itself in the technologies of the interview society rather than systematically questioning its root assumptions and methods. (Atkinson and Silverman 1997, p322)

It is this sense that I aimed to use the accounts of administrators (and myself, in my observations) to 'afford access' *to* discourse, and not attempt to account for some 'essential' truth or (phenomenological) 'self' that resided 'behind' discourse; I did not consider there to be a 'real' discourse awaiting my discovery and explication; rather, as Youdell (2006) notes in respect of her research, my interpretations were "absolutely entangled in the data I generate and the representations I produce[d]" (Youdell 2006, p513).

Hence I cannot deny my authorship of the interpretations, nor 'gloss over' the possibility that such interpretations might be considered to represent my own 'authoritative voice'. However, although the 'authorial voice' of the researcher might be understood to deprecate the 'voice' of the respondent, the written inscription of interpretation, which inevitably involves using analytical language and the meeting analytical aims, *is* arguably my domain, the domain of the researcher. It is in this respect I concur with Susan Chase (2008), when she argues that the researcher has a "different interest from the narrators [respondents]" and, as such, the role of the researcher is to make "visible and audible taken-for-granted practices, processes, and structural and cultural features of our everyday social worlds" (Chase 2008, p75). It is this regard that I now consider the role of memory, and the nature of 'common sense' knowledge.

USING OUR MEMORIES

An important aspect of this research was my consideration of the manner in which my respondents were working both within and without the interview context in order to

formulate and narrate (and authorise) accounts of their 'selves'. That is, following Lawler (2002, 2008), their administrative 'identities' were produced by the administrators themselves, within the interview, as they narrated their 'workplace' lives and experiences and, crucially, memory is/was important in making these formulations.[145] Hence what is 'remembered' is necessarily recited and reinterpreted (and perhaps exercised through ritual) in respect of/to the present: that is, what it is necessary for one to 'know' in the present is what is required in order to bring order to the present. The comments of Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky are apposite here:

> Living in the present means inventing cut-out mechanisms which prevent [the] future from being cluttered with a load of obligations...Every form of social life, if it endures at all, digs its own channels of memory and its own shapes of amnesic spaces, just as important as memory, for allowing that social type to persist (Douglas and Wildavsky 1983, p87)

Hacking (1995) notes the fallibility of memory, and its role in constituting and re-constituting the 'interpretation' of the present by individuals; that is, memory is not "a faithful record" of 'what has happened' (Hacking 1995, p247); that is, in making interpretations of the *present*, individual and "communal" (Hacking 1998, p210) memories are, knowingly or otherwise, folded into the present from the past. Here, I first use the following extract from an interview with Rena to illustrate how she 'makes' her narrative (interpretation) within the context of an extended interview. I also use it here as a device to explicate how I produced my own interpretation based on these (and other) data:

RL   My background's more in looking at social and economic factors of disadvantage. I was brought in very particularly, and [my manager] was very clear about this, for my background and skills

[...]

RL   [I]f we can't manage to find a nice disability label to put on them, it's going to be 'paddle your own canoe'. Which is why at the moment I'm spending a lot of my time in trying to really raise that debate – *I'm not alone, it's raging all over the University isn't it?*

NC   I'd agree [that] it's really a topic 'out there' so to speak.

[...]

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[145] Lawler's thesis here draws upon Hacking and Ricoeur, emphasising the role of memoralised narrative in the production of identity; see Lawler (2002, p248-251)

RL   *[A]nd as you'll be aware from the research that you're doing there are so many grey areas in this*, so somebody presenting in the office and they could have multiple things – you know they could be [a] neurological disorder, they could have epilepsy [and] they might be dyslexic as well

[Ref : Rena/04.02, 10:20-11:47, 21:07, abridged]

Synthesized here are a range of narrative components: the formulation of disability classifications; a concern for individuals and opportunity ("paddle your own canoe"); the raising of a debate; expert classifications; and multiple (she says) "things" (meaning, 'impairments'). This references a past, present and future: for Rena, this past includes her working with people that she characterises as located within 'disadvantaged groups'; a present (of confusing responses to disability, perhaps also 'unfairness'); and a preferred future ('debate' about disability classification). Her knowledge of a 'past self' working with, and being knowledgeable 'about', people who she styles as being 'disadvantaged' shapes and authorises her explanation of her present 'self' and work.

In respect of the epistemic character of the knowledge that one can gain during such an interview, Rena's knowledge can be understood to *already* be an interpretation - a production, or "something fashioned" (Geertz 1973, p15) – which, although assembled in the present, references (and is authorised by) her past. A positivist interpretation of Rena's utterances may attempt to account for what she is saying as being tainted by her (selective) recollections, a 'recall' effect. However, Lawler argues that problematizing interpretations, such as those uttered by Rena "misses the point" (Lawler 2002, p249) of interpretation in this context: rather, she argues, there is no essentially 'true' interpretation that is 'correct' and irrefutable. Rena is deploying her recollections of the past in order to formulate an account of *her* present, and in doing so, she is working to produce a consistent and 'reasoned' identity for herself that 'makes sense' and is consistent within the present; Lawler continues:

> Narrative, then, both connotes and constitutes movement – the movement from the potential to the actual, from what could be to what is, from past to present, from present to future. In the process, it works to *naturalize* the plot, making later events seem the natural and inevitable culmination of earlier ones (Lawler 2002, p250, original emphases).

