

Negotiating Youth Deviance and Parenting: Exploring the Effects of Social Class in Professional Interactions

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ABSTRACT

Recently, socially decontextualised understandings of youth crime as triggered by individual and familial risk factors have anchored themselves in criminological theory and the UK's youth justice practice. At the same time, research has exposed classed selection effects of institutions that propel behaviourally challenging young people and their parents into the system not only based on the seriousness of their cases, but also according to the family's reputation and their social disadvantage. As such effects remain largely unexplored, this thesis aims to analyse the processes behind agency contact, and examine how they could be directing individuals of diverse social locations on different pathways. It employs participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups to gather the views of young people, their parents, and practitioners on whether, how and why interactions between professionals and their clients might differ according to social class and with what consequences. Drawing mainly on Bourdieu's critical sociology, Emerson's work on negotiated trouble, Sayer's moral understanding of class, and Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model to make sense of the data, the thesis finds that a family's social location, institutional discourses, and organisational rules within youth justice and children's services all affect the views of practitioners and how they respond to children's conduct and parents' childrearing.

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INRODUCTION

In criminology, there has long been an interest in the impact of the family on the development of children's troubling behaviour. Although some authors have focused on the ways in which unstable familial life and inappropriate parenting lead to youth deviance (for example, see Wilson and Herrnstein 1985: 212-265; Farrington 2003), others have acknowledged that delinquency can occur in both broken homes and intact households (for example, see Hirschi 1995: 136). Despite the nuanced views on the correlations between parenting and young people's challenging conduct, Condry (2007: 4) has stressed that contemporary discourses on crime and the family often still concentrate predominantly on the individual offender and their parents, while underestimating the structural factors that influence their everyday lives, perceptions and actions.

In their General Theory of Crime, Gottfredson and Hirschi have exposed the child's self-control as the most crucial factor in minimising their propensity for delinquency. According to Gottfredson and Hirschi, stable childrearing is pivotal for the development of self-regulation since the inability of a young person to delay gratification — and a consequent increased probability that they will become an offender — is, to a great extent, triggered by parental failure to monitor the child, notice their inappropriate behaviour, and prevent it (Gottfredson and Hirschi 1990: 97). However, as the General Theory of Crime placed parenting centre stage and linked it to antisocial behaviour, it has been criticised widely (for example, see Simmons, Simmons and Hancock 2011: 180-191) for closing the window of opportunity for young people around the age of 10 and denying them the ability to change before they have even reached adolescence.

Furthermore, developmental criminologists have recognised the family as one of the most important risk factors for or protective factors against offending behaviour. More specifically, they have identified poor parenting in early childhood as a strong predictor of youth delinquency alongside family breakdown and parents' criminal history. However, while acknowledging the importance of parental care for the child's appropriate behaviour, Farrington (2002) has also concluded that the precise ways in which poor childrearing triggers delinquency remain unclear. In addition, he has argued that people are also affected by environmental factors, so parenting and crime should not be studied in a vacuum. According to Farrington, the family's social circumstances — as well as their possible impact on parenting styles and children's misbehavior — should therefore always be taken into account when examining the links between childrearing and youth crime (Farrington 2002: 144-148).

In line with this approach, some criminologists have explored the mechanisms through which social disadvantage impacts upon family life and parenting to trigger offending in children. In their age-graded theory of informal social control, Sampson and Laub (1993: 19-20) have hypothesised that the absence of parental supervision predicts the onset of juvenile delinquency, but is, at the same time, embedded in structural hardship and therefore shaped by it. Moreover, in his interactional theory of crime, Terence P. Thornberry has argued that unidirectional causality cannot explain juvenile delinquency, as risk factors for crime are reciprocal. Weakened bonds with conventional values, family and schools, which are believed to lead to offending behaviour, are thus always also influenced by social class (Thornberry 1987).

Some macro theories have addressed structural factors of offending by

exploring the relationship between crime and economic conditions in light of class struggles. Back in 1916, Bonger used a Marxist approach to argue that the means of production are concentrated in the hands of elites due to the capitalist division of labour, which makes the disadvantaged more inclined to criminality (Bonger 2003: 60). In addition, Merton (1938: 678-682) drew upon Durkheim's concept of anomie to explain criminal behaviour. Based on his observation of American culture, he concluded that monetary success is a universal goal, but society fails to acknowledge that the legitimate means to achieve this aim are unequally allocated, which makes the deprived more likely to adapt through crime (Merton 1938).

However, despite the impact of socially more conscious developmental theories as well as the challenges of macro- and other critical criminological perspectives, Gillies (2005b) has argued that the uneven distribution of capital and poverty have remained downplayed in UK's political arena. According to Hollingsworth (2007; see also Burney and Gelsthorpe 2008), insufficient parenting has been decontextualised in policy documents and professional discourses on crime and the family as a consequence. Furthermore, Goldson and Jamieson have stressed that bad parenting is often still perceived as an independent causal risk factor of youth deviance and is symbolically linked to disadvantaged households, whereby families' material reality tends to be sidelined (Goldson and Jamieson 2002: 85). In addition, McAra and McVie (2012a) have argued that simplified versions of developmental and life-course criminology, which are less conscious about causation, seem to have anchored themselves in Britain's youth justice practice.

According to McAra and McVie, critical criminology was unable to reduce the appeal that developmental accounts of crime had for politicians and practitioners

in the UK. Specifically, both had reasons to accept that delinquency is rooted in faulty upbringing and risks of early childhood, so it can be easily predicted and prevented. With calls for punitive responses, politicians were seen to be 'doing something' about youth crime in a seemingly neutral way, by hiding behind the 'risk-factor prevention paradigm' (McAra and McVie 2012a: 540). Practitioners, on the other hand, were able to make sense of the new role that they had in addressing young people's troubling behaviour through early intervention into the lives of children 'at risk' of offending and their families (McAra and McVie 2012a: 540)

However, although politically influential and practically compelling, approaches that focus predominantly on identifying risk factors related to juvenile delinquency are believed to have several drawbacks. Firstly, Gillies (2000) has exposed that risk-factor analysis retrospectively reveals the association between child delinquency and parenting, but does not sufficiently explain the causal link between them. In addition, it takes socioeconomic factors into account when controlling for their effects statistically, but does not consider the lived experiences of being disadvantaged or how they impact upon upbringing (Gillies 2000: 216-217). Furthermore, Skardhamar (2009: 875) has argued that intervening early based on identified or potential risks could help young people with their immediate concerns, but it is harder to advocate for interventions that aim to prevent troubled children from becoming criminals and perceives them as such before they have actually offended.

Moreover, McAra and McVie have exposed that childhood antisocial behaviour is a strong predictor of adult offending, but, at the same time, most deviant youths desist from crime before maturity and it is hard to prospectively predict which ones would continue on their offending pathways (McAra and McVie

2012a: 541). Therefore, specialist programmes designed solely based on risk factors could be unattuned to the needs of most young people that enter the youth justice system, but cease to offend before adulthood (McAra and McVie 2007: 317).

Lastly and most importantly for the topic of this thesis, a simplified developmental attempt to understand youth crime focuses on individual and familial risk factors, but disregards the possible 'selection effects' of institutions that deal with behaviourally challenging young people before and after they have offended (McAra and McVie 2007: 317). It thus seems reasonable to follow McAra & McVie's (2012a: 532) recommendation that criminologists should use alternative theoretical and methodological approaches to explore the functioning of — as well as the professional discourses and interactions within — agencies that help troubling youths and their parents, and this has been a key purpose of my study.

This suggestion seems especially topical in the UK context since the Edinburgh Study of youth transitions to crime has shown that, even in the Scottish welfare-oriented juvenile justice system, young people's offending pathways begin before their contact with law enforcement officials, namely with labelling practices in schools and other agencies (McAra and McVie 2012b: 357).[1] Moreover, an ongoing 'filtering process' (McAra and McVie 2007: 337) continuously propels the same young people into the youth justice system, whereby this does not necessarily depend on the seriousness of their offenses, but, rather, on prior agency contact *per se* and conditions that they cannot control, including their family reputation and social disadvantage (McAra and McVie 2007: 337-388).[2]

[1] For an insight into similar experiences of young people with the range of interventions in the youth justice system of Northern Ireland, see McAlister and Carr 2014.

[2] For similar findings in the justice system of Ireland, see also Corr 2014.

As there is still a dearth of criminological research on the precise mechanisms behind the classed outcomes of agency contact, my overarching aim in this dissertation is to explore whether, how, and why interactions between professionals, parents and young people might differ according to social class. I also intend to explore if classed discrepancies in the relationships between practitioners and the families that they work with within early intervention, welfare, law enforcement and medical agencies might direct young people of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds on different trajectories.

Drawing upon resources in critical sociology and qualitative research conducted in a county in Middle England, I argue that that a family's social location, institutional discourses, and organisational rules all affect the views of practitioners and the ways in which they respond to children's conduct and parents' childrearing. I suggest that prospective research should therefore acknowledge the implications of class-conditioned (mal)distribution and (mis)recognition on youth deviance and parenting as well as on the relationships between clients and the professionals that assist them across a web of services. Correspondingly, I propose that criminological theory and youth justice practice employ more nuanced concepts of justice, agency and human behaviour when conceptualising the links between youth deviance, parenting and social class, as well as when designing treatment.

Structure of the argument

The thesis begins by setting out the socioeconomic and political conditions, in which the interactions between behaviourally challenging young people, their parents and professionals are embedded. In Chapter 1, I show that structurally decontextualised developmental explanations of delinquency and a belief that crime is transmitted intergenerationally through childrearing have influenced family and

crime control policies since the 1970s. I criticise such understandings of youth deviance and parenting since they fail to acknowledge the material reality of families and sideline the selection effects of institutions according to class, although Donzelot's historical analysis has shown that a web of penal and welfare-oriented organisations has been policing disadvantaged young people and their parents since the 18th century.

I then draw on research findings in the fields of sociology, parenting studies, and criminology to demonstrate that class disparities are still (re)produced through institutional working practices and professional interactions within the current educational and youth justice setting, which could be affecting young people's life pathways. I conclude the chapter by offering alternative explanations of the intersections between delinquency, parenting and social class that better grasp implicit class bias when practitioners interact with families on the ground.

Contrary to criminological theories and policies that understand the links between youth troubling behaviour and childrearing as unaffected by agency contact and relational determinants of professional interactions, I use Chapter 2 to present a theoretical framework which is capable of conceptualising whether, how and why behaviourally challenging children and their parents are treated differently by practitioners according to their socioeconomic background. I argue that Bourdieu's notions of habitus and field as well as his relational understanding of class provide an appropriate foundation to analyse possible indirect discrimination based on social location when specialists within youth justice and children's services interact with their clients.

I combine Bourdieu's work with Sayer's moral understanding of class, and Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model to show that agents of diverse backgrounds

negotiate based on common norms of justice, but they draw from multiple worlds of worth at the same time, so clashes in the evaluation of a person behaviour can be distorted by classed associations and yield discriminatory results as a consequence. I use the final section of the chapter to outline the methodology of the study, specifying the research questions and methods that I utilised to answer them. I explain why I conducted research with three groups of participants across nine settings and present the principles that I followed during fieldwork and data analysis.

Drawing on participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups with young people (aged 10 to 22), their parents, and practitioners, the next three chapters explore how a child or their parent's social location on one side, and institutional rhetoric and organisational constraints on the other could impact the ways in which clients are perceived and responded to by professionals that help them with their difficulties in practice. In Chapter 3, I use Bourdieu's theoretical concepts to consider the ways in which gaps based on different types and amounts of capital are reflected in people's dispositions, perceptions and practices as well as in responses of others to these manifestations of social class in interactions on the ground. In this task, I examine whether class habitus guides people's viewpoints and actions across social fields, or, rather, both lay people and practitioners of different class belonging might, nevertheless, relate in some realms and agree on certain topics, but not others. I use the findings to disentangle whether the class-conditioned discrepancies and/or commonalities in individuals' cognitive and affective dispositions impact the ways in which young people's transgressions and their parents' childrearing difficulties are negotiated in professional interactions.

In Chapter 4, I outline the precise mechanisms behind classed distortions in professional responses to and decisions about young people's challenging behaviour and their parents' childrearing. I combine Bourdieu's notion of habitus with Sayer's moral understanding of class and Boltanski and Thévenot's model of (un)fairness to conceptualise how and why children and their parents may be unwittingly treated unfairly according to class in professional interactions despite practitioners' ability to deliberate about class-related issues. I explore the ways in which classing discrepancies in decision-making could be happening across institutions and at different levels, thereby possibly amounting to a wholly discriminatory framework for assessing young people's behaviour and directing them on distinct pathways. I also examine potential cases of positive discrimination based on the same grounds when specialists deal with families within an institutional setting.

Chapter 5 explores the organisational pressures that hinder the interacting parties' conscious deliberation about the impacts of the child and their parents' social location on behaviour, and on their treatment within the youth justice system, broadly defined. In Chapter 5, I argue that an institutional rhetoric focusing on risk and vulnerability may bolster a socially decontextualised perception of young people in trouble and their parents. I show that such professional viewpoints might also be reinforced by an economic conception of time that has invaded welfare-oriented services. As such, an understanding that time passes linearly and in the same way for families across class backgrounds is unattuned to the often zig-zag lifeworlds of disadvantaged children and their parents, thereby possibly impeding their gradual desistance processes when applied in interventions. I conclude by exposing some of the practical constraints that the interviewees expose as negatively affecting the reflexivity and flexibility of professionals helping families

on the ground.

In the conclusion, I summarise the key findings of my study. I suggest a view of behaviourally challenging young people and their families that better explains how their everyday lives and behaviour, as well as the ways in which professionals attend to their issues, are impacted by class-conditioned (mal)distribution and (mis)recognition. I defend principles of 'negotiated justice', 'relational agency' and 'autonomy in dependence' that might make it less likely for interventions with families to silently encourage unequal treatment of socioeconomically disadvantaged clients in practice. I outline the main limitations of my study and provide recommendations for further theoretical endeavours and practical research.

CHAPTER 1: YOUTH DEVIANCE, PARENTING AND SOCIAL CLASS

1.1. The impact of socioeconomic and political conditions on perceptions of youth deviance, parenting and social class

1.1.1. Youth deviance, parenting and social class in late modernity

Back in the 1970s, Emerson and Messinger introduced the 'micro-politics of trouble,' which suggested that personal problems are transformed into public matters or forms of deviance as a consequence of interactional processes and outside intervention (Emerson and Messinger 1977: 121, 128). I therefore explore if difficulties in children's transitions to adulthood and their parents' childrearing could be shaped differently by diverse responses of institutions and/or professionals on the ground according to a young person's social class. However, to understand why it is that, in these interactions, 'only *some* behaviours (...) [might] come to be defined (...) as deviant' (Muncie 2010: 145; emphasis in original), the cultural, economic and political conditions of a certain time — the 'macro-politics of trouble' (Emerson and Messinger 1977: 132) that initially 'frame' all problems — should also be considered.

During the last three decades of the 20th century, social life in Western liberal democracies was shaped by socio-political changes defined with the umbrella term 'late modernity' (Garland 2001: 77-78). Amongst these, the gradual decline of welfare and steadily rising crime rates after the 1970s led to a general distrust in the state as the exclusive provider of security. In the political arena, these shifts resulted in the rise of neoconservatism and neoliberalism that called for a restoration of tradition, 'family values' and individual responsibility on one hand, as well as free competition and a deregulated market on the other. Their combination enabled politicians to manipulate public anxiety and condemn the poor for wider

social problems that were beyond their control (Garland 2001: 93-94, 109-110, 96-99), which resulted in legitimising practices of 'governance-at-a-distance' (Garland 1996: 454; see also Rose 1996) in several realms of social life.

In childrearing, parents were responsibilised and expected to manage their children's 'crime risks' in a structurally decontextualised way that disregarded their resources and time as well as their cultural and social capital (Garland 2001: 124; see also Simon 2007: 178, 202). As a consequence, they were blamed for the antisocial behaviour of their children, so improving parenting practices *per se* became accepted as a reasonable solution to tackle juvenile delinquency (Burney and Gelsthorpe 2008). The UK's family and crime control policies of both the political Right and Left reflected these macro processes and revealed a 'class-specific concern with "socially excluded families"' (Gillies 2005a: 71). In addition, they signalled a belief that youth deviance was intrinsic to working class families and a consequence of their parenting styles.

According to Gillies, the rhetoric of the 'cycle of deprivation' in the 1970s suggested that poverty was passed down in disadvantaged families from generation to generation, so parents should improve their childrearing to reverse the trend (Gillies 2005a: 72-73). The New Right continued the discourse of the 'undeserving poor' in the 1980s and early 1990s although, as has been argued by Welshman, research rebutted the claims that children's misbehaviour stemmed from deficient childrearing, and showed that familial problems were transmitted intergenerationally due to synergic interactions between factors within families and those outside, rather than due to poor parenting only (Welshman 2006: 479).

After its rise in 1997, New Labour was determined to prevent child poverty by supporting parents to fulfil the obligations towards their children or by 're-

educating' them when necessary. However, Gillies has stressed that this mix of 'care and control' was imbued with middle class values, so social disadvantage played out as a personal failure, rather than a consequence of unequal distribution of wealth (Gillies 2005a: 76-82). In addition, the New Labour government adopted a raft of legislation that directly responsibilised parents for their children's behaviour. It offered them voluntary parenting programmes for their supposedly failed childrearing and 'named, shamed, fined and ultimately imprisoned' (Gillies 2005a: 83) them when they missed the opportunity to conform or prevent further transgressions. However, through such punitive responses, New Labour's goal to tackle 'parental deficit' was symbolically linked to their 'tough on crime' legislation (Gillies 2005a: 83-84), which resonated within youth justice through the pursuit to end the 'excuse culture' in responses to delinquency by tackling low-level deviance with antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) and by removing the provision of *doli incapax* (Gillies 2008b: 98; see also Morgan and Newburn 2012).

Nevertheless, Gillies (2008b) has argued that this legislation failed to acknowledge the material reality of working class families and perpetuated stereotypes by linking parental neglect to youth crime. In addition, others (Goldson and Jamieson 2002: 82, 117; see also Hollingsworth 2007: 204 and Koffman 2008: 130) have exposed that it pathologised and stigmatised a segment of population that was most in need and moved the discourse from welfare to that of social control. Despite extensive academic critique, however, the political trend of targeting disadvantaged families also continued in the new millennium and became especially recognisable after the 2011 riots in several boroughs in London and other

towns across the UK, and when the Coalition Government released its Troubled Families (TF) programme.[3]

In this programme, 'troubled families' were defined by, amongst other factors, parents' out-of-work benefits and children's antisocial behaviour (Great Britain, Department for Communities and Local Government 2012), so the seemingly new approach actually, once more, established an allusive connection between juvenile deviance and social disadvantage. In addition, Levitas (2014) has argued that the TF agenda was driven by a 'built-in financial incentive', as local authorities were promised a predetermined amount of money per identified family and an additional sum for the ones they would 'turn around', whereby the government was reluctant to reveal what criteria each locality adopted to reach the fixed number. Most importantly, as Levitas concluded, this resulted in labelling some families in need as 'dysfunctional' (Levitas 2014: 5).

In 2016, the outcomes of an independent study revealed that despite the TF programme's expense of £1bn, there was no 'consistent evidence that (...) [it] had any significant or systematic impact', measured according to its main objectives (child welfare and safeguarding; benefits; school attendance; antisocial behaviour; employment). Furthermore, a separate research group used a different methodological approach and data set to evaluate the programme, and confirmed the same findings (Great Britain, Department of Communities and Local Government 2016: 69; see also National Institute of Economic and Social Research 2016). Although the TF agenda did have some positive outcomes (e.g. improved confidence and optimism of the included families; increased satisfaction of practitioners working with the families on the ground), it failed to deliver any of the

[3] For a detailed critical account of the Troubled Families programme, see Crossley 2018.

changes that it promised (Great Britain, Department of Communities and Local Government 2016).[4]

Moreover, some academics have argued that the government deliberately misinterpreted the available data when the neutral evaluation of the programme was in progress and claimed that the TF scheme had an almost 100% success rate, which falsely legitimised its expansion and an additional spending of taxpayer money (Portes 2016; see also Crossley 2015). Most importantly and in parallel to Levitas (2014), Bunting, Webb and Shannon (2017) have exposed that the plan to 'turn around' the most 'troubled' of families was destined to fail precisely since it refused to acknowledge that some familial difficulties are entrenched and stem from disadvantage and poverty, rather than faulty attitudes and antisocial behaviour. As the government used a deficit model and emphasised that lifestyles are only a matter of choice, it systematically disregarded the wider social circumstances that influence people's everyday experiences, and symbolically redefined poor and disadvantaged families as dysfunctional and potentially criminal (Bunting, Webb and Shannon 2017).

It therefore seems that the policies of the political Right and Left have contributed to the construction of children 'at risk' of- and parents as 'key "risk factor[s]" in the onset of offending' (Muncie and Goldson 2006: 39). According to Muncie and Goldson (2006), this justified a number of pre-emptive interventions into the lives of behaviourally challenging children below the age of 10. Coupled with punitive responses to the offending of those that have reached the age of criminal liability and the responsibilising measures against their parents, these approaches played out as 'remoralization strategies' that punished a way of life as

[4] For media coverage on the (positive) results of the TF programme see Butler 2016a, Butler 2016b and Bracey 2018.

they addressed behaviour and/or needs devoid of the structural context from which they have emerged (Muncie and Goldson 2006: 40-42).

Based on these findings, the authors concluded that the selective use of the 'risk factor paradigm' in the name of prevention was grounded in ideological pragmatism, rather than in careful scientific consideration. Across the multidisciplinary youth justice nexus, this resulted in responses to children's deviance and parents' childrearing that focused on identifying and addressing familial and individual risks that were predetermined in government policies, while it disregarded histories of disadvantage that they were grounded in, thereby increasing the possibility that professional interventions on the ground could yield classed effects (Muncie and Goldson 2006: 41).

It thus becomes apparent that youth justice, family and welfare policies over the last four decades display a peculiar understanding of family life, in which different parenting practices across social classes have become individualised as personal victories or failures, rather than perceived as consequences of inequality and structural disparities. According to some, this has led to the assumption that only middle class parents are equipped with adequate parenting skills (Gillies 2005b: 849), while working class childrearing is perceived as 'toxic' (Furedi 2002: 38). Since these understandings also attach little importance to matters of social injustice, they deliver the message that it is 'middle class *culture* (rather than middle class *resources*)' (Gillies 2005a: 85-87; emphasis added) that makes good and responsible parents, so the working classes are further disadvantaged by having to live up to the universally accepted expectations to 'raise children capable of becoming middle class citizens' (Koffman 2008: 99).

As childrearing has been detached from the individual parent and their social class, so good parenting skills are deemed to be *the* most important factor in raising children, crime has symbolically been linked to the 'undeserving "underclass"' (Gillies 2005b: 836-839). Simon has argued that working class families have become 'site[s] of crime (...) and criminals (juvenile delinquents)' (Simon 2007: 204). According to Gillies, youth deviance and parenting have thus become arenas where class is reconstructed as a mode of subjectivity and a lived experience, rather than merely a structural category (Gillies 2005b). It therefore seems that the process of individualisation has not led to a '*dissolution* of lifeworlds associated with class and status group subcultures', as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim have claimed (2002: 30-31; emphasis in original) but, rather, might have only made class-imposed differences less evident and more dispersed (Gillies 2005b: 836, 849).

The analysis of contemporary socio-political circumstances and policy-making implies that children might be labelled deviant and 'bad parents' could be 'constructed' depending on their social location, which raises concerns about their possibly unequal treatment in practice. Nevertheless, it seems that the different management of privileged and disadvantaged families across institutions and by personnel that deal with their social problems is not specific to the era of 'new modernity', but has its origins in more distant modern history. It is to briefly presenting these institutional patterns that I dedicate the next section of this chapter.

1.1.2. Youth deviance, parenting and social class in modernity

1.1.2.1. 'The social' and the policing of families

In his historic account of the Western family, Jacques Donzelot (1979) traced classed interventions into families back to the 18th century and exposed some of the

ways in which working- and middle class family lives were shaped differently by state policies and professional discourses. Between the 18th and the end of the 19th century, children in need as well as those with risky behaviour became subject to preventive measures that justified state interventions into family life. After the first child protection laws were passed, families became 'policed' by what Donzelot called 'the social' — a hybrid sector that was both public and private, and was comprised of a plethora of social work, philanthropic, educational, medical and law enforcement agencies. However, when the control exercised by 'the social' clashed with parental authority within the family, the newly established surveillance affected the rich and the poor differently (Donzelot 1979).

When it came to childrearing, parents were able to preserve their autonomy and privacy only if they had the economic capacity to do so. This way, the financial ability of privileged families with behaviourally challenging children ensured that their morals remained unquestioned publically by statutory agencies, but they could seek help more discretely through contractual arrangements with private agencies (*protected liberation*). In disadvantaged families, on the other hand, amorality was assumed whenever social norms were disrespected, so — since these families could not afford non-statutory treatment — the state was authorised to intervene directly with its sanitary, educational, medical and/or moral tutelage (*supervised freedom*) (Donzelot 1979: 47, 89-95).[5]

Donzelot therefore concluded that the rise of 'the social' triggered the transition of the state's role 'from a government *of* families to a government *through* the family' (Donzelot 1979: 92; emphasis added). The family was no longer an institution, separated from the state, but became a '*mechanism (...) [of]*

[5] For a concise explanation of the rise of 'the social' as well as private (contract) and public (tutelage) control at the end of the 19th century see Deleuze's Foreword to Donzelot 1979.

social architectonics' (Donzelot 1979: 93-94; emphasis in original), in which the right kind of external intervention was combined with specific internal familial moral and social arrangements. Since the state's new focus was on helping 'dangerous children' and 'children in danger' (Donzelot 1979: 96) as well as assisting with hygiene and promoting compulsory education, the state was more likely to invade into the private sphere of disadvantaged families that lacked capital, whereby it diminished their sovereignty. At the same time, it destroyed their resistance, as it managed to strike a balance between not generating too many advantages and abandoning severe repression (Donzelot 1979: 94-95).

Furthermore, since the state made savings the pillar of assistance, it substituted unconditional charity with philanthropic aid as an earned investment. It also translated the inability of poor families to help themselves into their moral deficiencies that legitimised direct state interventions (Donzelot 1979: 55-58). As a consequence, the family was either subject to the 'unburdening of the liberal state' or became the 'target (…) of the interventionist state' (Donzelot 1979: xiii) based on their social location. In other words, the state encouraged individuals and families in need to remain autonomous and seek appropriate private assistance, while it, at the same time, remained the central provider of services and intruded into the lives of families that were less financially able (Donzelot 1979: 55-58).

By having a key role in administering philanthropic advice, the state evaded the cost of charity and the harshness of repression while making families feel like they had a free choice to either accept or refuse its referrals. However, the family's decision to 'control its [own] needs or be controlled by them' (Donzelot 1979: 65-70) depended on their capital and was thus inherently classed. Moreover, meeting the demands of the 'social' not only intensified family life and isolated the family

from the rest of the community, but also destabilised it by loosening the ties between children and adults, and constraining their social lives with constant overpolicing (Donzelot 1979: 79). In addition, as the agencies focused mostly on the child and their emotional wellbeing, as well as on the duty to build up their potential, parents gradually became the targets of blame (Donzelot 1979: 225).

In time, 'the social' became profoundly influenced by psychology and psychoanalysis that did not interfere directly with the family members' bodies (as did the doctor) or their morals (as did the priest) and therefore seemed neutral. Also, '"psy forces"'(Donzelot 1979: 229) perceived the family as, at once, the source of satisfaction and frustration for its members, especially children. As the family thus always seemed potentially pathological for personal development, the psychological gaze helped exert constant control over kin relationships in an intermediate space between the intra- and the extra familial realm. Therefore, there was less socialising in public spaces and less random supervision of family members in the community through everyday practices with individuals outside the family circle. As a consequence, people from the same background were gradually grouped together and protected from members of other social strata by the net of social assistance and schooling (Donzelot 1979: 218-226), which bolstered class stratification.

Furthermore, Donzelot was not alone in examining the intersections between the uprise of new familial forms and the expansion of class differences. In his book on the history of childhood, Phillipe Ariès (1962) analysed parent-child relationships between the medieval period and the modern era, as well as across national contexts. In parallel to Donzelot, he concluded that up until the 17th century, the family did not exist as an emotional social cell and children were perceived as little adults. The concept of childhood and the modern family emerged

in light of the dissolution of the state, whereby the father substituted the state's weakness and became the 'domestic monarch' (Ariès 1962: 344).

While childhood was brief and hardly lasted beyond infancy in the medieval ages, children came to be perceived as innocent, weak and thus in need of safeguarding under the auspices of 'lawyers, priests and moralists' from the 15th century on (Donzelot 1979: 316). However, as the attitudes towards children started changing, so did the structure of the family. In the medieval period, the public and the private sphere were undivided and people across class backgrounds sent their children away for domestic service as an 'apprenticeship for life'. Therefore, families were unable to nourish an affectionate relationship between parents and children. In Ariès's words, 'the family was a moral and social- rather than a sentimental reality' (Ariès 1962: 356).

With the emergence of compulsory schooling in the 17th century and the demands that schools be organised closer to homes, an emotional bond between the child and their parents gradually developed (Ariès 1962: 358-363). By the 18th century, the family came to symbolise private life and shielded itself against the public gaze. For a long time, individualism and privacy were only fostered in the middle classes, while the working classes still lived in families as economic forms and remained in contact with the rest of the community. In the 19th century, however, the modern concept of the family embraced the entire society, albeit with different consequences for the rich and the poor (Ariès 1962: 385-390).

According to Aries, there was thus a link between the emergence of the modern family and the beginning of class differentiation. Until the family developed into a separate affectionate entity, people of different backgrounds lived in a society that shared customs, facilities and manners. After the rise of the modern family,

however, people of diverse statuses became spatially and socially insulated. From then on, families and social classes became highly intolerant to variety and started assembling only individuals of complementary lifestyles and morals, whereby the middle classes began to guard themselves from 'lower-class contamination' and enforced their social norms as universal (Ariès 1962: 399).

It therefore becomes clear that the social and political shifts of 'new modernity' in relation to family, crime control and welfare policies might have presented a break from the generous and caring social order of the post-war welfare state, but actually continued the trends set out at the beginning of the modern era. Particularly, the responsibilising strategies against parents in 'new modernity', the sidelining of structural factors that impact families' daily lives, and the classed effects of both, were comparable to those at the cusp of the 20th century analysed by Donzelot and Ariès. At both points in time, the state only seemingly renounced its dominant position in the management of citizen's wellbeing or the lack thereof, but actually retained a central role in both caring for and controlling people's social lives, albeit 'at a distance' – through a web of public and private institutions, including through the family itself. I therefore present the parallels between Donzelot and Ariès's accounts and the findings of more recent research in the second part of this section.

1.1.2.2. 'Feedback effect' and the exposure to penal identification

Similarly to Donzelot's claims that 19th century tutelage triggered multi-agency policing of disadvantaged families, McCarthy (2011) has posited that working class families are nowadays often propelled into a system of surveillance through early intervention. According to McCarthy, early intervention programmes aim to assist

young people with their behavioural problems and divert them away from the youth justice system, but actually sweep presumably 'antisocial' underprivileged families into a web of control. McCarthy has argued that intervening early can exacerbate familial problems as social workers often have a predetermined conception of appropriate behaviour and responsible childrearing. As a consequence, they label working class children and their parents as 'lacking' or 'deficient' based on 'embodiments of class' (McCarthy 2011: 500) — figures of speech, tone of voice, clothing, perceptions of a tidy home — rather than their actual transgressions or parental neglect. Furthermore, although involvement in early intervention programmes is voluntary, a client's decision not to cooperate is frequently judged and can trigger further formal responses and/or sanctions like ASBOs and parenting orders (McCarthy 2011), thereby widening the net of surveillance over families in need.

In addition, Goldson and Jamieson's (2002) descriptions of contemporary cuts in welfare provision and the erased boundaries between help and punishment resemble Donzelot's accounts on the substituting of material support with conditional assistance under the rise of 'the social'. According to Goldson and Jamieson, disadvantaged parents are nowadays continuously negatively labelled through the multi-sided 'extension of state intervention into "family life"' (Goldson and Jamieson 2002: 95) as they have to face stricter criteria for financial support, while their welfare need has been criminalised through a conditional regime of benefits at the same time. More specifically, parents that are unable to control their children's behaviour are threatened with losing child benefits as well as subject to financial punishment for apparent breaches of benefit conditions, which, according

to Arthur, additionally deprives and demonises people that are already stigmatised by their lower socioeconomic status alone (Arthur 2002).

In addition, Webster has argued that punitive welfare measures against disadvantaged families are especially controversial since benefit sanctions nowadays exceed the number of court fines and are much more severe as well as imposed for minor breaches and in procedures where benefit claimants have fewer right than they would have in court (Webster 2015). Moreover, families with children in trouble are not only penalised financially, but also practically. An examination of the housing experiences of women with antisocial teenage sons and/or partners, for example, has revealed that the mothers, who are unable to manage their children's behaviour are repeatedly identified as 'cowardly and ineffectual' or 'inadequate' parents by landlords and the Courts of Appeal. As a consequence, they are often evicted from social housing regardless of the appropriateness of their own conduct or the actual quality of their parental care (Hunter and Nixon 2001: 409, 404).

Furthermore, in their ethnographic exploration of truancy in the UK context, Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh (1992) have demonstrated that rules on school attendance as well as family and crime control policies merge discourses of the decline of discipline with those of parental failure and the general moral malaise. In addition and by drawing directly on Donzelot, the authors have concluded that spreading the net of social services to tackle problems of youth deviance, broadly defined, has always had the goal of policing working class families. Not only does the 'combined and often cross-eyed gaze of a myriad of interlocking state agencies' (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 1) constantly point at disadvantaged young people, but it also targets their parents based on laws and policy documents that

silence issues of poverty and attribute the development of youth delinquency to pathological childrearing practices (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 1-10).

In addition and according to Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh, social policies — including, but not limited to those on school exclusion — have always shaped practices on the ground, so that institutions regulate the children of the underprivileged (punitive path) and contain the transgressions of the well-to-do (welfare path), which supports Donzelot's claims about the classed pathways generated by *tutelage* and *contract*. Based on this finding, Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh have concluded that, in the UK, controlling truancy has become — together with other marginalising practices like neighbourhood ghettoization, poor public housing, lack of facilities, unsatisfactory welfare and healthcare provision etc. — part of a wider '*civic exclusion'* according to class.

In line with Donzelot and Ariès, Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh have also argued that these exclusionary processes exacerbate social problems in already disadvantaged communities, whereby they legitimise further interventions and create a classed self-fulfilling prophecy of decline (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 46). Similarly, several other authors have indicated that current family and crime control policies, including the TF programme, help perpetuate the cycle of deprivation and class division rather than breaking it (Portes 2016; see also Crossley 2015 and Levitas 2014).

It can thus be inferred that the family and the child have been subject to intensive intervention — either through the public or the private, but still publically administered, sphere — ever since the 18th century. Children and adolescents have been separated from the rest of the community and parents have become more accountable for their behaviour. As a consequence, the youths who fail to act

according to normative standards often still receive a 'deviant status' that is usually attributed to a proclaimed deficiency within the family, including inappropriate parenting, which is classed. In the UK context, Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh have therefore concluded that 'Britain's economic failures [and class divisions] have been personalized' (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 28)

In all, contemporary institutional responses to the 'pathology of children' (Donzelot 1979: 96) resemble what Donzelot described as the move from a punitive approach to delinquency towards dealing with families preventively through educational, psychiatric, judicial and voluntary agencies that, together, form 'the social'. Donzelot argued that this shift was well-intended and aimed to decrease the stigmatisation of troubled children and children in trouble through preventive work, but the pre-court interventions into family lives were actually of a punitive and classed nature when accumulated (Donzelot 1979: 98).

According to Donzelot, the turn to prevention in the 19th century did not actually impede the criminalisation of young people, but merely diluted the punishment and spread it across agencies instead of keeping it confined to the judicial realm. The frequent institutional monitoring of youth 'in danger of becoming dangerous' (Donzelot 1979: 97) pulled children into a spiral of control that penalised them through gradual stigmatising at different levels instead of punishing them demonstratively in court only. To understand the effects of institutional contact, all of the social agencies that deal with troubled children should therefore be perceived as interdependent and stemming from 'the same judicial definition' (Donzelot 1979: 98) as they eventually lead to and/or rely on the juvenile court as *ultima ratio* (Donzelot 1979: 109).

In parallel to McAra and McVie's (2007) findings about how prior institutional involvement can propel the same disadvantaged children further into the system and exacerbate their deviance, Donzelot argued that constant institutional control has a 'feedback effect' (Donzelot 1979: 110). According to Donzelot, continuous surveillance of young people and their parents through tutelary practices places them on a 'gear train of the judicial apparatus' as it exposes them to 'penal identification' (Donzelot 1979: 110). Since agencies continuously investigate and judge young people by evaluating their characters and familial milieus, this results in a *de facto* prosecution of their lifestyles in the absence of a committed offense (Donzelot 1979: 111).

Donzelot therefore posited that the juvenile court is neither the only nor the main source of criminalisation, as the 'tutelary complex' that targets predelinquent behaviour actually generates delinquency by propelling out 'the negative products of (…) normalization' (Donzelot 1979: 112). Even if children's transgressions are dealt with by well-meaning specialists, the frequent processes of benevolent help and control push the young person towards a 'career of catalogued delinquency' (Donzelot 1979: 113) by inertia, whereby they exclude any surprises regarding the familial and class background of the people caught in the tutelary web (Donzelot 1979: 113).

From a criminological perspective and to clarify the intersections between juvenile deviance, parenting and social class, it thus remains relevant to explore if, how and why challenging behaviour in juveniles and their caregivers' parenting practices might be responded to differently through systemic contact with institutions, including through what Cohen has described as latent elements in professional interactions (Cohen 1985: 3). Since behaviourally challenging children

and their parents nowadays still receive help with their problems from several services, I decided to examine these effects from the perspectives of different practitioners that work with families directly as well as young people in trouble and their parents.

However, before I present the theoretical framework that I used to conceptualise my empirical results and the methods that I employed in my study, I examine the findings of research that has been conducted in the fields of sociology, parenting culture studies, and criminology with the aim of understanding whether disparities are (re)produced through institutional working practices and professional interactions as well as how that could be affecting young people's life pathways. The purpose of this overview is not to provide a detailed theoretical examination of the possible classed effects in settings, in which I carried out the empirical part of my research, but to expose why it is still important to inspect closely some of the potentially unintended side effects of formal and informal responses to 'trouble', starting with those in the educational setting.

1.2. Institutional responses to youth deviance, parenting and social class

1.2.1. The educational setting and pedagogic practices

1.2.1.1. Educational attainment

While studying how young people negotiate formal and informal orders that impact on the development of their offending identities, McAra and McVie (2012b: 353) have exposed schooling as one of the 'regulatory practices' that impels delinquency in some young people more than in others and propels pupils of different class backgrounds in diverse directions as a consequence. Similarly and when exploring

the classed effects of education from a sociological perspective, Pierre Bourdieu explained the ways in which power is transmitted across generations and the social order is preserved, whereby he focused especially on the role of the school in channelling young people towards 'prestigious' or 'devalued' pathways (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 18).

In Distinction (1984, 2010), Bourdieu argued that the habits of the middle classes correspond better with the school's ethos than do those of the less privileged. As a consequence, social class is reproduced when the economic capital of the higher strata is converted into cultural capital that is appreciated in the school setting. Through the process of schooling, capital is then translated into educational attainment and eventually results in well-paid jobs. The cycle repeats itself since decent pay enables middle class individuals to further access legitimate culture and enhance their capital. Class is thus transferred from one generation to another through the mutually bolstered links between the household and the school, whereby the levels of capital according to background remain relatively unchanged. Based on this finding, Bourdieu concluded that the school uses its 'value-inculcating and value-imposing operations' to bind the home-acquired cultural capital and the academic capital that is appreciated in schools to form an 'entitlement effect' for upper class individuals (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 14-15).

Furthermore, Bourdieu opposed the view that class differences have vanished in the age of modernity as ascription has become less important than school achievement. By drawing on Marx's notion of 'false consciousness', he argued that class disparities have not disappeared, but cultural capital is merely transmitted intergenerationally 'behind the backs' of all of the actors, involved in the educational process (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, 1990: ix). For example, the

school system manages to put a 'meritocratic seal' over inherited differences in cultural capital through giving out titles, which make arbitrary class-based 'inclusions and exclusions' seem natural and legitimate (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977,1990: ix-x). This way, people without titles have to prove themselves since they '*are* only what they *do*', while people with titles only have to 'be what they [already] are' (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 15; emphasis in original). In other words, the family and school function like markets that construct competencies and give them a price (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 78).

On the ground, these classed social and academic taxonomies merge and guide the ways in which teachers perceive students and evaluate their performance and achievement (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, 1990: ix). In their assessments, teachers ascribe predetermined levels of success to pupils according to class origin and, at the same time, deny the social grounds of these associations. As a consequence, privileged students have the privilege of not seeing themselves as privileged, while the disadvantaged believe their lack of success is due to their own ungiftedness, rather than to systemic dispossession, whereby both groups assume that the social places fall to them 'by nature' (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, 1990: 209-210).