This notion of 'naturalizing' the narrative is important: respondents are not just 'telling the truth' or 'recalling events' (although they may be presented as such) – they are

narrating their understanding: selecting for, and making sense of, what they 'know', in the present.

NARRATIVES OF COMMON SENSE

I discussed in earlier chapters how explanations of practice (for instance, that people 'need support'; that it is 'wrong to discriminate'; that 'slacking' at work is not to be celebrated) may be accorded the status of 'truth' within discourse. However, when considering the character of the 'knowledge' that might be ascertained through an interpretation of the stories and descriptions that my respondents provided, I was also incited to consider (and problematize) the tacit or *common-sense* quality of their explanations. Common sense, Geertz (1993) argues, is neither the haphazard remnant of a form of social life that is 'unexplained' by, for instance, religion, science or ideology, yet nor is it something that can only easily be explained as that which "anyone in his right mind knows" (Geertz 1993, p75); as such, common sense can be afforded a status, albeit a status that is challenging to determine. He explains:

> This analytical dissolution of the unspoken premise from which common sense draws its authority ... is not intended to undermine that authority, but to relocate it. If common sense is as much an interpretation of the immediacies of experience, a gloss on them, as are myth, painting, epistemology, or whatever, then it is, like them, historically constructed and, like them, subjected to historically defined standards of judgement...It is, in short, a cultural system, though not a very tightly integrated one, and it rests on the same basis that any other such system rests; the conviction by those who possession it is of its value and validity. (Geertz 1993, p76)

Geertz offers five tentative categories through which 'common sense' might be apprehended and discussed: 'naturalness', 'practicalness', 'thinness', 'immethodicalness' and 'accessibleness', of which his first, naturalness, considered by him to be the most "fundamental" (Geertz 1993, p85), I consider more closely here. The Geertzian quality of naturalness alludes not to the idea that a concept is entirely alien or unknown; rather, a concern for naturalness relates to how its status, its constitution as a 'truth', might be explained in the 'everyday'.

For instance, using the example of mental disability that I have explicated within this thesis, it is not *only* that this might be 'difficult to classify' in the context of disciplinary power/knowledge, but that the difficulty experienced in respect of its classification unseats what Geertz describes as "the settled terms of existence" (Geertz 1993, p85); that is, mental disabilities (or however these may be characterised in vernacular) exceed

and weaken the facilities for their description in the 'everyday', whereas dyslexia, by contrast, in this context typically accorded with pedagogic and administrative 'truths'.[146] The short interview extracts below, from interviews I undertook with Paolo and Rena, illustrate this:

> PT   *"You know and I know* from *our experience* that some students are so [mentally] *unwell* that it is not *reasonable* for them to go out on placement"

[Ref: Paolo/10:23]

> RL   "[S]ome psychiatrists are actually recommending University study almost as therapy, which *you and I know* is just disastrous"

[Ref. Rena/34:13]

As such, although mental disabilities may (or may not be) be accorded the status of 'truth' in the present, and the shading of my/our interpretation of this truth may (or may not) be 'explained' by me (or others) in terms of disciplinary discourse, there is also a tacit and commonsensical character to such 'knowing', that 'mental disability' is something 'known'. An extract from a discussion with Andrea further illustrates the 'ease' in which a respondent, in a 'close to home' and familiar context can communicate 'common sense' to a fellow 'member' of the community, yet this also serves to illustrate the difficulty of ascertaining the *status* of common-sense knowledge:

> AR   I think it's been more worrying compared to what I did before [the introduction of disability discrimination legislation]. What I did before, we dealt with disability because *it was there*, and not because it was a legislative requirement

[Ref: Andrea/11:14, abridged]

As a listener, and a participant in this workplace, I am perhaps *expected* by Andrea to understand her utterance, "it [disability] was there". Furthermore, she does not directly qualify her statement, "it's been more worrying", although her subsequent clause (about 'legislation') perhaps performs this function. In this example, her ('common sense') explanation is certified by her second (the 'legislation'), and her 'worry' is explained *in relation to this*. It is this respect that the "colloquial reason" (Geertz 1993, p79) of common sense – Andrea's assertion that disability "was there" – is made *knowable* to me within the text, and is authorised as part of the social performance our conversation.

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[146] Although Rena did problematize this in her account

In short, rather than, as Geertz suggests, "transcending...thought" (Geertz 1993, p79), affording it authority by reference to (for instance) the law, a policy guideline or an ideological 'position', these utterances are presented by these respondents to me as *dependable* and *sufficient* for a conversation between fellow members within this (our) community of workers: this knowledge is understood to possess authority in 'it's own right', as spoken in *this context* to *this listener*. Such assertions might not, when used in a conversation between colleagues, invite debate about their 'meaning'; rather, they may be understood function to delimit, organise and authorise that which is understood to be 'common sense' in this particular context. These utterances are, as Douglas (2002) reminds me, mnemonics – shorthand denotations – that encode and strengthen the veracity and authority of meanings that form part of the local and commonsensical knowledge that is circulated in this particular context, and are hence subject to ritualised, reiterated ways of 'knowing'; ways of 'knowing' that make everyday life not only safe (as they protect against the anomalous and unknown) but also practicable.

ASPECTS AND LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

In presenting my analysis, theoretical exposition and findings, some reflection of the potential limitations of this research are perhaps apposite. Although in my methodology chapter, some of these limitations were inferred, I now make some further (concluding) remarks. In respect of my selection of respondents and places, it was not my aim (nor claim) that the people who I identified (and who consented) to participate in this research were 'representative sample' of administrators within higher education in England.[147] This said, although characteristics such as age, gender, social class, ethnicity and educational qualification were not specifically incorporated into my selection strategy, those selected and who chose to participate (all of those who I approached) did 'represent' a range of these characteristics, although the nature of such 'representation', in the context of an ethnographic enquiry, is arguably a moot point.

What I can state with greater confidence is that my respondents reflected (to a greater or lesser extent) the range of administrative work which is undertaken in this particular University: 'junior' supportive roles (undertaking a variety of administrative tasks), for instance, or those in 'specialist roles' (undertaking a specific aspect of disability-related

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[147] I am noting 'England' specifically, given the different arrangement, configuration and funding arrangements that have arisen elsewhere in the United Kingdom, both prior to and during the undertaking of my fieldwork

work) and, indeed, those in 'senior' management or leadership roles. It in this sense that I hold that my selection of respondents (and the practices with which they are implicated) do represent a "slice" (Denzin 2008a, p21) of administrative life, albeit only within a particular university, and only in a particular point in time.

This brings me to my second point. The University in which this research was undertaken (and in which I work) shares characteristics with a number of other institutions within England. This is a 'Post-92' institution (see chapter two), and the faculty in which fieldwork was predominantly undertaken was one concerned largely, but not exclusively, with the training and education of 'healthcare professionals'. This context is, perhaps, somewhat different from other faculties (both in this University, and elsewhere); the closer relationship, for instance, with professional regulators (hence a concern for 'fitness for practice' and 'employability', particularly in specific occupational enclaves), or the intensive nature of teaching and administration that is undertaken (a forty-five week university teaching 'year', as opposed to a typically shorter academic/administrative cycle in conventional academic disciplines). Furthermore, during and following the undertaking of fieldwork, a number of significant changes were ongoing: for instance, the installation of new computer systems, management 'restructuring' and changes to funding arrangements. Although these features are, I suspect, typical throughout higher education within England, I cannot claim that these are representative of the whole sector, or that my 'findings' may be generalised elsewhere.

Furthermore, the individual work histories of my respondents, the local geographies of office buildings and spaces and, indeed, the collective 'memory' of this workplace (its history, heritage and particular vernacular) may be of significant, although, as my discussion earlier suggests, generalising from these (and according them the status of truth) is problematic and perhaps unwise. What I can argue is that the theoretical arguments (about discourse, resistance, ritual, for instance) and how these correspond with 'disability' *may* be transferable to similar contexts elsewhere, albeit with the aforementioned caveats. In addition, I might also reflect upon the recent revision of United Kingdom legislation in respect of disability (and 'equalities'), which I discuss in a *coda* to this thesis. Whilst the university in this study had anticipated many of the requirements of the new legislation,[148] given the novelty of these legislative changes

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[148] Two of my respondents were actively involved in this process

(introduced in 2010), it is perhaps too early to provide a definitive commentary that would be meaningful in respect of the findings of this study.

My location, as insider (chapter six) presented challenges in respect of the conduct of this research, and I discuss thoroughly my considerations in this regard in chapter six of this thesis, including the particular attention I afforded to ethical considerations. Some further comments are perhaps deserved, however. I could not, however, as per 'traditional' or orthodox ethnographic conventions might suggest, embed myself totally within the field of enquiry. When undertaking this fieldwork, I was negotiating and maintaining contact with administrators and their workplaces, accommodating these around both my existing workplace responsibilities and those of the administrators themselves. Whether a researcher operating in a 'complete' and 'immersive' manner would have made different conclusions, I cannot ascertain; it would however be a *different* account, informed by alternate interpretations and readings of the theoretical material. However, according with a Foucauldian standpoint, I do not assign 'insider' and 'outsider' accounts different statuses; both are (or would be) as 'truthful' as each other. This thesis is, however, *my* account, supported by my primary location within the specific location of enquiry, and utilising the theoretical tools which I have described fully elsewhere.

IMPLICATIONS FOR WORKPLACE POLICY AND PRACTICE

My interpretation suggest that administrators are sometimes confused, and sometimes vexed, regarding the performance (or not) of 'pejorative' talk, particularly in a context where the possession of 'the correct attitude' in respect of people with disabilities is valued. However, whether or not this 'problem' requires a 'policy solution' is, in the context of this research, perhaps a moot point: I argued that utterances and their identification as 'pejorative' or not, are constituted within discourse, and whilst I do not endorse the use of words about disability that might be understood to cause harm in their utterance, my findings in this research offer little to suggest that formal responses, for instance 'training', would be helpful. Rather, staff 'training' might be more concerned with procedural and communicative aspects of the administrator's role, particularly those concerned with their role in supporting individuals to navigate the sometimes arcane disability 'support' systems.