In her US-based study on the impact of parents' social class on children's educational pathways, Lareau drew on Bourdieu to discover that children's achievement does not depend only on their hard work or ambition, but, rather, mostly on their parents' socioeconomic status, so there is actually no equal access to educational opportunities for individuals of diverse social locations (Lareau 2011). Also, different childrearing practices do not reflect parents' personal abilities, but are imbedded in 'systemic (…) inequality' (Lareau 2011: 235) that stems from

variations in their education, occupation and prestige. As a consequence, intensive parenting plays out as two distinct parenting styles in working class- as opposed to middle class families (Lareau 2011).

While middle class parents engage in 'concerted cultivation' that involves enhancing children's social skills, constant surveillance and involvement in their education to increase their prospects, working class parents adopt the style of 'natural growth' that is far from passive, but less invasive (Lareau 2011: 238). It is more intuitive and focuses on equipping children with survival skills that are required for an autonomous life (Lareau 2011). In parallel to Bourdieu, Lareau observed that both parenting styles have their pros and cons, but institutions, especially schools, constantly bolster concerted cultivation only (Lareau 2011: 242-243). Lareau therefore concluded that the different ways in which working- and middle class parenting practices play out in schools can impact young people's lives as both groups of children have similar aspirations, but only those with middle class backgrounds are usually successful in realising them (Lareau 2011).

Moreover, Lareau and other researchers, many in the British context, have unravelled some of the precise aspects of the interactions between schools and children as well as their parents that yield such classed effects. For example, Lareau's study has demonstrated that middle class parents can ensure smoother educational pathways by drawing on their socioeconomic resources to provide professional assessment of their children's learning needs (Lareau 2011: 303, 248-250). Similarly and in the UK, Gillies has found that middle class parents frequently negotiate a 'different kind of difficulty' (Gillies 2005b: 847) and individual treatment for children with problems in educational attainment through, for instance, labels of 'bright' and 'special'. Working class parents, on the other hand,

disregard alternative markers for their children's behaviour or needs as their parenting style of natural growth emphasises that it is more important to '"fit(…) in" (…) than stand(…) out' (Gillies 2005b: 845). In other words, working class parents are often reluctant to expose their children in any way since schools usually attend to their children's educational experience separately only when they have misbehaved, so parents intuitively connect the label of 'special' to these events (Gillies 2005b).

Although the examples above imply that it is the social embeddedness of childrearing practices, rather than parenting *per se*, that is a 'gradient of personal development' (Gillies 2005b: 840) and a 'mediator of home-school relations' (Gillies 2008b: 105), Gillies has discovered that working class parents are, nevertheless, often labelled irresponsible in schools due to a decontextualised perception of their less intensive investment (Gillies 2006a: 114). Similarly, Lareau has found that working class parents are frequently blamed for their childrearing alone although schools give the middle classes an advantage through their standards, including those linked to children's academic achievement (Lareau 2011). According to Lareau, evaluations of parenting styles in the educational environment are therefore one of many manifestations of 'class division' (Lareau 2011: 257).

For Gillies and Lareau, young people's low educational attainment and its symbolic connection to working class parenting practices could thus be understood as proxies of class that might be based on different levels of their parents' economic, social and cultural capital, rather than only on children's cognitive abilities. However, as categorisations such as 'low-attaining' might trigger 'an array of beliefs' (Link et al. 1987: 1474) about some children as a designated category,

rather than seeing them as less equipped, such classifications could result in lesser expectations from teachers and other professionals. Since this could set pupils on alternative educational trajectories, schools' seemingly benevolent ways to meet the needs of all students might mask unintended labelling practices that reproduce fixed 'working-class identities' (Muncie 2015: 237-238, 242), perpetuate, but at once silence, class disparities and could represent, as will be explained in the forthcoming parts of this thesis, a continuing lead towards offending pathways.

Therefore, exploring different educational routes is not only relevant in the realms of education and employment, but also has implications for criminology and youth justice. For instance, Savolainen et al. have discovered that vocational schooling is a strong predictor of male offending as it prepares young people for occupations that are not in high demand in post-industrial European countries (Savolainen et al. 2013). In addition, their study has also shown that the vocational school environment itself wholly mediates between low academic attainment and delinquency, so it is participation in these courses *per se* that could be criminogenic (Savolainen et al. 2013: 610-619). Similarly and in the UK context, Muncie has argued that vocational training does not affect traditional academic pathways of middle class children in any way, but only normalises the transitions of working class pupils to an 'uncertain future in an unstable market' (Muncie 2015: 237-238), which, again, could direct some young people to irregular life pathways, including those of delinquency.

Interactions in schools regarding pupils' academic performance could therefore be contributing to diverse trajectories of young people from different social locations since some of the schools' 'supposedly non-discriminatory practices [that are] enshrined in long-established rituals (...) work to the advantage of some

(...), but the disadvantage of others' (Phillips and Bowling 2012: 384),[6] namely to parents and children of different social classes. In other words, even contemporary school programmes might indirectly discriminate against the working classes and could have secondary deviance effects that contribute to children's troubling behaviour instead of preventing it (Lemert 1972: 63). Since, for Lareau, professionals are not only implicitly biased against working class pupils when evaluating their academic achievement, but also when assessing children's adherence to school disciplinary rules (2011: 235), it is to examining the impacts of maintaining order in schools that I devote the next section.

1.2.1.2. School discipline

In his ethnographic study on 'why working class kids get working class jobs' (Willis 1977: 1) Willis indicated that people's class background and its cultural manifestations explain social (im)mobility in the UK much better than competence, intelligence and/or talent. According to Willis, the capitalist state school reproduces class division and social order through responses to the antagonistic working class 'counter culture' (Willis 1977: 59-60). Specifically, teachers and other professionals judge the 'lads'' non-normative behaviour as 'character deficiencies' and project these judgments from a minority of real troublemakers to most of the working class pupils (Willis 1977: 59-61). This happens as schools systemically disregard

[6] It is important to note that Phillips and Bowling use this definition of indirect discrimination to contextualise dispaties in the criminal justice system that are based on race and ethnicity. I have therefore merely borrowed the definition itself and applied it to class disparities within schools and, as will be described in the continuing parts of this thesis, the youth justice system. However, it seems crucial to acknowledge that the classed patterns I have outline so far and the ones I focus on in the following chapters of this dissertation likely intersect with consequences of indirect discrimination according to other personal characteristics, including, but not limited to race, ethnicity and gender. Nevertheless, my theoretical focus on the implications of social class as well as the practical restrictions of my study that I describe in the next chapter prevented a more thorough intersectional exploration of discriminatory patterns in professional interactions.

working class interests within their formal organisation and curriculum (*differentiation*). As a consequence, teachers attribute children's disinterestedness and misbehaviour to their personalities without acknowledging the impacts of their class background (*individualisation*) (Willis 1977: 62-63).

Back in the 1950s, Albert Cohen, too, identified school as a source of 'status frustration' for working class children as it is imbued with middle class standards and preoccupied with academic achievement (Cohen 1955). Since some working class children are unable to follow these demands, they resolve their anxiety through 'reaction formation' that results in establishing ties with gangs, permeated with values alternative to those of the middle classes (Cohen 1955: 84, 133-136). According to Lareau, contemporary schools also expect children to behave respectfully and act as 'good citizens', whereby the standards of this behaviour are still set as normative based on middle class values (Lareau 2011: 235).

More specifically and in the UK context, Gillies (2011) has explored schools' behavioural expectations in her study of pupils at risk of exclusion. She has discovered that emotional literacy has gained currency in the educational setting, while, at the same time, schools do not acknowledge that its levels might be culturally and socially conditioned (Gillies 2011: 189). For Gillies (2008a: 1088), children start learning the institutional modes of behaviour in their homes, so these can become, in Bourdieu's words, distinctive markers of class outside of the familial realm, including and especially in schools (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 59). Therefore, Gillies has concluded that fostering the ability to express 'socially appropriate thoughts' (Gillies 2011: 192) presents another classed ideal and exposes all of those children who are unable to do so elaborately and with ease. In her study, young people that acted out were labelled as 'pathological', 'psychologically

immature' or having a 'conduct disorder', while schools did not address the reasons behind their emotional excesses, so their structural hardship remained sidelined and became normalised (Gillies 2011: 187-201).

Other authors (see for example Churchill and Clarke 2013: 296-299) have also argued that labels like 'conduct disorder' are nowadays frequently used for a variety of behaviours, so they can be addressed through disciplining, while the causes for their development are disregarded. When looking for explanations of such practices in the educational setting, it thus seems plausible to rely on Gillies's finding that the pressure on schools to increase academic attainment has also resulted in teachers becoming generally less tolerant to children's challenging behaviour as they have to ensure the discipline that is needed for them to focus on the most able (Gillies 2012a: 20).

As a consequence, labelling of children's conduct as troublesome and/or its quasi-therapeutic categorisations have become new 'behavioural management practices' (Gillies 2012a: 26). In addition, teachers frequently classify pupils' disruptive behaviour with medical labels speculatively and without qualifications for diagnosing. This way, difficulties are placed within the young person's psyche and their familial background, while their social context is silenced and disregarded (Gillies 2012a: 32-33).

Furthermore, Gillies has concluded that not only working class children, but also their parents are nowadays often labelled in schools as lacking the affective capacity to, for example, act in the best interest of their children (Gillies 2006b). By disregarding their class-specific parenting styles and forms of what Lareau has called linguistic *interaction* (Lareau 2011: 341, emphasis in original), schools identify these parents as 'emotionally illiterate' and quarrelsome, while they

perceive middle class parents as adapted to the school's normative expectations since they interact smoothly and quietly with teachers to address their children's problems (Gillies 2006b: 289-291).

Both the implied medical and non-medical labelling of children's behaviour as well as the different perceptions of parents' childrearing styles in schools are criminologically relevant. When continuously repeated, even if in good faith and to ensure order, labels could have, as social reaction theorists have hypothesised, secondary deviance effects if successfully applied (Lemert 1972; Becker 2003). Furthermore, Matsueda (1992: 1602-1604) has explained the mechanism behind secondary deviance and has argued that delinquent behaviour is also, although not exclusively, triggered by the reactions of others and their projection to the self as, what he has called, 'reflected appraisals' (Matsueda 1992: 1603). Thereby, frequently ascribing the label of 'troublemaker' in an institutional context could become an important 'cause and consequence' (Matsueda 1992: 1603) of deviant behaviour.

It therefore seems important to note that constant reactions to children's challenging behaviour without researching the underlying factors that trigger it as well as the frequent negative labelling of that behaviour could have detrimental implications for the trajectory of young people (further) into the youth justice system. In addition, such labelling practices might perpetuate class disparities and possibly intensify them as they reaffirm middle class values by constantly placing the 'dim' and 'emotionally illiterate' child (Gillies 2008a: 1088) in opposition to the normative ideal of a 'talented' and 'emotionally literate' alternative, whereby they instil culturally imposed and class-conditioned expectations about personal development (Gillies 2006b: 193).

Also, the educational- and/or other settings that have made middle class parental involvement a general and universal measure of adequate childrearing do not sit well with working class parenting ideals (Gillies 2012b: 93; see also Gillies 2008b: 105). The professional ethos in these milieus therefore makes it more likely for working class parents to be blamed for their lack of appropriate engagement and/or their children's acting out. This way, as the reasons behind the children's non-conforming behaviour are placed either within the young person's character or their parents' childrearing, the structural context in which they are both embedded, including social class and (dis)advantage, is disregarded (Brady 2013), but thereby more likely to be perpetuated.

In addition, Lareau's research has suggested that, in the North American context, class differences are exacerbated and become more apparent as children progress through the educational system with middle class students proceeding to elite secondary schools, while working class pupils are predominantly directed into state schools (Lareau 2011: 278-280). Further, Simon has shown that state schools in some parts of the US are constantly criminalised in the media as well as through 'fortress tactics' (Simon 2007: 208), so their very image starts to symbolise the link between juvenile deviance and the lower classes. At those schools, metal detectors are placed at entrances, security staff outnumber the teachers, police searches are regular (Simon 2007: 207-211) and pupils' behavioural problems are addressed as 'quasi-crimes' (Simon 2007: 217-218), which results in draconian sanctions like referring students to 'punishing rooms' and school exclusions (Simon 2007: 207-218).

The practices outlined by Simon reflect an official punitive turn in resolving pupils' misbehaviour and are extreme even in the US context, so they cannot be

directly compared to UK's needs-focused and restorative school policy. Nevertheless, Kupchik, Green and Mowen's (2015: 11-16) research has shown that formal differences in school management discourses between the two countries play out quite similarly, as their disciplinary strategies on the ground result in near-equal exclusion rates and an overrepresentation of disadvantaged pupils therein.

Although corrective practices in England's educational settings are officially benevolent, they seem to have an exclusionary tendency that is very similar to that of US's punitive approach. At least on an abstract level, it is therefore possible to apply to the UK Simon's notion that 'penal pedagogy' (Simon 2007; 209, 220) has levelled the gap between education and juvenile delinquency and has made crime symbolic for the trajectory of some young people to adulthood. At the same time, it seems important to clarify whether this figurative connection also actually resonates in youth justice practice.

When Lareau revisited the initially recruited research participants ten years after her original study, most of the interviewed middle class young adults described their college lives and transitions to the labour market, while working class youths often mentioned poor academic achievement, school exclusions and unemployment as well as repeated contact with the police and the criminal justice system (Lareau 2011: 267-277). It thus seems relevant to explore whether the implied more frequent presence of working class juveniles in the youth justice system could be a consequence of continuing class-reproducing labelling processes for some children and their parents on the pathway from school — possibly through several other institutions — into the legal system. I therefore continue with examining the literature on the labelling effects of social control mechanisms beyond the educational setting.

1.2.2. The youth justice setting and the escalation of trouble and stigma

When Paternoster and Iovanni revisited the applicability of labelling theory to juvenile delinquency, they suggested that labelling according to social class be examined across institutions, as decisions made at earlier stages might influence the outcomes later on (Paternoster and Iovanni 1989: 364-374). When exploring whether the status characteristic of social class could be contributing to propelling young people into the youth justice system, it is thus important to locate where 'criminal conviction pathways' (McAra and McVie 2012b: 386) begin and whether their underlying processes perpetuate class disparities. The literature review in the previous section of this chapter has revealed that schools may not only amend the effects of inadequate informal social control, including parenting, but might sometimes help shape children's troubles in a certain way and reconstruct a normative form of childrearing according to class. From a criminological perspective, it is therefore crucial to explore if the labelling that seems to begin in the realm of education continues in other settings.

McAra and McVie's research on youth transitions to crime in Scotland has found that young people's deviant pathways emerge prior to their contact with youth justice officials, especially in schools (McAra and McVie 2012b: 374). According to McAra and McVie, the same children are continuously labelled 'troublemakers' by teachers and often find it impossible to shrug these labels off even in cases of subsequent appropriate behaviour or high academic performance. Also, these labelling processes seem to be based on the reputation and socioeconomic status of certain families, rather than only on the gravity of the pupil's challenging behaviour (McAra and McVie 2012b: 356-357).

Furthermore, McAra and McVie's study has shown that formal labelling continues as police target the same young people from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds as 'usual suspects'. In addition, the first contact of a young person with the police might be initiated by the seriousness of their offence, but the following interventions are often encouraged by their 'troublemaking reputation' itself (McAra and McVie 2005: 5-9). As the self-reports on offending in the Edinburgh study revealed that young people from underprivileged backgrounds are dealt with more frequently, McAra and McVie have concluded that the police are class, rather than legal, agents. Also, they have found neighbourhood effects to be less significant for police intervention than 'individual bias' and family reputation, concluding that the police help reproduce social disadvantage through targeting a particular socioeconomically deprived group of juveniles (McAra and McVie 2005: 15, 28).

Moreover, McAra and McVie have found that an ongoing 'filtering process' (McAra and McVie 2007: 337) persistently drives these young people further into the youth justice system. This inertia, however, does not depend only on the seriousness of their offences, but also on prior system contact *per se* and circumstances that they cannot control, including their social disadvantage. Moreover, the repeated institutional interventions, based on elements that young people are unable to influence, impel additional surveillance and prevent juveniles from removing the attributed deviant labels and desisting from offending. (McAra and McVie 2007: 334-339).

It therefore seems that working class children might get pushed on deviant pathways more quickly than middle class youths. Both at the initial stages of the youth justice system and later on, this tendency seems to be based on uncontrollable

structural factors, rather than merely on children's misbehaviour (McAra and Mcvie 2007: 338-339). This self-fulfilling prophecy appears to be embedded in the labelling effects of institutional working practices on the passage from schools, through the police to the justice system and may result in indirect class discrimination. However, these biased processes are not only generally problematic, but also have unfavourable consequences for children and their parents on a personal level.

Social reaction theory has contributed to the pool of criminological knowledge by exposing agents of social control as creators of deviance, rather than merely respondents to it. In addition, it has used the sociological concept of stigma to conceptualise the consequences of labelling for individuals (Muncie 2010: 142). In his classic study of the perceptions of self in interactions, Goffman defined stigma as 'spoiled identity' that is constructed when society reduces an individual to a discounted person based on a feature that fails to meet the expectations of 'normals' (Goffman 1963: 12-15). According to Goffman, members of society stigmatise other people to indicate and confirm their inferiority, whereby they often rationalise deep-rooted prejudices about differences, including those based on social class (Goffman 1963).

In the context of youth deviance, the children and parents that are frequently in contact with the system regarding the young person's challenging behaviour are thus more likely to be stigmatised, whereby parents' 'spoiled identity' partly stems from their vicarious responsibility for the child and in part from their own shameful experience (Condry 2007: 62-63). As society treats parents 'as one' with their children, they experience 'courtesy stigma' (Goffman 1963: 43-44) that is rooted in their social connection to the child. However, contemporary views on crime and the

family conceptualise parental stigma beyond the kin tie itself. Rather, they use the concept of 'secondary stigma' to unite courtesy stigma with the second and independent aspect of parental blame (Condry 2007: 62-63).

However, while stigma shapes identities on a personal and relational level, it also has a wider social role. Lemert argued that public and private agents stigmatise other people to characterise and classify them through social control. He also explained that individuals labelled *non grata* are rejected either in interpersonal relationships or through formal action that monitors them (Lemert 1972). Furthermore, Erikson concluded that stigmatising preserves social life through boundary-maintenance that draws the line between diversity that is tolerated and deviance that is to be rejected. Most importantly, he added that society never decides to label deviants only according to their acts, but also judges them based on other factors, inclusive of social class (Erikson 1966: 7-13).

In all, the explanations of both individual and social consequences of stigma have something to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the institutional treatment of working class children and their parents. As the review of the literature so far has revealed that they seem to get labelled within and by schools as well as the legal system more frequently than middle class parents and children, it is important to map out how the stigma of working class subjects may become predominant and come to define their senses of self as well as influence their subsequent behaviour.

According to Paternoster and Iovanni, secondary deviance is unlikely to develop if primary deviance is kept hidden (Paternoster and Iovanni 1989: 376). Similarly and three decades earlier, Goffman claimed that personalities can be categorised into 'discredited' and 'discreditable' based on the exposure or

concealment of their deviant status (Goffman 1963: 113). While the stigma of the former is disclosed, so they have to cope with everyday restrictions (*tension management*), the latter manage information to disguise their undisclosed status (*information control*) (Goffman 1963: 164). Although Goffman distinguished between the two personality types based on face-to-face interactions, his classification seems suitable to conceptualise the stigmatisation of some working class children and their parents through public 'degradation rituals' (Lemert 1967: 65) in institutions, including schools and the youth justice system.

The analysis above suggests that middle class culture has become normative in the educational- and legal setting as well as, possibly, across other institutions. Furthermore, the described labelling processes imply what Emerson and Messinger (1977) have predicted in their theoretical approach to understanding the formation of trouble. For academically and/or behaviourally challenging working class children, initially unclearly defined externalised troubles could be crystallised on their pathway from schools to the youth justice system. As a consequence, these children could eventually be perceived as 'troublemakers' and, in time, come to be defined as 'deviant' (Emerson and Messinger 1977: 127).

Through processes in schools and the justice system, young people from the working classes are more likely to be reduced to what Goffman (1963) has identified as discounted persons. Since McAra and McVie (2007) have explained that labels seem to be ascribed to disadvantaged youths based on proxies of class that they cannot manage, they might not be able to cope with their stigma and could internalise their deviant identities. Persistent institutional labelling could thus lead to Goffman's discredited status, and might enable underprivileged young people to

merely adapt to its restrictions, but may not allow that they overstep them (Goffman 1963: 477).

In parallel to their children's experiences, the informal labelling of working-class parents is believed to start in schools and could proceed with responsibilising formal reactions to their childrearing in the educational realm, as well as across other settings. On this trajectory, the initially unclear informal markers of their behaviour and practices could shift to more precisely defined formal labels in official procedures (Emerson and Messinger 1977: 127), possibly with actual legal consequences. It thus seems that institutions are more likely to attribute a discounted status (Goffman 1963) to working class parents.

Further, organisations do not base this status-attribution on parents' childrearing abilities alone, but also on a class-conditioned and therefore not easily amendable evaluation of parental engagement. As a consequence, the working classes could find it hard to manage their stigma and are more likely to accept the identity of 'bad parents'. Since the overview of research above has also illustrated that similar labelling processes occur in the educational setting and within youth justice as well as in the realms of early intervention (Gray 2013; see also McCarthy 2011), welfare (Goldson and Jamieson 2002) and housing (Hunter and Nixon 2001) they could result in publicly discredited subjectivities of working class parents.

In conclusion, the findings of contemporary research conducted in both the educational- and judicial setting as well as across other agencies have shown that class disparities could be (re)produced through institutional working practices and professional interactions, so young people may be directed towards different life pathways based on their social location. Although, as McAra and McVie (2012b) have argued, in theory, individuals can manage and transcend such institutional

effects, schools, law enforcement agencies and other formal settings are closed environments, where the same officials continuously work with young people and their parents. As institutional working cultures and the decision-making of employees seem to be imbued with stereotypes about familial reputation and the intergenerational transmission of deviant behaviour and parenting, this could contribute to a class-based 'path dependency', which makes it harder for working class children and their parents to negotiate new identities (McAra and McVie 2012b: 348-371).

However, according to Bourdieu, one of sociology's main attempts should be to 'deconsecrate' the social field. Based on his analysis of the educational setting, Bourdieu argued that to reveal the hidden transformations of social categories into school classifications, it is important to explain the *exact ways* in which teachers unwittingly judge their pupils based on class background. Only through understanding more precisely how and why micro processes of the (academic) field come to reflect forces of the economic and political system, the classed effects of their interplay can become more easily recognised, acknowledged and amended both within the educational setting and in organisations more generally (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, 1990: xxvi; see also Bourdieu 1984, 1988: 194-225).

Furthermore, Basil Bernstein posited that 'pedagogic relations' beyond teaching and disciplining in schools (Bernstein 1996: 21, 107) — so interactions between practitioners and clients across diverse agencies and social fields — are shaped by institutional discourses that promote neutrality and justice, but actually lead to social reproduction (Bernstein 1996: 13). However, Bernstein claimed that it is not enough to disclose and condemn classed practices and biases throughout the

social nexus, but it is also necessary to *understand* the 'discursive rules of pedagogy' that generate and/or perpetuate them (Bernstein 1996: 3; emphasis added). While the review of literature so far has shown that young people from the working classes and their parents are directed towards devalued trajectories more often than the middle classes, it also seems important to discern why this might be happening when practitioners interact with behaviourally challenging young people and their parents on the ground. I focus on this task in the last part of the first chapter before I present the theoretical framework of my thesis in the chapter that follows.

1.3. Alternative understandings of youth deviance, parenting and social class

1.3.1. A sociological analysis of pedagogic practices, the management of truancy and decision-making within law enforcement

When considering the reasons behind diverse responses of practitioners to similar types of (mis)behaviour in children and parents of different class backgrounds it seems relevant to, first, draw on findings in the sociology of language as people across the board communicate both verbally and non-verbally as well as interpret and react to linguistic expressions in others. In the book Class, Codes and Control: Applied Studies towards a Sociology of Language, Bernstein (1973) collected his own papers and the findings of fellow socio-linguists to map out some of the ways in which pedagogic practices, defined beyond the educational setting, can help translate class-conditioned differences in children's verbal and nonverbal communication into relative (dis)advantages, and transform them into inequalities.

By drawing on Bernstein, Hasan argued that people talk and act not only to engage in conversation and exchange information, but also and especially to

identify with a given community, so the interpretation of language and conduct should always be socially contextualised. In addition, Hasan did not distinguish between verbal and nonverbal communication (behaviour) and indicated that they both merge in 'the natural living of life' (Hasan 1973: 237), which is primarily rooted in socioeconomic background. For Hasan, social class is one of the most important factors in the distribution of privilege via language both at home and in school, so it profoundly impacts the dynamics and outcomes of professional interactions (Hasan 1973: 235).

In other words, pedagogical situations are not only influenced by the institutionally determined roles of teacher (practitioner) and pupil (client), but also by the social distance between them. Therefore, a young person's misbehaviour or their educational failure might not necessarily reflect their inability to comprehend disciplinary rules or scholarly concepts, but could stem from the teacher's incapacity to establish a connection between the pedagogic system's purpose and the child's socially-embedded lifestyle. Furthermore, behaviour might also be construed as a transgression due to the teacher's personal distance from the child and a consequent misunderstanding of what they are trying to convey (in return) through their class-conditioned linguistic expression (Hasan 1973: 235-242).

According to Bernstein and Henderson, children communicate mostly based on how they were taught to use language in social situations as part of their socialisation in early childhood. Middle class parents, for example, place greater emphasis on verbal communication when it comes to expressing emotions, moral beliefs and thoughts as well as when disciplining their children (*person* area statements). The working classes, on the other hand, usually emphasise verbal skills

more while teaching their children motoric and cognitive tasks (*skill* area statements) (Bernstein and Henderson 1973: 23-24).

In addition, middle class parents build up their children's self-esteem, so they can become active receivers of knowledge (*self-regulating* learning and *achieved* social role), while the working class child is rather passive in the process of knowledge-transmission (*didactic* learning and *assigned* social role) (Bernstein and Henderson 1973: 35-40). Also, young people in working class families usually remain hierarchically subordinate to their parents, so they are often not encouraged to act autonomously or to negotiate their rights, as has been argued by Turner (Turner 1973: 165-170).

However, as Robinson has indicated, such differences in primary socialisation are structurally and materially conditioned, rather than innate to a certain social group, as parents from any class background would become more egalitarian and democratic if 'other pressures (…) [on them were] not too great' (Robinson 1973: 181). While most socialisation practices are equally important to working and middle class parents as a matter of principle, the diverse ways in which these parents communicate issues of personal and practical development to their children depend on their everyday lives and can become more or less characteristic for- or frequent in a certain class (Bernstein and Henderson 1973: 35-37). Nevertheless, if an institutional setting fails to acknowledge that young people might use diverse linguistic codes due to their different social locations — rather than their passivity, defiance or opposition to organisational rules — (negative) professional evaluations of their communication, including their behaviour, might be biased and could trigger classed practices and decisions.

Bernstein therefore concluded that even advanced and novel pedagogic models should never be accepted uncritically, since they could be masking selective processes of control over children based on power imbalances according to their class background. By not acknowledging that the importance of language is — predominantly due to material and practical restrictions, rather than different moral beliefs — usually emphasised less in the process of working class socialisation, so the middle classes articulate their emotions, thoughts and frustrations more elaborately, even liberal and individualised pedagogies that claim to recognise a multitude of identities might treat young people unequally based on social class. Since linguistics and traditional class analysis have been neglecting that pedagogy is imbued with middle class standards, Bernstein considered the sociological analysis of language as crucial for understanding class reproduction through contemporary pedagogic practices on the ground (Bernstein 1996: 2-3).

Similarly motivated, Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh (1992) have called for more structurally conscious sociological and criminological interpretations of truancy. As absence from school has traditionally been debated as part of the judicial or the custodial discourse, a symbolic link between truancy and delinquency has been established, implying that the prevention of the former could help stop the latter. However, this kind of conceptualisation of school non-attendance seems unsatisfactory since there might be an association between truancy and youth crime, but a causal link between the two has not been proven (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 71).

By drawing on Grimshaw and Pratt (1984), Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh have posited that both unexcused school absence and delinquency might actually be triggered by ‘some external factor, such as socioeconomic background’ (Carlen,

Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 71), so the myth about the causal relationship between them is bolstered through professional perceptions within institutions, rather than being verified by empirical research. A sociological account of truancy is therefore necessary as it discloses that agencies and practitioners can play an important role in constructing deviance according to class when they deal with concrete cases by symbolically linking school non-attendance to crime and implying their intergenerational transmission, thereby silencing the structural factors of disadvantage that might trigger both (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 71-72).[7]

In the field of criminology, Besemer, Farrington and Bijleveld have confirmed that there is no *real* and clearly-identifiable transmission of criminal behaviour from parents to their children as criminal justice institutions and their officials are also biased against children of convicted parents as well as, independently and statistically significantly, those who grow up in low-income and poor housing families (Besemer, Farrington and Bijleveld 2013: 438-448; emphasis in original). Their findings are important as they imply the transfer of crime through an intergenerational exposure to official justice bias (Besemer 2014: 79), rather than failed parenting and problematic conduct of the working classes alone.

[7] Recent trends in the number of unauthorised school absences and measures against the absentees' parents have confirmed Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh's (1992) assumption that truancy might be, in part, constructed through legal action, organisational rules and practices of professionals on the ground. According to the government's report on pupil absences in schools in England between 2016 and 2017, the tightening of rules on school absences in 2013 has led to an increase in the number of unauthorised holidays during term-time and to a consequent rise in the overall number of nonattendances (Great Britain, Department of Education 2018). In addition, this has caused an increase of prosecutions against the parents of truant children, with almost 20,000 parents taken to court in 2015 alone (Yusuf and Bowcott 2017). However, the government's report has also shown that in 2016/17 more than 10% of all school children were persistent non-attenders, whereby the absence rate for pupils who were eligible for free school meals was more than twice as high as the rate for those not receiving free school meals (Great Britain, Department of Education 2018: 7), which resonates with Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh's conclusion that truancy is still predominantly a 'working class problem' (1992: 81).

In addition, Besemer, Farrington and Bijleveld's results suggest that biased labelling processes of disadvantaged working class children and parents seem to continue throughout their trajectory from childhood to adulthood and can reaffirm their social position. As the latter was also suggested in the previous part of this chapter, understanding the intersections between youth deviance, parenting and class only in light of developmental psychology and intergenerational transmission of criminal behaviour might prevent a more accurate division between the effects of agencies according to social class, in comparison with the impact of parenting, on the formation and continuation of deviance in children.

A broader sociological analysis of pedagogic practices, the management of truancy and decision-making within law enforcement reveals that these processes might not only guard knowledge, discipline and order, but can also contribute to 'social exclusion (imposed or self-inflicted)' (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 172). Therefore, young people's transgressions and their parents childrearing practices should not be understood merely as transmitted from one generation to another due to families' bad habits *per se*, nor can they be generically attributed to an abstract ongoing cycle of deprivation, within which people reproduce their own disadvantages. Rather, some problems connected to poverty, including, but not limited to child troubling behaviour and parenting difficulties, also seem to be (mis)interpreted by professionals in particular ways due to an institutional transmission of class prejudice that is embedded in historical, political and economic circumstances (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 173). I thus dedicate the last section of this chapter to presenting socially more contextualised understandings of people's lifeworlds and corresponding behavioural transgressions.

1.3.2. The systemic violence of class stratification and its impacts on youth deviance and parenting

In the French context, Bourdieu argued that 'to understand dispositions (…) [of the lower classes] one has to analyse the deep insecurity engendered by the experience of a whole lifetime lived under the threat of accident, illness [and] unemployment' (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 461). As rational and appropriate behaviour are culturally and economically conditioned, failing to acknowledge how crucial socioeconomic circumstances are for an individual's 'being in the world' (Bourdieu 2000: 135; see also Charlesworth 2003: 84) perpetuates the distorted belief that the propensity for (mis)behaviour is natural, rather than 'the product of a quite particular individual and collective *history*' (Bourdieu 2000: 70, emphasis added). According to Bourdieu, only a stable present and a minimum level of economic and social security allow for forward planning of practices that seem optimal for the future (Bourdieu 2000: 70-72), including those concerning parenting and other aspects of upbringing.

Therefore, Bourdieu and Balazs warned against drawing premature or definite conclusions about the causes of behaviour, events and life pathways. When exploring what jeopardises the economic stability of people from the lower classes and triggers their social downfalls, they found a variety of seemingly random and unconnected reasons, including bereavement, divorce, health problems and unemployment. However, Bourdieu and Balazs concluded that these 'chance events' are actually more likely to occur in some backgrounds than in others and, most importantly, that they 'set off effects that are themselves also inscribed, as potentialities, in specific economic and social conditions' (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 362), and could thus be perceived as their proxies.

Similarly and in the UK context, Valerie Walkerdine has argued that responses to delinquency or parenting should not focus on behaviour, as it is neither the habits of the working classes nor their familial relationships that are transferred from one generation to the other. Rather, the division of the poor into the working and non-working at different stages in Britain's history has provided an understanding of disadvantage that has persisted to this day, namely that the undeserving poor remain impoverished due to their inherently improper lifestyles, including flawed parenting, as well as their unconformity, inclusive of criminality (Walkerdine 2015: 168-172). As this belief has provided the 'material and discursive conditions under which lives (…) [have been] led' (Walkerdine 2015: 169) for such a long time, it has resulted in continuous intergenerational insecurity for people that are categorised as undeserving.

For Walkerdine, the intergenerational transmission of poverty is thus really a socio-politically and institutionally reinforced transference of class stratification that causes the 'embodied experience of suffering' in people's everyday lives (Walkerdine 2015: 175). In the realm of parenting, for example, it has positioned the middle class mother, who wants to and can take the time to engage with their children, especially academically, as the norm of appropriate parenting. This has sidelined the class-conditioned material reality of childrearing and demonised some working class mothers as inadequate through the rhetoric of psychology (Walkerdine 2015: 172).

Walkerdine's analysis therefore opposes simplistic understandings of crime as caused by individual or familial risk factors and transmitted to the next generation. It suggests that the passing down of behaviour can also be understood as a symptom of a family's continued experience of 'being classed' (Walkerdine

2015:173). Since constant classification across several generations might be traumatic and could evoke negative feelings that further strain people's everyday lives, youth deviance and parenting difficulties should be perceived as shorter and smaller historic pieces of a longer and larger history of trauma — in the case of the UK, that of class divide (Walkerdine 2015: 173-177).

Furthermore and when exploring the moral significance of class in Britain, Sayer has found that, apart from having material impacts, inequalities can have a profound effect on people's (in)ability to pursue commitments, including to their children. According to Sayer, parenting practices are indeed a central medium for the passing on of habits, including misbehaviour, between generations, but they always have to be interpreted in social context. Not only can middle class parents ensure smoother paths to adulthood for their children due to their economic and cultural capital, but they are also dominant, socially, in defining what comes to be perceived as appropriate childrearing and behaviour in the first place (Sayer 2005: 127).

Thereby, for Sayer, a system is truly egalitarian only when it acknowledges both the visible physical markers as well as the covert impacts of class on conduct and relationships, inclusive of those between young people and their parents, as well as on the interactions of both with practitioners. According to Sayer, social injustices attack the roots of working class people's lives and shape their personalities, so they can generate histories of resentment and opposition as well as affect behaviour intergenerationally (Sayer 2005: 208-209). However, if the hidden repercussions of social class remain unrecognised in an institutional context, continuous defiant behaviour in some families can be misunderstood and carelessly interpreted as a transmission of bad character across generations.

Moreover, Simon Charlesworth (2003) has examined the personal consequences of poverty and disadvantage in industrial parts of South Yorkshire after the decline of the welfare state and deindustrialisation. He found that, in these communities, the *laissez-faire* economic processes have caused mass unemployment and hindered the territorial, familial and occupational solidarity once fostered by the trade unions (Charlesworth 2003: 5). As people's identities were shaped through their embodied reactions to the changed social climate (Charlesworth 2003: 84), the economic downfall resulted in a general loss of dignity and a lack of humanity among the working classes (Charlesworth 2003: 3, 10)

Charlesworth has argued that class is crucial for the formation of personhood (Charlesworth 2003: 171), so the lack of economic, social and symbolic capital as well as a consequent experience of being excluded can come to direct the lives of 'powerless and politically dispossessed people everywhere' (Charlesworth 2003: 12). A sense of emptiness can hinder individuals' agency and contaminate their social and intimate lives (Charlesworth 2003: 175-176), possibly triggering negative affective responses of anger and aggression (Charlesworth 2003: 83).

In parallel to Sayer, Charlesworth has concluded that only a 'naïve humanist universalism' (Charlesworth 2003: 7) would interpret negative emotional reactions of underprivileged people as flaws of their character and responsibilise them for the clusters of social problems — ill physical and mental health, drug problems, lack of job opportunities, delinquency — that they are more likely to experience. Rather, these difficulties should be perceived as individualised effects of poverty that define the experience of being a stigmatised person 'of a certain distinct kind' from birth on (Charlesworth 2003: 7).

In addition, Charlesworth has claimed that there is a denial about class 'at

the heart of English institutions' (Charlesworth 2003: 48), so disadvantage, poverty and people's everyday lives, including their behavioural problems, are not neutrally perceived, described and interpreted in an organisational setting. People's language — both verbal and non-verbal — is part of their 'bodily hexis' (Bourdieu 1991: 13-17, 86-89; see also Charlesworth 2003: 234) and reflects their relation to the social world, including the institutional matrix. Since, according to Charlesworth, 'the major social institutions of British culture' (Charlesworth 2003: 234) bolster the inherited cultural and symbolic capital of the middle classes and allow their further acquisition, while negatively marking the home-acquired capital of the working people, the latter internalise the lifelong rejections of state agencies and (re)act accordingly (Charlesworth 2003: 234-239).

Therefore, for Charlesworth, working class people can be stigmatised within an institutional milieu based on class if their behaviours (for example blunt speaking, profane manners or transgressions) are uncritically described and interpreted as mere deviations from the norm, rather than possibly legitimate ways in which they refuse to recognise the legitimacy of agencies that have been systematically excluding them. Furthermore, Charlesworth has argued that institutions in the UK unconsciously deny the impacts of class on the outcomes of professional interactions (Charlesworth 2003: 48). In addition, he has posited that class inflicts hidden injuries that come to '*haunt'* consecutive generations of working class people (Charlesworth 2003: 69, 6, emphasis added). By intruding into their intimacy, friendships and relations, the strains of social class dwell upon individuals and imprint themselves in their bodies and senses, causing anxiety and possibly manifesting themselves in behaviours and practices (Charlesworth 2003: 167-169) as well as in interactions between people of different social locations.

Similarly, Avery F. Gordon has implied that what 'haunts' interactions are not only unresolved personal issues with deceased loved ones or enemies, but also prolonged misrecognition of living people or unacknowledged social injustices, including unarticulated relationships of power that have been concealed through history and have seemingly faded (Gordon 2008: 8, 180-190). For Gordon, silenced social matters do not disappear, but are displaced into imaginary dimensions, in which every culture can find what it has excluded and from which unacknowledged issues dwell upon future generations like ghosts (Gordon 2008: 178). Since, according to Gordon, haunting lies in mythical spaces beyond the individual and the society, it is crucial to explore silenced and unresolved injustices that are not comprehensible at first sight (Gordon 2008: 27-63).

Furthermore, Gordon has argued that unlike the intergenerational transmission of trauma, the transference of haunting from one generation to the other is not fatalistic, but signals the hope of resolving repressed unfairness in the future (Gordon 2008: 63-64). Also in issues concerning class relations, haunting reflects 'the utopian' that the state has been trying to hide, and indicates the potential that the functioning of the system could become socially more just (Gordon 2008: 127). According to Gordon, to eradicate the dehumanising conditions of social life, it is therefore crucial to examine the ways in which invisible systemic discrimination, including that based on social class, manifests itself in everyday life as well as haunts people's personhoods and interactions by directing their cognitive and affective decision-making (Gordon 2008: 194-199).

Similarly, Bourdieu argued that people's '*being in* the world' (*illusio*) is influenced by something distant and absent that guides behaviour practically and corporeally, rather than only rationally (Bourdieu 2000: 135; emphasis in original).

In opposition to approaches that explore the social world only through examining either individuals/groups or the macro level, Bourdieu suggested that sociological enquiry be relational and dispositional. More specifically, he encouraged studying the relationships between dispositions of the agents' bodies and potentialities of the situations within which they find themselves to tease out and unveil the otherwise invisible objectivities of social phenomena (Bourdieu 1998: vii-ix), especially the hidden and muted systemic violence caused by class stratification that is felt on an interpersonal and interactional level (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 628).

As this dissertation aims to explore some of the covert ways in which class might impact the interactions between practitioners and behaviourally challenging young people as well as their parents across a range of institutions that help them with their problems, it seems reasonable to employ Bourdieu's 'philosophy of action' (Bourdieu 1998: viii) as the wider framework through which the gathered empirical data will be examined. However before using the next chapter to present Bourdieus's theory and the work of other authors that, together, provide the analytical framework through which the narratives of young people, parents and practitioners will be interpreted, I briefly summarise the main points of the first chapter below.

1.4. Concluding comments

The literature review in this chapter exposes some of the ways in which social class affects formal and informal responses to young people's troubling behaviour across different institutional contexts, especially the school and the youth justice system. Since the 18th century, the web of services that help families in need has widened and the control over disadvantaged children and parents has increased.

In addition, politicised family and crime control policies have encouraged the perception that youth deviance develops as a consequence of faulty childrearing, familial risk factors, and mirroring of bad behaviour that is passed down intergenerationally. As a consequence, developmental explanations of delinquency, and a belief in the transmission of crime from one generation to the other, have also become influential in criminological theory and youth justice practice.

However, such understandings of young people's challenging behaviour as well as their desistance from crime seem unsatisfactory since the research presented in this chapter also reflects classed selection effects of institutions that deal with children in trouble and their parents, and steer them on different life pathways. As families' behavioural transgressions are, in part, shaped by classed institutional working practices, alternative explanations of the intersections between youth deviance, parenting and social class are necessary. Nevertheless, since the exact ways in which institutional class biases might manifest themselves in professional interactions on the ground remain underresearched, it seems relevant to explore if, how and why professionals across agencies might respond contrastingly to families from different social locations, and to develop a corresponding analytical framework and research design.

CHAPTER 2: YOUTH DEVIANCE, PARENTING AND SOCIAL CLASS: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF PROFESSIONAL INTERACTIONS

2.1. Pierre Bourdieu: Habitus, field and a relational understanding of social class

When interpreting people's perceptions, decisions and actions, Bourdieu transcended the common dichotomy between rational choice theory and structuralism. According to Bourdieu, individuals' practices are neither a result of their autonomous and conscious judgment, nor are they determined by their social position. Rather, practices stem from the two-way interplay between the 'objective structures' (the field) and the 'incorporated structures' (the habitus) (Bourdieu 1998: vii-viii) of all of the actors involved in an interaction based on the composition, volume and evolution of their economic, cultural and social capital (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 108).

More specifically, Bourdieu used the concept of 'field' as a metaphor for different realms of the social world, in which classes compete in what he called a 'game'. According to Bourdieu, the outcomes of the game in any given field depend on people's socioeconomic status, determined by their distance from necessity. In other words, individuals will be more or less adapted to a specific field and will interact more or less successfully within it based on the structure and levels of their capital as well as their corresponding dispositions (habitus) and ways of adapting to situations (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: xx-xxi). For Bourdieu, class thus predicts the approximate starting points and the most probable points of arrival for individuals, and is a theoretical concept, construed by the whole set of practices across the diverse fields, whereby its explanatory power remains quite consistent, albeit with distinct forms of capital playing bigger or smaller roles in different areas (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 100-108).

Moreover, Bourdieu argued that, on an abstract level, class is (re)constituted through struggles between diverse social fractions, whereby the efforts of one group to gain an advantage are always cancelled out by similar attempts of the other groups, so the system of distribution is only displaced, while the structural gap between classes — along with the corresponding differentiations and rankings — is maintained and thereby constant (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 153-160). However, what is crucial for the topic of this dissertation is that the gaps based on different types and amounts of capital are also reflected in people's dispositions, perceptions and practices as well as in responses of others to these manifestations of social class in interactions on the ground. By drawing on Bourdieu, it therefore seems reasonable to examine how a child or their parent's social location could impact the ways in which they are perceived and responded to by professionals that help them with their difficulties in practice.

According to Bourdieu, habitus is the 'structured structuring structure' (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 166) between the public and the private sphere that organises individuals' perceptions and practices according to the classed social order and transforms them into distinctive lifestyles and signs. This way, manners and conduct come to indicate class background and become judged and qualified diversely (e.g. on a continuum between distinguished vs. vulgar) in interactions based on the actors' social locations. As a consequence, individuals' economic, cultural and social resources — or the lack thereof — are transformed relationally into symbolic and (il)legitimate capital across the social field (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 160-166).

Furthermore and similarly to developmental psychologists and criminologists, Bourdieu, too, perceived childhood as a crucial stage in the formation of personhood. Contrary to them, however, Bourdieu did not focus only

on the impacts of parenting on the young person's development, but highlighted the importance of early experiences in producing the structures of habitus that come to form the basis of the person's perceptions and actions. Furthermore, Bourdieu did not disregard the interplay between home-acquired habitus and the environment, but saw their intersections as central in shaping an individual's practices and the ways in which others perceive them. For Bourdieu, practices are externalised manifestations of familial necessity and are usually employed subconsciously and without specific intent. Nevertheless, home-learnt behaviour can become subject to 'negative sanctions' as soon as the milieu within which it is responded to and evaluated is socially too remote from the one it fitted originally (Bourdieu 1977: 78-79).

In addition, Bourdieu perceived habitus to be a 'unifying principle' that guides agents across social spheres, be that the familial realm or the domain of economic decisions. According to Bourdieu, habitus consolidates the functioning of seemingly separate and independent fields and endows them with a sense of homogeneity, objectivity and structure that frame the subjectivity and agency of the individual acting within each and, at the same time, every one of them (Bourdieu 1977: 83-85). As has already been mentioned, Bourdieu argued that an individual makes habitus — along with its accompanying manners and bodily hexis — 'their own' (Bourdieu 1977: 87-88) through a 'gradual process of inculcation' (Bourdieu 1991: 12) from an early age, which equips them with the cognitive and affective ability to sense, practically, what to do and how to act within a given situation.

However, although practical sense can guide an actor's behaviour without their conscious deliberation (Bourdieu 1998: 25-26) and outside the specific field, within which their tact to assess the fulfilment of conditions to either express or

censor themselves was obtained (Bourdieu 1991: 13-20), Bourdieu, nevertheless, clarified that agents' (collective) action is still a function of the relationship between the habitus and the event, which, together, form a matrix for perceptions, appreciations and actions. Therefore, diverse situations might elicit different responses of a particular individual across social fields despite the generally unifying effect of habitus on dispositions (Bourdieu 1998: 83-84).

Most importantly for this thesis, Bourdieu concluded that people can be treated differently according to class since they are used to interacting, often subconsciously, with members of similar social locations based on their comparable distances from necessity (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 244). In interactions, class therefore becomes the 'match-maker' that brings individuals together or separates them based on a spontaneous mutual untangling of the habitus. According to Bourdieu, people do not only react as a consequence of a rational levelling of facts, but, rather, are also guided by their 'social sense', which is an 'unconscious deciphering of expressive features' of the body, broadly defined (behaviour, but also clothes, demeanour, use of language and pronunciation etc.) (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 238-239).

However, since the middle classes possess larger amounts and various types of capital, their lifeworlds are imbued with ease, so the ways in which they communicate and behave will usually set the norm. As distance from necessity signals freedom from the pressures put on 'common people', it becomes universally desired and approved (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 250-253). In addition, the absence of economic need and a consequent relaxed attitude are transformed into symbolic capital across institutions from school onwards. This way, middle class confidence becomes 'the most classifying privilege', but appears as the 'most natural one' from

an early age, while working class practices serve as a derogatory reference point (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 48-50). It therefore becomes apparent that the institutional redefinition of class-induced corporeal and practical differences into innate distinctions is based on 'an ideology of natural taste' (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 61), rather than on actually inherent diversities, and can indirectly discriminate against the lower classes.

For Bourdieu, it is thus important to examine the relational aspects of the social world (Bourdieu 1991: 14) and the ways in which class-conditioned power is maintained through interactions between the judging and the judged person, but also how these differentiations might be bolstered by institutional working practices and rules (Bourdieu 1991: 51). To understand if, how and why people — including behaviourally challenging children and their parents — might be indirectly discriminated against in professional interactions, it is therefore crucial to explore the extent to which this could be happening due to the inscription of the social world into the cognitive and affective structures of the interacting parties, or, rather, the institutionalised characteristics of the situation (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 473).

Furthermore, a relational understanding of class also corresponds better with a relational conception of youth deviance that seems to offer a more appropriate foundation through which to understand the development and continuation of as well as the desistance from young people's troubling behaviour. It is to explaining the mechanisms behind possible indirect discrimination based on class habitus and/or the circumstances of the situation as well as to presenting an alternative process-focused concept of deviance that I turn to in the next part of this chapter.

2.2. Indirect discrimination and a negotiation (amplification or de-escalation) of deviance according to social class

According to Bourdieu, tacit discrimination based on social class is hard to tease out or tackle, as it is not intentional, but derives from the unpremeditated convergence or distancing of individuals' habitus. In other words, Bourdieu argued that people act according to class-induced goals unknowingly and without following explicit rules or wittingly striving at discriminatory ends. In situations or interactions, habitus internalises the externalities of the social space and, at the same time, externalises peoples' internal class and familial belonging as to guide their practices and 'collectively orchestrate' them (Bourdieu 1977: 72; see also Bourdieu 2000: 146). Perceptions, decisions and actions between the interacting parties are thus triggered by a silent mutual anticipation of a future reaction, predicted according to the past conditions that produced it, rather than being either completely mechanical or the result of free will.

In these processes, however, only the practices that are familiar in that social space or dominant according to the prevailing habitus will be accepted, and those that are unlikely will be rejected (Bourdieu 1977: 77). For Bourdieu, the ways in which people perceive and react to situations — or a sense of how they should understand certain social conditions and respond to them — will thus be predictable, instantly comprehensible, assumed and agreed upon only amongst people of similar habitus based on the 'continuous reinforcement' of the same practices and in the absence of calculated coordination. Bourdieu therefore concluded that interactions are never only one-on-one relationships between individuals, so what happens in or results from situations — including formal encounters between lay people and professionals — does not depend merely on the

official criteria and characteristics of the setting, but is also influenced by the closeness of or the distance between actors' social positions (Bourdieu 1977: 79-82).

In other words, Bourdieu inferred that practices reflect class habitus, so they are unified within social groups that live in similar socio-economic conditions and diverse between classes. Nevertheless, while class-conditioned practical differences are, in themselves, understandable, Bourdieu argued that the disparate ways in which they might be assessed — either privately or publically within an institutional setting — can become problematic. If and when individuals and their conduct are not only evaluated based on the disclosed criteria of a particular field, but are also classified according to covert 'secondary properties' (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 96) that thus silently affect the causal explanations of behaviour, classed hidden criteria can become the real, but unacknowledged, generators of selection and exclusion.

Thereby, as Bourdieu asserted, it seems unsatisfactory to focus on individual variables and their effects on a person's current position and future, as the complete set of relationships and interactions that affect their trajectory is always partly masked (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 95-100). By examining the multifaceted influences of capital on interactions, Bourdieu's approach avoided the drawbacks of some quantitative research that reduced the explanation of complex social phenomena to a limited number of predetermined and seemingly independent factors, thus often misinterpreting the regularity of some incidences in certain circumstances as causality (Sayer 2005: 72-74). In addition, and according to Bourdieu, the competition of individual actors and social groups for goods as well as the struggles and relationships between them across diverse fields 'are not incidental to class, but constitutive of it' (Sayer 2005: 80-81). Therefore, Bourdieu's understanding of

social class as multidimensional and established in- as well as establishing interactions corresponds well with a relational understanding of trouble, including youth deviance.

In his foreword to Emerson's (2015) work on the negotiation of everyday trouble, Jack Katz has shown that academic understandings of crime and deviance are predominantly still predictive as they perceive troubling behaviour in time 2 as a given and explain it with causal mechanisms in time 1.[8] Emerson's research on trouble, including delinquency, is, on the other hand, 'process-attentive' and has revealed that the ways in which people understand deviance in time 2 also results from how its presumed causes in time 1 are interpreted through informal and formal interactions (Emerson 2015: 25).[9]

Katz has therefore argued that crime is actually 'phantasy phenomena', constructed by predictive sociological theories that treat deviants and their problems as ready-made instead of subject to negotiation. In addition, by unwittingly framing people's difficulties in a certain way and regardless of how these people interpret them, predictive approaches also legitimise the official exercise of power against them. On the other hand, the perceptions and narratives of troubling individuals about their own challenging behaviour have revealed that people's deviance is not entirely pre-existent, but is also shaped according to how others respond to it and how the subjects in trouble react to these anticipated responses in return (Emerson 2015: 27-30).

Based on this finding, Emerson has indicated that specific forms of deviance

[8] The numbers 1 and 2 are used here to indicate the time sequence of events, causes and perceptions. The aim of the numbers is to outline that time 1 preceded time 2.

[9] Another alternative to predictive theories on crime and deviance is, apart from process-attentive approaches, the inquiry of narrative criminology that does not percieve deviants' stories of crime as providing data on the causes of their offending, but, rather, as guiding their future actions by triggering their transgressions or desistance (Presser and Sandberg 2015).

are generated after (inter)personal problems are identified, defined and responded to (Emerson 2015: 48-49). In addition, he has stressed that, to understand how and why a particular definition of deviance is accepted in each case, it is important to examine both formal interactions and the informal processes that either precede and lead to official involvement or are at work simultaneously with it (Emerson 2015: 52-53). As a consequence, Emerson has concluded that trouble has a prior 'ontological reality'[10] (Hulsman 1986: 66) only to some extent, while it evolves and is either amplified or remains, in Goldstein's terms, of 'low visibility' (Goldstein 1960; cited in Emerson 2015: 632) according to how institutions or individuals react to it. While some private issues or the intimate matters of certain people stay confidential, other problems or the difficulties of particular individuals escalate into public affairs through unofficial and/or official interactions (Emerson 2015: 54-55, 135).

Furthermore, Emerson's research has also exposed the mechanisms through which deviance can come to be interpreted diversely and people might be dealt with unequally. Confirming Bourdieu's suggestion that people's actions are guided by their practical sense based on the anticipation of a future reaction, but according to past experience, Emerson's observations of informal and formal contacts have disclosed that the treatment of clients — be that mental health patients, the accused, or prisoners — depends significantly on how their cases are initially qualified according to the history of incidents that have been dealt with within a given interpersonal relationship or institutional setting.

If the case is identified as 'typical', it is usually interpreted within a 'restricted pool of "candidate troubles"' (Emerson 2015: 222-223), whereby the

[10] The expression that trouble has 'no ontological reality' paraphrases Hulsman's (1986) quote that 'crime has no ontological reality'.

complexities of its events are ignored. As a consequence, suggestions on how to resolve the case are determined quickly and often one-sidedly, rather than deliberated and agreed upon between the two parties. In 'unprecedented' or 'special' cases, however, clients feel — based on verbal and non verbal reactions of the opposite parties — that their cases are open to reinterpretation and the outcomes are subject to negotiation between both agents of the interaction, rather than being predetermined by one (Emerson 2015: 29-30, 220-226).

Moreover and by drawing on Kitsuse (1964), Emerson has concluded that behavioural problems are exacerbated or minimised relationally not only based on the organisation of social control in a particular field, but also according to an individual's social location or the personal distance between the interacting parties (Emerson 2015: 536). However, Emerson has added that, in formal interactions, troubles are also partly transformed based on the official policies, organisational rules and institutional working practices that professionals have to follow (Emerson 2015: 565-566).

In a similar manner, Bourdieu stressed that people's social positions are determined predominantly based on the levels of their economic, social and cultural capital, but their actions are, at the same time, not guided entirely by a narrow economic logic. Across the different social fields, practices and decisions also emerge according to specific rules within these fields that help transform the individual's class-conditioned capital into its legitimate forms. Since, in contemporary societies, there is no overarching authority and power is dispersed across the social spheres (e.g. the economic, political, artistic and domestic sphere), each of these realms functions partly based on its own rules of conversion. In addition, transformations of capital into its valued shapes are nowadays often

institutionalised, so interactions are also subject to specific organisational processes that can help perpetuate or extinguish class inequalities (Bourdieu 1991: 15-25).

To demonstrate how deviance is negotiated according to class within an institutional context, Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh have explained the ways in which truancy is managed in British state schools. In parallel to the findings of research presented in the first chapter of this thesis, Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh have shown that the institutions, aimed at regulating truancy, seem to propel the same disadvantaged young people into trouble, rather than ensuring they stay out of it. They argue that agencies fail to motivate parents to cooperate with the schools in preventing non-attendance, but, rather, succeed in further alienating them from both the school and their children. However and most importantly, organisations and professionals that regulate truancy amplify, rather than deescalate, non-attendance and accompanying difficulties for working class pupils, whereby they perpetuate the view that the working classes are not only economically, but also morally inferior to the middle classes (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 135).

By drawing on Young (1971) and in line with the reasoning of Bourdieu on class differences as well as Emerson on the negotiation of deviance, Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh conclude that when practitioners interact with working class truant families, they escalate their problems by choosing to deal with their most atypical familial situations, presenting them as stereotypical and then comparing them to middle class scenarios that are over typical. At the same time, professionals systematically sideline the additional factors (poverty, illness, unemployment, lack of a sense of community in schools etc.) that working class parents mention in these procedures in order to deescalate the dispute as well as diminish their own culpability and the responsibility of their children (Carlen,

Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 135-137).

It thus becomes apparent that both Bourdieu's relational understanding of class as well as Emerson's process-attentive account of deviance have something to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the intersections between youth deviance, parenting, and social class as well as of the selection effects of institutions mapped out in the previous chapter. Namely, the analysis of this body of work implies that delinquency should not only be understood as misbehaviour that is triggered by individual and familial risk factors, especially flawed parenting, and then responded to by a plethora of agencies within youth justice. Alternatively, youth deviance could also be perceived as conduct that is initially challenging merely to some degree, but is additionally (re)created, shaped and negotiated, also according to class, in formal and informal reactions to it across diverse institutional contexts. However, in order to satisfy the main objective of this dissertation — which is to understand the precise processes behind the classed effects of agencies that deal with behaviourally challenging young people and their parents from the perspectives of the actors involved in professional interactions on the ground — the theoretical framework provided in this chapter so far requires the application of additional concepts.

2.3. Beyond Pierre Bourdieu: Habitus, field and the relational understanding of social class revisited

2.3.1. Bourdieu and Wacquant and the undeterministic and divided habitus

Bourdieu's explanation of the interplay between habitus and field as well as Emerson's relational concept of deviance imply that children and their parents might be responded to unequally according to class and pushed in separate

directions in professional interactions due to clashes between practitioners' and family members' habitus as well as a consequent exacerbation or minimisation of families' difficulties through continuous institutional surveillance or the lack thereof. On the other hand, however, and as will be further explained below, people's habitus neither always guides them subconsciously, nor necessarily determines their practices. In addition, habitus does not unavoidably dictate individuals' perceptions and decisions across all social fields and subjects of diverse habitus might differ in some aspects of their lifestyles, but they may also be quite similar in others.

In other words, people have 'complex personhoods', so class belonging does not completely shape their worldviews, choices and actions or the interactions between them (Gordon 2008: 4-5). Furthermore, while class might impact individuals' dispositions, the latter may also be, at the same time, affected by the particular situation, within which the opposing parties are brought together to interact and reach a decision. To explore and understand more specifically the ways in which class differences as well as factors beyond the discrepancies in habitus might impact the outcomes of the relationships between youth justice practitioners on one side and behaviourally children and their parents on the other, it is thus useful to upgrade the theories on the relational nature of class and deviance with a narrower analytical framework, within which the parties' perceptions and negotiations can be interpreted.

However, before finalising this theoretical framework, it is important to, once more, clarify those Bourdieu's understandings of social class that require additional attention. Therefore, the brief summary of Bourdieu's work below and the critique of his concepts that will follow, together, provide a matrix for a more

nuanced understanding of why and how class background can trigger diverse professional treatment based on the discrepancies in the negotiating parties' habitus alone or the interplay between the agents' habitus and the situational circumstances of their decision-making.

For Bourdieu, habitus is acquired in early childhood through gradual and unconscious inculcation into the individuals' bodily, cognitive and affective structures based on the interplay between their family-conditioned functioning and the rites of institutions across the social field. Consequently, people perceive the social world and their position within it as natural, so they take it for granted (Bourdieu 1998, 35-60; see also Bourdieu 2000: 173). Bourdieu thus posited that a person feels 'like a "fish in water"' (Bourdieu 1990: 90, 108; see also Bourdieu 1991: 129; Bourdieu 2000: 14, Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 127) based on their practical sense and usually without conscious deliberation (Bourdieu 1991: 130-131) whenever there is an immediate fit ('*amor fati*', 'necessary coincidence', 'tacit agreement') between their habitus and the rules of a particular field (Bourdieu 2000: 143-144, 177).

However, it seems relevant to clarify that, within academia, habitus has often been inaccurately interpreted as functioning exclusively on a subconscious level and without deliberation, thereby inevitably leading to classed decisions based on 'practical sense.' To refute this assumption, Bourdieu and Wacquant have argued that the expectations of the field will correspond with the embodied dispositions of actors' habitus in most, but not necessarily in all cases. In certain conditions, people will decide and act based on more calculated consideration and similarly to a rational weighing of costs and benefits, especially if they are in a social position to do so (Bourdieu and Wacquant 192: 131).

Secondly, Bourdieu and Wacquant have warned that, in most interactions, actors' habitus will be confirmed by their experiences with the social world since people are more likely to encounter and act within circumstances that correspond with their original dispositions. Nevertheless, for Bourdieu and Wacquant, 'habitus is not fate', so some situations might encourage individuals to reinforce the predictable outcomes, while others can push them to change the course of 'relatively irreversible' action. In other words, habitus entails predictable potentialities that will only be fulfilled in specific structural conditions. In changed circumstances, however, habitus can trigger different and less expected practices (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 132-135).

For Bourdieu and Wacquant habitus is thus 'mediating' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 132), so social actors are neither determined by their socio-economic backgrounds, nor do they act completely class-neutrally or sensibly. Rather, individuals are *'determined only to the extent that they determine themselves'* (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 136; emphasis in original). More precisely, while people's dispositions, perceptions and actions are framed by the entire social field and the subfields within which they function, agents can, at the same time, be reflexive and interpret the specific situation within which they find themselves beyond its habitus-endowed definition as well as (re)act accordingly (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

In other words, Bourdieu argued that habitus is not a deterministic, uniform, all-encompassing or unchangeable concept that would inevitably and blindly guide actors' perceptions and decisions. In order not to completely disregard individuals' agency and their power to resist the working forces of habitus (Bourdieu 2000: 61-65), Bourdieu indicated:

> '…that the degree to which a habitus is systematic (or, on the contrary, divided and contradictory) and constant (or fluctuating and variable) depends on the social conditions of its formation and exercise, and that this can and must therefore be measured and explained empirically'. (Bourdieu 2000: 64)

Therefore, how habitus plays out in practice also depends on the situation in which individuals find themselves (Bourdieu 2000: 159). People's tendencies are affected by their social position, but their initially class-conditioned dispositions do not determine their actions or the outcomes of their decisions, but are, in Bourdieu's words, in a 'virtual state, like a soldier's courage in the absence of war' (Bourdieu 2000: 149-151). In the private sphere, people are therefore more likely to surround themselves with subjects of a similar habitus and acquire objects that fit their class-conditioned inclinations. In the public realm, however, the responses that individuals expect based on their primary habitus might clash with the practical demands of a particular field, whereby the unequal treatment of people according to class could result as one of the consequences (Bourdieu 2000: 150-151).

Furthermore, Bourdieu perceived habitus as a continuum between systematic and unifying on one side or divided and contradictory on the other (Bourdieu 2000: 64). In addition, he implied that a person's habitus can fit a particular field well, but might be dissonant with the standards of another (Bourdieu 2000: 160-161). Bourdieu also allowed for a habitus to be 'divided against itself' (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 511) as in the case of an individual's social mobility. In other words, Bourdieu believed that an increase in a person's capital could create tensions between their primary habitus and their newly acquired dispositions, making it harder for them to choose their being-in-the-world (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 510-511).

However, Bourdieu simultaneously resisted the notion of a fractioned habitus, according to which an individual could have diverse and either more or less

class-conditioned dispositions towards the rules of different social fields. Similarly, he explicitly opposed the idea that a person could have separate and contrasting cognitive, emotional and aesthetic inclinations as well as distinct corresponding attitudes, as that would undermine Bourdieu's main conclusion that dispositions are, in most cases, 'more systematic than one might think' (Bourdieu 2000: 64). Lastly, Bourdieu argued that the symbolic power over the dominated is rooted in and transmitted through knowledge exchange and communication, rather than explicit force, so the dispossessed must share the opinion of the dominating about their subordinate position and accept it based on the embodied and practical nature of habitus, rather than conscious and explicit consent (Bourdieu 2000: 198-199).

However, Bourdieu's view of a unified habitus that usually guides a person's dispositions, perceptions and actions similarly across all social fields as well as his conclusion that people of all social locations, but especially the disadvantaged, 'take the world for granted' (Bourdieu 2000: 143-144, 198-199) prevent a less fatalistic conception of class differentiation that would allow for a more benevolent interpretation of the relationships between people of diverse social classes on a micro level. Nevertheless, before presenting some of the alternative views on Bourdieu's main concepts, it is important to note that these additional understandings should not be interpreted as opposing Bourdieu's theories. Rather, they should be perceived either as clarifications and extensions of Bourdieu's notions of habitus and field or explanations of these phenomena on a different level, thereby distinguishing more diligently between class-related macro processes and their manifestations in social relations between actors on the ground.

2.3.2. Multidimensional habitus and a moral understanding of social class

2.3.2.1. The multifaceted and narrative habitus

In his pragmatic critique of critical sociology, Boltanski has argued that Bourdieu's work is 'too powerful and too vague' at the same time as it analyses all relations of control — both highly structured and formalised hierarchal positions as well as strictly personal interactions — with the same explanatory apparatus (Boltanski 2011: 20). In addition and in line with Garfinkel, Boltanski added that by claiming that actors' behaviour across social fields is generally directed by their early and subconscious acquisition of dominant social norms, critical sociology treats individuals like 'cultural dopes' (Garfinkel 1967: 68; cited in Boltanski 2011: 20) that are usually helplessly guided by their primary dispositions and unable to critically asses situations.

Similarly and drawing on the work of Lahire, Silva has indicated that habitus is neither homogenous within an individual or between people of the same social location nor fully acquired in childhood, but is also impacted by later experiences, e.g. with peers. In addition, agents are not simply led by their class-conditioned dispositions, but have (limited) control over what will guide their actions. Most importantly, a person can have mixed or even contradictory dispositions towards different realms of the social world, whereby their interests, motivations and decisions are not merely functions of their class habitus, but are also affected by other aspects of their identity (Lahire 2004; cited in Silva 2016a: 77 and Silva 2016b: 169-171).

In the field of criminology, Sandberg and Fleetwood have used Bourdieu's theory of practice to analyse the extent to which offenders' narratives are shaped by habitus as well as if and how stories of crime interact with the social field and

(re)construct it. According to Fleetwood and in parallel to Bourdieu, the available stories that a person can draw upon are not wholly determined by their background, but can be limited according to their social position (Fleetwood 2015: 43). However, it is not only class divisions, but also those based on gender and ethnicity, to name a few, that impact the narratives that people choose to describe their perceptions and actions, including offending behaviour (Brookman 2015: 210). In addition, people's stories of crime are also shaped substantially by institutional discourses, within which they are told (e.g. the rehabilitation discourse) (Fleetwood 2016: 182). As a consequence, a 'narrative habitus' (Fleetwood 2016: 182) is not necessarily unified, but can be multifaceted or even internally contradictory (Brookman 2015: 210).

In their qualitative study of Black drug dealers in Oslo, Sandberg and Pedersen discovered that offenders' self-narratives were (at least) dual based on the number of different discourses from which they were able to draw. Namely, prisoners' accounts of disadvantage derived from the conventional 'oppression discourse' about poverty and racism, fostered by the Norwegian welfare state, while their stories of crime formed part of the subcultural 'gangster discourse' that stemmed from their street lives before detention (Sandberg and Pedersen 2009: 33-52).

Based on their results, Sandberg and Pedersen imply that habitus is multidimensional, whereby the importance of each of its segments will depend on the roles that different forms and levels of capital (e.g. legitimate cultural capital and conventional discourse vs. illegitimate 'street capital' and 'gangster discourse') have played in an individual's biography thus far, which could help explain why people of similar backgrounds that function within the same field can tell quite

different stories. In addition, the habitus that is most enduring for an individual based on their personal history might also slip into other fields and impact their narratives there as well as possibly trigger misunderstandings and discrepancies (e.g. the accidental use of 'gangster discourse' may not be well received within an educational or occupational setting) (Sandberg and Pedersen 2009: 160).

Bourdieu's conceptual framework as well as the theoretical work and empirical studies that challenge it therefore unveil some of the ways in which classed social order is perpetuated through people's everyday practices, including their verbal and nonverbal communication. However, while Bourdieu focused on disclosing the structural circumstances in which such practices are embedded (Sandberg and Pedersen 2009: 35), his critics concentrate on how individuals (re)shape their class-conditioned dispositions and regulate the extent to which these guide their perceptions and biases as well as their corresponding decisions and actions. To explore class differentiation — inclusive of the diverse treatment of young people based on their social location within youth justice — Bourdieu's sociological conceptualisation of class and the empirical and theoretical attempts to challenge it should thus not be employed exclusively, but complementarily.

A merger of these views, rather than their separate application, enables the understanding of contemporary individuals — including practitioners whose decision-making is profoundly limited by their professional frameworks or young deviants that often draw on illegitimate discourses — and their practices as fluid and complex (Sandberg and Pedersen 2009: 33). While primary class habitus and the predominant narratives of a particular field might steer people's perceptions and behaviours to some extent, individuals are, at the same time, reflexive in their responses to the social world.

In addition, a combination of the two approaches implies that habitus is heterogeneous, rather than unified across fields, so people might not always react to others subconsciously and based only on their initial dispositions. Furthermore, habitus is also shaped by the particularities of a specific situation, so even people of the same social location can clash while trying to resolve a problem or agree on a distinct topic. On the other hand, individuals of different social classes can be strongly motivated to reach a consensus about a particular issue despite the possibly many other class-conditioned differences between them. However, while the implications of economic, social and cultural distinctions between classes have been extensively researched within social sciences, the potential of the commonalities between people regardless of their social location have not received much academic attention (Sayer 2005).

Before introducing the narrowest part of the analytical framework through which the negotiations of consensus and/or the possible distortions in decision-making — including, but not limited to those based on social class within youth justice — might be best understood, it is thus crucial to examine the areas in or the topics about which people of diverse backgrounds are more likely to agree. I therefore address both of these issues in the next section, whereby I begin with presenting people's mutual moral understandings of what matters regardless of their social location and their affective, rather than only practical, sense as both might be important in guiding their judgments and choices when they interact with others.

2.3.2.2. Sayer and the moral understanding of social class

In his work on distinction and the ways in which class belonging impacts dispositions as well as the relationships between individuals and groups, Bourdieu

was unique in examining the '"soft forms of domination"' (Sayer 2005: 16), rather than focusing on class subordination through the use of force or other explicit exercises of power. In this task, Bourdieu centred on micro struggles that emerge habitually and, in most cases, automatically between individuals based on their embodied class-conditioned differences. According to Sayer, however, Bourdieu's analysis largely neglected the ethical dispositions and moral judgments that emerge when individuals form opinions, reach decisions or (re)act in relation to agents of similar or adverse social locations (Sayer 2005: 16).

While exploring the moral significance of class, Sayer has asserted that studies of class relations should always take ethical assessments into account, as these are inherent in any, even seemingly purely aesthetic, evaluation (Sayer 2005: 15-21). More specifically, Sayer has argued that habitus predisposes members of certain backgrounds to (want to) acquire some objects more often than others and engage in specific practices, rather than their alternatives, but individuals across the board still evaluate significant goods and actions quite similarly. In other words, micro class struggles across fields emerge precisely because agents of different social locations compete for some of the same possessions, positions and treatment based on whether they believe these are important for their wellbeing (Sayer 2005: 119). Class differences thus stem from a quantitative maldistribution of things and practices, rather than their different qualitative evaluations by the privileged as opposed to the disadvantaged**.** For Sayer, people across class backgrounds have a complementary moral understanding of what matters and about the ways in which they want to be treated, which is additionally confirmed by the fact that they often — contrary to Bourdieu's expectations — refuse to take the social order for granted and challenge class relations (Sayer 2005: 119).

Furthermore, Sayer has indicated that while sociological theory and empirical research often focus on the differences and negative sentiments between social classes, they rarely acknowledge that, at he same time, most people will behave thoughtfully, caringly and respectfully to each other regardless of class origin. For Sayer, the mere fact that people accuse each other of classism (or, in parallel, racism or sexism) proves that, on the ground, they adhere to some common standards of fairness. For example, while the educational system might be classed on a macro level, not all teachers treat pupils diversely according to their socioeconomic background in everyday school interactions. In addition, not only people of a distant social location, but also members of our own class can behave rudely and unjustly towards us (Sayer 2005: 49).

Sayer's observations therefore confirm and further upgrade the adaptations of Bourdieu's class analysis summarised in the previous section of this chapter. Particularly, Sayer has concluded that an individual's moral dispositions as well as the ways in which they treat and interact with others do not depend only on their social location and corresponding class habitus, but also on their reflexivity and people's ability to regulate their perceptions and actions both cognitively and affectively. More precisely, people are neither completely rational, nor are they blindly guided by their embodied practical sense most of the time, as Bourdieu hypothesised, but they also respond to the social world according to their affective sense and a general concern for fairness (Sayer 2005: 47- 48).

Since agents across the board might have a common ethical understanding of what is important, Sayer has suggested that the struggles between classes are not merely disputes about status and power, but also negotiations about mutual respect and how to live equally well. Individuals of diverse class backgrounds might differ

in the material and aesthetic sense, but they can, at the same time, share moral principles. On the other hand, people of similar backgrounds may, depending on the social field within which they are negotiating, be guided by either their moral or their non-moral dispositions as well as a combination of both, so their narratives as well as their decisions and actions can be ambivalent (Sayer 2005: 3-4, 76).

Based on the latter, Sayer has argued that judgments are not only complex and dual in professionals and academics, but in lay people as well (Sayer 2005: 8). While an individual's moral views are indeed profoundly influenced by their quality of life and previous experiences, a person is not entirely determined by their social position and can transcend it (Sayer 2005: 7-9, 37-40). As a consequence, people do not only talk about inequalities in terms of how things are, but also how they should or should not be. For example, somebody from an underprivileged background might acknowledge that socioeconomic circumstances impact the propensity for criminality, but they may, at the same time, demand that people take responsibility for their actions, as disadvantage does not excuse antisocial behaviour. On the other hand, people from the middle classes can condemn the snobbery of the aristocracy, but simultaneously act snobbishly towards the lower classes (Sayer 2005: 4-7).

Sayer has therefore inferred that to understand better how 'inequalities are lived' and expressed (Sayer 2005: 38), it is crucial to 'take lay normativity seriously' (Sayer 2005: 5) and analyse individuals' ambivalent responses on the ground. According to Sayer, 'folk sociologies' (Sayer 2005: 4) might be nuanced and therefore more accurate than mainstream sociology in explaining the complexities of social inequalities (Sayer 2005: 5, 36-38). As ethical and affective responses depend on the person's original position in the social field, but they also — to a greater extent than material possessions and aesthetic preferences — cut

across class lines (Sayer 2005: 47-51, 143) they should become the main object of sociological enquiry (Sayer 2005: 37).

According to Sayer, examining subjects' moral evaluations of their own and others' perceptions and practices could therefore help understand the differences and similarities between people of diverse social locations beyond the reductionist division between the working and the middle class that is mostly based on income and visible markers. As a consequence, Sayer has suggested that research on social class and the classed implications of interactions — in the case of this thesis, those between behaviourally challenging children and the practitioners that help them with their difficulties — should include participants' narratives as 'rival (…) lay concepts' of class (Sayer 2005: 70), rather than merely objects of academic enquiry.

In this task, however, it is also reasonable to examine if, how and why negotiations between individuals might unwittingly play out discriminatorily according to class even when the interacting parties could reflect and draw on their similar moral understanding of the problem they are resolving. Sayer has indicated that, sometimes, actors judge other people based on material and aesthetic differences between classes as well as stereotypically attribute their behaviour to class position. At other times, however, agents are more cautious when assessing others' conduct and evaluate it on common ethical grounds (Sayer 2005: 4-5).

Furthermore and similarly to Emerson, Sayer has also argued that in familiar situations, people will examine problems 'on automatic' or, in Bourideu's words, as part of their 'feel for the game'. In less typical cases, however, agents will employ '"intelligent dispositions"' (Wood 1990: 214; cited in Sayer 2005: 27) and judge situations less intuitively, so their decision-making will be subject to more conscious deliberation (Sayer 2005: 45). As the underlying aim of this thesis is to

explore — from the perspectives of the actors involved in these processes on the ground — whether, how and why classed distortions might happen when practitioners across youth justice institutions interact with behaviourally challenging young people and their parents, it seems appropriate to, lastly, upgrade the broader Bourdieusian framework with narrower pragmatic viewpoints that might help better conceptualise when negotiations between parties and their outcomes can be perceived as unfair.

2.3.2.3. Boltanski and Thévenot and the polity model

Pragmatic sociology has moved the gaze from both the structural and the individual level and has developed its theoretical explanatory system based on numerous empirical observations of situations, in which actors interpret their own intentions and others' dispositions (Boltanski 2011: 23-24). Based on their findings and contrary to critical sociologists, Boltanski has asserted that when trying to reach an agreement, individuals are not passive and unaware of social injustices or their own positions, but are critical towards their opponents and often unveil their biases, including those based on social class (Boltanski 2011: 26-27).

Furthermore, the extensive fieldwork has enabled Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) to develop a theoretical model that helps conceptualise the ways in which people justify their reasoning and decisions when trying to resolve a dispute, broadly defined. In parallel to Sayer's finding that individuals often act with a common interest in reaching a fair result, Boltanski and Thévenot, too, have noticed that interacting parties are driven by a sense of justice, based on which they attribute or deny worth to people and things that they have to compromise and decide about. However, Boltanski and Thévenot have concluded that people do not only draw

justifications from one, but six 'worlds', each following a specific higher common principle and employing a distinct way of assessing worth (Boltanski 2011: 27; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 159-212).

In the *inspired world*, incentive and creative insight are highly valued, so worth is ascribed based on being original, spontaneous and bizarre, often in contrast to what is deemed worthy in the world at large. Furthermore, the *domestic world* is subjective and imbued with tradition, familial hierarchy and personal ties, therefore honesty, reliability and loyalty are desirable qualities within it. On the contrary, in the *world of fame*, reputation and success are the most appreciated as worth is assessed only in relation to the public. Within the *civic world*, individuals are guided by the general and collective will, thus their worth derives from following rules and procedures that divert them away from their particular interests. Moreover, in the *market world*, defined beyond the economic sphere, people are led by a desire to possess rarities and their worth is determined according to their eagerness to succeed as well as their ability to obtain goods. Finally, in the *industrial world*, the most reliable and effective are the worthiest, since value is attributed to the pursuit of efficiency and performance (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 159-212).

Despite employing different principles of assessing the beings in question, all six worlds have a shared underlying structure aimed at ensuring fair agreements. As humans are essentially equal, a specific form of worth cannot be ascribed to a certain person or a group of people in advance as if innate in them (*constraint of equality* or *principle of common humanity*) (Boltanski 2011: 27; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 65-80). In a dispute, it is therefore impossible to dismiss tensions between the six simultaneously available worlds by associating particular

worth only to people of certain personal characteristics, cultures, backgrounds or environments, as this would be — by presupposing associations akin to casts — inherently discriminatory and opposed to the principle of common humanity (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 75; 130-131, 215).

Nevertheless, the interacting parties can differentiate between objects or individuals according to their relative worth (*constraint of order*) and resolve a specific case or problem, but only if they agree, either explicitly or tacitly, on the grounds of evaluation first (Boltanski 2011: 27; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 65-80). In other words, although people live in a differentiated society and are repeatedly exposed to situations from different worlds of worth, they cannot, at once, employ argumentations from different worlds with equal explanatory power if they want to solve a concrete problem justly (Boltanski 2006: 28-29). For a decision to be fair, all of the actors involved in the dispute have to identify the nature of the case first and then agree upon the main principle of justification that they will use — as well as possibly on the marginal arguments that they will also take into account — to resolve it, so appropriate action can follow (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 216).

However, people might not always be willing or able — for a variety of reasons — to reach a consensus about the best possible solution to the problem in question. In addition, the interacting parties may not clearly articulate the available measures of worth that they are using as justifications, so these become impossible to agree upon. As a consequence, decision-making can be distorted and play out discriminatorily as well as feel unfair for either or all of the individuals involved (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 130-131; 215-223). Based on the critiques that research participants made as actors in resolving disputes, Boltanski concluded that

judgments can be unfair for two reasons: 1) due to the ways in which a decision is reached (‘*the modalities of judgment in a particular situation*’); 2) due to the format of the assessment itself (‘*the test format’*) (Boltanski 2006: 28-29; emphasis added).

In case of the former (1), injustices can occur if a participant in the dispute invokes a principle of worth that is not the same as the one on which the other interacting parties are concentrated on or if the parties do not base their judgment on officially announced principles, but on hidden and implicit criteria (Boltanski 2011: 28). In other words, as agents can draw from multiple worlds of worth at the same time, their decisions might be affected by the presence of beings from a world of worth that does not fit the issue in question, so that a person either unjustly: a) suffers a deficiency (‘*transport of deficiency*’); or b) benefits from a privilege (‘*transport of worth*’) (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 151, 219-221; emphasis added). In case of the latter (2), however, the way in which the test of justice is formatted alone favours an individual or a group of people in advance**,** and is therefore wholly discriminatory (Boltanski 2011: 28-29).