Second, and notwithstanding the above, my interpretation suggests that those impairments and disabilities that reside at the 'margins' of categorical 'groupings' (or,

indeed, appear to be located outside them completely) are problematic for administrators. Specifically, those impairments or disabilities that are experienced as 'variable' in expression (for instance, those that might attract a classification of 'mental illness', as I described in chapter ten) or those that are subject to misrecognition or 'failed categorisation' (likewise, chapter ten) serve to question the efficacy and purposefulness of the classification systems. Administrative systems that are less orientated towards the 'definitive' or 'expert' classification of impairments and disabilities, and that are more sensitive to temporal or life-affecting experiences may be more apposite. Again, however, this is not a policy 'recommendation'; rather, an appeal for those concerned with 'disability assessment' to do so with critical attention: classification systems, by definition, 'include' and 'exclude', and it is the nature of such inclusions/exclusions that I feel are deserving of scrutiny.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Several issues arose during my interviews with respondents that offer tantalising departure points for future enquiry; of these, I select two for consideration in respect of further enquiry. First, the notion of social class and 'social capital' was presented by a number of respondents as an 'explanation' or 'justification' for their individual practices. Further study is perhaps indicated that considers the relationship between social class, social capital, student achievement and the governance and practice of 'disability work' in the Higher Education context, particularly in respect of how the 'truths' of such experiences are interpreted and applied by university workers. Such an enquiry would be particularly resonant in the context of major revisions to higher education funding (including the payment of tuition fees) that are currently (2012) being introduced to universities in England. Second, public debate on the 'acceptable' or 'unacceptable' use of language continues to be in ascendancy; in respect of disability, for instance, my fieldwork reflected broader public discussion about the nature of 'acceptable' or 'unacceptable' language in the public sphere, and particularly in the workplace. In respect of disability (and perhaps most specifically in respect of mental health or well-being), further research is deserved.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Motivating me throughout the writing of this thesis had been the ambition not to produce a work that resided neatly within the developing discipline of 'disability studies'. Instead, I aimed to deploy anthropological theory and method in order to

examine the 'everyday' circumstances that occurred at the 'margins' of this discipline, and in doing so locate 'alternative subjects' for whom the notion of 'disability' might have also been a concern. In doing this, I identified the administrative workers who, whilst not identifying themselves explicitly as 'disability workers', were nonetheless engaged thoroughly with 'disability-related work'. Nor did I aim to reject entirely the contemporary inclination for disability-related research that is characterised by some as 'emancipatory'; I do however recognise that within this thesis I have not afforded this standpoint an elevated position within my enquiry: however, it was not my aim to do so. However, my selection of a group for enquiry for whom 'disability' was not, ostensibly at least, a political and 'representational' concern has enabled me to unpack and reveal a tapestry of discourses and circumstances, all of which may to a greater or lesser extent impress upon the 'lived experience' of disability for whom it *is* a personal concern.

Total word count: 110, 410.

CODA: THE EQUALITY ACT 2010

The Equality Act (2010) is the most recent iteration of British statute relating to equality and discrimination, and it incorporates and attempts to consolidate and harmonize a number of earlier pieces of equality and anti-discrimination legislation.[149] In short, the Act names nine 'protected characteristics', namely age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. In addition, it incorporates a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which outlines both general and specific responsibilities for Public Sector organisations in respect of equalities and anti-discrimination. In this coda to the thesis, I outline the principal changes enacted within the Equality Act, discuss the abandoned socio-economic duty, and reflect on the implications of this legislation in respect of the findings of my thesis.

Following the report *Equality: A new framework* (Hepple et al 2000)[150], an independent examination of British equality legislation conducted immediately following the election of the Labour government in 1997 recommended the installation of a unified equality legislation, the creation of a single commission for equality issues, an extension of duties within both public and private sector and, perhaps most significantly, transformational (positive) duties for public sector organisations (Hepple et al 2000; Hepple 2010). These recommendations were based on both formal legal review and consultation with stakeholders,[151] and were outlined in response to a perception that the existing equality and anti-discrimination legislation were outdated. Innovations in European Union (EU) legislation, devolution within the United Kingdom, the recent (1998) introduction of the *Human Rights Act* (HRA) and, not least, longer-term changes in the labour market and related changes in social and employment practices all served

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[149] Specifically these were the Equal Pay Act (1970); the Sex Discrimination Act (1975); the Race Relations Act (1976); the Disability Discrimination Act (1995); the Employment Equality Regulations (2003, 2006), and the Equality Acts (2006, 7); see EHRC (2011)

[150] Also styled as 'The Hepple Review', or by Hepple himself as 'The Cambridge Review'. This report was 'independent' from Government, and received funding from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Nuffield Foundation. It combined legal review with stakeholder consultation.

[151] For a detailed narrative of the development of a single equality act by one of its chief protagonists, see Hepple et al (2000); for a more detailed summary including discussion of the characteristics other than disability, see Harrington (2010), Hepple (2010).

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to problematize existing legislation, including the *Disability Discrimination Act* (DDA) of 1995 (revised 2005).

Subsequently, the establishment of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) followed in 2007, as indicated by an earlier iteration of the equality legislation (the Equality Act 2006). This unified commission replaced the existing Disability Rights Commission (DRC), the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), with the aim of integrating the monitoring and enforcing equalities law, shaping public policy in respect of equalities, and promoting good practice within public, private and voluntary organisations (EHRC 2011). The *Equality Bill* was finally presented to the United Kingdom Parliament in 2009, [152] and was granted Royal Assent in 2010, immediately prior to the dissolving of Parliament and the General Election of May 2010. Following the election, and the installation of a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government, the legislation came into force in respect of most of its proposed sections in October 2010; notably however, a duty to consider socio-economic inequalities was removed by the incoming administration (Home Office 2010; Fredman 2011); I consider this below.