Furthermore, Boltanski and Thévenot have also illustrated how the theoretical model of (un)fairness presented above can be used to conceptualise injustices in practice. For example, a student suffers from a transport of deficiency (1a) when an exam takes into account not only their knowledge of the subject matter, but also their social origins, manifested in their distinction and manners. This way, an assessment of the industrial type is corrupted by evaluations from a domestic test of worth (Boltanski 2006: 28).

On the other hand, a pupil benefits from a transport of privilege (1b) if a board of teachers meets to punish them, but instead of only considering disciplinary procedures as set out in legal documents, they also draw on the personal bonds with

the pupil to reach a more benevolent and humane decision. Thereby, a test of a civic sort is impacted by assessments of worth that stem from the domestic world (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 307-308). In addition to discriminatory modalities of judgment, some tests of worth also exclude certain (groups of) people from evaluations in the first place (e.g. discriminatory eligibility criteria or job selection tests), whereby injustices are formalised and/or institutionalised (2) (Boltanski 2006: 29).

Based on the latter, Boltanski and Thévenot have concluded that every test is an evaluation of some kind of worth (e.g. to be a creative artist, a good parent, a famous actor, a fair teacher, an established entrepreneur, an efficient factory worker), but its assessment criteria should never *a priori* prevent any (group of) subject(s) from accessing worth of a specific sort. At the same time, in every test, the evaluation measures should be outlined and agreed upon, so the judgment is not arbitrary and its results do not play out unfairly for any of the interacting parties (Boltanski 2011: 29).

Although Boltanski and Thévenot's model of (un)fairness is not limited to explaining class-conditioned injustices only, it bears a striking resemblance to Sayer's understanding of how class inequalities develop on the ground. According to Sayer, class differentiation does not stem only from an unequal distribution of goods and assets on a macro level, but also from biased evaluations of their uses and practices as well as people associated with them on a micro level. In parallel to Boltanski and Thévenot's transports of deficiency and worth, Sayer has claimed that injustices occur when beings — either people, things or practices — are undervalued if associated with the disadvantaged (1a) and overvalued when related to the dominant (1b), regardless of their *actual* worth.

Furthermore and also similarly to Boltanski and Thévenot, Sayer has argued that what is perceived as good can sometimes be entirely 'monopolised' by one — generally the dominant — class, which systematically discriminates against the underprivileged through their automatic association with what is deemed bad (2) (Sayer 2005: 122-126). Sayer has thus concluded that interactions across the social field are permeated with direct, subtle and/or systematic manifestations of class contempt, which not only stigmatises lifestyles (clothes, manners of speaking, appearance and posture, behaviour, property), but also hides 'judgments of moral worth' (Sayer 2005: 123).

It therefore appears that Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model helps understand in a more nuanced way the relational nature of class differentiation and deviance as explained by Bourdieu and his critics as well as Sayer and Emerson. Not a separate application, but a combination of these theories thus seems to provide an appropriate framework through which to explore in more detail whether, why and how interactions between youth justice professionals and families with behaviourally challenging children could yield classed effects. Together, the outlined concepts can help disentangle if possible class disparities in professional treatment might stem from discrepancies between the interacting parties habitus and a consequent lack of their conscious deliberation about young people's behaviour or, rather, from institutionalised situational circumstances that guide dispositions, perceptions and actions of the interacting parties in a classed manner.

In this task, however, it seems important to draw on the narratives of actors involved in professional interactions — in the case of this thesis, on the accounts of behaviourally challenging young people and their parents as well as practitioners that help them with their problems across different institutions. Bourdieu argued

that people should not be presented through a 'borrowed discourse' (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 50-51), but should be able to provide their own accounts of the processes through which they believe disadvantage is dispersed throughout the social world (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 4, 64). By drawing on Bourdieu, Charlesworth has also indicated that 'there is nothing wise in describing vulnerable people through categories that are the product of their condition', so they should be presented 'through [their own] vocabulary of being-in-the-world' (Charlesworth 2003: 48).

Similarly, Boltanski has argued that only academics can hypothesise about the influence of structural circumstances on individual's perceptions and decisions, while real life situations are accessible to everybody and people have critical capacities to analyse them, so sociological enquiry should explore the social world through actors' own interpretations of their experiences (Boltanski 2006: 20-23, 43). As Sayer, too, has suggested that social inequalities should be examined through lay understandings and people's corresponding emotions (Sayer 2005: 7-9, 37), this thesis builds on the perspectives of professionals that work with families across youth justice institutions, troubled children and their parents to explore the classed distortions that might happen when they interact on the ground. However, before presenting and interpreting the research findings, it seems important to clearly outline the research questions and methods that were employed in gathering the data.

2.4. Researching youth deviance, parenting and social class in professional interactions

2.4.1. Research questions and research design

When using a Bourdieusian framework as the theoretical basis of research, it is important to consider if Bourdieu's work can also be employed as a methodological foundation for sociological enquiry. Narrative criminologists (see for example Sandberg and Fleetwood 2016) have warned that Bourdieu was often misunderstood as being overly deterministic in emphasising the structural constraints upon agency. However, as I have shown, Bourdieu did not deny the ability of individuals to act according to their class-neutral personal dispositions, but stressed that habitus profoundly predisposes people's perceptions as well as limiting both their verbal and non-verbal communication. The extent to which this will happen can only be explained empirically in each case (Bourdieu 2000: 64-65).

By drawing on Bourdieu, Sandberg and Fleetwood have argued that narrative criminology acknowledges the social embeddedness of agents' views and conduct, but it also, at the same time, emphasises that individuals actively recreate the field through their storytelling and use of language (Sandberg and Fleetwood 2016: 378). Similarly, this thesis, too, stems from Bourdieu's materialist analysis of structural and cultural constraints upon perceptions and (re)actions, but investigates participants' narratives and talk to develop a theoretically-informed study of whether, how and why the interactions between practitioners and behaviourally challenging young people as well as their parents might be classed.

This research has three associated aims. Firstly, it intends to explore if participants believe that their socioeconomic background profoundly moulds their family life, including parenting practices and children's behaviour. In this part, it

endeavours to disentangle whether people's habitus substantially determines their being in the world across social fields, or, rather, both professionals and lay people of diverse class backgrounds might think, feel and act similarly in some fields and regarding certain issues, but not others. The aim of these findings is to map out whether the class-conditioned differences and/or similarities in people's dispositions, perceptions and communication — both verbal and non-verbal — might impact upon how deviance and childrearing are responded to, shaped and negotiated in professional interactions.

Secondly, the study plans to outline the precise mechanisms behind the possible classed distortions in professional responses to and decisions about young people's challenging behaviour and their parents' childrearing. Thereby, it aims to make concrete the abstract conceptions of class, worth and just consensus outlined in the previous parts of this chapter. In particular, the above-presented notions of habitus, the moral understanding of class, and the polity model, might provide appropriate theoretical tools to conceptualise how and why children and their parents may be unwittingly treated unfairly in professional interactions on the ground. On the other hand, however, this standpoint may equally help understand potential cases of positive discrimination when professionals deal with families within an institutional setting.

Lastly, the study will examine whether a risk- and vulnerability-focused institutional discourse may encourage practitioners to perceive behaviourally challenging youth and their parents in a socially decontextualised way, contributing to classed distortions in professional evaluations of young people's transgressions and their parents' childrearing. The thesis also explores whether such professional responses might be additionally bolstered by lineal conceptions of time and agency

as well as particular working practices within youth justice and caring professions more generally.

The research was conducted in a county in Middle England[11] and comprised participant observation of two parenting courses, interviews with behaviourally challenging children, parents and practitioners that work with families across different agencies as well as focus groups with teenagers that have not been identified as experiencing observable conduct problems. As the research participants were not only professionals, but also parents and vulnerable children, ethical approval for the study was secured from the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) after an enhanced review for complex cases. Furthermore, since some of the interviewees were mental health professionals, the study also needed approval from the National Health Service (NHS). Separate application forms and extensive accompanying documentation were therefore prepared for the two ethical reviews before the onset of fieldwork.

Once ethical clearance was obtained, I sat in as an observer/group work assistant in two courses that support parents to deal with their challenging teenagers. The courses took place in an early intervention (EI) hub and ran twice a week for an hour and a half through two 4-month periods between October 2015 and January 2016 as well as February and May 2016. Before the onset of the parenting programmes, the course leader distributed information sheets about my study to prospective participants and obtained their written informed consent for me to attend and observe the sessions. Depending on their availability, between five and 15 parents came to the weekly meetings. The participants were in their mid- to late

[11] In the remaining parts of this thesis and to ensure the research participants' anonimity, the county in which the case study was conducted will be referred to as 'research county' and the county's capital 'research city', while the term 'city in the research county' will be used to indicate towns other than the county's capital.

30s, 40s and 50s. Most of the parents in the programme were women, with only four men across both groups. All of the parents were White.

In addition, 86 interviews were conducted in the course of research, with the first 15 practitioners interviewed between February and March 2015 and the rest of the 71 professionals, parents and young people interviewed between September 2015 and September 2016. Different information sheets about the study for professional- and lay adults — as well as age-appropriate documentation for children — were sent to team leaders by post or email and distributed to prospective participants. The practitioners who volunteered to be interviewed were advised to contact me by sending an email or calling to set a date and time for our meeting. Prospective child- and parent participants were initially asked to partake in the case study by their key workers. Once they expressed their willingness and interest to meet with me, I contacted them to arrange an interview.

At the onset of the interviews I briefly explained my research again to make sure the participants understood what it was about before obtaining their informed consent (Mason 2002: 80-83; see also Noaks and Wincup 2004: 46). If the children were below 16 years of age, I had to gain their parents' permission first since only 16-18-year-old minors are competent to give their own informed consent. If interviews were conducted with young people in care or otherwise institutionalised children, the consent of their biological parents as well as their (social) worker or other person that had parental responsibility for the child was sought in addition to the young person's consent regardless of their age (Economic Social and Research Council 2018; see also University of Oxford 2017).

Throughout the interviews, complete confidentiality and anonymity were assured. In addition, the research participants were reminded that they could stop

answering questions if they felt uncomfortable with me using the data in my thesis (Noaks and Wincup 2004: 48-50). All research participants also explicitly agreed that I use a Dictaphone to audiotape our conversations. The interviews with adult participants lasted between 40 minutes and three hours and the conversations with children were shorter, ranging from 15 minutes to an hour. After the interviews, the participants were given debrief sheets to access additional support in case they felt they needed it.

48 interviews (41 individual- and three group interviews) were carried out with practitioners — 17 men and 31 women — aged between 26 and 61. Three practitioners were Mixed-race and 45 were White. Interviews were conducted at the research county's youth offending teams (YOTs) and across agencies that work in partnership with YOTs to tackle the needs of young people who have offended or are exhibiting other forms of challenging behaviour. To grasp the perceptions of professionals from diverse institutional arrangements, semi-structured interviews were undertaken with senior managers and workers from YOTs (9) and various partner organisations, including early intervention (EI) (6), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) (9), education (6), the County Council (2), the City Council (1), charities for children and families (5), the police (9) and a clinical psychologist in the private sector.

In the YOTs, two managers were interviewed along with four youth justice support officers, a bail support officer, a social worker and an education, training and employment officer. Within EI, three interviewees were general EI support workers, two were specialist drug and alcohol misuse workers and one was a parenting specialist. The research in CAMHS comprised interviews with three child and adolescent psychiatrists (one in training), a child and adolescent forensic

psychiatrist, two consultant clinical psychologists, an assistant clinical psychologist, a forensic psychologist and a youth justice liaison and diversion coordinator. A clinical psychologist was interviewed in the private sector. In the educational setting, two school counsellors were interviewed in mainstream schools, while interviews with two teachers, a learning mentor and a Key Stage 4 manager were conducted in a pupil referral unit (PRU) for children who have been excluded.

In the County Council, interviews were undertaken with an anti-bullying strategy coordinator and an educational inclusion manager, while an organiser of youth work activities was interviewed in the City Council. In the police force, interviews were conducted with four police officers, two police constables, a neighbourhood inspector, a PCSO and a detective sergeant – child abuse investigator. In the voluntary sector, managers of five charities (three child and family charities, a victim support service charity and a special education needs and disability charity) were interviewed. In the sample, 10 practitioners finished secondary school, 28 practitioners had an undergraduate university degree, eight received a Masters degree and two had a doctorate.

Interviews (17 individual- and two interviews in pairs) were undertaken with 21 young people — 12 young men, eight young women and one young trans person — aged between 12 and 22.[12] Two young people were Black, one was Mixed-race and 18 were White. Sixteen children went to secondary school — nine were in mainstream education and seven in alternative provision due to having been excluded. One young person was pursuing a level 2 qualification and one was studying at level 3. Of those who had left compulsory education, two were in full-

[12] Three young people that I interviewed had already reached the age of 18. However, I included them in the sample of young people since they committed criminal offences before they were 18, so I talked to them about how they experienced the youth justice system and their contacts with other agencies as minors.

time employment and one was studying at university. Eight children in the sample received free school meals, three children were in care and social services were involved in other ways with an additional four young people. The young people were selected from YOTs (9), schools (7) and early intervention services (5) across the research county, but most of them were involved with several agencies at the same time due to their challenging behaviour.

Eighteen parents of behaviourally challenging children were interviewed. Fifteen of them had volunteered after the observed childrearing courses had finished. Three parents were additionally recruited for interviews (one individual- and one interview in a pair) through the research county's YOS (Youth Offending Service). Fifteen interviewees were women, three were men and all of them were White. The youngest interviewed parent was 33 years of age and the oldest was a grandparent, aged 68. In average, the interviewees had between two and five children, whereby the number of children ranged between a minimum of two and a maximum of 13. Two parents had a university degree, nine had a vocational diploma, six had a GCSE and one was retired. Nine parents received help from social services and their children received free school meals.

Lastly, an additional 84 young people participated in 10 focus groups. Two focus groups of five children were conducted as part of a youth club in an early intervention centre and focus groups of five and four young people were carried out in two different youth centres. Two focus groups (nine and seven children) were undertaken in a state school, while a focus group of seven participants took place in a private school. Three focus groups (13, 14 and 15 young people) were carried out as part of a summer school programme. The children involved in the focus group discussions were aged between 11 and 17, 52 were female and 32 were male,

whereby three were Mixed-race, 10 were Asian, five were Black and 66 were White. All of the children were in secondary school and none of them received free school meals or welfare support.

An invitation letter and an information sheet about the focus groups were initially sent to the school's headteacher or the team leader of the agency in question. Upon their approval, teachers or key workers informed prospective child participants and their parents about the content and aims of the focus groups. Only after both the parents and the young people had agreed to participate, a date for the focus groups was set and the participants' and their parents' explicit written informed consent — or exceptionally parental consent via telephone — was sought. A vignette about a young person in trouble was distributed to the participants at the onset of each focus group to start off the conversation.[13]

As participants in the focus groups were teenagers without identified criminal involvement or other forms of challenging behaviour, the initial aim of these conversations was to serve as controls that would provide narratives of 'ordinary' youths as opposed to those of children in trouble. Nevertheless, the accounts of all the young people — both those who had been identified as having behavioural difficulties and those who had not — turned out to be similarly nuanced, whereby their perceptions were, at the same time, also surprisingly mature and thus comparable to the accounts of practitioners and parents. I therefore decided to treat and analyse all of the narratives, gathered in this study, as one data set. However, before disclosing how the impressions from the observed parenting

[13] The text of the vignette that was distributed to the focus group participants read as follows: 'Matthew is in Year 8 and he has recently started shoplifting. He went into Tesco and stole a packet of sweets and a can of Coke. Recently, he has been hanging out with a group of older boys and girls from his school, who often truant and get in trouble. These young people sometimes drink and smoke weed. In school, Matthew's grades have dropped and he has been rude to teachers'.

courses as well as the accounts generated by the interviews and focus groups helped answer the set out research questions, the reasons behind talking to different groups of participants across diverse institutional milieus and the ways in which the data was interpreted should also be revealed.

2.4.2. Studying cognitive and affective aspects of subjects' perceptions across different research settings

In sociological research, gathering information about a topic of enquiry does not, in itself, produce meaning if the collected data fails to provide a reference point through which it is to be interpreted (Loader 1996: 43-44). It thus seems important to clarify that this doctoral study employed participant observation, interviews and focus groups to accumulate and decipher research participants' perceptions, more specifically the cognitive views of children in trouble, their parents and practitioners about- as well as their affective responses to: the impact of their class habitus on inclinations, understandings, actions and relationships; the classed anomalies in interactions and decision-making when they negotiate to reach a just solution about a young person's behavioural problem or more complex difficulties within the family and; the institutional rhetoric and organisational constraints that affect the views of practitioners and the ways in which they respond to children's conduct and parents' childrearing.

Bourdieu argued that studying people's perceptual schemes is crucial since the value of every product and, in parallel, the worth and meaning of any other object of enquiry are not pre-determined or intrinsic, but are established based on how they are perceived by agents according to their socioeconomically-embedded dispositions (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 94-95). To explore the social world, the

researcher should therefore design their study so that it captures the different experiences of actors that occupy diverse social positions and avoid imposing their own desired viewpoint under the pretence of 'reliving' the participants' 'lived experience' (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 95).

Furthermore, this approach seems especially appropriate for studying issues related to youth deviance, as Emerson has encouraged examining trouble through people's subjective understandings that should not be categorised as individual's biased accounts, but as experience-driven factual reports about the ways in which problems are (re)constructed or negotiated (Emerson 2015: 103-105). Since Charlesworth has implied that class domination has hidden repercussions and affects people's intimate lives as well as their personal views about the social world (Charlesworth 2005: 167-177), so it could be imprinted in their narratives, it therefore seems reasonable to draw on the stories of children, parents and professionals across the board to examine the ways in which class manifests itself in professional treatment and decision-making.

Moreover, taking people's perceptions seriously and studying social phenomena through their narratives also seems suitable since it encourages analysis at a level that transcends traditionally 'powerful oppositions' (individual vs. society; objective vs. subjective; conscious vs. unconscious) within social sciences (Bourdieu 1998: vii-viii). In addition, contemporary narrative criminologists (Fleetwood 2016) have indicated that while the scope of available interpretations is always limited by surrounding circumstances (structure), including individuals' social location, people of similar backgrounds can still employ different narratives to present their experiences (agency) (Fleetwood 2016: 3-7). Interpreting someone's ambivalent perceptions is therefore crucial for deciphering their class-sensitive as

opposed to their class-neutral dispositions as well as conceptualising how the possible clashes between these dispositions might manifest themselves in interactions, including when young people with behavioural problems and their parents negotiate with practitioners on the ground.

On the other hand, it is also important to acknowledge that lay concepts might not differ substantially from professional views and *vice versa*, so they may both provide valuable information about aspects of relationships that are equally important to people across class backgrounds and social locations (Sayer 2005: 70-72). As lay perceptions are multifaceted, but their complexity is often blurred in everyday contexts, the role of sociological enquiry is to bring them in '"imaginary dialogue"' (Loader 1996: 42) with professional opinions and academic views to provide more nuanced understandings of social phenomena and human interactions, including the ways in which social class might play out when behaviourally challenging young people of diverse backgrounds and their parents interact with practitioners in an institutional setting.

Apart from accumulating the viewpoints of different actors involved in interactional processes, this case study also generated the accounts of practitioners, parents and children recruited from various organisations within youth justice**,** broadly defined. Moffitt has indicated that law enforcement officials record only the tip of the 'deviance iceberg', while there could be distinct types of juvenile offenders with different pathways to crime and desistance, depending on their childhood conduct — and its social and neuropsychological triggers — prior to entering the youth justice system (Moffitt 1993: 675-693). According to Moffitt, our understanding of deviant behaviour is therefore inadequate because the onset of offending is currently defined according to first police arrest- or court appearance

statistics, while data on troubling behaviour in children that have not yet reached the age of criminal liability is sparse (Moffitt 1993: 675).

Furthermore, Donzelot argued that ever since the 18th century a web of educational, psychiatric and judicial services has been 'policing' children and families. According to Donzelot, all of these regulatory agencies are punitive in nature as they expose young people of disadvantaged backgrounds to systemic surveillance and can thereby contribute to their criminalisation (Donzelot 1979: 96-98). Similarly, Paternoster and Iovanni have suggested that the decisions to incriminate a young person might not only be based on the seriousness of their challenging behaviour, but could result from accumulated labelling of children according to their social class through prior non-judicial interventions (Paternoster and Iovanni 1989: 364-375).

In parallel and in the UK context, McAra and McVie have demonstrated that children are often pulled into a spiral of control by schools, the police and the judiciary based on their socioeconomic status and familial background (McAra and McVie 2005, 2007, 2012a, 2012b), so institutions and professionals perpetuate class disparities, rather than only ensuring order (McAra and McVie 2005: 15, 28). Since Gray (2013) has also found that the working practices and professional discourses in YOTs and across the myriad of public, private and voluntary organisations involved in YOT multi-agency partnership help translate social inequalities and class disparities into the governance of youth crime, it seems important to gather the perceptions of young people, their parents and practitioners across a range of institutions that help families with their difficulties**.**

The research design of this study therefore constituted what Smith has called a holistic institutional ethnographic approach**.** According to Smith, institutional

ethnography investigates organisational processes by accumulating and analysing the perspectives of all the actors that are involved in them in order to find ways to 'change [them] from within' if they turn out to be problematic (Smith 2005: 29-38). Similarly to Smith, Bourdieu suggested that social sciences analyse personal accounts to explore 'the rites of institutions' that classify individuals and groups (Bourdieu 1991: 105-126) as organisational classificatory frameworks constrain people's cognitive, bodily and emotional dispositions, thereby guiding their viewpoints and practices (Bourdieu 1998: 54). According to Bourdieu, individuals' intimate narratives can thus reveal a lot about the most impersonal aspects of the social world (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 384, 511), which makes people 'the best "historians of their own disease"' and '"practical experts"' in the objective processes that constrain them (Bourdieu and Wacquant 192: 201).

Furthermore, Bourdieu argued that people across class backgrounds are closest when it comes to personal issues and matters in the private sphere (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 406; see also Bourdieu 1991: 69-70). Similarly, Girling, Loader and Sparks have concluded that individuals 'respond in more modulated and complex ways to events and issues in which they are personally implicated than to those of which they are more abstractly aware' (Girling, Loader and Sparks 2000: 160). Since every narrative and interaction, however personal, therefore reflects the structural circumstances, in which it is embedded (Bourdieu 1991: 2), studying social phenomena without acknowledging people's concerns can produce results and encourage practical improvements with — what Girling, Loader and Sparks have, although in another context, called — a 'legitimation deficit' (Girling, Loader and Sparks 2000: 5). To avoid the latter, this research drew upon the personal accounts of children in trouble, their parents and practitioners that work with both to

explore whether, how and why class differentiation occurs when they interact within an institutional setting.

In this task, the case study employed 'philosophical ideas ethnographically' (Charlesworth 2003: 11), so the theoretical framework presented in the previous part of this chapter was used to discern the research questions and choose the appropriate methods of enquiry (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 5) as well as guide fieldwork and interpret the findings once the data was gathered. In addition and for the reasons outlined below, both rational and affective aspects of research participants' narratives were analysed to tease out how children, parents and professionals understand: 1.) The ways in which class habitus guides dispositions, perceptions, actions and interactions between people of similar or different backgrounds; 2.) Whether, how and why practitioners act and decide differently according to class when they interact with families on the ground; 3.) How possible differentiation of clients according to their social location might be impacted by specific institutional rhetoric and organisational rules.

Sayer has argued that emotions should not be understood as in opposition to reason, since both rational and affective dispositions reflect people's views about — and experience of — the social world (Sayer 2005: 36). As feelings are narrative in nature, so they link current social situations to past events, analysing both cognitive and affective responses is crucial for understanding how inequalities — including those manifested in professional interactions between children in trouble, their parents and practitioners — are lived, accepted and confronted (Sayer 2005: 37-38).

When advocating for an emotionally more intelligent justice, Flynn (2014) has, similarly, emphasised that it is important to explore the feelings that people express about discriminatory practices as affective reactions reveal the bonds

between wider socio-cultural trends and people's subjective experiences. According to Flynn, understanding if and why people are more inclined to ascribe criminal behaviour to disadvantaged groups as well as exploring in detail the negative feelings behind such tendencies are the first steps in establishing a more progressive justice system that will make use of the ambivalent nature of people's affective responses and try to reverse the negative emotions into positive ones (Flynn 2014: 357-361).

For the reasons outlined above, this study explored whether and why practitioners within an institutional setting treat children and their parents diversely according to class as well as how these possibly differentiating tendencies could change, so their decision-making could improve. In pursuing this goal, the research focused on analysing both rational and affective aspects of participants' narratives. However, before presenting the findings of this study, it seems important to reveal the practical ways in which the fieldwork was conducted to answer the research questions. It is to this undertaking that I dedicate the last section of this chapter.

2.4.3. General research principles and reflexivity in gathering accounts and data analysis

According to Bourdieu, a study's findings do not only stem from the research questions that it aims to answer, but are also influenced by the methods it employs and the social relationship between the researcher and the participants. Therefore, the impact of the ways in which fieldwork is conducted should be acknowledged while collecting the data and when analysing the results. However, rather than providing thorough descriptions of standardised methodological procedures, Bourdieu suggested researchers clearly specify their intentions and reflect on the

general principles that guided their work to recognise the effects of the research situation on the object of enquiry and the subjects involved (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 606-607).

Similarly to Bourdieu, Charlesworth has argued that 'theorising the findings' of sociological enquiries by being more conscious about the applied research standards and the steps of data analysis does not distance the investigator from the lifeworlds of their research participants, but, on the contrary, honours the subjects' experiences (Charlesworth 2003: 26-27). In line with Bourdieu and Charlesworth, I treated both the random conversations that I had with parents while observing the childrearing courses as well as the planned interviews and focus groups with practitioners, young people and their parents as opportunities for individuals to provide what Bourdieu has called 'possible truths' (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 63-64) about their experiences, in particular about their interactions within an institutional setting regarding a young person's challenging behaviour.

Rather than seeking 'the real truth' about events and expecting people to describe them exactly like they 'actually' happened, the broad methodological basis of this study was to 'create the conditions for an extraordinary discourse'— specifically about the ways in which social class impacts people's interactions in the realm of youth justice — that is latently present, but rarely realised in everyday communication (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 613). I treated the conversations with research participants as opportunities for them to express more freely what they otherwise could not reveal in everyday situations due to either their subordinate social roles (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 63-64; see also Loader 1996: 54-55) — and accompanying feelings of shame and stigma — or the institutional settings that framed their narratives through organisational discourses, policies and guidelines

(Holstein and Gubrium 2000: 153-156). The research participants often spoke about the interviews as situations, in which they could — unlike in an institutional context or in their day-to-day life — speak about their problems in a more relaxed way:

> L: The YOT intervention didn't help me at all. It just added to the 'jibba jabba' that I was hearing in my ears. You don't wanna be hearing it. In all the interventions I received when I was young, I was suspicious of everyone, so I didn't trust anyone to be close to me and they were trying to be close to me. You understand what I'm saying? I'm keeping my distance and half of the time I'm either quiet or lying to them. I'm just telling them what they wanna hear.
>
> JA: Why the lack of trust?
>
> L: Young people are put off, because the only people that they're gonna listen to are the people that reach out to them and the people that look like they've been through something like them. The people who ain't just read about them on a piece of paper and then come to meet them. You can pick up on someone's vibe. You can tell if they're real or if they're just fabricated. That's the pretty simple fact of it. 'Cause I could tell that Lisa [a police officer with whom I had a good experience] was genuine. The way she spoke, the way she looked in my eyes. But then when you feel like people are just reading from a paper and transcribing, that's falseness. That falseness makes you feel forced and when something is forced upon you, you just want to stay quiet or rebel against it. It was all the negativity that put me in prison and got me onto that bad path in the first place. Worrying and stressing and not being a kid, as they would say, is always seen as an adult thing. When you're young and going through it because you've been around different surroundings and environments and you've seen a different life than some other people and you're still treated as a young person and can't say anything, it's frustrating. And then frustration and anger is not a good mix.
>
> (Leroy, young person, 21-year-old male)

> JA: So you think that not living with your dad is the reason for your behaviour?
>
> B: No, it's not *the* reason, it's partly because of my childhood. It was messed up.
>
> JA: Can you tell me a bit more about your childhood?

B: Every time I used to go to my dad's, my step mum would beat me. That's what messed me up the most. My childhood was ruined because of her. Neither me, nor my sister like her. She used to beat us both. We'd go there and she used to say 'Oh, dad's here, come over' and he wasn't there... They used to live in a city, which is two hours of walking away. I was eight and my sister was 11, so we couldn't walk back, so we had to stay there. And when my dad came home, my step mum would act normal.

JA: Is your dad still with her?

B: Yeah, but I don't think he knows.

JA: You've never spoken to him about this?

B: [shakes his head]

JA: Maybe at some point when you're older...

B: I only just told my mum a few years ago. Last year. Because I was too scared to say it. No one knew about it then and almost no one knows right now because I was too scared to say anything. Me and my sister were terrified of her. Now that we've grown up, we've just grown out of it. In school, they always said 'It's about you. It's your own fault'. 'Cause no one knows about my past. No teachers knows about what I've been through, not even teachers here [at the PRU] know what I've been through. The only older person that knows is my mum and now you. That's the only two people that know my past.

JA: Have you ever considered talking to someone in school?

B: I tried to, but I can't.

JA: Maybe counsellors...

B: They tried to put me on counselling, but I wouldn't speak to them. They would ask me 'Can you tell me your past?' and I would say 'No'. They have no idea what I've been through because I used to be ashamed to say what I've been through. I don't know why. I used to feel ashamed of my past. My step mum, the things with the police, just friends-wise... I always felt like I was ashamed of it.

(Ben, young person, 14-year-old male)[14]

[14] Although Ben had told me about his stepmother's physical violence in confidence, I had an ethical and legal obligation to check whether he was still in danger. I therefore contacted Ben's mother to find out that he had indeed told her about the violence and was not at risk of harm anymore. All of the research participants were notified of the exceptions to confidentiality in the information sheets

> I can't do shallow bullshit. 'Cause [my son] James says to me 'Oh, it's your fault that you haven't got any friends', but I don't know where you go to make friends. 'Cause I'm friends on Facebook with all my school friends, but I haven't spoken to them for 20 years and they haven't got a clue what's going on. You don't say to people 'I've been a heroin addict for 20 years' because there's such a stigma. They just don't wanna know, so you just don't talk to anybody.
>
> (Kate, mother, 40s)

> Their [the YOT officers'] bread and butter is actually doing the work. And yes, they need the knowledge and experience, but they need the knowledge and experience in so many different areas. They are not researchers [laughs]. I'm not being dismissive of research because I think it's very important. We need research to inform our practice, but I think that sometimes there's a feeling amongst practitioners that researchers forget that we don't have the leisure to sit back and reflect for any lengthy time. We're in the maelstrom, the swampy lowlands of practice. We are dealing with a lot of emotional turmoil [laughs] and pressures in terms of deadlines and things like that.
>
> (Lincoln, YOT officer, male in his 50s)

In trying to create the circumstances in which participants would feel comfortable enough to share their experiences, the first step was to ensure that they knew their personal accounts mattered and were crucial for the outcomes of the study (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 613-615). To achieve this aim, I avoided what Bourdieu called 'intellectual narcissism' when collecting and interpreting subjects' narratives (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 616). I tried to remain as reflexive as possible to prevent stereotypical assumptions about the different groups of participants and the topic of this thesis as well as my biases — personal, social and academic — from impacting the interactions that I had with the research participants (Bourdieu 1998: 32; see

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that they received before the interviews. In addition, I discussed my decision with Ben once more before contacting his mother to clarify that I was obliged to make sure that he was safe.

also Bourdieu 2000: 119-120; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 35-40, 70-72; Charlesworth 2003: 31-32). In other words, to keep general stereotypes and my prejudices from affecting the data collection and analysis, I continuously considered how my life history and academic interests guided my theoretical and methodological pursuits (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 194; see also Mason 2002: 65 and Wakeman 2014: 709).

For example, while the 'topical continuity' (Holstein and Gubrium 2000: 130-132) that I was trying to ensure throughout the meetings by following my research aims and questions surely influenced the content of the accounts that I gathered, I consciously avoided interrupting the natural pace of conversations just to stick to the overarching goal of the study (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 610). Research participants welcomed this approach as other formal settings apparently often restricted their narratives:

> JA: What's interesting is that the school didn't pay any attention to that.
>
> L: Not much, no. They probably did have a meeting and somebody probably called my mum in, but at this time I can't remember it, so it was clearly just for words on paper. To sign the legal stuff. To say 'Yeah, we spoke to him about it. Speak to us if you need anything'. If I need anything, am I gonna say 'Hello, please, can you help me'.
>
> JA: You feel there's a lot of paperwork and tick-boxing going on?
>
> L: Yeah. 'The last thing we'll do… Yeah, this, yeah that. Right, yeah' [indicating tick-boxing] 'Is there anything else?' And you're thinking 'Hold on a minute, I was just about to open up, sit down and talk to somebody'. Just when you're ready to say something, they cut you off and you're like 'You never really gave me a chance to talk'. I mean, you just sit there and you feel angry and you feel like you're being ignored. People are a bit ignorant.
>
> (Leroy, young person, 21-year-old male)

I let the discussions flow, but paid close attention to participants' social backgrounds and acknowledged the circumstances that influenced how they expressed themselves both verbally and corporally as well as affected what they chose (not) to tell me (Charlesworth 2003: 62-75). As a consequence, I respected people's lengthy accounts about experiences that were especially important to them, although they seemed only tangentially related to the research topic at first sight. Some interviews therefore lasted for more than two hours, producing transcripts of almost 40 pages and providing rich data on people's lifeworlds as well as the myriad of ways in which these can impact behaviour:

> JA: What's your opinion on the ways in which the early years might have impacted your children?
>
> K: I think it's given them a different outlook on life. I think that they know more in regard to drugs and because they were in care (…) I was raised in a religious cult and I moved there when I was five. It was hippie people, but they were Baptists and they all put their money together and they bought houses and it gradually got bigger and bigger. It's huge now, they've got their own website and everything and their own businesses. So I was raised with no contact with the outside world. We didn't have television. I went to school, but I wasn't allowed to go to any out of the school activities, so I wasn't really raised to live like this. I was just raised to be a submissive wife and a mother and a strong woman of the lord. My education wasn't important. I've got a sister and my mum, she remarried when I was about 14 and we left and moved to one of the cities in the research county. The only thing I knew how to do well was to be a wife and a mother, so the first man who came along that was viable, I think that's what I did. He was 10 years older than me, so I married. Looking back, it was a bit of a game really. I was just playing the game of life. I got a job and I met a man and we bought a house and we had a big wedding and planned our children. But he used to hit me and I used to think 'Just perhaps if I'm a bit more loving or if I'm a better person'. I used to always think it was my fault and I was just learning how to live. It was him that taught me all about money, 'cause obviously I wasn't raised with money, so he taught me how to pay my bills and just how to live in this sort of world. And then he held us hostage at gunpoint, so social services got involved (…) The domestic violence unit of the police and social services moved me to a house on the other side. We shared custody of the children, but he had 64 relatives in a 10-mile range as it was a

> little village. We had to sign a written agreement, saying there'd be no violence and if there was, the children would be taken to care of the local authority. I didn't sign it because I said I can't be responsible for his behaviour and he did sign it and then he broke my nose and that was on the Saturday and on the Monday, the children were just taken into care. I went from having a good job and a lovely home and children to just having nothing really and then I felt like I'd been punished for something that I hadn't done wrong. It was really confusing. I felt very misunderstood, so that's how I ended up on heroin. 'Cause I tried everything, but the physical pain of not having my children with me was just indescribable. It would have been easier if they were dead because I could have mourned them, but the fact that I didn't know where they were and if they were OK. It has been recognised since that social services didn't handle that well. They actually chipped in for [my son] Brian's funeral when he killed himself. In 2009, my current partner Peter and I got clean and went through rehab, but there was no funding, so we went to Spain for a fortnight. Peter's grandparents paid for us to go all-inclusive. So we had no money at all and we got on this plane and we'd been spending four grand a week on heroin and crack and I have track marks in my neck where I'd been injecting because all my veins had gone. We just went to Spain and when we came back the back door had been knocked down by the police and I just couldn't recognise the house. I couldn't believe that we got 56 black bin bags of rubbish out of here. It was just absolutely trashed and everything was missing. We had no spoons. It was just mental. And we had a massive case conference and they put my sons James and Daniel on the 'at risk' register. And they gave me Brian and William [my sons from the previous marriage] back in the same case conference. So Brian and William came to live here. I'm really grateful for that time now in light of Brian's death. If I hadn't had that time, I don't know how I would cope. But it was a really strange time, a difficult time because obviously we were really ill and just having four children in the house. So yeah, from Daniel's point of view... His life has moulded who he is. I think James and Daniel are very savvy and James gets very angry when I say to him 'You don't need to know everything, you're only 13'. And he says 'That's really annoying because age is just a number. What does that mean, I'm 13? I'm a lot more mature and I've got a deeper understanding of things and not all 13-year-olds are the same'. So yeah, I think they've got a good understanding of things.
>
> (Kate, mother, 40s)

On the other hand, however, I tried to make sure that people did not feel pressured to talk about their most personal or intimate experiences. I also endeavoured to

understand longer pauses and silences during the interviews if the research participants felt uncomfortable with sharing particular details:

> JA: Like you said before about YOTs...To have somebody who is a stranger and probably has a completely different background and just sits there and asks you how you're feeling... I guess that's not really a situation, in which a young person can speak freely and in a relaxed way. So the situation here [in the interview] is similar. If you ever feel like that here, please know that you really don't need to answer my questions.
>
> L: It's OK, but half the time when I was sitting there [at the YOT] I was just like 'Yeah...I'm alright'.
>
> JA: To be honest, I think there's no difference between young people and adults as far as this kind of communication is concerned. Even as an adult, you don't know how to answer questions about really personal matters sometimes. I think we're not programmed that way, especially if we're having a hard time.
>
> L: You just want someone to comment 'Be strong, be positive. Listen, I know you're going through this or you may be going through that, but I'm only here to help. If you don't wanna speak to me right now, you don't have to. You can stay silent throughout this whole interview.' Someone needs to be nurturing, rather than in your face and questioning.
>
> (Leroy, young person, 21-year-old male)

> JA: Did you have problems anywhere else, like outside of school? Maybe with the police, at home or anywhere else?
>
> M: There were a couple of things going on at home. That's why I'm in foster care at the moment. That was from start of January and it's gonna be at least 'til September before I go back home.
>
> JA: Are you comfortable with sharing what went on at home or do you want us to skip that part? If it's too personal, then you don't have to share it.
>
> M: I won't say it then.

> JA: That's absolutely fine. How did you find your interactions with the police?
>
> (Marlon, young person, 15-year-old male)

During fieldwork I also acknowledged that interviews are — in general, but especially for research participants of marginalised statuses — frustrating 'quasi-formal' experiences (Charlesworth 2005: 138-149). According to Bourdieu, interviews are not random conversations, in which opinions are exchanged between equal parties with ease, but they constitute part of a study that is unilaterally designed by the researcher according to their non-negotiable 'rules of the game'. Furthermore, Bourdieu added that there is also a 'social asymmetry' between the investigator and the investigated if and when the interviewer is hierarchically superior to the research participant according to the levels of their social, cultural and — especially important in the context of an interview — linguistic capital (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 608-609).

To minimise the power imbalances in my meetings with the research participants, especially those of underprivileged backgrounds and/or children, I followed Oakley's suggestion and did not treat interviews and focus groups as if they were neutral sources of information, but conducted them as 'pseudo conversations' (Oakley 1990: 51, 32). Contrary to a typically 'objective' research protocol, I did not conceal my personal information or motives for undertaking the study and talked openly about my interests. In addition, I shared my opinion about the research topic and was willing to answer participants' questions, including those about my upbringing, my parents' childrearing and my family background (Oakley 1990: 32-51). As a consequence, the interviews and focus groups that I conducted

became collaborative storytelling events (Rapley 2004: 22) rather than merely research methods, through which I would obtain data for my thesis.

Specifically, my analysis during transcription revealed that I built rapport with the interviewees by shifting between various subjectivities (Rapley 2004: 19) and thereby relating to the different groups of research participants. As I used to work as a judicial assistant, I often asked questions and spoke about youth deviance from a professional viewpoint, while, at the same time, sharing my adolescent experiences. However, my multiple identities did not function in a vacuum, but interplayed with those of the research subjects (Silverman 2011: 186; see also Gubrium and Holstein 2009: 24). For instance, the interviewed practitioners often withdrew from their professional roles and provided spontaneous accounts about their parenting or anecdotes about their childhood:

> JA: So are your approaches in the parenting courses based on a specific theoretical framework?
>
> E: It's very difficult for academics to understand. The truthful kernel of the programme is that I was a fucked up child of fucked up parenting.
>
> JA: I understand. So it's based on experience...
>
> E: Yes. Some of the people that started [the parenting programme] and myself went to private schools, top girl's boarding schools. So we felt passionate about parenting, as we hadn't had the attention and the affective kind of parenting. We'd had lots of financial benefits, but it's interesting that both of those programmes came from people who've had personal experiences with privileged, very privileged, backgrounds. But, it's the lack of warmth, you see.
>
> JA: I understand. What's interesting is… when I asked you about the theory behind the programmes and you said that academics don't understand that it's mostly about experience. Actually, I think that the situation is very similar for academics in terms of their interests.

E: Yes, exactly. I just think that - looking from the outside - we had a good education and we went to university. You know, all that stuff. But there was something missing.

(Emily, child and family charity manager and parenting consultant, 60s)

A: I remember going into classes with other students that have taken substances before classes and, maybe because I'm an adult now, I know that I would know straight away who was completely spaced out and was tripping because there was an elephant in the room. Well, there was always the odd joke, you know 'Oh, you've got red eyes and you're stoned', but it was never sort of 'I definitely know you're stoned' or 'Why are you eating all these crisps?'

J: I remember being at school and we were all having poppers in the classroom. And I remember the teacher came back in the room and we were passing it around. He didn't even question it, even though we were absolutely pissing ourselves laughing. He didn't pick up on that.

JA: I'm not sure if teachers didn't pick up on it or just ignored it.

(Ashley and Jane, drug and alcohol misuse workers, 30s and 20s)

JA: It's also an economic thing... It's hard to provide on a basic level for a child alone.

S: Yeah, I mean my mum was able to not work, my dad worked and always had a job and there was loads of jobs, so when we weren't in school, my mum was always there and I firmly believe that that was the main thing as to why I am here. Because trust me, I've put my mum through the mill [laughs]. I didn't have appropriate coping mechanisms at the time and my life could have gone either way had I not had someone there to come home to from school. Knowing that if I'd done something wrong, I would be held accountable, because my mum would be there and believe me she would have heard about it and I wasn't getting away with it. I think if you come home from a full day at work, and you've got a voicemail from school or something... To have the energy... That's a lot to ask... So I don't think the economic situation is very helpful at the moment.

(Alice, bail support officer, 30s)

> I was out drinking with him [my father], out having underage sex with people, doing drugs. Spending loads of money. And he was like 'You're only young once, just do it!'
>
> (Sarah, head of victim support charity and youth worker, 20s)

Moreover, the social imbalances in the interviews were, to some extent, reduced by my foreignness and its impact on my linguistic capital. Some authors have argued that in the UK class is still a 'powerful social distinguisher', so being a foreign researcher enhances the participant's trust as they cannot tell the researcher's background from their accent (Rosenblatt 2014: 117-123). As a non-British interviewer, I did not talk to the participants as elaborately as a native speaker would and therefore sounded unthreatening, which contributed to a more relaxed climate:

> JA: Do you think there's a kind of giving up going on? That these services…that some of them…I noticed this when working… Ah see, I can't even form a sentence. Sorry, I'm from another country and…obviously, I'm not British…
>
> S: No? You don't say. [Laughs]
>
> JA/S: [Both laugh]
>
> JA: You'd never tell, right? [Laughs]
>
> S: Never, no. [Laughs]
>
> JA: Anyway, what I meant to say was that in my work back home, there were situations when people were disappointed with social services. Individual social workers are great people, for sure. But as a system…
>
> (Sarah, head of victim support charity and youth worker, 20s)

Lastly, my analysis was ongoing (Rapley 2004: 26) and began with taking notes about emerging themes at the end of each observation, interview or focus group, followed by thorough examinations of the conversations while transcribing. I read and re-read the transcripts, together running to 1327 pages, numerous times, which was tedious (Noaks and Wincup 2004: 129), but made me feel closer to the data (King and Wincup 2008: 36) and turned out to be the key analytical phase (Bird 2005: 227).

Nonetheless, I analysed the entire data set twice again after I had finished fieldwork and typed up all of the conversations. By drawing on my theoretical framework and the set out research questions, I examined the continuities and ambivalences in accounts of the three groups of research participants across nine research settings in order to tease out reoccurring topics and discourses about the intersections between youth deviance, parenting and social class. I present these findings in the next three chapters.

2.5. Concluding comments

This chapter introduces the analytical framework of the study. Specifically, Bourdieu's work provides a useful theoretical frame through which to conceptualise that behaviourally challenging children and their parents might be indirectly discriminated against in professional relationships due to differences between the interacting parties' class-conditioned practical and affective dispositions, the circumstances of the situation or both (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 473). In addition, Emerson's interactional conception of youth deviance corresponds well with Bourdieu's relational concept of class and could be suitable for understanding young people's troubling behaviour.

Moreover, Bourdieu's critics suggest that habitus is multidimensional and not necessarily unified within a certain class or diverse across socioeconomic backgrounds, so people of the same social location can disagree, while individuals of different origins can consent on a particular issue despite many class-conditioned differences between them. Correspondingly and according to Sayer, people across class backgrounds share understandings of what is important and fair as well as how they want to be treated. Similarly and in line with Boltanski and Thévenot, agents negotiate based on common norms of justice, but they draw from multiple worlds at the same time, so clashes in the evaluation of worth can yield discriminatory results, also according to class. Therefore, a combination of Bourdieu and his critics, Emerson, Sayer as well as Boltanski and Thévenot's theoretical accounts provides an appropriate framework through which to understand whether, how and why interactions between youth justice professionals and families could have classed effects.

This chapter concludes with specifying the study's research questions and describing the methods that were employed to explore them. It explains the reasons behind examining the rational and affective aspects of people's perceptions as well as why interviews and focus groups were conducted with three different groups of research participants across nine different research settings. In this task, it also describes the principles that were followed while conducting fieldwork on the ground.

CHAPTER 3: PRACTITIONERS, CHILDREN AND PARENTS ON THE IMPACTS OF SOCIAL CLASS ON PROFESSIONAL INTERACTIONS

In the previous chapter, a consolidation of theoretical concepts — Bourdieu's notions of habitus and field; contemporary variations of Bourdieu's thought; Sayer's moral understanding of social class; and Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model — were suggested as an appropriate foundation from which to explore the classed implications of interactions between professionals, children in trouble, and their parents across a range of agencies that respond to young people's challenging behaviour and/or their parents' childrearing. In this chapter, I intend to confront the proposed analytical framework with the narratives of the interviewed young people, parents and practitioners. My aim is to examine whether the interviewees' socioeconomic background profoundly moulds their family life, including parenting practices and children's troubles. I also want to explore whether, how and why differences in social location shape the interactions between professionals and lay people.

Through such an analysis, I endeavour, firstly, to disentangle if the research participants perceive their class-conditioned habitus as substantially determining their being in the world across social fields, as Bourdieu hypothesised, or, secondly, if people of diverse class backgrounds might, nevertheless, think, feel and act similarly in some realms and regarding certain issues, but not others, as has been inferred by more recent adaptations of Bourdieu's work. Lastly, I aim to tease out the likely parallels between research participants' moral understandings of class, as proposed by Sayer, and explore the ways in which a potentially shared affective habitus between practitioners and clients of different classes might influence their interactions. The findings in this chapter could help better understand whether the class-conditioned similarities and/or disparities in people's dispositions, perceptions

and communication might impact upon how deviance and childrearing are responded to, shaped and negotiated in professional interventions, which I attend to in the next chapter.

3.1. The impacts of social class on children's behaviour, parenting and professional interactions: A Bourdieusian understanding

In *Distinction* (1984, 2010), Bourdieu defined habitus as a structure that is, at once, 'structured by' and 'structuring' the social world through synchronising an individual's beliefs, manners and conduct with their class background. For Bourdieu, the ways in which people perceive and respond to — as well as are responded to by — others reflect their social position and lifestyles as manifested in their relationships. Particularly, people's practices are deemed (il)legitimate depending on how the levels and structure of their economic, social and cultural capital are evaluated relationally in their interactions with other individuals across different social realms (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 165-171).

According to Bourdieu, the most important features of a person's habitus and their corresponding characteristics, views and behaviour as well as the responses of others to their being in the world will typically be outlined *in their childhood* through an interplay between their interfamilial experiences and their encounters outside the family (Bourdieu 1977: 78-82; see also Bourdieu 2000: 165-172). A number of accounts in this study demonstrate a similar understanding of how parents' childrearing practices and a child's troubling behaviour might be shaped by the intersections between the family's socioeconomic background and the ways in which their 'ease' or the lack thereof is interpreted by other agents (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 48-50, 61, 250-253; see also Bourdieu 1998, 35-58). As a 13- and 15-year-old male, participating in a summer school focus group put it, the

lack of capital within the family can influence both an adult's capacity for satisfactory parenting and a child's conduct:

> JA: Does poverty impact the family's everyday life?
>
> C9: Not exactly poverty, but the stress that it causes, which can rub off on the children. They can get stressed too, but they're not in the position to be, nor do they need to be. They're not causing it.
>
> C14: I think poverty does influence everything, but it's because parents have to work more jobs to support the family and can't spend as much time with their kids and can't support them in the same ways that they would if they had money. And all kids need attention, so they might get it through committing crime instead.
>
> (13-year-old male and 15-year-old male in FG 7)

Many interviewed parents and practitioners share the view that young people's lives are affected by their childhood experiences as the family's social situation often prevents parents from engaging more fully with their children. However, for several participants in this research, parents are hindered in their childrearing due to financial need and a resultant preoccupation with gathering resources as well as a lack of time, rather than their inappropriate care:

> JA: So what is a typical day like for you?
>
> G: I try to drag the children all out of bed in the morning, take them to school. I take them to school and then I'll go to work, but recently my role has changed work-wise. I've taken on more work, so my youngest is talking about being neglected lately. He says he's gonna report me for neglect [laughs]. Sometimes I'll pick them up after school, depending on what's going on at work. I've had four different jobs lately. I'm trying to juggle all of those. I've recently taken on another job, working in a shop in the retail park because I figured it's going to help me get by.
>
> JA: So you have 4 jobs at the moment?
>
> G: Yeah.
>
> JA: Jesus.

> G: I didn't realise where I was going with that, I don't think my kids realised where I was going either. And I'd be like 'You've gotta walk home, here's your key, here's your phone, you know my number' and just coordinating it all. 'Here's food for the microwave or here's the money to go to Tesco's to get something by yourself'. They've been coping really well, and it will quiet down, it's just that I've taken on extra hours, which I do debate at the end of the day. We won't be any richer, we'll probably just end up having to pay more of my bills. Then I'm thinking 'Why have I done it?' And the kids are always complaining that I don't have enough time for them and we don't have enough money, but they don't realise that we just can't do it otherwise.
>
> (Gabrielle, mother, 50s)

> I think that parents can't relate to other types of parenting from a different class, so the lower classes sometimes struggle to relate to this 'Come on, you can do it' [indicating aspirations and encouragement] kind of thing. The main difference is that working class families still have that 'old-school' way, where it's more about survival, so their perception of good parenting is for their child to have food on the table and clothes on their back, but there's less cuddling etc., while the middle class way is more about - and that's why they're so connected to schools - 'You have to be something', it's about achievement and being an individual and spending time with a young person as a reward. But if you live in a house with seven young people, they're all running around, if feels a bit mad, you try to spend one minute with one, but then you've got another seven. It's not only about money, you also actually don't have the time. And imagine you're a single parent. So there are a lot of assumptions within middle class parenting: 'But of course you have time for your child'. Yes, you do if you have one child and your husband runs to the store and grabs the groceries in the meantime, whilst you spend ten minutes reading a book with your child, and that's a book that you are able to pay for. I don't know, but I do see a naivety in the middle classes and the way that they parent and why they parent like that and why they think it's the best way for everyone.
>
> (Tom, charity worker, 20s)

The research participants thus generally confirm Bourdieu's understanding that practices — along with parenting and youth challenging behaviour — are often affected by the family's socioeconomic standing, including their possible deprivation. In addition, the practitioner's narrative above supports Bourdieu's

notion that a person's habits within the domestic sphere are sometimes evaluated less favourably in socially remote fields or by agents of different backgrounds (Bourdieu 1977: 78-82).

Further, several accounts also confirm Bourdieu's view that dispositions, beliefs and actions are transferred from parents to children *subconsciously* (Bourdieu 1977: 78-80). The idea that habitus is transmitted intergenerationally without conscious deliberation is encapsulated in the narrative of Judy, a female parenting lead at a child and family charity in her 50s: 'Most parents are trying their best (…) according to their internal sense of what it might be like to be a parent, which depends on how they were parented themselves and what they got from it without knowing'. Moreover, parents often share such opinions with practitioners. As Laura, a mother in her 30s, put it: 'We're just so very, very different in parenting and perhaps it's because of our own experience of being parented. What is instinctual about being a parent depends on our upbringing'. Lastly, young people's accounts, like the one quoted below at length, support adults' perceptions that the child's habitus — along with its corresponding cognitive and affective features — depends on their parents' social location and is passed down the generations, as well as manifests itself and/or is responded to intuitively in relationships across the social space, including in professional interactions:

> I wanted to do that speech because I wanted them [the YOT workers] to think that I was moving on. I went from talking to a drug dealer, who left school at 16, and talked about football, girls and weed to saying 'Oh, I saw this in the news last week'. Then again, I don't know whether that's just because I was raised in a family where I saw that as a good thing. You've got kids, who are raised in a poor family or in a family where mum smokes weed, dad smokes weed, dad does coke in the weekends, never had to solve a problem and they ask their kid: 'What are you gonna become in your life?'...'I'm gonna be a builder'. 'Cause that's what dad is telling him. And there's nothing wrong with these jobs, but you're supposed to have ambition for your

> kids. There's nothing wrong with being a painter or a decorator, but as a mum you should say 'No, I want you to be an astronaut. I want you to be more. I never went to University, dad never went to University, but you can go to University'. And it's a class thing. Maybe I recognised that they [the YOT workers] were trying to help me and that they were a good thing for me because I don't come from a class background like other people [that are usually within the youth justice system], but I'm fair to think that some of them come from a class background where they have had no exposure to that culture (…) The thing with your children is that even if they go off the rails, if you expose them to that culture and those positive things at a young age, a part of that will always still be with them. So when you're trying to pull them out of that, they have something to latch onto, rather than trying to teach them some big new skill that they have never used before. I think, fundamentally, it's a class thing because it's hard to see outside of your... It's almost as if you've got tunnel vision. It's hard to have that social mobility. That is the hardest thing. To visualise things differently, especially being raised in one way.
>
> (Danny, young person, 21-year-old male)

Danny's account — specifically in the part that socioeconomic and family background endow a person with 'tunnel vision' — provides due illustration of yet another important aspect of Bourdieu's habitus, namely its *unified and unifying* nature. For Bourdieu, habitus corresponds with an individual's social location and is not divided between, but, rather, functions consistently across domains (Bourdieu 2000: 64), providing similarly predictable guidance for beliefs and actions in each and every sphere of an individual's life, at the same time impeding alternative routes outside 'the tunnel'.

According to Bourdieu and many of my research participants alike, habitus thus frames a person's agency in an all-encompassing way, stretching across different realms (Bourdieu 1977: 83-85; see also Bourdieu 2000: 64). In the words of Terry, a YOT manager in his 50s, 'It's not just about income, it's also about attitude, about understanding, it's about education. It's about everything really'.

Moreover, the following quotation reflects a recurrent view amongst professionals in this case study about the far-reaching impacts of class — via habitus — on (young) people's lives:

> JA: Do you think that in families with generational problems that you mentioned, behaviour is something inherent in the families and their parenting, or is it about something else... like their living circumstances?
>
> R: I think it's probably a combination of both. In some of the families that we see again and again, there are definitely poor parenting skills. But I think it is mostly a case of a lack of opportunities. This research county is quite affluent, but there are some areas that are deprived here and certainly in my neighbourhood, some areas are quite deprived. So I think part of the issue sometimes is lack of opportunity and if you are living within a housing estate and you've been there for several generations… How you get out of that is quite difficult. You would like to encourage youngsters to get a good education, and to aspire to move on and move out of that, but the problem a lot of the time is that their role models are their parents and the other people around them, who don't have any aspiration towards that, and if there's no one driving them and pushing them and showing them what potential they might have and what's possible, they don't even have that on their radar. They're not looking for stuff like that. This is a generalisation, but if you're working class, generally, your parents were working class, and so they had a tough life and that's all you know about and it shapes your sense of normality. Actually it's really tricky, because at the end of the day it's all about money really. It's a hard cycle to break. In England, I think breaking out of what you're born into is practically unlikely.
>
> (Richard, neighbourhood inspector, 40s)

Nevertheless, metaphors like the 'vicious circle [that you get] in the (…) family' (Lisa, teacher, 30s) are not only prominent amongst practitioners, but are also often employed by young people ('the chain,' used by: Jamie, 21-year-old male) and their parents ('the wheel,' used by: Gabrielle, mother, 50s). Taken together, these accounts indicate clearly the difficulty of abstracting people's behaviour — including their parenting and/or deviance — from their material reality.

At the same time, many narratives in this research demonstrate how important it is to draw on Bourdieu to makes sense of perceptions and actions beyond either their individual or structural causes, but, rather, by focusing on habitus as an intermediate concept that glues together the family's socioeconomic circumstances and the agent's subjectivity to explain their positive and/or negative experience of the world (Bourdieu 1998: vii-viii). Specifically, while the first quotation below encompasses the often too enduring effects of disadvantage, the second account outlines the equally pervasive positive consequences of privilege and 'ease', even if it is only encountered in early childhood:

> JA: How does family background influence a person?
>
> K: I think it determines you. It must do, definitely. I can remember somebody writing about me that my childhood would undoubtedly always have a negative effect on my parenting ability. I took great offense at the time, but as I've got older, it's... I try, but when I look at myself and my sister and then my brother. He's only my half brother, but he's also on benefits and has addiction issues. So that's all gone down the family and in [my partner] Peter's family there's drinking issues too. And they've all been drinkers. I see how Peter is becoming his father, who he despises so much and he's sort of turned into him. He's just aloof from the children, he's not really involved. He wants to be, but it's almost like he's not emotionally capable to do so because of his family legacy. And I talked to his mum about it and tried to ask the question you're asking. Is it because of what he's experienced or is it because of who he is genetically or how and where they live? Is he, you know, like his dad? It's hard to disentangle whether it's a genetic, family or a social thing.
>
> (Kate, mother, 40s)

> I started in private school and I was a boarder until I was eight. Then when my dad left, all the money went, so that was the biggest change. We were all in boarding school and then we suddenly had to go to a local state school. For the first couple of years, I still had a boarding school attitude, so I still had this drive to be successful. But I didn't fit in. I was literally getting bullied and I just wouldn't get any friends. Then that status of being an outcast just drove me more and more mad, so the ethos that I wanted to be successful, I wanted to work hard, I wanted to be able to talk about all these things kind

> of went out the window and I started to hang out with a lot of rough kids. I did the usual stuff, like trying drugs out and I found that the more I took drugs, the easier it was to escape what I was in and to not think about things. I started using drugs more and more and there was this guy that I met who turned out to be a really big nuisance in my life. Anyway, the whole drug thing was a phase and it took me getting arrested to see the other side of life. At the time, I thought drugs were my life, but as soon as I got arrested, my life changed completely. It changed socially. I don't like to use the word chav, but where I was hanging around there were lots of chavs. After getting arrested and being involved with the YOT, I started working at a café. Now people that come to this café aren't the kind of people who do drugs and stuff. So the people I referred to every day went from drug addicts to university students. And it made me see what I've lost. It made me see that ethos that I had from private school again. That there's more to life than this. So that was the biggest thing. It gave me that perspective that I needed to get out of it. And then with the counselling, the thing that was crazy to me was that I talked to counsellors and I knew what they wanted me to say. If I'm sat there in the couch and the counsellor is talking to me, I know what he wants to hear, I know what the form's gonna say. I know what he wants to sign off. So I'd just say it and I'm good at doing that. I'm good at sourcing out what people wanna hear. And I think it's because I went to private school as a kid.
>
> (Danny, young person, 21-year-old male)

Kate and Danny's narratives correspond well with Bourdieu's reasoning that an individual internalises — physically, cognitively and emotionally — the socially conditioned habitus that is made available to them at an early age (Bourdieu 1977: 87-88; see also Bourdieu 1991: 12). The gradually inculcated habitus therefore becomes a reference point that directs a person to know, practically, when, where and how to think and act with a 'feel for the game' (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: xx-xxi; see also Bourdieu 2000: 151), much like what Danny is describing towards the end of the quotation above. By emphasising his ability to 'switch over', Danny keeps referring to what Bourdieu called *practical sense* (Bourdieu 1991: 13). Namely, for Danny 'it all comes down to the vocabulary, how I act, the way I look at them [in

this case the YOT workers], everything really. I know how to switch it on and use it. I can get on people's level more'. The following account by a practitioner also provides some flavour of how class habitus works on a subconscious and practical level, rather than only rationally:

> We are creatures of habit. The way we have our own values and most of that is clearly learned behaviour. It's harder to bring up your kids when you have limited resources yourself, limited education, limited knowledge about how education could benefit you and your kid. I think everyone, even uneducated people, understands that if you're clever at school, you're bound to get a better job, but there's knowing it in theory and knowing it in practice, isn't there? And privileged people will have had more practical experience with that, regardless of their knowledge. Habit, you know, in any family, actually, is just entrenched and they're used to living this way. It can be chaotic and difficult and challenging, but it's normal to them. That's what they've learned. It's learned behaviour. That's what they've learned to survive. That's why I think it's difficult for families to change sometimes. Parents that have really negative experiences of being parented themselves and there's the likelihood that they might have had negative experiences of education. On top of that, there's the reduced access to community facilities or health services, so then when they get to the age when they're then parents and responsible for their children, they don't know what to do. How do they go out and find a job? Particularly now when you need certain levels of qualifications to be able to get any job. So even something as simple as that. Trying to make changes to become financially independent. That sets a routine and it's role modeling to the children, but I think they are still difficult steps to take.
>
> (Jenna, early intervention worker, 20s)

As perceptions are also steered by practical sense, rather than only conscious consideration (Bourdieu 1998: 15-16), Bourdieu concluded that many seemingly irrational thoughts, decisions or actions are actually socially understandable (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 238-239). The following professional's account provides significant illustration of how and why behaviour that seems incomprehensible at first glance is often imbued with a practical logic, based on an unconscious decoding of visible or merely implied, but, nevertheless, sensed, markers of class:

> Most people from this council estate wouldn't cross the bridge and go to the city centre. I worked with kids that have never been to the city centre. There were two girls and I took them to the centre for the first time. There was a mental barrier. They basically mentally didn't feel good enough. I remember one that was 21 years old and she's worked since she was 15. She struggled, mentally and emotionally, to go to a pub in the city centre. 'Cause the only pubs that she went to were in her area of the city and I took her and she physically couldn't cope, which for me was like 'Oh my gosh', but for her, that's the barrier because of the upbringing and the perspective that her parents taught her. It's the lack of confidence and a type of parenting where people are also afraid of professionals, but it makes sense. It's similar with parents in schools. Schools will say 'Oh that [parenting] programme sounds great, parents need this, *some* of our parents need this'. The very fact that they were saying *some* of our parents'… I knew exactly what they meant. They were judging, so the parents wouldn't go anywhere near those programmes. They knew intuitively that they would be judged. And even if the professionals tried not to judge them, the parents would be judging themselves deep down because they could feel it. So in the end, all the parents came that were part of the parent-teacher association, all the active middle-class parents would be there. They might have big issues because of family stuff and whatever themselves, but none of the parents that the school *wanted* to come came. Because they probably have bad memories of school themselves and they wouldn't want to go into school, as they would feel they are being looked at and judged.
>
> (Kylie, police constable, 40s)

Many interviewed children and parents share the view that people either orient themselves towards, or distance themselves from, others based on their (own) closeness or remoteness from necessity (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 244). In private interactions, disadvantage reflects economic need and contradicts the desired norm of middle class 'ease' (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 250-253), which can result in spontaneous dissociation of the privileged from the disadvantaged and, conversely, proximity between the deprived as well as *vice versa*:

> When I meet this friend [who goes to private school now], we'd usually go to his parents' house and I'd hear the parents say 'Why are you with him?' And it's just because of the way I'm dressed and the way I speak. I don't mean to speak like this, but I've been around so many people that speak the way I speak, like slang words and stuff

> like that. It comes out of my mouth by accident. I don't mean to speak like that. They're just like 'Why do you hang around him for? You're gonna get arrested. He'll cause trouble'. I met him [the friend] in primary school, then he went to a different secondary school, but I talk to him and we still go to town shopping and to get something to eat, but I don't really hang around with him anymore now. I hang around with people that, I don't know why, but they keep causing trouble. Smoke weed and that, but when I'm with them, I feel safe if you know what I mean. Like no one can touch me. It's just the way that I like it. We have a laugh and we get on. Posh people, they have a laugh differently and they do weird stuff to have a laugh. We just mess around and that.
>
> (Jamie, young person, 21-year-old male)

> Most of my son's friends have unstable lives. Most of the ones he hangs out with are also from divorced families. It's funny… We all have that, don't we? We all connect to people that have a common background of some sort. Eventually, you find out that there's been some similar trauma down the road or something like that. Most of them have got one parent that is bringing in the money. Dads call them when they want or Facebook them when they want and just give them money when they choose to give them money. There's no regularity there. The mums are the only stable and consistent people in their lives.
>
> (Gabrielle, mother, 50s)

The comfort and confidence of the middle classes also seem to be well received within an institutional context, whereby the formalised nature of agency contact imbues the arbitrary relational distinctions made between the well-off and the poor on this basis with a sense of naturalness (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 46-50). Practitioners' accounts like the following illustrate starkly some of the ways in which social class can impact professional interactions as impressions about people's physical, material and practical features are often used to evaluate their behaviour or character (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 60-61):

> JA: Why do you think this [disparities in decision-making] still persists although professionals and judges nowadays receive a lot of training so there should be more awareness about these issues?

> T: I think there's several reasons for that and I think that young people who come from more affluent backgrounds tend to be more able to communicate in a way which is at the same level as the magistrates or someone else. They have a large vocabulary, they have better body language, they will come across as being reasonable. Their presentation in court will be much better. The pattern we see from affluent people is the ability to 'fake good'. They make it seem like everything's fantastic on the outside and give the right answers to the right people. That happens. 'Everything's fine, everything is really good', but underneath the behaviour continues. I would say that people who are living in poverty, they are going to be different in their presentation because they are on what I call a survival level. How can you concentrate in school or present yourself in court when you're worried because you have no money? I think what also happens is, in terms of the disadvantaged, that their parents are not always as able as the more educated ones to argue the case for their child, so they can end up with less favourable results.
>
> (Terry, YOT manager, 50s)

The narratives of young people and their parents confirm that tacit differentiation based on language and other markers of class is common in their interactions with practitioners. However, in parallel with Bourdieu's reasoning, most of the interviewees understand such classed distortions as unplanned and happening due to a spontaneous merging or distancing of the interacting parties' habitus (Bourdieu 1977: 72; see also Bourdieu 2000: 146). Namely, when people communicate, they expect certain reactions based on their prior experiences and corresponding predictions, embedded in their social position. Therefore, individuals will accept or dismiss the perceptions, habits, manners and actions of the opposing party based on whether these are familiar within their own social group and its class-conditioned habitus (Bourdieu 1977: 77).

In this regard, Leroy, a 21-year-old male, explains why he thinks he was disciplined in school more frequently than other pupils: 'My home life and my school life was just too contrasted, so they [the school personnel] didn't understand

my behaviour. They don't see that at school. And they don't see the different backgrounds and how that affects you'. In a similar manner, Dora, a mother in her 50s, exposes her social position as a likely reason for having been misunderstood by her son's school:

> D: I got a call to come to school as my son was in a fight and this other kid's parents were calling the police because my son had hurt them. But he'd hurt them after they threw a can of Coke at the back of his head. He's lucky he wasn't knocked unconscious. In school nobody was listening to me, nobody would ever listen to me. Nobody. That's why I always thought they had a stigma on him.
>
> JA: Why do you think that was?
>
> D: I don't know, but I think it was because of my position in society. I have to say. I really think that was the case. Because I am not one of those parents that goes to school every week to ask how things are going. You know, it was that kind of school. They didn't care if they lost me and my child out of that school. They might care if they lose some of these richer 'putting-the-funds-in' kind of parents.

The reasons, outlined by Terry, Leroy and Dora above correspond somewhat with Bourdieu's inference that interacting agents will intuitively and immediately assume, understand and know how to react to each other only if they have been continuously exposed to similar practices grounded in a common habitus. Based on this understanding, Bourdieu concluded that the courses and outcomes of negotiations — both official and unofficial — are not only constrained by formal rules or the organisational pressures of the situation, but are also and always affected, albeit unwittingly, by the social gap between the cooperating parties (Bourdieu 1977: 79-82; see also Bourdieu 2000: 242). The notion that class-conditioned practical sense provides the 'law of (…) direction' (Bourdieu 1998: 25),

according to which people either gravitate towards- or distance themselves from one another is actually an evident feature of most accounts gathered in this research:

> E: There's little groups of parents, who click together and get their children to do better at school. The ones that are always in lead parts in the plays and the ones that get to do things are always in a certain group of parents who invade the teachers. I would never go to the school and fit in with these parents because I couldn't stand any of them because they were all like 'We live here and we've got this and we've got that' and I'm thinking 'Well I don't care'. I used to call them the 'yummy mummys' because they used to stand outside of school and used to have their make up on and goodness knows what time they got up in the morning to make sure they present themselves in school looking good. And I was always arriving late [laughs]. I can't even join the PTFA [Parents, Teachers and Friends Association] to say how I feel about the school because these people are all there and you're just the one that they don't like. You don't fit into their group. I remember that one day they were talking about a kid in a group of parents: 'How does that child get to be so fat? What does the mother feed that child that he is so fat?' And they were discussing this child like they have nothing better to do. They all stick together. They are like these cackling geese that you see, aren't they?
>
> JA: Why do you think this happens?
>
> E: I think that people just want to feel that they are better than somebody else, don't they? And the child grows up and they think 'I'm better than you because I live in a better house than you and my job pays better. I live in a better place, I've got designer clothes or I've got something else… I'm going to be a…because my dad's a whatever he does'. And they grow up with that and then they go into school, thinking that they are better because the parents treat them like they're little angels or whatever.
>
> (Emma, mother, 50s)

> JA: Do you think that a bad intervention is worse that no intervention at all?
>
> L: To not have an intervention at all, that's not what you want. If I didn't have an intervention, who knows where I would have ended up. I could have ended up living at the bottom selling drugs for some older guy in the area, so it's always good to have an intervention. It's just that they need to regulate the intervention better, basically. I

> think you should have certain people for certain people. I would have opened up more to someone that was more like me, rather than someone who is the total opposite to me. And that's normal. If all of the mentors in my time were young males who probably didn't have a father and had a little bit of trouble back in the day, I would have gotten on way better with them. I would have opened up to them way more than to some old lady, whose uncle owns a shop. 'I've got nothing in common with you. Your house is paid for, I've lived in a council house all my life'. You can't relate, because they're living in a different world at that time and they can't see it either. Whereas if someone has been through the same thing, they see how your posture is, how you speak and your demeanor and they can tell how you feel inside.
>
> (Leroy, young person, 21-year-old male)

> There are parents that know how to talk about things and how to work the system, so they remain invisible. Parents from quite disadvantaged backgrounds are somehow much easier to spot because they don't have the language and they don't know how to come in and politely ask the right person. They turn up at reception angry or just don't ring back or you can't get hold of anybody or… I'm exaggerating, there's a huge chunk of people in that group who also are able to communicate, but then again, not that often. It's just different communication.
>
> (Sandra, school counsellor, 40s)

All three groups of research participants therefore agree that people interact better — so they 'click' and can 'relate to' each other more easily — if their dispositions, bodily features, skills and customs are shaped by a common class habitus. While, for Bourdieu and the interviewees alike, practical differences between people of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds are in themselves understandable and unproblematic, they should, nevertheless, not generate discriminatory treatment, especially in an institutional context. If individuals are officially processed for specific acts or aspects of their behaviour — in the case of this thesis, parenting difficulties and/or youth deviance — but factors beyond their conduct (e.g. their

material and physical characteristics) (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 96) also impact how they are dealt with, the covert criteria of evaluation present unjustified reasons for differentiation (Bourdieu 2000: 100-107).

Not being assessed only based on transparent criteria, but also according to unacknowledged indicators of class as 'secondary properties' (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 96), resonated widely amongst the study participants and generated feelings of resentment. Describing his experience with the police and his prediction about how the officers would treat someone from a more advantaged background, Jamie, a 21-year-old male, explains:

> I had a fight with a posh person and I was arrested and he wasn't and he started it, so he should have been. Obviously, if you ask them [the police], they'll say that everyone gets treated the same, but that's bullshit. No one gets treated the same. If I even only went into the police station to say or report something, they'd probably be like 'Get out'. Just based on how I'm dressed and how I speak. If a different person went in there, dressed smart, wearing a suit or something or even just like jeans or something, they would listen to him. They wouldn't listen to me. They would say 'You're wasting our time. Go away'.

In parallel to Dora's impression above that the school treated her differently from other parents due to her 'position in society', Jamie also felt that it was his class — expressed through visible and audible signs like clothing and speech — that engendered a peculiar type of handling by the police. Austin, a consultant clinical psychologist in his 40s, describes in detail another way in which classed differentiation can manifest itself in professional interactions:

> JA: Why do you think there is such a discrepancy in the number of young people of different backgrounds that experience behavioural difficulties?
>
> A: I think we [CAMHS] have quite a large proportion of young people and families who are well known to services throughout their

> lives for various reasons, mostly because they've struggled and their parents might have struggled. There's been problems at school, a reasonable amount of contact with social care, different concerns. These are cases that have been around for a while and always have been and always possibly will be. Some of those are intergenerational as well, I think. They're the cases that will often come via social care and are more complex in some ways... Lots of different issues that don't always fit different services' boxes. I think that ends up meaning that eventually things will escalate and then they get into trouble, the kids get into trouble. This city is reasonably affluent, but yet there's still areas of poor housing and low income and benefits and all that. I think there's something about that population being more obvious. Anyway, I think some of the higher income families have issues too, but schools and other professionals probably deal with their problems better than with others'. I also think there's a couple of schools, which are closer to the area with poorer families that don't deal with problems at all. Then there's also something about how these poorer young people are dealt with when they get into trouble I think.
>
> JA: What's your opinion about that?
>
> A: Our experience is that there's quite a variety of responses by the police and schools. Some schools will phone up the police at a drop of a hat and others will manage it. The private schools certainly manage a lot of things in house and they don't contact people because they're outside the system and they can do that. It's similar with some of the better state schools. So if you think about the number of schools around here, it's interesting that you get a lot of referrals from one or two schools and sometimes none from others. So there's something about how schools manage their concerns. And there's something about how the police deal and interface with that as well, I think. Whether it's a specific teacher or police officer and their judgments about class or just how they deal with offending. I think that sometimes they see it as the worst thing in the world and sometimes they don't. So there's evidence that if kids are coming from a better background they might be offered less or told off less.

The analysis in this chapter so far has revealed the significance of Bourdieu's multidimensional and relational understanding of class, in particular the ways in which it affects and is, at the same time, shaped by interactions. According to Bourdieu, social sciences should thus not be preoccupied with exploring the influence of individual variables on the development of social phenomena,

including behaviour, as the correlations between particular factors and their presumed outcomes are always distorted by and, simultaneously, constitutive of an individual's social position (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 95-100; see also Sayer 2005: 72-81).

Bourdieu's complex and interactional understanding of class therefore also resonates well with Emerson's (2015) notion of trouble, including deviance, as a negotiated, rather than a predetermined occurrence. Practitioners' views about how children and their parents are processed within institutions that help them with their difficulties often reveal that troubling behaviour is, in line Emerson, defined according to the ways in which it is perceived and reacted to (Emerson 2015: 43-55), whereby social class often seems to be an important distinguishing factor that dictates the pace and direction of the intervention:

> JA: Do you see different treatment of young people from different backgrounds in court?
>
> A: Yeah, definitely [with a convinced tone]. From the magistrates, yeah… They are obviously predominantly White, middle class, middle age, middle mannered. It's a running joke that we have. Obviously again, it depends bench to bench, but certainly if you have a young person in court who is presenting in a suit, has both mum and dad there, who have taken time off from work, and the young person has an excellent education record, so it looks like they're going to be doing well (…) Even if they've committed quite a violent offense, the court will be putting pressure on you to resolve that matter today, so that it doesn't have any more impact on the life of that young person. Now if they applied that to everybody in terms of low-level offenses, that's fine. Swift administration of justice is very important. So we often come back from court and feed it back to our managers [at the YOT]: 'Actually, I was really concerned in court today and if you could raise it as a training issue and explain that actually if that'd been a boy from one of the city's council estates, would he have been treated the same?' And I'm telling you that even if that boy would have everything else. If he would be

> doing well in school, if he had no previous convictions, if he had caring parents… Actually, would he have been treated the same? He wouldn't. They would have not hesitated to ask for a pre-sentence report in that situation.
>
> (Alice, bail support officer, 30s)

Alice's description of how children are treated diversely in comparable cases corresponds well with Bourdieu's reasoning about the mechanisms, through which similar situations can be defined distinctively, possibly generating unequal treatment of individuals from different backgrounds. In parallel to Bourdieu's view that agents sometimes decide about the present based on their class-conditioned social sense of the future, but according to past experiences (Bourdieu 1977: 72-73), Alice's account implies that magistrates might treat young people of different backgrounds diversely not only based on the facts of their cases, but also according to a habitual familiarity that they share with youth of their own class location and, on the other hand, distance from the lifeworlds of the lower classes.

In addition, Alice's observation also reflects important findings of 'process-attentive research' (Emerson 2015: 22) that explored how deviance is (re)constructed in (in)formal interactions between practitioners and clients, including offenders. In particular, in his foreword to Emerson's (2015) work on the negotiated nature of trouble, Katz has argued that both the treatment of people and the outcomes of their cases often depend on the types of problems that the decision-making officials in that professional milieu usually deal with. According to Katz, incidents are normally perceived as 'typical', processed by inertia and without conscious deliberation if officials in that setting continuously resolved similar issues in the past (Emerson 2015: 23-30).

In the context of this thesis, Katz's assertion about the automatic nature of

managing standard cases becomes important if aligned with Donzelot's claims that when dealing with young people in trouble, any intervention, even benevolent help at earlier stages, is actually penal in nature as it is part of an apparatus that gradually constructs delinquency as a working class problem (Donzelot 1979: 112-113). Since practitioners in the multidisciplinary web of youth justice will therefore 'typically' expect to deal with young people of lower economic standing, their reasoning is more likely to be 'on automatic' in cases concerning working class clients, which makes decision-making in these events more susceptible to class bias due to lack of conscious deliberation about the details of their cases. Correspondingly, Anne, a YOT officer in her 20s, posited that most agencies within youth justice have 'an ingrained view of what sort of people come through and deal with cases accordingly'.

Moreover, the rest of Anne's narrative as well as Ben and Dora's accounts below also confirm Donzelot's assumption that, in interventions with behaviourally challenging children, young people of the lower classes are regularly viewed as delinquent in advance and thus interpreted as well as confirmed as such (Donzelot 1979: 112). In addition, the quotations also support Emerson's understanding that both official and informal interventions with children or their parents can amplify or deescalate troubles not only based on organisational criteria, but also according to the client's social position (Emerson 2015: 536):

> I suppose the bias is not intentional, but they [the magistrates] look at it from the perspective of 'work needs to be done', so if you have somebody who's coming in and their life looks reasonably stable, they might give them less because they think they might need to do less work. And in terms of punishment as well - it's often not proportionate to what people have done, but who they are and how they live. That's also why there's a very high percentage of disadvantaged young people in the justice system. In some examples, it seems fairly obvious that children from a more affluent

background are able to manipulate the police decision or the crown prosecution decision or the court decision, so that they don't end up on our books. And when you look at clients that you do have on your books, you tend to see White, poorer younger people. It's still predominantly poor White British. If you have middle class affluent kids coming into the system, then there is a chance of either a very articulate pushy parent or a powerful person - somebody who might know the magistrates or other powerful people in the area - that's gonna keep them out of the system. And I think there's prejudice in the system for kids who are seen to be problems, just trouble-making delinquents in nasty kind of pejorative terms. I think they're more likely to be the kids who have disadvantaged backgrounds and they're seen more like the problem, rather than a victim of their circumstance.

(Anne, YOT officer, 20s)

JA: How did you feel in mainstream school?

B: I felt that they tried their best, but it just still seemed unfair to me. I felt I was invisible in school. The only time the teachers would talk to me was if I'd done something wrong. That's all they were doing, so like if I'd done something good, they wouldn't say anything, but if I'd done something bad, they would. Even my mum said that I was targeted in that school. Like they only focused on me. Say I'd be walking down to the field and I would walk past a group of teachers. They'd stop what they were doing and they'd look at me walk past just to see if I'd do something wrong, which I hated. So I'd look behind me and there was three teachers stood there, staring at me and *that* was what I hated. And there were people messing about at the same time, like there could be a fight going on and they didn't look at that, they looked at me... Even my mum said that the communication with the school was hard. She said that it was bullshit, that the school was just terrible. I didn't wanna leave the school because I had friends there and I didn't want to be left out, but then I had to leave anyway. Now [in a pupil referral unit] all my mates are the same as me. I don't have any mates I hang around with that are good in school 'cause I don't feel comfortable around them anymore. I only feel comfortable if I'm with people that misbehave. 'Cause I feel like I'm in the right place.