The Public Sector Equality Duty
The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in England [153] formed a part of the Equality Act (2010), and came into operation in April 2011 (EHRC 2011). The PSED combined and widened the provision of the existing equality duties to all the aforementioned protected characteristics; prior to its introduction, only race, disability and gender equality had specific duties attached to them. The PSED contains three 'general equality' duties, namely to eliminate discrimination and harassment, 'advance equality of opportunity', and to 'foster good relations' in respect of the eight of the nine aforementioned protected characteristics; for marriage and civil partnership, only the first of these duties applies (EHRC 2011). The PSED applies to public sector organisations[154] and only to private sector organisations where they may have a specific

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[152] Northern Ireland has its own equalities provision, reflecting particular features of its devolved status, and I do not discuss this here. The *Equality Act* as discussed here in general only applies to Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland), and hence includes the location of the research in this thesis.

[153] The devolved government in Scotland and the National Assembly of Wales have their own implementation details and timescales in respect of the PSED.

[154] Although there are exceptions, for instance, in relation to age discrimination and school provision, and the House of Commons and the Security Services.

role in delivery of a public service. The PSED outlines specific duties which, in short, include the requirement for public sector organisations to publish equality information sufficient to demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Act (including effects of policies and data analysis) and the requirement for them to prepare and publish policy objectives.

The abandoned socio-economic duty

The Equality Act (2010, part 1), as originally enacted, contained a public sector duty regarding socio-economic inequalities. This proposed legislation was arguably controversial as it embedded a clear ideological aspiration within the proposed legislation, namely to reduce socio-economic inequality by placing a duty on public bodies to consider such matters when developing policy and allocating resources; that is, socio-economic inequalities were to be legislated for in a manner consistent with the other equality issues identified within the Equality Act. The socio-economic duty was suspended by the nascent Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government in late 2010; the Conservative Party had, in opposition, challenged the socio-economic duty proposal on the grounds that socio-economic inequality differed from other modes of discrimination and hence would be requiring of different solutions (and not necessarily primary legislation) (Hepple 2010; Fredman 2011; Home Office 2010). The words of the Minister for Women and Equalities, Theresa May, perhaps summarise neatly the political sentiment underlying the withdrawal of the social inequality duty:

> [I]n recent years, equality has become a dirty word because it meant something different. It came to be associated with the worst forms of pointless political correctness and social engineering ... I want us to move away from the identity politics of the past where government thought it knew all about you because you ticked a box on a form or fitted into a certain category (Home Office 2010) [155]

It is perhaps premature to consider scholarly responses to the withdrawal of the social inequality duty, although there have been some early expressions of disappointment and criticism, given the purported links between those inequalities defined in respect of protected characteristics and the experience of inequality as considered from a socio-economic standpoint (National Equality Panel 2010; Fredman 2011). Ongoing changes (2011) in the funding arrangements for Higher Education, including revised tuition fee arrangements (and, for many programmes of study, significantly uplifts in this regard), may significantly disadvantage and deter some potential students, particularly those

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[155] Speech by Theresa May, 17th November 2010

from families and communities already experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. Given that some people with disabilities, particularly those relating to mental disability, already experience difficulties gaining access to the labour and education markets (National Equality Panel 2010), then the current deleterious national and international economic context may serve to exacerbate these disadvantages and inequalities.

The confluence of public and private sector financial constraints combined with the insistent insertion of consumerism into the public sector (including Higher Education) may serve to energize a 'perfect storm' whereby those already experiencing relative socio-economic advantage may be able to accumulate further benefits from the public sector. For instance, the ongoing reorientation of public sector education to reflect a 'consumerist' sensibility may further disadvantage those who do not possess (or are unable or unwilling to articulate) a 'middle-class' consumer ethic/authority when interacting with these services (see Riddell and Watson 2011); this may further disadvantage those with disabilities, particularly those from challenging socio-economic contexts. Given that social class is understood to be a significant factor in the 'experience' of disability, and that concern for 'identity', not socio-economic status, has characterised the 'disability movement' (see, for instance, Shakespeare 2006), then the abandonment of the socio-economic duty perhaps represents a missed opportunity to reconcile social class and socio-economic inequality within the disability 'movement'.

Other implications

The installation of revised systems for disability 'governance' in the University which emphasise individual 'responsibility' in respect of 'attitudinal' characteristics may be considered admirable in terms of 'creating' an environment that is responsive to people with disabilities. However, the limited address of structural (socio-economic) inequalities, particularly following the abandonment of the socio-economic duty, may render such innovations less significant. Whilst the amelioration of 'disabling barriers' that are attitudinal in character may aid the recruitment and progression of students with disabilities (and, ironically, may also concord with a 'listening and serving' consumerist ethic), little account can yet be made for the actions of universities in respect of their role in the amelioration of socio-economic inequality, particularly in the present economic environment.