(Ben, young person, 14-year-old male)

My son got searched at school. He was one of the children that were smoking weed, but they had the names of the other ones as well. And I was all for it. 'Let's discipline them, somehow get the message to their parents, so we could stop this together'. But they searched my

> son and made him talk about it, which got negative attention brought to him and stigmatised him right there and then, but some parents…I don't know how they did it, but they obviously turned it around because nothing happened to their kids.
>
> (Dora, mother, 50s)

Dora's lay understanding of how and why the school stigmatised her son, but failed to discipline other pupils, provides a pertinent illustration of Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh's findings that, through agency contact, troubling behaviour is often elevated in young people from working class families and deescalated in children of more privileged social standing. According to Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh as well as in line with Emerson, such differentiation happens based on the diverse ways in which the cases of particular families are handled, whereby relevant arguments stated by children or parents of lower social strata are often disregarded or sidelined (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 135-137), which can sometimes yield different outcomes. As Terry, a YOT manager in his 50s put it:

> I've got a friend who's got a family and one of the boys, he's 22 now, and he's on the autistic spectrum... If he'd been from a different family, he could have well ended up in the youth justice system, but he hasn't, because he's been positively steered away from that.

In all, the narratives presented in the first part of this chapter expose the family's social location as an important feature in establishing how their problems — including their childrearing difficulties and children's troubles — will be perceived, acknowledged and reacted to by practitioners within an organisational context. Taken together, the accounts introduced so far provide support for a Bourdieusian understanding of habitus as ingrained in an individual's childhood experiences and internalised subconsciously, unifying their dispositions, perceptions and behaviour

across social fields, so that agents of similar backgrounds share a practical sense and are, at the same time, separated from people of diverse class belonging.

In combination with Emerson's conception of trouble as negotiated relationally, such an understanding of habitus helps better explain why — in their interactions with professionals — young people and their parents might be responded to adversely according to their social class and possibly directed on different pathways as a consequence of gradual institutional intensification or de-escalation of their problems. However, as will become apparent in the following section of this chapter, most of the interviewees' narratives are, nevertheless, complex and internally ambivalent.

It thus seems necessary to move beyond a restricted Bourdieusian view of habitus to understand in a more nuanced manner how class distinctions on one side, and elements beyond inconsistencies in habitus on the other, might shape interactions between practitioners and their clients. I therefore devote the next section to alternative understandings of habitus before attending to similarities in the moral understanding of class in the last part of this chapter.

3.2. The impacts of social class on children's behaviour, parenting and professional interactions: Beyond Pierre Bourdieu

When exploring how historically silenced power relations and hidden structural imbalances, including class stratification, manifest themselves in present relationships and interactions, Gordon (2008) has exposed the notion that life is complicated as one of the simplest yet most relevant sociological statements today. Moreover and more importantly for the aims of this thesis, Gordon has stressed that even the most dispossessed individuals have a 'complex personhood', which can

easily be overlooked if sociological analysis fails to grasp the contradictions in people's subjectivities as expressed in their narratives about the social world and their personal difficulties (Gordon 2008: 3-5). Therefore, although the previous section of this chapter provides ample support for a purely Bourdieusian understanding of social class and its impacts on professional interactions, a more thorough examination of the ambivalences in the gathered accounts requires an adaptation of Bourdieu's thought.

As has already been mentioned, Bourdieu argued that habitus is inscribed into the person's physical, mental and emotional makeup through a gradual osmosis that adjusts intrafamilial dynamics to the social structure and *vice versa*. For Bourdieu, the most important part of this process occurs by means of both planned parenting and mundane activities in an individual's childhood, so their habitus and early-acquired social position are usually taken for granted as a consequence (Bourdieu 1977: 85-95; see also Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 48-58, Bourdieu 1998: 35-55, Bourdieu 1991: 12, Bourdieu 2000: 173).

Other academics have, however, rejected the notion that agents cannot resist their primary dispositions and corresponding social instructions, including those that are transferred to them by their parents (Garfinkel 1967: 68; cited in Boltanski 2011: 20). Furthermore, Lahire and Silva have *explicitly dismissed a habitus that is predominantly acquired in childhood*, as it can also be modified with later life experiences, e.g. through contacts with peers (Lahire 2004; cited in Silva 2016a: 77 and Silva 2016b: 169-171). In correspondence with Lahire and Silva, the accounts of all three groups of research participants in this study suggest that habitus is constituted both by a person's early familial experiences as well as through their relationships with people outside of the family, thereby resulting in an individual's

'plural interiority' (Lahire 2004, cited in Silva 2016b: 170):

> I am a parent myself and I know that if you ask a parent of a child that is being bullied or is bullying other children, they will feel to blame. But it's very difficult to know whether it was something that parents did wrong because children also create their own environments, don't they? It's a combination. In a family, one child will react very differently from the other, so what's that all about? And that can be children from the same parents in the same environment. But they may not have the same relationships at home or outside of the home. I think you get back to the nature-nurture debate. Is it nature or is it nurture? It's neither because it's a combination of the two. I know that because I have a psychology degree, so the conclusion I came to was that - as well as the impact of the parents - a child can also create their own environment. I think it's an interplay between your genes, parenting and your environment.
>
> (Mary, anti-bullying strategy coordinator, 50s)

> I used to blame myself for my son's behaviour [offending, drug-taking]. I always blamed myself. Most parents do. And my husband and I said 'What have we done wrong?' We couldn't understand. But then my friends went: 'Well Ella, but your other kids, have they ever done that? No!' and I thought: 'They're right'. Because I've got three children and that never happened. When they were little, they might have done something and then cried and said 'Sorry' and have never done it again. So now I know that it is definitely my son's problem. I think the environment creates how you are, but our house has always been calm, so how do you explain his behaviour? And some kids are disadvantaged because they live in a disadvantaged house, they've got no money and their parents really don't care and they don't work, but they still don't offend. A lot of parents sit and drink and they're not very good role models, are they? And their kids are fine. But you can also be an OK parent and your child is not OK. I think everything is important, you know: the teachers, the friends, the parents. But I think at the end of the day, the individual child is still there with their own bits and pieces and all three of my kids are different and they've all come from the same place.
>
> (Ella, mother, 40s)

> C5: Parenting will always impact what the child does. It's their parents, it's their two people, it's their supply of knowledge and experience. It's the only thing they can really refer to. So obviously it will impact it, but I'm sure there's plenty of other factors to it. The

> child can be almost the opposite of what the parents are, so whatever your parents are doing, you're thinking 'Oh I don't wanna do it'.
>
> C2: Also, as a child, the only people you know are your parents, so the parents are your main people. When you grow up, then you're probably gonna have the same habits as your parents. Your parents might do something and you might copy them, so... I think it's mostly environmental reasons, but there are other reasons as well. And you have to give the kid some responsibility as well because the kid has a mind of his own, so it's not only the parents.
>
> C1: But also, you can't just assume that if kids are doing bad stuff that they must have parents that are either doing or had done bad stuff as well. 'Cause, we all do things that our parents would not like at all. Just 'cause kids are doing a lot of bad stuff, you don't necessarily know that it's because of their parents.
>
> (15-year-old male, two 15-year-old females in FG 4)

Ambivalent accounts like the ones gathered above are frequent amongst the interviewees and suggest that while the family — along with its socially-conditioned levels and forms of capital as well as their accompanying values and manners — surely impacts the child immensely, the young person's behaviour is, nevertheless, not determined by either their social location or their parents' childrearing, but is, in part, also a manifestation of their own agency. Based on similar findings, even Bourdieu and Wacquant *denied a purely subconscious functioning of habitus* that would inevitably lead individuals to think, feel and act based on their primary practical inclinations, embedded in their social position.

According to Bourdieu and Wacquant, habitus indeed internalises the objective features of the field as well as, simultaneously, externalises a person's dispositions and motivations, which makes it more likely for them to (re)act with less conscious deliberation in a social sphere akin to their primary familial milieu (Bourdieu 1990: 90, 108; see also Bourdieu 2000: 144, Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 127-128). This does not, however, exclude an individual's rational and more

calculated approach or their critical capacities in changed circumstances (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 131). The narratives of several research participants also reject an exclusively subconscious operating of habitus, thereby supporting Bourdieu and Wacquant's assumption that, although important in shaping thoughts, decisions, conduct and interactions, 'habitus is not fate' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 132-135):

> It's not a given, but it certainly doesn't help when you're raised in a very challenging family that's got unhealthy behaviours going on in there. For young kids it's going to be challenging from the start, isn't it? Being brought up in that environment because they have to make a choice about that at some point… Well I say a choice, but they may have very few choices then because they're in an environment where they don't have a choice. But it's about making that choice later on in life... Like peers and that influence.
>
> (Sylvia, YOT manager, 40s)

> I don't know how my dad's behaviour has influenced me. I can't say. But I do know that when my dad was hitting me, I didn't go around saying 'Because my dad hits me, I'm gonna hit you'. That's always been my responsibility. At the end of the day, I'm responsible for what I'm doing. It did influence me a bit because I'd see him hitting people and I thought I could hit people, but that's when I was younger. As I got older, obviously I realised that it's not OK to do that.
>
> (Jamie, young person, 21-year-old male)

> People think children of parents with prior criminal involvement are exactly the same as their parents. Even though the parents don't want that, people mark their children like that. It's the same as when Dominic, one of my two sons, got arrested in school [for stealing from a teacher's drawer]. They just looked at me and went 'Well, daddy's on 'social' and has been done for crimes and he's been to prison, so here's his child'. This is what his teacher thought she knew, but I didn't go into school and say 'Dominic, go through that drawer'. That's just a little boy being inquisitive. I brought my children up

> with manners and respect, you can ask them. They show it to everybody else too.
>
> (Rob, father, 40s)

Outlooks such as these are recurrent between practitioners, young people and their parents, confirming Bourdieu and Wacquant's 'mediating' habitus that — although making certain perceptions and behaviours more likely in people of certain familial backgrounds — can actually result in unexpected practices that depend less on an individual's socially-embedded dispositions and more on their agentic tendencies, the favourability of the situation or both (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 132-136). They also uphold Bourdieu's suggestion that habitus be explored empirically in each case and defined on a continuum between deterministic and unified across domains on one side as opposed to modifiable and diversely influential in different social fields on the other (Bourdieu 2000: 61-65, 160-161).

Furthermore, although Bourdieu relativised the nature of habitus to some extent, allowing for internal contradictions between a person's class-conditioned dispositions and those that they acquire later on through, say, their social mobility (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 510-511), he, at the same time, principally renounced the idea of a habitus that would be internally divided and would trigger diverse intellectual, affective and/or aesthetic dispositions and corresponding practices of an individual (Bourdieu 2000: 64). In this respect, Bourdieu's overarching aim to understand habitus as more influential and all-encompassing than one would like to imagine (Bourdieu 2000: 64), prevents a less pessimistic view of the extent to which people are aware of- and can steer their own attitudes as well as, consequently, interpret others' perspectives in relationships with agents of similar or diverse social locations (Bourdieu 2000: 143-144, 198-199), and should thus be updated.

Especially, Tom and Abby's accounts below provide due illustration that people navigate their perceptions and actions not only *between* different fields, but also *within* them — e.g. within the realm of parenting — based on *different segments of their identity* (e.g. their economic/material standing vs. their emotional capacities). In addition, the different domains of people's subjectivity are also not equally ingrained in or characteristic of their social location. However, these internal ambivalences might be overlooked or misunderstood, often in a classed manner:

> Parenting is very complex and I don't think it's easy for parenting programmes to grasp that. There's various domains that parents communicate to their child. One of them might be safety, so to keep you safe, one of them might be attachment, so how close you are, and one of them might be discipline or punishment. Some families are very clear on which domain they are operating from: 'I'm doing this because I'm protecting you', so the young person is 'Oh, I understand why', whereas someone might keep someone safe, but they might either not say it or say 'I'm doing this 'cause you're naughty'. So I think there are differences depending on where you live, your socio-economic background, but it's not *because* of that, I believe, as parents can be clear on which domain they're coming from in any case. Maybe it's more about resources in another way, I'll give you an example. I met someone recently. He smoked a lot of weed in school, he was fire setting, he was in a very wealthy school, they paid for him, but he didn't fit the norm. However, he's now left school and in a way, he's reinterpreted those norms and values. He may not be a banker or a lawyer or a doctor, like they wanted him to be, but actually, there was a benefit to that normative way of thinking because he now has his own company. The thing is that in the process, he could go wrong and he did go wrong and his parents were always there to pick him up and he'd just start again. And you wouldn't have that possibility in a less economically developed family. But what's important is that this was not emotional support in the domain 'You'll be safe', because you get that in disadvantaged families as well. It was a financial and very practical assistance: 'If you get into financial problems, I will help'. And in a disadvantaged family that would be in the sense of 'Do I have the capacity to survive?' And that's not meant emotionally, but practically as well.
>
> (Tom, charity worker, 20s)

> I'm not exactly well off, rich, but I don't let it stop me or my children from having what we need (…) My daughter Claire knows my limits. She knows that sometimes I haven't got the money, but she's fine with that because I still do other stuff for her, so she's OK. I'll let her friends stay for a sleepover in the garden, but because we can't afford the pizza takeout, I get pizzas from the freezer, you know. Well sometimes she does get a bit 'Oh, I wish I had the money to go and do this' and I say 'Yeah, I know you do' and she gets a bit down in the dumps about it and I just accept it, but then I don't try and compromise with her on that one because obviously I won't have the money even if I do. But I try and make her understand that we have other things in life sorted out and we get along. Also, as soon as the money comes in, I'll give her an allowance and tell her not to waste it. Anyway, money can't buy you happiness or perfect children. It's putting love into them and being there and it's listening, and it's saying 'You're OK, you're brilliant as you are, you don't have to have this or do that or whatever'.
>
> (Abby, mother, 40s)

In addition to the views of adults, some children's narratives also refute a narrow understanding of Bourdieu's work, which implies that individuals are predominantly directed by their unified and socially conditioned dispositions and are therefore considerably restricted in their ability to control their beliefs, motivations and actions beyond their class belonging. More precisely, a reassessment of both the already presented parts of Danny's story as well as his account below implies that young people, too, have *multifaceted and sometimes conflicting dispositions*, both between different social fields as well as within them. People's thoughts, impulses and conduct are not always embedded in their primary class habitus and thus predictable, but also derive from other constituents of their subjectivities and life experiences (Lahire 2004; cited in Silva 2016a: 77 and Silva 2016b: 169-171):

> JA: So how was your experience at the state school where you went after your father left?
>
> D: After starting state school, I got beaten up four or five times in the first year and I just found myself sitting alone at lunch. I'd do this thing where I'd walk around the school, which made it look like I was doing something at lunch. But really I had nothing to do and no one to talk to. The thing that helped me was I met a friend. And it was probably this friend that got me into the whole drug thing. Because this friend smoked weed, was a little bit more cool, a little bit more chavvy, liked rap music and we became best friends. And to this day, he's still my best friend. He probably got me into that kind of like outside culture, rather than playing games and sitting inside. He got me into a much more social person. He brought me out of my shell in a certain way. It was because of that I could do and deal drugs, but it wasn't his fault. And I also got a job at this takeaway and the whole job was serving people and over time just by talking to more and more people, I found myself to actually break through. It wasn't easy. I didn't find school easy. I never liked school 'cause I was either at the private school, but I wasn't as rich as everybody else, so I felt an outcast there, or I was at the state school and I was the posh guy who tucked in his shirt and wore his tie normally.
>
> (Danny, young person, 21-year-old male)

An isolated analysis of Danny's account in the previous section of this chapter might warrant a careless conclusion that early acquired middle class habitus and ease always provide an individual with clear and unified guidelines ('tunnel vision') as well as the ability to negotiate ('switch over') across a range of settings, including in a formal environment. Nevertheless, a thorough examination of Danny's 'narrative habitus' (Fleetwood 2016: 181-182) — as expressed in his story as a whole — reveals internal ambivalences in Danny's identity and his corresponding perceptions, interests and actions. These contradictions, furthermore, signal a *fragmented and, at times, contradictory habitus* beyond primary class position (Brookman 2015: 210-211) and a correspondingly bumpy, rather than foreseeable and straightforward, path to desistance.

In parallel to the findings of narrative criminologists introduced in the preceding chapter about the two-fold accounts of drug dealers in Norway (Sandberg and Pedersen 2009: 33-52), Danny's self-narrative is dual as it is split between, and draws from, two mutually exclusive discourses. More specifically, Danny's account that he 'was (…) at the private school, but (…) wasn't as rich as everybody else' and he 'was at the state school and (…) was the posh guy' might help explain why, in his personal biography, this division encouraged him to abandon, albeit temporarily, the conventionality of a reserved and law abiding pupil ('the private school/posh' conventional discourse) and exchange it for the thrill of what he calls the 'outside culture' of drug-dealing ('the state school/chavvy' subcultural discourse).

A brief inquiry into Danny's storied habitus demonstrates that, at a certain time in their life course, a person is not necessarily impacted more severely by their primary dispositions as the importance of specific segments of their personality will depend on both the roles that different types and amounts of capital (e.g. in Danny's case legitimate school capital vs. illegitimate drug-dealer capital) have played in their history thus far as well as on the current surroundings (Sandberg and Pedersen 2009: 160). Therefore, although Danny's class-embedded conventional discourse helped him realise that practitioners were, in his words, 'trying to help' him, which gradually paved his pathway to desistance, a different individual of otherwise similar class background might have, conversely, narrated their past and present experiences differently, e.g. by slowly abandoning their primary dispositions and corresponding legitimate capital while, at the same time, accumulating more of its illegal forms, thereby inhibiting desistance and pushing themselves towards a life of crime.

Taken together, both Tom and Abby's accounts on one side as well as a more detailed inspection of Danny's narratives on the other clarify that people are not only subconsciously led by their initial familial and social dispositions, but also deliberate about their behaviour, try to explain it by ascribing it to either their background or factors beyond their class position as well as talk about it to others, which confirms Garfinkel's assumption that individuals — or at least the participants in this study — are not '"cultural dopes"' (Garfinkel 1967: 68; cited in Boltanski 2011: 20). Furthermore and lastly, the levels of professional and lay people's reflexivity as expressed in the gathered accounts so far as well as in the following narratives perhaps most evidently contradict another one of Bourdieu's main assumptions, specifically that *people's beliefs, tendencies and actions are predominately triggered by their practical sense* (Bourdieu 1991: 13).

On the contrary, the three accounts below provide appropriate illustration that an individual's perceptions and decisions are not always entirely guided by their class-conditioned embodied practicalities, but are also regulated by their rational thinking and, as will be further attended to in the next section of this chapter, affective sensibility. In other words, while some people deliberate less about the impacts of class and other factors on their behaviour and relationships, most individuals are aware of class-related influences or, like Danny, have become more conscious about them with experiences, possibly making it more likely for them to be able to manage them:

> JA: What, in your opinion, was the most significant factor that led to your offending behaviour?
>
> D: I didn't think it affected me, but what I have realised as I've gone on is that actually my dad leaving and me being taken out of that private school had a much bigger effect than I realised it did. My life

would have been easier if I stayed at that school, but I also feel that if I stayed there I would have failed in another way.

JA: Why do you feel that way?

D: Because to me, that school was just normal life. It was just normal and I took everything for granted. Everything, I took everything for granted and I didn't work hard or care. That change [going to state school and getting arrested for drug-dealing] actually kind of gave me that drive and motivation and perspective. Do you see what I mean?

JA: Yeah.

D: So the private school was amazing, but things would have gone very differently. I just wouldn't be the same person that I am today, because I took everything for granted, I didn't work hard, I didn't care. Maybe I would have realised that as I got older, but I'm not sure. I guess it took that conflict and that struggle.

JA: Maybe it doesn't have to be so extreme...

D: I wouldn't change it. The fact that it's happened, I wouldn't change it now. Mostly because I meet people from that private school now, people that I used to know and they're not the people that I would wanna be at all. There's something about them. They're not down to Earth. There's something about people with... I'm not... I mean it's not like I don't like people with money, but there's something about children that come from families with money. I would have been one of these people. Because I was born into money, but I just didn't know it then or until I was eight years old. And the fact that I was living a nice lifestyle then - you know living in a big house and we lived well - it didn't mean anything to me 'cause it was normal to me, so I had no idea and I didn't recognise that. You see what I mean? And rich children don't have that life experience. They're not even interested in trying to accept you.

(Danny, young person, 21-year-old male)

I think parenting doesn't only come naturally. I actually plan quite a lot of things. You have to if there's not enough to go around. If my three children and I get stuck anywhere, we'll ask for help. There is no shame to ask for help, ever. So, I arranged an appointment for my daughter Denise to go and see the doctor, which then referred her to PCAMHS, which then referred her to having someone to go to her school and she had to have counselling. And if anybody asked me to do a parenting class, anything, I'm up for it and am always willing to, you know. I don't mind learning something new. And when I

learn something new, I don’t just keep it to myself. I share it with my mates, my coworkers, my kids. Maybe it’s because the girl’s dad was never present and I got used to this way. Men come and go, yeah? And fathers definitely come and go, so it’s just you and your kids. Hopefully, you make the best of it. I don’t really find it hard to balance housework, work and parenting ‘cause this is how it’s always been. When I split with my ex, me and the girls just did it. It was the norm. They went to school, I went to work and that’s how it’s always been. My youngest son Dylan has done the same. As the girls got older, I might have asked them for some help around the house, but that’s it. I don’t make it as an excuse or anything. If you’re a single parent, you choose… I choose to be that way, to be honest. I have enough hassle with the kids, let alone another man… Having a man causing more hassle. He would be the first one out the door [both laugh]. My main focus is my kids. Until they are ready to leave home and then I’ll go from there. With parenting, I think everything comes down to boundaries and you need to have some sort of relationship with your kids. If you’re free and let your kids do whatever they want, then they’re gonna go and do it. If there are boundaries and they know where they can go and what they can and can’t do, then I think it’s more acceptable for a child. Because, you know, they are still kids. Even when they’re teenagers, they are still kids. They still need you. They still need you to get up and give ‘em a cuddle, as much as they deny it. People don’t realise that you’re a parent for a reason and you’re a parent from the day that you get that child ‘til the day you die, yeah? That child is gonna be with you. Hopefully until it’s old enough to leave home and defend for itself, so you have to do the best that you can to make sure they are going to be a decent person in society.

(Carol, mother, 30s)

In the UK, we can’t really say it’s only the family’s problem. It's often also a class thing. Before I did this job, I was a therapy lecturer and I used to work at a college. I had a girl there who was the first one in four generations that has gone further than secondary school, so the first one in college. Before her, four generations didn't work and keep in mind the first generation is not even 60 yet. Because they’re 15, 13 when they have a child. So you would think four generations go back far, but they don't really. Anyway, it’s hard to motivate a kid in these circumstances, because they don't understand what you're trying to do. They really don't. And it's not because they're naughty or stupid. 'Why do you want me to work? Why would you want me to work for six pounds an hour if I get it for free?' They don't get it, they're not being arrogant. They're really confused and this is something that the people that try to help them have to understand. People sometimes say to me 'How do you work in such a school [a pupil referral unit] in a place like this city?' and

> they think 'Really, are there people *like this* in this city?' and you think 'Yes!' This place is a bubble, a non-realistic bubble. That's just the tiny bubble and then there's the ring around it, isn't there? That's where your other people live. If you want to help people, you need to realise that poverty exists around here although it's not part of your world.
>
> (Charlotte, key stage 4 manager, 30s)

The empirical findings as expressed in people's stories so far support both Bourdieu's conceptual framework as well as the theoretical inquiries that challenge it. Together, the analytical viewpoints imply that social differences as manifested in people's perceptions, speech and behaviour might impact professional relationships in a classing way, but can also be consciously regulated by the interacting parties. While Bourdieu's thought and the narratives that support it reveal that familial and socioeconomic circumstances frame people's thoughts, dispositions and actions to guide their verbal and non-verbal communication, the studies upgrading Bourdieu's work express that individuals may, nevertheless, steer their class-embedded thoughts, inclinations and conduct by rationally and — as will be shown in the last section of this chapter — affectively controlling possible class biases (Sandberg and Pedersen 2009: 35). In the words of a 17- and 16-year old female as well as a 15-year old male, partaking in a summer school focus group:

> C12: You can do things differently to your parents, but it's hard because it's your instinct to imitate them. You imprint on them when you're a child, so if you don't wanna be like your parents, specifically if they were bad, you have to consciously make an effort not to be.
>
> C11: Yeah, parents constantly fall back to the ways of their parents, but once you remind them, they try really hard to change and they do change, but it's really hard for them as they are so used to it and used to ways of reacting to certain things and ways of punishing people. It

> just goes really, really back. But if they try really hard, they can change.
>
> C1: I feel like a parent's economic standpoint doesn't determine how they really think and feel. My dad's parents, they never went to university or anything, but they were still strict. Because they didn't have much, they wanted my dad to have more. So just because someone starts off low doesn't mean that they don't have just as good of a chance to do something better.
>
> (17-year-old female, 16-year-old female and 15-year old male in FG 5)

As the accounts above reveal that young people and their parents can 'consciously make an effort' and reflect about their class-embedded predispositions, Bourdieu's work as well as the theories and empirical studies that revisit it should be utilised together in order to conceptualise in full the possibly different treatment of children and their parents in professional interactions. In parallel to Gordon's conclusions, Sandberg and Pedersen have also posited that people and their practices are complex as well as subject to change (Sandberg and Pedersen 2009: 33), so a combination of Bourdieu's critical sociology as well as its adaptations, rather than their separate application, is better able to grasp the socially-conditioned and, at once, reflexive functioning of individuals, including children, their parents and professionals who work with them.

Moreover, by drawing on these joined theoretical approaches, an individual's habitus can be conceptualised as either homogeneous across different realms or contrasted and manifested differently in one field as opposed to another. Nevertheless, while the similarities between people of comparable social locations as well as the differences between individuals of diverse backgrounds have been extensively explored, the habitual resemblances between agents of disparate class backgrounds remain underresearched (Sayer 2005). This seems unsatisfactory since several quotations in this case study reveal that people from the lower classes and

the more privileged often share dispositions, viewpoints and, to a certain extent, behavioural traits:

> I think the issue with private education is a little bit like what we were saying about the deprived students of poverty. It's a fact that a lot of the students in private education have been sent away from home to board in the schools, so they've got no relationship with their family. You've got a family with real poverty on one side, so dysfunctional families, where the kids have no idea how to interact with others. Then you've also got the really affluent families who are sending their children away to give them the best education, but through that comes not having any form of belonging, not being able to relate to society because all you've known is the family that you've been brought up with, which is the school (…) These two groups are very similar when it comes to mental health and behavioural issues because none of them have ever belonged to anything or have ended up having to create their own family environment by latching on to friends. They've got no common sense or social etiquette of being able to communicate with anyone else than the people or the classes that they have associated with. 'Cause that's the only environment that they have ever known: the town or the street where they have lived and the boarding school, in which they were from the age of three to the age of 18. If you put the two together, they are very wide apart financially and on the scale of things, but in terms of their mental health and narrow vision, they're very similar. Privilege can trigger a very narrow mindset, just like the one at the very bottom, where they have not had the opportunities to be able to develop it.
>
> (Lisa, teacher, 30s)

Before using the next chapter to empirically test the ways in which children, their parents and practitioners of complementary and diverse backgrounds negotiate decisions about a young person's treatment within juvenile justice as well as to explore the possible classed distortions in the interacting parties' beliefs and decisions, it thus seems important to first examine the areas in- or the themes about which individuals across classes are more inclined to comply. By following Sayer's

(2005) moral understanding of class, I therefore devote the last section of this chapter to the similarities in people's affective sense regardless of class location.

3.3. The impacts of social class on children's behaviour, parenting and professional interactions: Sayer and the moral understanding of class

In agreement with Bourdieu, Sayer has asserted that habitus pushes people of a particular class background towards specific practices and encourages the acquisition of respective goods based on a familiarity that individuals gradually absorb through their class-conditioned experiences. At the same time, however, Sayer has argued that agents across class backgrounds value internal goods and practices that are important for their wellbeing — rather than providing economic or material benefits only — somewhat equivalently (Sayer 2005: 117-119). In accordance with Sayer's conclusion and in the realm of childrearing, for example, the interviewed young people, parents and professionals have a similar understanding of what a good parent is, especially when it comes to dealing with the child's misbehaviour:

> I suppose being a good parent obviously means to love your kids and cherish your kids, but to not let them walk all over you. Set the ground rules and the boundaries, make sure they understand them and make sure you go through with the consequences, not just give the threats, but, at the same time, you have to balance that out and show them that you *do* care, you *do* love them, so they can understand that and they understand that you're not having a go at them for the sake of having a go. You've gotta say the reasons why, you know: 'We're trying to protect you, because we love you and we don't want nothing to happen to you'.
>
> (Adam, father, 30s)

> Sometimes, I ask myself what disadvantage is. For example, I've got little Johnny or whatever and his siblings, probably six of them, and their parents of very low income, but they're the salt of the Earth if

> their moral grounding, what they're saying to their child, the way they're supporting them and the ways that they're pushing in lots of directions are fine. Then you can ask yourself, 'Are they really disadvantaged?' Well, maybe in terms of money, yes, but when it comes down to the way that the kids are being brought up. There's no chaos, so just the fact that they haven't got their own bedroom doesn't really matter that much anymore. Because everything else is the moral grounding and they'll be less likely to commit an offense than if they were millionaires, because they are morally alright. I think young people across the board want to have a feeling of safety, they want boundaries, they want to know where they stand, they want continuity. This comes from the children, from young people, that's what they say. They want parents to have continuity, so they know where they stand.
>
> (Lucas, police officer, 40s)

> L: I get along with my mum quite well, because she rewards me and praises me if I've done something good and she also comes down on me quite hard when I've done something wrong. I think that if my mum didn't come down on me if I'd done something wrong, it wouldn't feel or be right. If you do something wrong, you need to have consequences. If you do something right or helpful, you need rewards.
>
> JA: How would you define a good parent?
>
> L: A good parent is like when you're there for your child, you praise them and you say 'Well done' when they've done something good, but you're also there to be the bad parent when they've done something wrong and if you don't do that and you just give your kid whatever they want whenever they want, that's not the way to parent. That's pretty much like the kid's telling you what to do. Like he owns you.
>
> (Lewis, young person, 14-year-old male)

Similar accounts not only in all three groups of research participants across social locations, but also within the same families — for example Carol's (mother, 30s) belief that, in childrearing, 'it all comes down to boundaries' and her daughter's claim that parents 'need to draw boundaries, because otherwise their kids will just walk all over them' (Libby, 17-year-old female) — seem to confirm that people

have a complementary understanding of what matters when it comes to issues and relationships of value, like parenting. In other words, they deem childrearing 'a human factor, not a money factor at all' (Abby, mother, 40s), so 'no matter how well off or educated you are, there's something different about parenting your own children' (Tracy, early intervention parenting worker, 40s).

In addition and as opposed to Bourdieu's assumption that people rarely challenge the classed social order, the interviewees in this case study also clearly express their views about how they (do not) want to be treated as well as often confront various forms of classing differentiation. More precisely and in line with Sayer's reasoning, they challenge the maldistribution of assets and/or processes that are important for their fulfilment and they usually do so in reference to common humanity in some form or another (Sayer 2005: 47-48, 117-119):

> People are still quite prejudiced and just like to have someone that's different because they can pick on them and they can say something and it makes them feel more normal when somebody else is a bit less normal. That can be someone who's from a poor family or it can be about being male or female or whatever. And my daughter will wake me up at night if she wants to talk about how she's feeling, about school and bullying and people that pick on her and why they do it and why people are so horrible. She'll ask 'Why are they horrible? They are just people'. And I don't know what to say. Anyone that is slightly different still stands out. Anyone, who is Black or anybody… Like our next-door neighbour, who is Mixed-race. She's actually my daughter's ally. She's got a friend in her. She's about the same age and she's Mixed-race and I believe she's always gone through school thinking 'I'm a bit different' and I think they get on a bit better because of that. Young people are trying to figure out on their own where they are going and they want to fit in the peer group of who they get along with and if you don't fit into any of those groups and you become this person who is a loner, then people don't wanna talk you and you keep to yourself a bit more, kind of separate, don't you? At the end of the day, it's all on a sliding scale, but we just don't address it that way because we live in a society, where everything has to be, you know 'The boys go there and the girls go here', 'The poor live here and the rich live there'. Everything is just too black and white. And it may be that it is not supposed to be like

that. I think it's a sliding scale. It's a spectrum. There's male and there's female, there's Black and there's White, there's rich and there's poor, but we all fit in. At the end of the day, we are all people. We are humans.

(Emma, mother, 50s)

They talk about diversity in school, but you never used to see it. There was this sense of 'These people don't speak to these people' either on the field or at the playground and they [the school personnel] never used to intervene. They never used to intervene and say 'You kids, why are you all segregated?' and get to the root cause of the division and have a bigger assembly about it. Whereas it was clearly a problem. In my school, the Asians and the rap kids used to have fights with the White kids or the posh kids had fights with the normal kids, just for no reason and we didn't even know why we're doing it. It's just how it was and the teachers knew this and didn't do anything about it, which is ridiculous now that I think of it. They used to say that we need to stop fighting. But they never used to say what was clearly going on. Never. As a kid you tend to socialise with a crowd of people that is similar to you, but it's up to the school to say to different groups of kids 'Actually, you have more in common than you think'. But learning about the cultural and class differences was of minor importance compared to us doing Science and Math. Mind you, we had classes on diversity, but it wasn't mentioned there. And you know, these are the things that are really important and make people better people. Instead of just making them better academics and things like that.

(Leroy, young person, 21-year-old male)

I've just though of quite a good example of the differences and similarities between classes. We were running a group programme and we were working with three girls in the group. Two of them were codefendants from very well-to-do families from somewhere in the South part of the county, I can't remember exactly where. And then we had another girl on the group, who was from a council estate, so from sort of a low working class family. She'd had a lot of problems, she was looked after…Sort of total opposite of these two girls who'd had everything in their lives that they ever needed. We talked to them about different situations. For example, we said: 'What would you do if somebody stole your phone?' And the two girls' reaction was 'Mum and Dad would just buy me a new one, we wouldn't care'. 'What about all your photos, doesn't that matter?' you know, that kind of thing. So this other girl was like 'It would ruin my life, I've got everything on there. My photos and contacts. I can't afford to buy a new phone. I use it to speak to people and stuff

> like that'. I think then we kind of said 'What would you do if somebody broke into your house and assaulted one of your parents?' So, using some naturally quite provocative language with them. And these two girls were like 'Well, you know, I'd stay out of it, Mum can deal with it on her own. It wouldn't have anything to do with me'. And this other girl, when these two girls were saying this, her reaction was brilliant. She turned around and she challenged them and she went 'That's *your Mum*! Wouldn't you just be absolutely furious?' And she couldn't believe it herself, that these two other girls were so blasé about it. So, you know, I guess the natural kind of assumption is that the wealthier somebody is and the higher their social class, the better their understanding, but actually, this other girl had a much better understanding of empathy and relationships with other people than these two girls who'd lived in a bubble.
>
> (Amber, YOS support officer, 30s)

For Sayer, the very fact that individuals sometimes express concerns about class distinction and blame each other for their classist (and, in parallel, sexist or racist) views and behaviour — as did my research participants in the narratives above — signals that they follow similar norms of fairness regardless of their class origin. In addition, Sayer has argued that while both sociological theory and empirical research usually concentrate on the divisions between people of different classes, they often fail to acknowledge that people across class backgrounds actually behave respectfully and kindly towards one another most of the time based on shared ethical grounds (Sayer 2005: 49). Adherence to common moral standards — put simply, avoiding 'what is wrong/bad' and striving for 'what is right/good' — was also an evident feature of the accounts gathered in this study:

> Economically, it's class categorised in England, isn't it? It used to be working class, middle class, upper class. Now it's just working class and upper class. There's no inbetween anymore and it's very sad, but I like to think that I can have a good relationship with people regardless of that. Especially my neighbours and they could be two streets away, living in a nice big house or whatever, but I always say hello to them at the bus stop, when I see them walking the dog. I don't even know their first name, but it's about being polite. There was a lady in town, very upper class. She couldn't get all her stuff out

of the boutique and I offered to help her and she was pretty appreciative, although I think she was also pretty shocked at first. You just do that for somebody, don't you? She could hardly walk herself. But to me that was natural, you know. If it was me struggling, I would appreciate a little bit of help. I always feel that everybody does, but more working class people treat people like they would like to be treated, so they will offer to help you or they will just be polite to you because that doesn't cost anything. Your politeness and manners do not cost anything.

(Abby, mother, 40s)

JA: Would you have an opinion about somebody if they were from [one of the council estates in this city]?

C2: Well you can't judge a book by its covers. If I only know that you live there, so then obviously I've never met you, so I can't just say that I don't like you just because you're from a certain place.

C1: But people do do that.

C2: Yeah but it's not right. You shouldn't just go up to somebody and say 'I don't like the look of you or where you're from' because you don't really know how they *act*. Because technically, we're all the same. Well, we're not all the same, but we're equal. We all chose to be equal and we must respect that.

(14-year-old female and 15-year-old female in FG 1)

JA: Do you think that the values that people have [about parenting] depend on their class background or are the values quite universal across the board?

R: I don't think that just because you're from a more deprived background that you will necessarily have a bad set of values, if you like, or certain values that I wouldn't agree with. I think the other issues and circumstances that are in your life are more important, so if you have a parent that has addiction issues, substance abuse issues etc., then clearly that's gonna have an impact on how stable and secure your home environment is, even if that person is trying the best they can to be a good parent. And it doesn't mean that they don't love their children and they're not trying, but there are other things, other factors influencing what's going on in their home life, aren't there? Equally, affluent household could have somebody who's, again, an alcoholic or has substance abuse issues, but just manages to hide it better. That doesn't necessarily mean that they're going to have a better set of values than somebody who can't hide it. I don't think it necessarily matters how much money you've got. I think it

> matters what circumstances are impacting on your wellbeing and your family unit.
>
> (Richard, neighbourhood inspector, 40s)

Taken together, Sayer's work and the accounts presented in this section so far help further demonstrate that an isolated Bourdieusian perspective is sometimes insufficient in explaining if, how and why class habitus impacts people's dispositions and their interactions on the ground, including those between behaviourally challenging children, their parents and youth justice professionals. Specifically, they indicate that individuals can regulate their beliefs and conduct through rational reflexivity and by drawing on moral dispositions, so their perceptions and actions as well as their relationships with others are not necessarily habitually guided by what they have inculcated depending on their social location. Terry's (YOT manager, 50s) account below perfectly encapsulates that agents are not only impulsively led by their incorporated practical sense, but can also react to situations according to their relatively class-neutral affective abilities and a general understanding of fairness (Sayer 2005: 47- 48):

> I think saying that people from completely different backgrounds cannot understand each other can be simplistic, because people can come from a more privileged background, but are still able to form affective relationships with those who are not well off. You don't have to have been mad to be an affective psychologist. It's the same kind of argument. I believe it's more about the ability. You have to be able to value and treat a young person with respect, so they then feel like they are seen as an individual that is of value**.**

Two further aspects of Sayer's work are relevant here. Based on the above presented accounts, it is possible, firstly, to agree with Sayer that people may share an ethical sense of what matters, so class struggles between individuals or groups of

different backgrounds are not only about assets and positions of power, but are also attempts to achieve equally respectful treatment and equivalent (emotional) wellbeing regardless of class position. Sayer has therefore argued that agents of disparate familial and class environments can reach an agreement due to their similar moral tendencies despite their possibly different aesthetic and material dispositions. On the other hand, however, individuals of comparable social locations can disagree on ethical grounds although they have complementary cognitive or aesthetic inclinations. It therefore seems useful to, secondly, acknowledge the theoretical and empirical relevance of Sayer's conclusion that people's narratives and conduct can be ambivalent and difficult to interpret (Sayer 2005: 3-5, 47-49, 76).

More concretely, a subject's evaluations of others are complex and, at times, contradictory as they depend on their socioeconomic- or familial origins in some aspects, but are simultaneously independent of their class habitus in others (Sayer 2005: 4-8, 37-40). As a consequence and in parallel to Sayer's observations (Sayer 2005: 4-7), lay people of an underprivileged background can denounce class stratification and, at once, despise the transgressions of the deprived. In addition, professionals of the upper classes can condemn systemic discrimination on a macro level, but simultaneously engage in classing moral assessments in practice. Correspondingly, the accounts by children participating in a youth club focus group at a council estate and a YOT officer below reflect such internal narrative tensions:

> JA: Why do you say that the first council estate is 'bad' and the second council estate in this city is the 'worst place to live'?
>
> C3: 'Cause it's just bad...

C1. Because the second council estate is where you have all the druggies and stuff. They just go around and...

C3: Like all the bad people in our school are from the second council estate.

JA: Why do you think they all live there and not in the third council estate like you?

C1: Because all the chavs live in there and think they're all... They think they're all like gangsters, so... I'm not sure... It's just where they live.

C3: So in the second council estate... Every kid that lives in the second council estate is naughty...

C1: I wouldn't say that they are *all* naughty, but most of them are.

JA: Naughty in what way?

C3: Just naughty. They smoke greens. They mess around like on the street, running around, nearly getting hit by cars and fooling around.

(10-year-old and 11-year-old male in FG 9)

Being poor makes everything harder. I was listening to the radio yesterday when they were talking about there not being enough school places, especially in certain cities. They were talking about how middle class people can afford to move to certain places or they can afford tutoring or whatever, so it is possible that a parent ends up having a child at this school, another child at that school, and a child at that school... and it's their responsibility to get the child there, but they also have to get to work and the working class parents might have two or three jobs, because a lot of people that earn less have to work more jobs to pay the rent. That's just so hard, basically impossible. You're asking somebody to do what's almost impossible, and they might then get ill because the pressure is immense. So, I think being poor is very difficult. And I've come across staff in the school that don't take that into account and the way they talk about a young person or a family makes you question whether the young person has had a kind or a fair treatment.