Whilst the Equality Act furthers movement away from notions of formal equality (individual justice, individual concerns) towards a future of comprehensive and

transformational equality (Hepple 2010), whereby the amelioration of inequalities is 'universalised' and no longer locked-into narrow classifications of 'loss' or 'deficit', my research suggests that expert discourses on disability continue to assemble and circulate within the university context. These incite the installation of 'parallel', 'alternative' (and even ritualised) arrangements for students with disabilities which are embedded within the vernacular and practice of administration; incongruously, some of these practices are explained or justified in terms of the nascent legislation. Hence whilst the recent legislation extends and refreshes the prospect for 'equality' in practice, the experience of 'equality', its legitimate subjects and professional attendees remain, I argue, 'written into' the circulation of expert and organisational discourse.

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APPENDIX 1: PEOPLE AND PLACES

THE RESPONDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THIS RESEARCH

To protect respondents, pseudonyms have been applied, the nature of some of their roles has been changed, and details redacted (see chapter six). These biographies are representative of their roles at the time fieldwork was undertaken. Some respondents now occupy different roles, whilst others have secured employment elsewhere.

Morag (MB) Morag works as an office manager, supporting a larger number of junior administrators. She has broad experience of administration within this organisation.

Rena (RL) Rena is a senior administrator whose role involves supporting 'junior' administrative staff in their coordination of support for students with disabilities.

Andrea (AR) Andrea is employed as a senior administrator, and her responsibilities include the staff recruitment and enacting legislation associated with employment.

Veronica (VO) Veronica's role is to provide counselling support to those with disability concerns. She is particularly concerned with 'employability'.

Mark (MG) Mark was a member of a university staff disability group at the time of my fieldwork. Employed on an academic grade, he helps devise disability policy.

Kirsteen (KP) Kirsteen works to deliver administrative and pedagogic services to students already identified by the University as having eligibility for 'support'.

Winifred (WX) Winifred is a senior administrator who supports the implementation and evaluation of the University's disability and equalities strategy.

Jackson (JB) Jackson is a junior administrator who undertakes a wide variety of administrative tasks for specific academic programmes.

Janice (JP) Janice's role involves 'assessment' administration (processing examination and essay scripts) and offering information and advice to visiting students.

Stefan (SP) Stefan, like Janice, is also a junior administrator. Both liaise with academic and learning support teams in respect of students with disabilities.

Simon (SR) As an office supervisor, Simon has responsibilities including staff training and development, and the coordination of 'health' screening for NHS students.

Paolo (PT) Paolo is a faculty manager with long service in a number of universities. He provided insight into the 'history' of bureaucratic and legislative changes.

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THE PLACES VISITED DURING THIS STUDY

These were the primary research locations.

Place	Geographical location	Access
Programmes office(s)	Campus	Open
Human resources	Central	By appointment
Disability/learning support	Central	Open/ by appointment
Disability support service	External	Open/ by appointment
Employment centre	External	Open/ by appointment
Training centres(s)	Central/Campus	By appointment
Staff offices / corridors	Various	Open

APPENDIX 2: TEXTS AND DOCUMENTS

ORGANISATIONAL TEXTS AND DOCUMENTS (INCLUDING ELECTRONIC)

Name	Type	Description
Disability disclosure form	PDF document	Form completed by students wishing to disclose a disability to the University
Disability Support Framework	PDF document	Staff document outlining roles and responsibilities for all staff
Disclosure Authorisation Form/Section B	PDF document	Form completed by a student who does not wish to 'formally declare' a disability to the University
Disclosure Guidelines for staff	PDF document	Staff guidelines outlining specific responsibilities, particularly for administrators
Guidance for students	Webpage/HTML	Website for University applicants
Guidelines for inclusive communication	PDF document	Staff training and policy guidelines regarding verbal and written communication
How do I find out if I am dyslexic?	Student leaflet (also HTML)	Leaflet providing information about dyslexia and the assessment process
Staff guidelines: Admissions Processes and Procedures	Webpage/HTML	Staff training and policy guidelines outlining specific roles and responsibilities
Supporting disabled students	Webpage/HTML (also printed brochure)	Webpage providing information about University policy and support services

University Statement of Service Standards	PDF document	Outlines generic benchmark standards that the University aims to achieve in respect of disability
Prospective students	Webpage/HTML	Website for University applicants

TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS

Name	Description
Andrea	Transcribed interview with a senior administrator
Jackson	Transcribed interview with a junior administrator
Janice	Transcribed interview with a junior administrator
Paolo	Transcribed interview with an academic
Stefan	Transcribed interview with a junior administrator
Simon	Transcribed interview with a senior administrator
Kirsteen	Transcribed interview with a senior administrator
Morag	Transcribed interview with a senior administrator
Mark	Transcribed interview with an academic
Rena	Transcribed interview with a senior administrator
Veronica	Transcribed interview with a senior administrator
Winifred	Transcribed interview with a senior administrator

FIELDNOTES

The following field note documents were used when preparing my data analysis. In addition, transcribed interviews also contained field/research notes.

Type	Description
Text document	Notes on an academic-administrator staff meeting
Text document	Notes of visits to external employment agency
Text document	Notes of visits to external support agency
Text document	Notes of administration meetings
Text document	Academic staff meeting
Text document	Composite of e-mail correspondences
Text document	Notes on disability training workshops
Text document	Composite of training coordinator e-mails
Text document	Further field notes on accessing an interview

APPENDIX 3: DATA PROCESSING AND CODING

All in-depth and pre-arranged interviews were audio-recorded, with the respondents' consent, onto a portable electronic device, and later transferred into a password-secured electronic archive. My transcription (translation of recorded interviews into verbatim text) afforded a first stage apprehension of the interview data, data that I could annotate, re-read and re-annotate whilst (temporally) still 'close' to the point at which it was collected. During transcription, I made notes throughout, either as analytical memoranda (appended to field notes), or within the text itself.