(…)

Personally, I think parenting is probably *the* fundamental thing. I'm a parent myself and I have quite strong views about it. I went to a home just down the road very close to here not very long ago. I'd say the mother had learning difficulties, and she was clearly a very young mum, she had lots of children, and it almost seemed like she

> had too many for it to be mathematically possible. They were kind of everywhere. And during the short interview that I was having with her 15-year-old daughter, the little ones were constantly raiding the kitchen, but only for cakes and crisps and she was sort of complaining to me 'Well, I try hiding them high up, but they just climb up and they get them' and she said 'I can't stop them, they're always eating'. Like it had never crossed her mind that she can just not buy them. That she could just buy vegetables or fruit instead of sweets and crisps. For me, that was symptomatic of parenting in *these* households.
>
> (Harvey, education, training and employment YOT officer, 40s)

When researching the nature of judgments employed by early intervention specialists, McCarthy (2011) has interpreted responses similar to Harvey's as a way in which practitioners draw on their own experiences ('I'm a parent myself and I have quite strong views about it') to relationally position themselves as superior to their clients, thereby constructing them as lacking moral respectability ('too many children for it to be mathematically possible;' 'like it has never crossed her mind that she can just not buy them'). For McCarthy, such professional opinions and reactions — as well as further exertion of social control over people within the early intervention system thereon — are thus based on professional evaluations of visible aesthetic signs and status symbols, transformed into classed views about people's integrity, rather than on actual assessments of their (mis)behaviour (McCarthy 2011: 497-503).

On the other hand and in line with the children's account above, Sayer has provided a more benevolent understanding of moral evaluations in human interactions by suggesting that ethical judgments are not only employed by practitioners, adults or the privileged, but also by non-professionals, young people and the lower classes, albeit possibly with unequal effects. For Sayer, individuals of

different social positions all strive for the same goods, conditions and practices that they evaluate as crucial for their wellbeing, so class struggles on a micro level — including those that are based on visible signs, but manifest themselves in normative assessments — develop across all realms and between individuals of similar or different social locations (Sayer 2005: 119).

For Sayer, moral dispositions do not depend only on people's socio-familial backgrounds, but also — and more likely than material assets or aesthetic choices — transcend class boundaries (Sayer 2005: 47-51, 143). As a consequence, examining the ways in which professionals and lay people ethically assess their own beliefs as well as the values and practices of others (Sayer 2005: 4-5, 36-38) might clarify the similarities and diversities between individuals of different backgrounds beyond the narrow division between the middle and the working classes that predominantly rests on income and evident markers only (Sayer 2005: 70).

Sayer has, further, argued that while people have a mutual moral understanding and can thus diligently evaluate behaviour based on shared ethical norms, rather than indicators of class, they can sometimes also react to others stereotypically and assess their conduct according to apparent physical and cultural differences, as well as unwittingly ascribe behavioural transgressions to class position (Sayer 2005: 4-5). In the next chapter, I therefore attend to examining the ways in which these kinds of distortions might happen from the perspectives of people that engage in professional interactions on the ground. Such an analysis could help disentangle whether, how and why negotiations between children in trouble, their parents and the practitioners that help them with their problems may unintentionally differ based on the interacting parties' class although their

dispositions, as I have shown, are not only influenced by their social location, but also depend on relatively class-neutral moral principles.

3.4. Concluding comments

In this chapter, I have analysed the gathered empirical data to explore whether, how and why class habitus impacts people's dispositions, perceptions and decisions as well as the interactions between behaviourally challenging children, their parents and practitioners that work with both. Taken together, the narratives presented in all three parts of the chapter reveal that the family's social class is important in directing the ways in which young people's troubling conduct and their parents childrearing are understood, defined and responded to by professionals within an institutional context.

I have shown that, on one side, the participants' accounts confirm Bourdieu's view of habitus as acquired in early childhood through subconscious internalisation, consolidating a person's beliefs and behavioural responses across different social fields, but separating individuals of diverse class backgrounds based on their different practical senses. Based on the analysis in the first part of the chapter, I have also suggested that an isolated Bourdieusian understanding of habitus corresponds well with Emerson's concept of negotiated trouble. It implies that the challenging behaviour of young people from the lower classes may be gradually amplified through their interactions with practitioners based not only on the seriousness of their cases, but also on their social distance from the professionals that they are negotiating with.

On the other hand, however, I have argued that a more thorough examination of the ambivalences in the participants' narratives in the second section

of the chapter discloses that people's subjectivities are — in Gordon's terms — complex, so discrepancies between the interacting parties' class habitus might not be the only decisive feature in guiding their relationships and the outcomes of their negotiations. By drawing on the interviewees' accounts, interpreted in light of narrative criminology, I have shown that habitus is also shaped by factors beyond the family's socioeconomic background and can therefore be fractioned across realms as well as rationally regulated, rather than functioning merely subconsciously. As a consequence, both the discrepancies in agents' class backgrounds as well as the differences between them that are beyond class distinction can steer interactions between youth justice professionals and their clients.

Lastly, my interpretation of the data presented in the third section has confirmed Sayer's conclusion that people of disparate class locations have a similar moral understanding of class and also evaluate what matters for their wellbeing rather uniformly. Due to their common affective sense, people from the lower classes often share beliefs, dispositions and modes of behaviour with the more privileged, so — in relationships between them — the interacting parties are not only instinctually led by their inculcated practical sense, but can also react according to their common understandings of fairness.

Nevertheless, Sayer has also suggested that individuals, including professionals, can morally assess people's behaviour based on class stereotypes and apparent material markers of class despite their propensity to be reflexive, which can result in unjustified differentiation. In the next chapter, I will therefore further explore participants' narratives in light of the presented theoretical framework as well as Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model to clarify if, how and why these

kinds of discrepancies occur in interactions between children in trouble, their parents and the practitioners that work with them on the ground.

CHAPTER 4: CLASSED DISTORTIONS IN DECISION-MAKING: THE APPLICATION OF BOLTANSKI AND THÉVENOT'S POLITY MODEL

In the previous chapter, the accounts of young people, their parents and practitioners were utilised to test the analytical framework comprised of Bourdieu's 'philosophy of action' (Bourdieu 1998: viii), more recent variations of Bourdieu's thought, and Sayer's moral understanding of class. An examination of the research participants' narratives suggests that a merger of these theories helps clarify when classed differentiation in professional relationships derives from mismatches between the opposing parties' habitus; the agents' lack of conscious and affective deliberation about what matters in resolving the case; or, rather, situational factors beyond the individuals' social class and agency altogether.

Before using the last part of this thesis to explore the organisational characteristics of the youth justice milieu and children's services that might contribute to guiding the interacting parties' dispositions, perceptions and actions in a classed way, this chapter aims to outline the exact processes behind possible classing inclinations in professional responses to and decisions about young people's challenging behaviour. It intends to explore whether Bourdieu's notion of habitus and Sayer's ethical perception of class, presented in the previous chapter, as well as Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model, provide suitable theoretical solutions for conceptualising whether, how and why young people and their carers might be treated unfairly by professionals in practice. In the last part, the chapter also plans to examine if this combined analytical framework can equally explain potential cases of positive discrimination when practitioners interact with families in an agency setting.

4.1. Distortions in how a decision is reached: The modalities of judgment

To eradicate the hierarchal asymmetry between researchers and the ordinary people whose lifeworlds they set out to examine, Boltanski and Thévenot have proposed that social sciences should avoid purely academic and theoretical explanations of the collected data and make way for actors' lay and everyday descriptions of their own activities and justifications, especially when they coordinate their viewpoints with those of the opposing parties to reach an agreement (Boltanski 2011: 18-23). In their sociological research, Boltanski and Thévenot therefore took seriously and advanced Bourdieu's suggestion that individuals be presented through their own — rather than a 'borrowed' — discourse (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 4, 50-51, 64; see also Charlesworth 2003: 48). To achieve this aim, Boltanski and Thévenot observed a myriad of situations in which people made sense of their dispositions and the intentions of others to develop a conceptual scheme that explains actors' justifications when they try to negotiate a solution (Boltanski 2011: 23-24).

More precisely and in search of a generic framework that grasps agents' reasoning when they interact across social realms, Boltanski and Thévenot explored negotiations between individuals in different contexts and situations within healthcare, the media, the corporate world, as well as the educational and welfare sphere, to name a few (Boltanski 2011: 24-26). Drawing upon their empirical findings, they opposed Bourdieu's notion that interactional differentiation stems predominantly from vertical social domination that agents accept without knowing. On the contrary, Boltanski and Thévenot argued that — when seeking consensus — people are far from passive or unaware of injustices, as Bourdieu claimed, but actively unveil each other's prejudices (Boltanski 2011: 26-27). The research

participants in this study, too, frequently disclosed the opposing party's or their own class biases:

> Services could be fairer. I think it's about education, training of staff and personal values and the magistrates and the court system are probably not the only ones, but they are the worst at that. I was a duty officer in court the other day and we had a lad from a rich part of the city, from a well off family: middle class, financially stable etc. He had a warning in the past, but then he had assaulted a female victim twice and she was disabled. It was really quite a horrible crime. He'd thrown a stick at her eye and her eye was the area of the disability, so it was kind of targeted. Yeah, really horrible, and then punched her in the side of the head on a separate occasion. He stood up in court and said he was interested in interior design and he could speak for himself and he wasn't dressed in a hoodie and the magistrates lapped it up and asked him question about his future and he got two months for each offense, so a 4-month referral order for two assaults against a very vulnerable victim, which I felt was disgusting, but OK. And then the next case that came there was a lad on a child protection plan, mum presented very differently as a parent. Very weepy, visibly very different… He found it very difficult to talk, the entire presentation was different, he was very intimidated, he was younger... and his offense was nothing like the other one and he got nine months and the disparity on that day… I did come back and reported it to management, 'cause it just felt so biased. No questions about, you know 'What do you want to do for your future?' 'Oh, you're interested in this', you know... None of that. It was just so unfair. So the magistrates are White, upper middle class people. It's that section of society that can afford to volunteer. And we have that issue with our volunteers and I'm sure that happens in other services as well. So the magistrates aren't representative of the communities that they serve. Our volunteers aren't representative of the communities they serve. Even our staff team… So the young people go in and it's very posh to them. The people that work with them all look like teachers or headteachers to them... It's just posh people telling them off.
>
> (Lesley, youth justice support officer, 20s)

> JA: Why were you on child protection?
>
> A: The main reason we were on child protection was because of [my daughter] Maggie's behaviour [violence towards her peers]. So after that when I went to the hospital with her for an appointment, the doctors judged me straight away because it comes up on their screen – 'child protection'. They judge you because they think you're on

> there for beating your kids up. So they judge you straight away and without asking you anything. The professionals don't know the ins and outs, 'cause it probably just pops on their system. So that's the judgmental side of it. I mean, it's not like the kids have broken bones or anything and they can see that, but they still judge you. And you're judged by the nurse because you're on child protection, so...In that sense, it's horrible to have that hanging over your head all the time.
>
> (Adam, father, 30s)

> L: At secondary school, they definitely pick on people that have less money because there was one girl at our school, who no one liked. Everyone used to just ignore her, but she did used to get herself into lots of trouble. The main reason that we didn't like her was that she didn't take care of herself. Like hygienically and we'd know that's not her fault, it's her parents' fault and they were really not well off.
>
> D: But going back to stereotypes. Everyone stereotypes people and you have different standards for yourself and different for others, so you either judge more or judge less. There's really no way of staying the same and you either look at people and think 'I really, really, really want to have something that they have' or just be like them or you hate them entirely and you don't want to be around them. You have classes like working class and stuff... And when people say higher class, you think of snobby little kids getting away with everything and their parents never around. That's like a stereotype. Like they have nannies and stuff. But you never really know unless you're actually in that situation.
>
> (Libby and Denise, young persons, 17-year-old and 19-year-old females)

The stated interviewees' accounts about practices of differentiation — especially Lesley's claim that 'it all just felt so biased (…) it was just so unfair'; Adam's feeling that professionals 'judge you straight away (…) without asking'; and Denise's honest belief that 'you have different standards for yourself and different for others, so you either judge more or judge less' — reveal that individuals interpret their own or other people's viewpoints, habits and/or conduct in reference to an underlying sense of justice, similar to Sayer's concept of fairness. However, Boltanski and Thévenot's theoretical model completes Sayer's work as it helps

explain why agents can be generally reflexive about the impacts of their class habitus on interactions and can share ethical beliefs about what matters when resolving a dispute, though they sometimes still disagree on the relative worth that is attributed- or denied to a person in a concrete case.

More specifically, people's perceptions, behaviour and reactions to others within a particular situation are not necessarily influenced by class-conditioned dispositions, but can derive from any of the domains of the social world that individuals belong to (Boltanski 2011: 20-26). In other words and according to Boltanski and Thévenot, negotiations are thus not always distorted due to differences stemming from the social domination of one party over another, but also because agents draw justifications for their perceptions and decision-making from at least six diverse 'worlds' (the domestic-, inspired-, civic-, market-, industrial world and the world of fame) that are available to them at any given time (Boltanski 2011: 27; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 159-212). Before focusing on the classed implications of such distortions, it therefore seems important to demonstrate in simplified terms how clashes of worth develop in the first place.

In particular, when people justify their beliefs, decisions and actions in relation to other individuals, they can select arguments from diverse realms, so their evaluation of another according to the parameters of one sphere can differ completely from their assessment of the same subject based on the criteria belonging to a disparate domain. The following quotations enable a practical application of Boltanski and Thévenot's theory as they reveal individuals' fractioned moral evaluations when, for example: children assess their peers in school or at home; parents love their children, but, at once, morally condemn their

actions; and practitioners unwittingly treat parents as children, rather than adults in the educational setting:

> I have three things to say. First off all, the thing that I find a bit confusing is that whenever we go to our grandparents house we have to make sure that we are really well behaved, even though we will probably be pretending. We have to act that we are even better behaved because our parents expect us to do that even though we are relatively well behaved at home. We have to put extra effort into being well behaved around our grandparents and I think that has to do with respect. Respecting the different relationship. But it's just a bit strange, really. Secondly, there are some people who I am absolutely fine with at school or other places, but whenever they are around my parents, I always feel slightly uncomfortable. Just when they are around my parents 'cause I'm afraid of what they will say or the way they will be acting. I'm not really sure why because I'll be totally fine with them being that way at school, but I guess it's a different world. And thirdly, a similar thing happens between friends, so that's why there's pressure to have labels in friendship groups. When actually, it doesn't matter if they're nerds or geeks or whatever. Even if they're categorised or labelled, they can still be good friends.
>
> (13-year-old female in FG 3)

> My son just throws everything [the partying, the drinking and the general misbehaviour] into the weekends and then acts like a complete idiot. Always to the extreme. There's always this one person in the crowd. You see him and you think: 'You're such an idiot.' Surely, everybody else must think that. He doesn't help himself either. This is what we've always said to him. How can you shower your children with praise and encouragement when they act like idiots? We try to squeeze little bits in where we can, but the last two years have been a nightmare with him. They have really been difficult. He's not very nice to be around. He's not a very nice person. He's very selfish. He takes from everybody. And so you try and say nice things, but it's really difficult. I hate to say that because I'm not saying he's not a nice person because he can be and he has been, but not for a while and I'm worried. [My husband] Darren said to him the other day 'Do something you love, do something that makes you feel passion or that you enjoy or that is fun. Anything. Just find it, search for it'. And he obviously hasn't found it yet, but I don't want him to give up and just be a loser, I don't want him to be

> one of those people, who just ends up in a crappy burger joint, or something because he can't get anything else.
>
> (Ella, mother, 40s)

> It's a bit of an occupational hazard. I think teachers tend to talk down to parents in schools. They're used to talking to children, so they can often take that approach towards parents, which is not something they would do otherwise when talking to somebody of the same age. On top of that, you have parents who have learning difficulties and have had bad school experiences. They find school a particularly uncomfortable environment. They just feel blamed, they *do* feel blamed by the school.
>
> (Mary, anti-bullying strategy coordinator, 50s)

Taken together, these accounts encapsulate perfectly the findings of narrative criminologists as well as Gordon and Sayer, introduced in the previous chapter, along with providing further support for Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model. On one side, they confirm that — in a differentiated society — people's personalities are complicated, so individuals draw the evaluative principles for their beliefs, inclinations and actions from disparate domains. On the other hand, however, they imply that the parties involved in a negotiation, broadly defined, can reach a fair decision only if they determine the nature of the issue first and agree upon the measure of justification that they are using to resolve it, so constructive consensual solutions to the problem can follow (Boltanski 2006: 28-29; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 216).

In other words, while Thévenot and Boltanski acknowledge that people can distinguish between individuals (or objects) based on their relative value (*constraint of order*), so differentiation is possible and understandable, all of the agents making the assessment have to, first of all, explicitly or implicitly agree on the world of worth that they are evaluating the person or object in as well as what available

measures of justification they are using (Boltanski 2011: 27-28; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 65-80). In the absence of such a consensus, assessments of people and their behaviour can be distorted, and, in extreme cases, discriminatory (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 215-223), also according to class. The three quotations below illustrate the distinctive ways in which an individual and their behaviour — in the following examples an act of shouting — can be (mis)interpreted (e.g. as a transgression; a manifestation of worry; or a sign of distress) if the standards according to which they are evaluated are not clearly articulated and agreed upon:

> I think people would agree that a parenting style that works is the one where the child understands the message that the parent is trying to say and the parent understands the message that the child is trying to say. So in a working class style, parents might shout: 'Hey Tom, get in here' and a middle-class person would go 'Ah, awful'. But if Tom understands 'Oh, it's my Mum, she's not upset with me, I just need to come back for tea', that's not angry shouting, but a successful way of parenting. It just has a different way of approaching it, so I think that sometimes we're [professionals and institutions that deal with behaviourally challenging children and their parents] treating things that don't need to be treated. But what we actually need to address is the level of understanding, especially *our* level of understanding. I know it's easier to understand someone if they're just talking in a certain calm tone and with certain body language. It is easier. But if you understand this in a more complex way and you know that a child is able to distinguish the difference between a shouting mum that only wants you to come up and her shouting is planned, and a shouting mum that is very angry, then there's no problem. There is a problem if you're looking at it and thinking 'Huh…they're not speaking soft' and judging them.
>
> (Tom, charity worker, 20s)

> I stopped shouting although I was doing that up to a point, but now after the parenting course, I sort of stopped and I take three breaths instead. You have to explain to your children that it's your worry that

> makes you shout: 'I'm upset and that makes me loud... You think I'm shouting, when I'm not shouting, I'm just concerned'.
>
> (Gabrielle, mother, 50s)

> When I was lashing out, I always got in trouble. But when you're lashing out, you're actually just asking for a positive influence, that's what I needed then, but they didn't understand. It's a signal. It's a form of communication. I was trying to somehow show that I'm not doing very well. I was somehow trying to show that life's shit. I felt rejected, so I acted out.
>
> (Leroy, young person, 21-year-old male)

If the interacting individuals are unwilling or unable to express which criteria they are drawing on when deciding about an object, subject or — in the narratives above — a person's behaviour, they cannot reach a *real* and thus just consensus about the ways in which a case is to be understood, processed or resolved. In other words, Boltanski and Thévenot have indicated that — when trying to resolve a specific problem — the negotiating parties are steered by a sense of justice, based on which they apply or deny worth to people and things that they have to communicate and agree about. At the same time and as has already been mentioned, agents do not only seek justifications in one 'world', but always draw from six conceptual spheres, each with its own overarching principle of assessing worth (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 159-212).

Due to clashes between the grounds of evaluation according to different realms, negotiations can be distorted and decision-making discriminatory, whereby either or all of the agents involved in seeking consensus can experience the discrepancies as unfair (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 130-131; 215-223). Boltanski and Thévenot have therefore concluded that when all the measures of

judgment are not transparent, evaluations may be unfair due to skewed: 1) mechanisms of reaching a decision (how an agreement is achieved) or 2) ways in which the test as a whole is designed (the format of evaluation) (Boltanski 2006: 28-29).

The distortions in the 'test format' (2) will be further explored in the next section of this chapter and involve situations in which the layout of the assessment is entirely biased due to excluding certain individuals or things from evaluation in the first place. The 'modalities of judgment' (1), on the other hand, are distorted and therefore unfair when a party involved in solving the shared problem draws on criteria of worth that are distinct from the measures adopted by the other parties or when the judgment is not based on formally proclaimed rules, but on hidden standards of assessment (Boltanski 2011: 28).

More concretely and in reference to the topic of this thesis, when a practitioner assesses a young person's antisocial behaviour not only based on official criteria, but also according to their (parents') social location as expressed, for instance, in the family's economic standing and/or where they live, the professional decision within the youth justice realm about the child's delinquent acts is covertly — as Boltanski and Thévenot (2006: 221) have put it — 'preoccupied' with matters of the 'domestic world' and thus at best arbitrary if not prejudiced. The following narratives provide some flavour of possibly distorted modalities of judgment according to the child and their family's class background:

> When building up a decision about what we're gonna do [in an intervention with a young person], we have to follow the same criteria for every young person. If I ever raise an eyebrow because of a result, it's usually about a court's decision. I must admit, my jaw's dropped a couple of times when some people walked out the court with just a fine for some of the things that they've done, when clearly, I'm thinking, being a normal human being, that if it was

somebody from one of the council estates that had done exactly the same thing, they'd probably be on a 6-month referral order minimum. But that's the court and that's what happens in court. We've all heard about it. Some people are more equal than others and what money can do. But when it comes to pre-court, those decisions will be more equal as they are made by a team across the board, and we all follow the same agenda about justifying why we're doing it.

(Lucas, police officer, 40s)

C14: I've noticed that - well I won't say all the time and wouldn't say it's the majority, but - there is a distaste with some police stations when it comes to police proceedings. It is kind of like a stereotype, but I feel that the more money you have, the easier it is to get off of things. The police know about that stereotype and they're trying to push that down, but although they are aware of it, they still do it. So if you have money, you don't even necessarily have to try to use the fact that you have money to your advantage or privilege or whatever, but it can still be an advantage just because the police know it.

JA: Are you talking about status? I don't know how to put this... Does your status make people treat you differently? According to the way you speak, the way you dress, where you're from...

C1: Yeah, I have an example. So these guys got pulled over and the police was giving them a hard time, like questioning them ridiculously, made them get out of the car... Then they realised that they go to a really nice high school, like the nicest one. And they were just like 'OK, you can go'. Because they knew 'Oh, you're one of *those* kinds of people, you're like good'.

C13: Also cops, they don't wanna deal in some cases with like getting a lawsuit or something. Sometimes, if you were to arrest someone that has rich parents, they could end up causing trouble for you... This can be easily avoided if you just let them go. That happened to I think a friend of mine at some point... Just like 'Fine, you can go'.

(17-year-old female and two 16-year-old males in FG 5)

Not long ago I was reading an article that statistically, lone children from multi-rich families are sometimes more likely to commit crimes and be on drugs or alcohol than council estate children from broken families. And I think that council estate kids from broken families get in and out of trouble like everyone else, but because society orientates itself towards that, it then looks bigger than it actually is. Because there's more council estate kids from broken homes in the

> system then there are multi-millionaire rich kids, but I think that little outbursts of this that and the other are actually sparse and few and far between and yeah they might be continuing, but they grow out of it and it could be just a phase. I'm from a working class background, I'm a council estate child and I was never in trouble. And my kids... They've had their issues, got in trouble a bit, but nothing major. It's an experimental stage, but I do think, yeah, working class council estates are… What's the word? Stereotyped. I really do and I don't know why it is, but maybe it's because of the policing. Nothing to do with the police, but I think the areas they police... It's probably more commonplace in council estates, whereas they mostly don't do that in other estates, because they don't think they need to or whatever.
>
> (Abby, mother, 40s)

One of the most prominent views across all three groups of research participants in this study is that some children might be treated unfairly by law enforcement agents and other professionals within the multiagency juvenile justice setting since they are not only judged based on the disclosed facts of their cases, but also according to unacknowledged markers of their socioeconomic backgrounds that thus serve as criteria akin to Bourdieu's 'secondary properties' (Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 96). As reflected in the accounts above and conceptualised in Boltanski and Thévenot's terms, decisions about young people from the lower classes seem to be influenced by *transports of deficiency* (1a) from worlds outside of the justice domain, usually from the familial realm. On the opposite side of the spectrum, young people of the middle classes appear to benefit from *transmissions of worth* (1b) from their domestic spheres into the formal world of agency contact (Boltanski 2011: 28-29; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 151, 219-221).

Furthermore and in parallel to Boltanski and Thévenot's illustrations of how their theoretical scheme of (un)fairness can be utilised to explain injustices that might occur when people interact on the ground (Boltanski 2006: 28; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 307-308), numerous narratives from participants in

this research demonstrate the ways in which an assessment of one type is corrupted by beings from a different world of worth. The following three quotations reveal the mechanisms through which a deficiency from one domain (e.g. a child's misbehaviour within the community) is transported into another sphere of evaluation (e.g. to the school setting), possibly impacting the outcomes therein, whereby the judgments of conduct in one world based on negative assessments from another seem to be more frequent for children of lower socioeconomic standing:

> L: One or two times, the police would come into school and that's what used to annoy me the most. Outside school, I used to get into trouble and that's alright. They can come to my doorstep. If I get in trouble outside of school, they shouldn't come into my school. They'd tell the deputy head or head that they need to talk to me and then they'd bring the police round school and pull me out of class.
>
> JA: How do you find that?
>
> L: I think that's a bit unfair to be honest. I wouldn't mind if they pulled me out of class and put me in a room with them, but bringing them around the school and pulling me out of class in front of everyone with the police... To me that was just a bit tight.
>
> JA: Why does it make you feel bad?
>
> L: Because my outside school life has nothing to do with what goes on inside school. It's like two different lives pretty much. If I got into serious trouble at school, and then the police were involved *at* school, I would understand it. But if I got in trouble outside of school, then they shouldn't bring the police into my school. Reputation is pretty much everything. If you've got a good one, or a little bit bad, a little bit good, it's alright. If you've got like a spot excellent one, everyone thinks you're goody two shoes and all that stuff, like a teacher's pet. And if you've got a really bad one, it's like 'I don't wanna be associated with you because I don't wanna get into trouble'. So when the police come into school, it's like they know and everyone else knows that you've been in trouble, and that obviously means you get a bad reputation. Other students definitely think 'He's got like a bad reputation. Don't wanna be hanging around him' and

stuff like that. And the teachers probably think 'Yeah, he's got a bad reputation'.

(Lewis, young person, 14-year-old male)

I don't think it's their business at the end of the day [school getting involved about the behaviour of young people outside of school]. I mean the school is obviously concerned, but I'm in two minds about this because what happened was that just some of them [the pupils that had misbehaved] were ostracised and they were put on report and given detention... And the thing was that we weren't sent any email, we weren't sent any letter... There was no meeting arranged for any of us - certain parents of children with issues. Just to say 'This is our policy and this is how we do this'. I found that really unfair. So when I was called in eventually by the school and they said 'We know that Jim smokes. Who else smokes?' I was like 'You know what, it's not for me to tell you because it's not happening in school'. It's kind of like 'What are you, the police?'

(Dora, parent, 50s)

Children begin to think that they are troublemakers themselves. In fact, this young man that I met last night told me an example. His friend was told to go at the back of the queue, they split them and so he also went there, but then later, three other people came and went on the back because they were late. And the teachers saw that, but it was only him that got a detention. It's that sort of thing. If you don't have enough time as a teacher and you don't have enough resources, you will always make mistakes like that. And it's always the same ones that they focus on. They want them out of the lesson. I can see that the police want the same young people off the streets. When I worked for the youth offending team, I was fully aware that there were meetings in the mornings where they would say: 'Alright, let's get *him* today' and it would be one of these kids. They would pick a child, who's mainly outside and who's already got an antisocial behaviour order and he's probably cycling where he shouldn't be cycling and they will say: 'Right you, home!' I think the same kind of thing is bound to happen in schools. And I don't blame teachers for it because they're stuck in the system. We try not to it at youth club, but to be honest, these kids are the ones that you follow with your eyes. I also know that the police can make judgments in the other direction as well, such as 'They come from a very well-to-do family and they're affluent'. And actually just because they've got a nice house maybe in the middle of the city or in an area that's quite expensive, it doesn't mean that they are not misbehaving or struggling in other ways.

(Tracy, early intervention parenting worker, 40s)

To explore in more detail the role that class background plays in transfers of deficiency and/or worth between different domains, Boltanski and Thévenot's model should, once again, be conceptualised together with part of Sayer's reasoning about the impacts of social class on relationships, including professional interactions. For Sayer, people are not only assessed based on how they behave, but also according to their classed-conditioned lifestyles (assets, appearance, manners, speech, clothing, family reputation etc.), so evaluations of conduct are not merely assessments of actions, but also hide classed 'judgments of moral worth'. Furthermore, since the social field is permeated with systemic class contempt, Sayer has argued that — in negotiations — the lower classes more often suffer from moral devaluations, while the privileged frequently benefit from ethical advantages. (Sayer 2005: 123).

In line with Sayer's understanding, children of different backgrounds can thus be treated diversely for the same transgressions because the lower strata are covertly regarded with disfavour, which often manifests itself in moral undervaluing of behaviour in young people from the working classes on one side and a corresponding overvaluing of middle class children's acts on the other. As can be inferred from the two accounts below, Rob, a father who 'is on "social" and has been done for crimes and (…) [has] been to prison' describes the consequences of his son's theft in school quite differently from Ella, a middle class mother, whose son had also stolen from school on several occasions:

> [My son] Dominic's misbehaviour did start when he joined secondary school, but I think when he was five or six, he stole from school and he got handcuffed by a police officer. At the age of five or six. He got handcuffed and marched through the school. And he's always remembered that and hated it. Me and [my ex-wife] Jackie were still together at the time as a family... We stuck together, we

still do. And as a family, we were like 'No! What the school did was wrong'. But the headmistresses… The way they explained it was that they were making a point. Well, to me that was a wrong point and I think it was just because of who we are as a family. And Dominic... I don't know how to explain it, but to me it's like... he's had handcuffs on him at that age and the way that I perceive it is that that must have had an impact. And even before that, he had dyslexia and dyspraxia, same as [his brother] Jamie, but it's never been picked up until social services got involved. And the school, they obviously kept sending them out. They'd send them to like a separate house, a unit, which basically means that you are told 'You're just an outcast, you're thick, you're not worth nothing'. But it wasn't until they've been actually diagnosed and it was lightning, it was words flashing around on computers and all sorts of moving. But the teachers, they just thought that they're not doing what they're told. They got accused by the teachers, and they were thinking 'Well, to you too. I'm gonna play your game', so they misbehaved.

(Rob, father, 40s)

E: When he was at primary school, he was a little bit naughty. I would describe him as 'a little bit naughty, a little bit cheeky', but he wouldn't be all, you know, terrible, terribly behaved or horrible. You wouldn't say a horrible child. You would say 'a bit of a rebel' kind of thing. Towards the end of primary school, I would say in the last two years he got worse. I'd say the first thing I remember he did was when he went back into class at about the age of six and somebody brought cakes in to share with the whole class because it was their birthday and he went in and he went into the teacher's desk, where she put them, and he took them and he also took some other things. And it was just this devious, horrible side to him. I remember being brought into school and I cried. It still makes me emotional now [starts crying in the interview]. I was *so* disappointed. I was *so* ashamed. And his teacher was there and they were *really* angry. They couldn't believe that he'd gone and…'cause kids were supposed to be out on the playground. And he'd planned it. He knew he was gonna do it. He knew exactly where the teacher had hidden them. And then a few years later, he did a similar thing. He went into the teacher's desk in break time and stole some sweets. And he was seen by somebody, so, again, I got called into school. That was about two or three years later. And then the last year was the worst one. So it was the last year of primary school, when he was 11 and just before he went off to secondary school. They had a summer fair at the school and the kids got into little groups and made something. And in his group, they made money, and obviously it's supposed to go back to the school, but he stole some money and went off and spent it at the fair. And so all the friends that were in his team wouldn't speak to him. They hated him for a while. So this is a kind of pattern.

JA: Did the school ever get the police involved?

E: No, thank god!

(Ella, mother, 40s)

Rob and Ella's narratives indicate that — in an institutional setting — children's misbehaviour can be perceived and responded to diversely, in Rob's view also according to the child's socio-familial background. In this aspect, Rob's belief corresponds well with Sayer's claims that the injuries of class do not only derive from material lack and an unequal distribution of assets, but also stem from systemic misrecognition, manifested in criminalising, pathologising and — as will be illustrated in the following parts of this section — patronising tendencies (Sayer 2005: 207), including those of practitioners when they evaluate the actions of children and adults from the lower classes, often making them feel like they are, in Rob's terms, 'worth nothing'.

Furthermore, Rob and Ella's accounts also suggest that 'symbolic domination' (Sayer 2005: 207) as expressed in different assessments of individuals' conduct, can have real life effects. Specifically and by drawing on Nussbaum, Sayer has concluded that people's different experiences of injustice according to class are often downplayed as individuals sometimes choose to overlook the hidden, although broad and deep impacts of overarching class contempt. In reality, people's perceptions of unfairness are actually profoundly different as — according to Nussbaum and Sayer — the most that misfortune triggers amongst the middle classes is 'unhappiness' ('I remember being brought into school and I cried (…) I was *so* disappointed. I was *so* ashamed'), while injustice affects the less privileged though their repeated embodied experiences of disadvantage ('he got handcuffed and marched through the school'), possibly resulting in their discredited and,

possibly, discrediting subjectivities ('They got accused by the teachers, and they were thinking "Well, to you too. I'm gonna play your game," so they misbehaved') (Nussbaum 2001: 404; cited in Sayer 2005: 208).

Sayer's work and the empirical data that support it therefore importantly advance both Boltanski and Thévenot's reasoning about the modalities of judgment as well as Bourdieu's conception of symbolic domination. Firstly, Sayer's analysis implies that when examining imports and exports of worth in negotiations on the ground, social class should always be considered as an important personal circumstance in determining which seemingly neutral evaluations of people are actually ethical in nature (Sayer 2005: 15-21). Secondly, by arguing that moral judgments can have detrimental consequences for the lower classes in real life, Sayer has also made more concrete Bourdieu's abstract conception of symbolic domination that principally sidelined the ethical components of people's classed opinions and decisions about- as well as their reactions to agents of similar or adverse social locations (Sayer 2005: 16).

The following narratives provide ample illustration of Sayers's view that ethical judgments according to class can be implicit in any, even essentially purely aesthetic assessment (Sayer 2005: 16). In particular, the accounts demonstrate how officials — as well as lay people in general — can evaluate the ways in which children are dressed so that these assessments instantly trigger assumptions about young people's familial and socio-spatial background as well as prompt predictions about their (mis)behaviour:

> The 'troublemaking' status is not limited to the young person. It's extended across their siblings, across their parents. If you have a parent, especially in a small place like this county, where teachers have often taught their parents and their parents' parents, the teachers

will go like ‘Do you know who that is? That's Joe, keep an eye on him’ or ‘Johnny, his mum was a nightmare in school’. There are also areas where police is particularly harsh (...) Apparently, it was in one of the cities in the county where they had these meetings and identified young people to get them off the street. It’s been identified as one of the most… I think it *is* the most deprived area in the whole of the county. But what we have here is that there are some families that have been known for absolutely decades to the police and the police say: ‘Oh, it’s one of the “blah blahs” again’. So classifying people is the general culture, isn’t it? Not just in schools. You don’t walk past a bunch of teenagers because they’ve got their hoods up and this way, you’re sort of putting them in a box when actually, they could be just cold and they have their hoods up and they’re having a conversation about politics. You know, they’re not talking about the next person they’re gonna rob. But the police in these areas do think that and they do think that they belong to one of these families just because of the way they are dressed.

(Ashley, drug and alcohol misuse worker, 30s)

B: I remember I was with my mate, we were walking and we were both in tracksuits and we got stopped because they thought we had drugs in them. They thought that, because they target people in tracksuits. And they stopped us and asked us if we have anything on us that we shouldn't have. That’s the police. We were just walking back from mine and we got stopped for no reason at all. No reason. This other time I was with my mate and uncle and we were walking to my dad's house and we got stopped because there was someone that got hit by a hammer and because we was in tracksuits, they stopped us and asked us if we have a hammer on us. Just because of the way we dress.

JA: Do you think if a posh kid was walking there, they would have reacted differently?

B: Yeah definitely. Well, my uncle was walking a bit away and he didn't get stopped. Like my uncle was in jeans and that... He's a bit of a geek. So it was only me and my mate that got stopped because we were in tracksuits and he didn't get stopped. They asked for both our names. And they laughed at us because they already knew who we were and they didn't ask his name or nothing.

JA: Do you think that posh kids get in trouble too?

B: Well they might get in trouble, but they'll never get stopped or accused...Me and my friend, we are dressed the way we are and we go to different behavioural schools, so they just think 'Oh, they go to that school. We might as well go over and see if they've got anything

> on them'. Just assuming. Reputation is the most important thing with the police and they just automatically assume.
>
> (Ben, young person, 14-year-old male)

> Another stereotypical thing that annoys the hell out of me is the assumption that people that are walking around in hoodies must be a car thief straight away, but actually... A group of friends that my children used to hang out with would be sat outside, a whole gang of them - like 13 or 14 - and they would be sat outside and people would be like 'Oh, bring in the police' and they'd knock on the door and say 'Are you having any trouble?' and I would be 'No, why?' 'Yeah, somebody just called the police about this gang of kids' and I'd say 'What gang of kids?' Because when [my daughter] Chelsea was a tiny baby, all I'd have to do was say 'Guys, I'm putting the baby to bed, could you keep it down a bit?' 'Yes, Mrs A', so I had no worries. They sat on my wall, and they put their rubbish in my bins. It wouldn't be left in the garden, it wouldn't be left on the street. They'd respect me and they'd keep it down. But you know, I think we had a good rapport because I didn't automatically have a prejudgmental thing with them like others do. So they weren't mouthy and they weren't attitudey to me. I suppose to other people it looks intimidating if there's 12, 13 of them and they are in their hoodies. Some of them are all grown up now and they've got kids themselves. They got into trouble when they were kids once or twice about you know noise, doing this doing that, maybe vandalising, but nothing major. They didn't burgle people's houses, they didn't use knives, they didn't use guns, they were not hardcore drug-takers.
>
> (Abby, mother, 40s)

Viewed from the standpoint of Boltanski and Thévenot's model, the stated accounts suggest that every test, broadly defined, is indeed an assessment of some kind of worth (e.g. an aesthetic evaluation of how somebody is dressed vs. a moral assessment of how they behave). However, the narratives also confirm Boltanski and Thévenot's conclusion that evaluations are distorted when an assessment of one kind actually masks judgments belonging to another world of worth. More specifically, a test is unfair when aesthetic evaluations of what people are wearing

actually hide moral assumptions about how they have (mis)behaved.

Judgments employed in both informal and official interactions therefore breach Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model when there is a lack of consensus amongst the interacting parties — in the case of the accounts above and this thesis in general, young people and the police or, equally, other professionals — about what is actually being assessed and why. When clothes are used as a means of classifying which people are more likely to have offended and should therefore be stopped and searched or processed in some other (in)official way, whereby the aesthetic criteria or the social class that they reflect are not transparently proclaimed as classificatory measures, the situations in which this distorted test is applied — as well as its results — will likely be perceived as arbitrary and unjust by (at least) one of the parties (Boltanski 2011: 29).

In addition, the narratives gathered in this study also reflect a myriad of other, even more subtle ways in which practitioners assess their clients' moral worth during interventions. In particular, the accounts reveal that a person's ethical standing is often evaluated — albeit not officially — based on their everyday practices, for example housework ('Some of the mothers don't cook at all. *At all*. It's Iceland or McDonalds. Full stop. There's no "Mummy made a shepherd's pie"') (Charlotte, key stage 4 manager, 30s); consumer habits ('How do you not feed your child, but you give them 100 pound trainers? I don't get it') (Ryan, youth worker, 30s); dating ('Because they've had a series of different boyfriends, the schools say "Well that mum's not very good"') (Sylvia, child and adolescent psychiatrist, 30s); and reproductive choices ('They're breeders. They're nearly always breeders. They have too many children they can't look after them, but it's their human right') (Mark, learning mentor, 20s) to name a few.