For interviews, a standard template modified from Silverman (2005, p376) was used to generate the transcript. Recorded interviews were re-played using a proprietary software package (NCH Express Scribe™); this simplified the inevitable 'stop', 'start' and 'pause-rewind' requirements of close audio transcription and provided a precise timing function. The time of each conversational 'turn' was also recorded, and longer pieces of unbroken speech also divided into further timing points for cross-referencing purposes.

I initially adhered rigidly to a formal transcription protocol (see Silverman 2001, p303), although as the research progressed I found that some features of the protocol (for example the precise timing of very short pauses) became unnecessary during subsequent analyses; conversely, I began to include stylistic features of my own (for instance, transcription commentary in brackets) that I found more useful for my own analytic approach. This is illustrated below.

Data were imported into a proprietary computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) package (QSR Nvivo™). This enabled a more structured approach to data management, including the use of sub-folders in which data and associated text could be searched and retrieved. For security and ease of editing, text documents were initially written Microsoft Word; these were later copied into the Nvivo package. Audio interviews were stored separately in a compressed data format (MP3).

The Nvivo software package permitted my coding of specific words, sentences and paragraphs. The Nvivo software package imposed a structured scheme in terms of data management (named 'internals', 'externals', 'memos', and so forth); this necessitated intensive cross-referencing between data extracts. The software also served to maintain a rudimentary audit trail of my data analysis, albeit one that I felt necessary to use in parallel with conventional word-processing software.

I progressed through various coding schemes. My first two schemes, following Geertz (1993) and Spradley (1979) were soon abandoned, when I realised that I was attempting to 'enforce' the application of a fixed analytical scheme. A third attempt was undertaken, which produced a voluminous number of codes (the Nvivo software refers to these as *nodes*) that proved unmanageable when undertaking analysis: I had adopted a strategy that attempted to 'over saturate' the transcribed text with coding, rather than making more cautious selections.

Finally, a collection of codes were formulated that, although still numerous, more adequately accounted for both the data itself and the analytical direction that I had taken. The coding categories used within the previous approach introduced some concepts that invited me to 'over saturate' the transcribed text with 'early concepts', rather than making more cautious selections from a wider selection of more subtle ideas raised within the data.

EXAMPLE CODES

Below are illustrated a typical selection of codes as utilised in this research. The description column acted as an *aide-mémoire* so I might be reminded of the particular use I was making of a code. The sources/references statistics indicate the number of sources containing a coded reference and the frequency of cross-referencing actualised.

Name	Description	Sources	References
Being complicit	Being complicit with a particular discourse on disability because of a law, regulation etc. League tables!	6	29
Mental health experiences	Contact with or characterisation of a mental health issue	6	23
Explicating a familiar phrase	Example of when an oft-used phrase or concept from this context is unpacked a little more, perhaps in response to futher probing	5	10

'Doing' or problematizing non-judgemental talk or concordance	Qualifies a particular moral or ethical position on disability, even when not asked. This suggests evidence of concordance with a particular discourse 'on' disablement	5	31
Careful around disability language	Are respondents 'careful' about how they deploy certain phrases or language around disability?	5	14
Political or moral viewpoint (including labelling, emancipation)	Where respondents frame their response within an identified political or moral standpoint	4	14
Not sure if this should be a disability or not	Expresses uncertainty around whether something should be categorised as a disability	3	5
Categorising disabilities in policy	How are disabilities captured by a policy, i.e. how are they categorised?	3	9

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND TYPICAL QUESTIONS

This is the schedule I used when conducting interviews with respondents. This contained key themes that were generic in character and subject to later variation within the interviews. These themes translated into 'ideal' questions for my interview schedule. 'Real-life' questions, as asked in a particular interview, are then illustrated.

KEY THEMES

1. Defining and classifying disability

2. Work and work activities

3. Knowledge of policies and law relating to disability

4. Language use about disability

EXAMPLES OF 'IDEAL' QUESTIONS THAT I DERIVED FROM THE KEY THEMES

1. What does the word disability mean to you?

2. How do you define or ascertain disability?

3. What to you characterise as a disability?

4. From where do you derive your knowledge about disability?

5. Have you received any additional training?

6. What experiences do you have of disability?

7. Can you describe the language you use 'around' disability?

8. What constitutes 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' language use?

9. Can you tell me something about your work in general?

10. Who do you work with?

11. Can you describe a typical working day?

12. Can you tell me something about your disability-related work?

13. Can you tell me something about the policies or laws that relate to disability?

14. Can you tell me a disability-related work story?

QUESTIONS AS THEY WERE ASKED IN AN INTERVIEW

1. What does the word disability mean to you?

2. When do you use the word 'disability'?

3. How do you use it [disability]?

4. When do you use the word [disability] in the workplace?

5. Would you say that you come across disability at all in your role?

6. Have you worked with someone with a disability?

7. Is disability something that ever comes up in conversation at work?

8. How you categorize or define or characterize disability?

9. What sources of information or knowledge do you use?

10. How has the language changed [over time]?

11. What is the [political] climate that has changed?

12. What about things like TV or anything else in the media?

13. Do you think you're speaking or using the 'correct' language?

14. Have you ever heard language which you thought at the time to be unacceptable?

APPENDIX 5: EXAMPLE TRANSCRIPT AND FIELD NOTE EXTRACT

This is a short extract from an interview. For all my interviews, I developed a standard pro-forma. This details basic information (time, date, respondent, etc.), a summary of the transcription format (adapted from Silverman 2001, p303), some brief research field notes' (later appended separately into Nvivo) and the interview transcript itself. Additional notes (here in italics, original in coloured text) were appended during transcription to serve as an *aide-mémoire* when returning to the data at a later stage.

Transcription format

… (full stops)	Indicates a short pause in speech (0-1 seconds)
, (comma)	Indicates a natural sentence punctuation as spoken
[laugh],[cough]	Indicates some other interruption/embellishment to speech
CAPITALS	Indicates a significant rise in volume on single word
[… […	Indicates speech overlapping
→ *I did not ask...*	Additional notes made during transcription
04:03 MB	Minutes: seconds into interview; speaker's initials

25:54	NC	Can I just come back to a couple of things? Erm, there's so much here to come back to! Erm, there's three expressions you've just used
	NC	'Climate change'
26:07	MB	[Mmm
	NC	Disability being more 'Out there'
26:11	MB	[Mmm
	NC	And 'less closed off'
	MB	[Hmm
26:14	NC	OK, can you tell me about those choices of words that you've used there? What climate has changed? What is the climate that has changed?

26:24	MB	I think I mean … we're becoming more … I think it's because … people with disabilities … are prepared to talk more about what having a disability means to them…And … how… I think how we … perceive having a disability cos I suppose disability – as I said before – it used to be seen as erm meaning that you couldn't partake or enjoy the standard of life or take part in what you want to do…And now we have in sport and other areas of life we have people who…with a disability…who will actually talk about it more and I think that has enabled other people to talk about their experiences and then for people without disabilities to glean more of an understanding of what it is like to have a disability
27:45	NC	Why do you think they have felt more able to do that?
28:00	MB	…I think that because … the - it's an old-fashioned word – the stigma's not like it used to be, like there used to be with lots of things in the 50s and the 60s you know…people are more accepting, more understanding … I would hope less judgemental
28:26	NC	Generally, or in relation to disability?
	MB	I think generally, I mean things that would have been a stigma twenty years ago, ten-fifteen years ago – I'm talking for me personally – erm, I don't judge and I think more people are less judgemental, more accepting of people as individuals
28:51	NC	'Out there'.. that was a really interesting turn of phrase that you used…you said that there's more erm disability's more 'out there' than it used to be, less closed off

29:08	MB	Yeh because I think that it used to be something that was kept hushed because you didn't speak about it … if you had a disability you would keep it within the family, you'd keep it as closed as you could …protection, it was probably protection…a way of protecting that person and I think as people have come to understand disabilities more. And I suppose that the professionals have played a big part in this and I also think – as I said before – you've got the role models these days are personalities and I think if they can do it, it can impact on us ordinary mortals. But I also think that communication…I mean the explosion in communication erm … you can access information on anything that you want. And OK, so some of those are a bit … you shouldn't touch them, you know on the internet, there's a lot of good information if you want to find out… so people's understanding, there's a widening understanding

SAMPLE EXTRACTS FROM FIELD NOTES

"A description of the second floor"

[...] Access to this floor is gained through the rear of the first floor office. An electronic access door ensures that this area can only be accessed by staff, and its entrance (along a corridor that connects to the rear of the main floor space) is hidden from the direct view of visitors. Climbing a set of stairs, I pass a small 'kitchen' area (sink, kettle, refrigerator), then walk along a poorly-lit corridor that appears to transverse the entire length of the uppermost floor. The 'staff canteen' area, located to the right, is where I conduct an interview and, at the time of my visit, no other staff members are using this space. Its description as the 'staff canteen' area is perhaps generous: a large room containing simple tables, plastic chairs and 'service area' where prepared food might be displayed, although this appears to be no longer in use. The dissimilarity between this floor and the lower floors is striking: there are no signs, carpets or corporate décor, no computer equipment or 'administrative' collateral, and these areas appear slightly untidy and perhaps deserving of renovation. This top floor constitutes a 'third space'

whereby only access to or from this area is permitted for staff, and within which free 'talk' and movement are permitted [...]

"A conversation with the employment advisor"

[...] My (recorded) interview with Veronica is conducted in this space. On the day of our interview, Veronica has been 'verbally threatened' by a 'customer' during a telephone call. Following this, a member of the junior administrative staff has suggested that Veronica vacate her normal desk area whilst the nature of the 'threat' is more fully ascertained. Our discussion on this occasion lasts nearly ninety minutes, and during this time we are intermittently diverted by one of her junior peers wishing to "update" Veronica in respect of the threats that have been made and the actions that had been undertaken to prevent the individual concerned from meeting directly with her. Although there appears to be no immediate physical threat to Veronica (the individual making the threat would be unable to access this floor without staff intervention), the junior administrator appears concerned for Veronica's safety [...]

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