In this regard and in Weiss's terms, clients are often 'incidentally derogated' in professional interactions by specialists that condemn their lifestyles or behave disrespectfully towards them (Weiss 1973: 323-324). Similarly, the interviewed parents and children sometimes experience even well intended professional interventions as imbued with moral misrecognition (Sayer 2005: 207) and thus unhelpful, patronising and/or unfair:

> The first conference session that I had was absolutely horrible, so at the second one my mum came with me and the chairwoman spoke to us beforehand. She said 'If you have any questions throughout the conference, you'll get an opportunity to ask them, you'll get an opportunity to speak'. So any questions that I was asked, I went to answer, but even then I was just cut short. I wasn't actually able to finish answering anything. And I didn't get the opportunity to actually ask any questions myself. It was just absolutely disgusting. So now I dread these conferences because I don't feel that they mean anything…. And the social workers…Actually, we had one that was absolutely brilliant. She wasn't at all biased. She had it from both sides, you know, took it into consideration from both sides. Worked really hard, you just couldn't follow her. But the new one is just a complete waste of breath, to be honest. She visited twice and was more interested in going home for her dinner, and made it very clear. She just had no interest whatsoever.
>
> (Diane, mother, 30s)

> I must have been 15 and they gave me a sticker chart and I hated it, I've never had a sticker chart in my life and I thought 'What the fuck is this?' and they said 'You gotta get all these stars and you get a tree' and I said 'What?' I ripped it down straight away and I said 'Who am I? I'm not a kid, I'm not trying to prove nothing to no one. I don't have to prove nothing to you'. My behaviour is bad, yeah, I can understand that, but come on, that's for kids like my little sister. To punish her if she's behaving bad and reward her if she's good. Not a 15 year-old me then or even me now. I'm 21 and they're still trying to give me shit like that. 'Go away, it don't work'. So it seems like they want you to kick off because the only way I seem to get through to them is if I kick off. If I kick off like a spoiled child, I get my own way. But I don't wanna have to kick off for them to listen to me or

> for me to get my own. I wanna speak to them like a normal person, like a human being, not a kid.
>
> (Jamie, young person, 21-year-old male)

Professional denials of moral worth in people from the lower classes through either apparent othering or more covert and benevolent interventions resemble what Bourdieu — in a pedagogic context — called ‘distancing techniques’. According to Bourdieu, specialists employ such practices to draw symbolic boundaries between themselves and their clients, whereby these figurative barriers result in additional social separation from the less privileged. Amongst these processes of social splitting, Bourdieu exposed linguistic habits — especially disjunctions between professional language codes and those acquired by children in their family homes — as one of the most influential, yet formally unacknowledged (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, 1990: 109-111). The research participants interviewed in this study, too, mentioned speech as an important factor in distorting professional evaluations of people’s behaviour. Particularly, although the use of language seems neutral, how people communicate is often unwittingly interpreted in ways that stigmatise the class-conditioned aspects of speech by ascribing to them a lack of moral worth:

> If you came to this environment [to the UK] as a kid and not an adult, you would feel isolated and you would feel hurt inside. That hurt would then turn to anger and you could have ended up doing anything. You probably would have had fights in schools, things like that. The teachers were, half of the time, prejudiced towards some children and openly... You could hear teachers joke about someone's stuttering because they couldn't speak English properly. Serious. And that's the truth and that's just the way it is. Literally laughing. I remember it clearly. And me seeing that as well and the whole class seeing that… That's just instilling things in your mind as a child. Shaping your perspective. Because you're perceptive to your influences.
>
> (Leroy, young person, 21-year-old male)

JA: Did the parenting course help you in terms of equipping you with new tools?

G: Yeah, oh yeah. Well, I mean to be honest, some of the things were a bit namby pamby. I don't know if you know what that expression means, so a bit like tip-toing around things. You know, like 'Oh, you have to speak to them [the children] like this' or you have to say to them 'Oh, I understand how you're feeling'. It doesn't happen that way in real life, at least not with us. So me and Lindsey [another participant on the parenting course] had a chat about it. Some of the things were great and others were like 'Look, that's not gonna happen' because it wouldn't work. Even if I tried talking to my son like that - and even I wouldn't feel comfortable with it - he would just look at me like 'Why are you talking to me like that?'

(Gabrielle, mother, 50s)

I think it's difficult not to get into stereotypes in terms of talking about parenting styles. Middle class, well-educated parents have this elaborated language code and they have this democratic way of talking to their children that encourages them to develop their confidence. I think in schools, it can become very individualised and the language can impact how well the school gets on with the kid and the family. So for me, it can become about how people deal with each other based on communication styles and language. And so there's a lot more sort of blunt speaking in certain families, isn't there? So kind of swearing content and stuff like that and that ability to negotiate isn't there. It's not their kids and it's not them either, but that ability to negotiate is not present in institutions. It varies on what background or training people might have had or how thoughtful they might be, I suppose. So it's not uniform, I don't think. I mean we would try and think about things like that but not in any sort of routine way. We would, in trying to understand the case, think about the wider aspects and family history and things like that. And certainly some of us have had training in ways to bring in cultural aspects into your practice. It's out there, but I don't think it's uniformly done.

(Austin, consultant clinical psychologist, 40s)

Many of the accounts gathered in this research confirm Bourdieu's views that it is people's linguistic capital — especially their (in)ability to express emotions and justify thoughts and actions — that most strongly reflects their socioeconomic

background since different social classes employ language diversely (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, 1990: 117). When combining this part of Bourdieusian thought with Boltanski and Thévenot's understanding of distorted negotiations, it therefore becomes clearer that deficiency is often transported from the domestic world to the world of institutional contact based on professional devaluation of lower class clients' communication patterns.

In other words and as Bourdieu argued, people of less privileged backgrounds can indeed form sentences that are understood, but their words will not necessarily be listened to and accepted in a formal agency context (Bourdieu 1991: 55). As a consequence, the evaluation of speech is not officially proclaimed as a distinguishing factor in professional interactions, but it often becomes the informal source and — as Lesley's (youth justice support officer, 20s) narrative below suggests — means of differentiation and possible *de facto* exclusion of working class clients:

> Whether the offense will be a 'one off' or not does not necessarily depend on the young person's behaviour. I've got a case where the young person's family background is totally normal, so good levels of support, financially stable and he... I know that his behaviour remains pro-criminal, but it's the way that the police treat those young people. They're much quicker to be more lenient and give cautions to these kids and you'll see that in the transcripts of youth conditional cautions. That's when they contact us [the YOTs] to say 'What do you think?' So in the decision-making process, you'll see the police use language like 'from a very nice background', 'good potential for the future', 'nice family' and then use a lot of language that is class-based. It happens quite a lot and we have discussions about it. Requests come from the youth justice decision-making unit in the Police and they come through to us for our opinion on whether to go through with a caution or whether it needs to go to court. And sometimes someone will say 'Oh, we'll talk about a particular case' because it will be quite flagrant. We had one the other day, where the offense was setting fire to a door handle but the handle itself was wood, so it was dangerous in terms of flammability and the family were asleep inside the house, but the language the police used was 'well of family', 'very nice', 'well to do', 'he wants to go to college', 'it

> would be such a shame to affect these outcomes', which is true, but the conversation that we had was that if this was a young lad open to social care, bouncing around the housing pathway, not well off... It would be all about risk and it would be 'Oh my god, he set fire the door, the family were inside, the potential outcomes could have been disastrous'. The way that it's approached is completely different.

In addition, Lesley's account demonstrates distinctly another way in which language might function as a concealed discriminatory component in professional relationships. Classed differentiation is not only manifested in practitioners' unwitting evaluations of how clients speak according to the social gap between them, but also in their different descriptions of families from diverse backgrounds. More concretely and by drawing on Bourdieu, the analysis of the research participants' narratives suggests that professionals classify people through 'categories of high and low' by using a 'system of paired adjectives' (Bourdieu 1991: 92-93). As can be further inferred from the 'dualistic taxonomies' (Bourdieu 1991: 93) in the accounts of two practitioners below, working class individuals are usually described in ways that make symbolic references to what is bad or lesser, while the middle classes are often defined according to what is good or superior (Bourdieu 1991: 60, 92-94):

> We've got the whole kind of spectrum [of parents] really. We've got the very academic people, 'cause obviously of the autism thing and then we've got the really gutsy parents that are coming from backgrounds that are not particularly privileged. So we have quite a cross-section. I think we do have this very academic group of parents and they are the hardest to work with because actually... I had a group the other day and just by coincidence it was a very White middle class group and they were all academics and I went round the room, asking about their child and they all said 'Oh, they're only mildly autistic' and it was really hard for me. They were intelectualising everything and I was going in in a much more gutsy kind of way. It was much harder to work with that group than it is to work with families who are on the estates, don't have much, not well educated and actually, they're much easier to work with because you

> kind of go in the house, get on with it [laughs], suggest ideas and I think they're also perhaps grieving less for the intellectual kind of 'They're not going to get to University now'. I think other families are happier to take the journey a bit more slowly and safely or a bit differently. They might do things in a different time frame.
>
> (Liane, clinical specialist mental health practitioner, 40s)

> One family that I mentioned earlier that are the only family that I can think of that were White middle class, both working, own their own house... Actually the reason they were referred to us was because their son was offending and for quite serious offenses, so sexual assault on a minor. I mean, he was 16 at the time, but the girl was like 13. It was really quite serious. My first opinion when I met that family was actually that they are going to be a nice family to work with and we will be able to make some positive changes with them. When I say 'nice', I mean working parents without financial troubles, with good family networks, good schools and lots of support around them. Well-liked families with well-liked kids. Actually, it turned out their engagement was really no different to any of the rough families that I'd worked with. There were lots of different things that were going on, but they presented as a swan on the water, gliding along. Actually, as you got in, you realised that there were quite complex issues and the parents would never truly engage. My initial thoughts were that that family would be very different, but it was superficial engagement and it was actually very chaotic behind the scenes.
>
> (Jenna, early intervention worker, 20s)

Liane and Jenna's narratives therefore illustrate that — through the use of opposite adjectives ('academic' vs. 'gutsy' (parents); 'nice' vs. 'rough' (family)) — practitioners may symbolically classify people and, at once, express social judgments about their (expected) behaviour, thereby unintentionally making these arbitrary differences seem natural (Bourdieu 1991: 238). Similarly and by drawing on Savage et al., Sayer has posited that every kind of assessment is an evaluation of moral worth, so the pairs of words that professionals employ to describe families of diverse backgrounds do not function only as innocent descriptors, but also as

‘“loaded moral signifiers”’ of what is right and wrong (or, equally, good and bad etc.) (Savage et al. 2001: 875; cited in Sayer 2005: 200).

In parallel to Boltanski and Thévenot’s explanations of how and why discrepancies arise due to transfers from other worlds of worth, Sayer has explained that classed moral judgments and differentiations occur despite an otherwise mutual ethical understanding of what matters across class backgrounds, as people’s dispositions, beliefs and decisions can be distorted by differences in material standing or aesthetic factors (Sayer 2005: 205). As a consequence and as is encompassed in Jenna’s narrative below, individuals — including professionals — can employ different evaluative standards for the same behaviour in people of diverse social locations (Sayer 2005: 205), whereby these skewed assessments can ultimately result in their diverse treatment (e.g. in the case of Tracy’s account, in different types of childrearing courses for parents of disparate socioeconomic backgrounds):

> I've got a friend that works in a private school. She's a PE teacher in a private school and these children will come from very affluent families. So I think that will have a huge impact on their emotional and social wellbeing, and the attachment with their families. For many of these children, there's actually no one there for them at home, parents are out working all the time. I don't think that they're any different from these other families. The difference is that they've got money and they won't be scrutinised for the things they do because actually all their children's needs are being met, their basic needs, but the emotional needs above that, I don't think are. Another thing is domestic violence and substance misuse. That would be viewed very differently within those families. OK so if you think of these two scenarios. If we - as a professional - walked through a council estate, and saw various different families stood at the front of their house smoking cigarettes with cans of Strongbow and children running around the street, that would be viewed very differently to if we went to a really affluent area and saw families sat in a garden, drinking wine with the children running around. Actually they're very similar scenarios, they'd just be viewed completely differently.

And even the police… I don't think the police will have a lot of involvement with affluent families, but even if they did, I think it would be viewed very differently. If a police officer was to walk in a two-bedroom house of a family in a less privileged area of the county with five children and a few pets as well. A house that is probably very chaotic, perhaps quite messy, quite dirty, so the children might look quite unkempt. Say because of an argument... I think that would be viewed very differently to a police officer going to a six-bedroom house where parents have had an argument and the children are perfectly presented. Those judgments and those first opinions would be very different. I think families from the lower class would be scapegoated and generalised. As I said, there are some families and the position that they're in is just bad because of the circumstances that led them in that situation. But actually, they are still good people, that love their children and want the best for them. They're making do with what they've got. I think that in all these programmes on like Benefits Britain and things like that, they're kind of portrayed as bad people. And I think there is lots of fraudulent benefit claims and people will find ways to exploit the system and avoid coming to work, but there are some people for which it's very different. But they are still portrayed as bad, as scroungers on society. Unlike all the MPs that have off shore accounts [Sarcastically]. So I think that some prejudices will just kind of be embedded into the system.

(Jenna, early intervention worker, 20s)

I was observing a parenting course last night at a local school, full of incredibly affluent people. They were doing emotional literacy. They don't like to call it parenting. They were offering them a glass of wine, which again... I'm going to have to say something about that. These parents might as well have alcohol issues. We wouldn't dream of it here [at the Early Intervention Hub]. You know, OK, people smoke and drink, but to promote it? So they were quite happily getting into the red and white wines and talking about emotional literacy and I wasn't impressed with the quality of work that was going on. I was thinking: 'They are getting sold short, these affluent parents. They're not getting the parenting support'. They were using the business model. They were showing power point from a business model and I just thought 'This isn't quite right'. Because we are talking about children, we're not talking about… One of the women there was obviously a high-up manager and the leaders knew it and one of them said 'I expect you've met this before, this emotional intelligence' and she went 'Oh yes'. And I don't think this is appropriate because the experience of the well-educated in splendid amounts of theory doesn't necessarily mean that they are attuned to their young person. And I think they are not attuned. One of the attendees at the parenting course said: 'So my daughter was sitting

> on the naughty seat just before bed and she was getting changed for bed. She was bare and I made her sit on the naughty seat, I can't remember why, but she annoyed me. And she was screaming and crying, so I left her there even longer. And then I looked around and there was a huge spider there and it'd been there the whole time. Oh my goodness, she's probably scared for life hahaha'. It's a funny thing, whereas if you went into a family in [name of a council estate] and the parent said 'I sat her there naked because she really annoyed me, on the naughty step, beside the fireplace', actually, we'd call social services. The leaders laughed about it as if it's a funny tale. And I just thought: 'What a disparity there is'.
>
> (Tracy, early intervention parenting worker, 40s)

In conclusion, the accounts presented in the first section of this chapter confirm that Boltanski and Thévenot's theoretical model contributes immensely to a better understanding of the subtle ways in which the relational nature of class differentiation can manifest itself in negotiations about youth deviance and parenting. In this respect, Boltanski and Thévenot's thought supplements both the work of Bourdieu and his critics as well as Emerson and Sayer, so a consolidation of these concepts, not their isolated use indeed helps explain in a more nuanced way how the contacts between practitioners and troubling young people as well as their parents might have classing implications and may yield classed effects.

While professional bonds are partly affected by the social distance between the interacting parties' class habitus as Bourdieu argued, individuals can, at the same time, draw on their common ethical standards that transcend class divide, as implied by Sayer. Nevertheless, the narratives of all three groups of interviewees in this section also suggest that in evaluations of- and decisions about young people's behaviour and their parents' childrearing, clients' actions are not only assessed based on the official criteria through which they are supposed to be measured, but

also according to unacknowledged principles from other worlds of worth, especially the familial realm.

The analysis in this chapter so far thus validates the first aspect of Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model, specifically that every 'dispute' is an assessment of some sort of worth, but visible or covert distortions in negotiations about the solution to the problem can occur if the principles of judgment are derived from different spheres and the latter is not questioned or resolved, but remains silenced. Furthermore, the here presented views of the research participants also affirm Sayer's understanding that in a social world imbued with class contempt, discrepancies in the evaluations of *real* worth are more likely to be classed as objects, individuals or their habits are often overvalued when associated with the dominant and devalued when related to the disadvantaged.

Nevertheless, it still remains unexplored whether the described classed distortions constitute a wholly biased evaluative framework that systematically hinders the less privileged in accessing worth of a specific sort and being connected to what is perceived as good and valuable. The following section will therefore examine more thoroughly if the discrepancies according to class, analysed in this part might amount to what Boltanski and Thévenot have described as a 'test format' that is entirely prejudiced. In addition, it will also touch upon imports of worth that might happen regardless of the interacting parties class background. This will form a basis for analysing the organisational circumstances that might be preventing positive discrimination based on common ethical grounds, which I attend to in the last chapter of this thesis.

4.2. Distortions in the assessment scheme: The test format

When explaining why the relational implications of class matter and should be thoroughly explored (although they often go unacknowledged in real life situations and in academic literature), Sayer has argued that both the apparent forms of class stratification as well as its subtler manifestations can cause massive differences in individuals' opportunities. In addition and according to Sayer, preventing unfavourable consequences of class differentiation is also important since class contempt — although possibly understandable on *aesthetic* or *material* bases in the private sphere — lacks any justifiable *moral* ground (Sayer 2005: 163). For Sayer, it is therefore crucial to examine even the mildest indications of class revulsion as they can, in certain situations, result in morally indefensible discrepancies (Sayer 2005: 163), akin to Boltanski and Thévenot's *distorted evaluations of worth* (1).

Moreover, since the accounts presented in the previous part of this chapter confirm such classed distortions when practitioners negotiate with troubling children and their parents, the aim of this section is to explore whether professionals' classing dispositions and actions towards their clients across a range of institutions could — especially if and when accumulated — practically amount to what Boltanski and Thévenot have conceptualised as a *discriminatory evaluative framework* (2). This analysis seems necessary since several participants in this case study suggest that less privileged young people and their parents are consistently funnelled into the system through their interactions with practitioners across private and public as well as statutory and voluntary agencies, together comprising an organisational web similar to what Donzelot (1979) called 'the social':

If a bench is able to have a conversation with parents, they will ask what they think about their child's behaviour, they will ask pertinent questions about what they're going to do to support their child trying to avoid getting in trouble again. I think that it does make a difference if there is a reasonable dialogue between the sentencer and the family. So there are massive inequalities there. Well, that's an example from court, but that happens before court in society. There will be a referral coming through about behaviour. They'll look at the parents and think: 'They're affluent. They're obviously managing life well therefore we can trust these people. We'll provide a minimal intervention that will have minimal consequences. Because we can trust that they'll do that'.

(Lincoln, YOT officer, 50s)

Social services look down on you 100%. Even the workers look down on you although their lives are probably messed up as well. It's silly, but they're trying to look down on you because of the way you behave, because of how your kids behave, because of who your family is. But what you don't need is smirky people coming around from everywhere, getting involved in your life and poking their noses in it. 'It's got nothing to do with you, so don't go around my house. I don't go around your house, poking my nose into your business. I bet you've got problems at home as well'.

(Jamie, young person, 21-year-old male)

So for that crime [breaking into a shed that looked abandoned] my son Daniel was the only one of four people to be taken to a police station and then we had this avalanche of people working with us. First we went to see the police officer and that was at the social services house. And then we had... I'm not sure what their qualifications were, but they came out and left questionnaires about his mental health, so they were coming from a mental health perspective. We had someone who decided how it was gonna move forward called Jenny, who was working with the police and she had to decide whether it was just a straight caution or whether it went on to something else. And I said that I felt that it was an opportunity for Daniel to work on things like self-esteem and being submissive, but I didn't realise how many people would get involved dealing with all this other stuff as well. So then, he's had another girl called Donna that's come up and I think it's her that's gonna be working with him one on one of these papers [shows me a questionnaire about their family circumstances]. As you can see, it's like 'whoa', like loads of stuff and he didn't sort of premeditate the whole thing and think 'Oh,

> I'm gonna take a knife out and slash tires or do whatever', so I think from Daniel's point of view... I don't know whether it has been the lesson that I wanted him to learn. 'Cause it seems like he's gone through an awful lot and nobody else has been held to account. And it's just… He feels like he's explained himself over and over. Perhaps the punishment isn't quite fitting to the crime.
>
> (Kate, mother, 40s)

Kate's metaphor that an 'avalanche of people' started working with the family after her son Daniel was caught by the police and her view that this 'punishment isn't quite fitting to the crime' correspond well with some of the findings in Donzelot's historical analysis of the ways in which the poor have been policed by 'the social' since the 18th century. As has already been mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, Donzelot claimed that the then novel preventive and philanthropic approaches to solving familial problems resulted in a myriad of institutions 'encircling' the disadvantaged child and their parents, thereby ensuring their constant surveillance (Donzelot 1979: 108-110).

As this 'tutelary complex' attended predominantly to behavioural difficulties in children from poor families, it actually contributed — albeit with good intentions — to shaping their delinquency by selectively propelling them into the system and keeping the children of the well off out of it (Donzelot 1979: 112-113). In this respect, Donzelot's findings mirror the outcomes of more recent criminological research (McAra and McVie 2005, 2007, 2012a, 2012b; see also Bradford and Loader 2016: 249) as well as some of the narratives in this case study that reveal how system contact — either within social services, early intervention, law enforcement or the judicial sphere — is 'usual' for young people of more disadvantaged backgrounds and 'unusual' for the privileged:

> The families that are well off are worried about their reputation and being exposed. But in the ones I've come across sometimes, there is stuff there, there's no doubt about it, but parents try and get it dealt with privately. It doesn't always work. And the institutions don't want it to become generally known, so it is quite difficult to get a sense of whether the child's behaviour is purely socially determined or not. Certainly, it's very unusual to see middle class young people in complex care settings or in the youth justice system generally. If you look at the social demographic data, then they are usually rather unusual. I mean I remember a boy when I was working in a prison, who was in a prison and who'd been at a renown private school before and I remember him because it was very unusual to have someone from that background. So it seems that we already set up an expectation of what's going to happen with *this child* and with *this family*.
>
> (Michael, consultant child and mental health forensic psychiatrist, 50s)

Perceptions such as Michael's are common amongst practitioners and position families of lower socioeconomic backgrounds as the 'usual suspects' (McAra and McVie 2005) of preventive and coercive agencies. Such professional dispositions and viewpoints are, however, understandable since, according to Donzelot, institutions operate like 'Russian dolls', whereby the educational, psychiatric and welfare agencies are but variations that all fit into a generally repressive penal model, together providing an ongoing 'sequence of interventions' that invade the family lives of the disadvantaged. As a consequence, the classed presumptions about the characters, conduct and trajectories of people from the lower strata are often affirmed and possibly further exacerbated (Donzelot 1979: 98-99):

> I'm dealing with a 7-year old, who is violent at home and is now coming to youth club. His parents are involved with social care. I just see him. I know someone, who is 12 years old and reminds me of him. I knew someone back in the youth offending, who was about 14, who reminds me of him. I can see this path that seems to me starts so early on. And I can see he will offend. I mean, obviously, this is only my opinion, but given how he's been brought up and given how he's reacting to things at the moment at the age of

seven… He's a lovely boy, he's a really nice chap and he also gives big hugs and he's kind and sweet, but he's sort of stuck in his way of behaving. Give him another 10 years and he'll be out there or less than 10 years - eight years, seven years.

(Tracy, early intervention parenting worker, 40s)

J: If you're from a family with loads of money, you have respect from everyone else. If you don't have money and you have to struggle to get money, they look at you like you're a fucking idiot. If you have money, then you're OK. If you don't, you're fucked. It's as simple as that. People just pick out the one group that are dressed the way they are or according to the way they speak or act. They don't pick out the wealthy people. For example, if they're drink driving (…) A prison officer told me he was wearing a suit and his mate was wearing a suit and they were in a nice car and they crashed into a shitty car that had cans of alcohol in it and the guys were wearing hoodies. The police went straight to them [to the guys that were wearing hoodies] saying 'You crashed, nanana'. And he said he went there and said 'No, it was us that crashed into them'. It's just assumed that if there's a guy in a suit, it's definitely not him. It's the other guy. What the fuck is the point? What is that about?

JA: Do you think they are aware that they're prejudiced?

J: No. They think, 'Look at his family, look at his background. Nah, he won't get in trouble with the police'. Then they might look at my background and go 'Yeah, he's gonna go to prison. Look at him, fucking hell. He's getting in trouble with the police. He's gonna end up dead or in prison'. All the time I would hear: 'You're gonna end up dead or in prison'.

JA: Really?

J: Yeah. 'You're gonna end up dead or in prison'. I ended up in prison.

(Jamie, young person, 21-year-old male)

I didn't go to a mainstream school. I actually went to a special needs school. Through children's homes and everything and there was a school in one of the city's council estates. That was the only school -

> well teachers wise - that actually cared and listened and talked. But everybody else was just like 'Get on with it'. And if you didn't get on with it, there was something wrong with ya. Whereas now it's supposed to be completely different, but my two boys still felt alienated and they weren't getting help. They excluded Dominic, so I home teached him for a year and then through social services as well because I did complain and said that he needs to be in full time education. They sent him to an academy and when I walked from there, I'd get out of the door through the big fencing that actually looked like a prison fence. I already told you that I was in an adult prison and before that I had been in borstals, which was children's homes, but there was lock down. I'd been in them. When I went to prison, having been through children's homes all my life, and different foster homes and everything else… When they actually did send me to prison when I was 21, it didn't bother me. It was like an adults children's home, so I sat there and I got on with it. So if your dad had been to prison, you're just tarred with a brush. 'You're the black spot, there you go'.
>
> (Rob, father, 40s)

Taken together, the quotations above imply that — for individuals of deprived backgrounds — offending does not necessarily present a break from everyday experiences, but might, rather, constitute a part of their life course or be perceived as such (Rajah et al. 2015: 189-190). In addition, the narratives of Rob and his son Jamie also help further clarify why delinquency is more often perceptually linked to or, in Jamie's words, 'assumed' by workers for people of the lower classes. Namely and according to Donzelot, the long lasting simultaneous or consecutive involvement of educational, welfare and penal institutions with disadvantaged families has a 'feedback effect' (Donzelot 1979: 110) as it steadily dilutes their 'punishment' across a number of settings, thereby possibly overexposing their members, including children, to 'penal identification' (Donzelot 1979: 110) or, as Rob put it, 'tarring them with a brush'.

While showing that prior agency contact actually results in higher numbers of children from lower class families in the youth justice system is beyond the scope

of this thesis, the accounts above provide pertinent illustration of the participants' beliefs that young people of privileged backgrounds are expected to experience 'inclusive transitions' ('won't get in trouble'), while the trajectories of youth from lower strata will more often be 'marginalised' ('end up dead or in prison') (Loader 1996: 4). In determining which individuals will follow conventional routes as opposed to alternative pathways, including delinquency, the interviewees exposed the interplay between the family's class-conditioned social standing and the nature of institutional involvement with their difficulties as an important factor.

More concretely, a combination of two already mentioned quotations — Michael's (consultant child and mental health forensic psychiatrist, 50s) viewpoint that '[middle class] parents (…) get (…) [familial problems] dealt with privately', and Anne's (YOT officer, 20s) belief that institutions often perceive disadvantaged kids as 'trouble-making delinquents (…) [and a] problem, rather than a victim of their circumstances' — resonates starkly with Donzelot's conception that the state continuously regulates the family lives of the deprived through enforced and visible social control (*tutelage*), while it usually helps the privileged only if and when assistance is requested and agreed upon (*contract*). In parallel to Michael and Anne's accounts as well as in line with Donzelot, the interviewed parents and children also reveal proxies of the family's social class as important aspects in determining whether the treatment of a young person's troubling behaviour is negotiated discreetly or imposed forcefully by statutory agencies (Donzelot 1979: 47, 89-95), possibly steering children of diverse backgrounds on different (institutional) trajectories (e.g. the medical route vs. the welfare and law-enforcement pathway):

There are lots of strands to [my son] Liam and that's why I've got a folder that big [makes a gesture indicating the size of the file]. First it was the NHS and we waited nine months for that, as you do. A woman from the NHS came and she sat at the kitchen table and she did all the tests with him and said he comes above her line. An answer I was expecting. She told us, he's not great, but he comes above the line. He doesn't need any occupational therapy from the NHS, but he does need an autistic spectrum disorder assessment. So she referred us, but he was above the line again. You see, I still don't have a diagnosis, but I don't care so much about that because I believe that I'm right about what he has, so I just feel like I can go and get one [laughs]. I'll pay for a diagnosis. What I think happens is that if you have a diagnosis, you are then in this kind of channel and you access services from people. At the end of this interview with the NHS my husband asked what we should do now that we've come to the end of our journey in a way. So, next time Liam is really kicking off, what she suggests that we do. One of her answers was that we call the police. I mean you can't expect parents to do that! If you call the police, you're in another channel and it might not necessarily be the right one. I've come at it medically. I don't really know whether it's right to come at it from a social care perspective. I don't know whether we're there yet or if we even want to be when we could pay and get the diagnosis privately, but I'm wondering whether I'm about to be seeking a diagnosis.

(Beatrice, mother, 40s)

JA: How did your mum react to all of this [your drug-taking and drug-dealing]? Did she know while it was happening?

D: She knew and she tried to stop it the whole time as a parent would and can. She didn't wanna turn me in. I mean that's the thing I'm writing about in my independent studies project now. We have these rules against drugs, but parents don't turn their kids in to the police for drugs. They find other ways to deal with that problem. Parents don't think that the police and law enforcement and courts are the best way to deal with that situation, but if they don't have enough money, what are they supposed to do? So my mother knew and she told me I'm gonna get caught. In my head, I'd only get caught out in the street and they wouldn't come into my house. I didn't think it was a big deal. I mean, in the end, I had 15 police in their riot gear in my house when I was 16.

(Danny, young person, 21-year old male)

Two further arguments are relevant here. Firstly, it is possible to agree with Donzelot's conclusion that although the state has partly supplemented the exclusive use of either its repressive apparatus or unconditional charity with a plethora of institutions that offer diverse and benevolent services to deal with behaviourally challenging children and their parents, the ability of the family to accept the state's guidance or autonomously cater to its own needs and choose appropriate individualised assistance still, to a large extent, depends on their socioeconomic standing (Donzelot 1979: 65-70). In parallel and in a more contemporary context, Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh have argued that while the types of familial and social aid, broadly defined, might be constantly evolving and becoming more personalised at first sight, their primary mechanism of targeting working class families remains intact (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 94).

Importantly for the subject matter of this dissertation, both Donzelot as well as Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh have, secondly, posited that young people and parents of the lower classes are not sucked into a system of organisational monitoring based only on the seriousness of their problems — including youth delinquency and childrearing difficulties — but also according to judgments of 'normative or corrective agencies' (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 23) about their lifestyles, which transforms the family's socioeconomic circumstances into tacit assessment criteria for their behaviour (Donzelot 1979: 69; see also Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 94). This way and according to Lincoln's account below, professional interactions can frame some behavioural problems as 'typical' for working class children and their parents, as well as amplify, rather than minimising, their difficulties (Donzelot 1979: 107; see also Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 125, 136-137), as implied by Jamie and Veronica:

Historically, families that had social services involved were stigmatised, so they didn't want to be involved with the social services anymore, whereas the 'the social of now' is very different, but, again, while it's not labeling you as being bad, it is labeling you as in need of support. That's not a bad thing in itself, but families can still see it in the way it was before and then don't want to engage. I can understand that because the help gets associated with being bad anyway. As with offending generally, I think that those from a deprived background are more likely to come to the attention of agencies for a variety of reasons. They're going to be picked up and identified. That might be prompted by problematic behavior on the part of their children, but they don't have the resources to access services that can help them without statutory agencies getting involved and *imposing* help. I think there is a danger that the Troubled Families agenda, for example, is quite similar to the idea of prolific offenders. It makes it seem like there are these 20.000 individuals, who account for 80% of all crime. Well that group changes. There's a turn that are in and out. OK, there are some life course persistent offenders, but most are not. I think it's the same with families. Depending on where they are in their life cycle and depending on what their socioeconomic situation is and the stresses that they are currently facing. If you've got a parent who is struggling with three zero-hour contracts and another parent, who's a carer… Well, that's bound to impact on the quality of care that they can give and the boundaries that they can impose for their children. There's a danger that families get sucked up in this sensationalising about a core group of people or families or social networks that are the cause of the community's disquiet, but what we really want to do is avoid stigmatising those who might genuinely need help to overcome. Because they're in a crisis… They might be usually able to cope, but there's just been this, if you like, multitude of problems that have pushed them over the edge and they'll need the help. But they will only need it for an amount of time and until they've had the resources - personally and socially - to go forward and cope. I'm not aware, I have to say, of any parents who I would class as middle class, upper middle class, who've actually been on parenting groups [laughs]. But that doesn't mean that they don't have difficulties, they're just not in the system.

(Lincoln, YOT officer, 50s)

It [involvement with social care and/or other institutions] puts stress on you. I see it on my mum and dad. It's put stress on them because they have to prove something to social services and constantly say that they're not something that they never really were. They have to prove that they're fine, that everything's good, that we're a happy family. It's causing them stress, when they [social services workers]

come around the house. My mum's cleaning all morning because she thinks she has to make the house look nice. I always ask her why she is doing that. It's only a person coming around, so she doesn't have to do that. She goes: 'Oh no, it's social services. They keep telling me to do this and that. I'm gonna get kicked out of my house'. If I see them, personally, I'll ask them to *fuck off*. It pisses me off. It really annoys me that they're involved with us.

(Jamie, young person, 21-year-old male)

JA: What do you mean when you say that the school is too involved in [your daughter] Ivy's stuff?

V: For instance, the other day I had a text from school to say that Ivy was one to five minutes late to morning registration. Now, if she was late every day for the last week, I'd appreciate a text to make me aware of that. But if it's one to five minutes and if it was this one time...To me that was almost beyond needing to contact me. Maybe it's me putting my head in the sand a little bit. I don't think I am. When I was working at the nursery, I got a phone call one morning from school that Ivy said she wanted to kill herself, so I got all upset. I asked them what they suggest I do and they advised me I go to PCHAMS, so we went down to PCAMHS. When we go there, they were like: 'To be honest, we don't really understand why you are here'. Not that they were pushing away what Ivy had said, but I think the schools refer pupils just because they have to and without thinking about how serious it is. I'm assuming. Because I really don't think that was such an issue. When we were kids, we said things like 'I wish I were dead'. Sometimes that comes out of your mouth, but you don't actually mean it... I understand that the school must protect themselves, which is probably why they did it, but I don't know whether they almost go too far sometimes and it's unnecessary because then you have all these people involved. And I'm the sort of person that gets stressed quite easily. Also, I went to a meeting with Ivy at PCAMHS and it was OK, but anything we said was followed by 'Why do you think that?' and it was very pushy. I though: 'Hang on a minute, mate, back off'. I wanted to say that to him, but then you can't because he's the professional. He knows his job, but I felt he was actually pushing too much at the moment. They keep digging and digging and digging and I know that's probably their purpose, but even if they ask a thousand times, they won't know exactly what the kids are feeling. The kids are probably feeling a good handful of different things and you might be making it worse to some extent by digging deeper.

(Veronica, mother, 30s)

When interpreted jointly, the above accounts demonstrate that the functioning of 'the social' might still be contributing to a symbolic and actual differentiation between disadvantaged and privileged families based not only on their (mis)behavior, but also and especially on socioeconomic markers. In a similar manner, critics of contemporary early intervention programmes have argued that less punitive alternatives to the criminal justice system are indeed crucial, but the programmes that are adopted to divert children away from criminality still 'sweep into the system' — often according to class- and familial stereotypes, rather than only their transgressions — young people that have not yet been engaged in delinquent behaviour (McCarthy 2015: 499).

Correspondingly, and by exploring the institutional treatment of truancy, Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh have found that the practitioners working with truant families across educational, welfare and law enforcement services often employ their class-biased 'cognitive maps' (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 107) to further refer working class subjects until the latter have been processed by numerous diagnostic agencies, while their underlying problems remain unresolved. In this light, the narratives below provide some flavour of how the 'soft machine of tutelage' that deals with young people's pre-delinquent troubling behaviour to prevent their future penal involvement might actually contribute to it. By gradually filtering out what Noah calls the 'mad, bad and sad', agency contact seems to separate the trajectories of the 'pathologically deviant' working class young people from the pathways of the 'normally deviant' middle class children (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 119) while, at the same time, sidelining the underlying triggers of their misconduct:

When I'm explaining it to people who don't work here [at the pupil referral unit], I say that what we have here are the 'mad, bad and sad', but then obviously you have the family backgrounds on top of that. I've worked here for five years and I've never had what you'd call a middle class kid. I've never had a kid that's been on a skiing holiday or who has a dad in university and mum who's a doctor. It just hasn't happened. Previously I worked in a SEN [Special Educational Needs] school, where they're diagnosed with Asperger's and ADHD and they present similar behaviours to what I deal with here and the bigger majority of those kids were what you would call middle class. And here, not one in the five years I've been here. And there are certainly kids here who - had they been from a different family with proactive parents - would have ended up in an SEN school and had a diagnosis really early, rather than being labelled naughty. With these kids it's just all become so mixed up, so it's not only skipping school and offending, it's social care involvement, police involvement, and all of it combines to create a big multi-agency response. It just becomes seen like we are dealing with a ‘problem young person’ from a ‘problem family’. And their problems are very much never ever dealt with, their case is just moved on.

(Noah, teacher, 20s)

I've never really dealt with social services until my children were put on it. It seems to me like everything's paperwork to social services and we have to comply, but they don't have to comply with the things that they say. Obviously there's good and bad in everything, so there's good and bad people working there, but I think the teenagers get palmed off a lot by social services and get promised help and then the social services don't do it. Then they wonder why teenagers kick off. Ask Ethan [a YOT worker that really helped the family and got along with them], I give you permission... Ask Ethan to speak about social services and the police and the way they have treated this family. He'll tell you about the times that they haven't turned up to meetings and the way that they just shrugged us off. They’re only involved by paperwork and that's it. Where's a social worker when you need one? They're not there. They ask you to come to the office or tell you to speak to the duty worker, but when you get there, they don’t know nothing about you, so you sit there in the reception for two hours while they look on the computer and still don’t know nothing about you, instead of spending ten minutes asking what the problem is, why it's come to this and how it has happened, so it could get solved. They don't do it.

(Jackie, mother, 30s)

JA: Why did you feel that they [the school] didn't respect you?

N: If I had a problem, every teacher that I spoke to about it would be like 'Go speak to this one'. When I went to that person, they would say 'Go speak to that one', then he'd say 'Go speak to them', they would say 'Go speak to this person'. No problems would ever get solved. If I did manage to speak to somebody about a problem, they wouldn't do anything about it at all. Now I'm here [at the pupil referral unit] and they're doing a similar thing to my younger brother back in that school just because he has the same last name as me, so they think he's gonna be like me. They're victimising my brother as well because we're from the same family.

(Neil, young person, 15-year-old male)

The accounts presented in this section so far — along with Donzelot's historical exploration of 'the social'; Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh's work on the management of truancy; and McCarthy's examination of contemporary early intervention — imply that, in their interactions with practitioners across a range of agencies, children in trouble and their parents are not assessed and directed to further treatment merely based on their behavioural specificities, but also according to socioeconomic factors and signs of familial conformity that thereby serve as covert indicators of their moral worth and personal quality or the lack thereof. When examined in light of the findings from the previous part of this chapter, evaluations of children's delinquency and their parents' childrearing difficulties therefore seem to be 'preoccupied' with classed assessments from other 'worlds' that Boltanski and Thévenot have conceptualised as unjust *transports of worth* (1b) for the middle classes and *transfers of deficiency* (1a) for the deprived (Boltanski 2011: 28-29; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 151, 219-223)

In a multiagency youth justice context, the described distortions from other worlds of worth might occur across diverse settings and/or at different levels, so

they are more likely to be accumulated and thus perceived by professionals as justified. Namely, the continuous practical transformations of *de facto* economic, material, aesthetic and familial distinctions into *de jure* unequal treatment of people from different social locations can appear natural and start functioning like unofficial 'rules' that seem legitimate and thus worth following (Charlesworth 2003: 253; see also Bourdieu 1998: 72). In other words, *biases in the modalities of judgment* (1) that are combined or repeated on the ground can practically amount to what Boltanski and Thévenot have identified as a wholly *discriminatory evaluative framework* (2), albeit in the absence of directly biased laws and official policies (Boltanski 2011: 27-29, 40). In professional milieus that are dominated by or imbued with such perceptive schemes practitioners are more likely to accept and employ, although unintentionally, classing dispositions, beliefs and actions, as indicated in the account below:

> I think there's a lot of blame in society in general, but also in institutions. Parental blaming has been around a long time. You know, the Conservative government of my youth started that, so now the image of a single unemployed mother has been present for so long that it's become an axiom of society even though it isn't necessarily true. You actually have single mothers who are wonderful, so there are examples of both in daily work, but some people have that at the back of their minds.
>
> (Isabella, consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist, 30s)

Isabella's narrative serves to show that class-biased evaluations of people's worth can — even if initially prompted by political changes or other processes on a macro level — become 'the axiom of society' when applied continuously over a prolonged period of time and across institutional contexts. Correspondingly and when exploring the impacts of examinations within the educational system, Bourdieu

argued that decision-makers at different levels can agree on equally biased judgments, so classed assessments of people's behaviour and achievements that are never questioned help mask the arbitrary transmission of privilege and disadvantage as hereditary and thus natural (Bourdieu 1977, 1990: 163-167). In addition, evaluations that are based on an 'ideology of equity' (Bourdieu 1977, 1990: 163), rather than ensuring real equality of treatment regardless of class background also breach Boltanski and Thévenot's *principle of common humanity* in practice as they systematically hinder young people and parents of the lower classes from accessing certain conditions of worth (Boltanski 2011: 27; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 74-80, 130-131, 215).

In an institutional setting that constantly undervalues the lifeworlds of the working classes, while overvaluing the habits of the privileged, subjects of deprived backgrounds are therefore more likely to be perceived and reacted to according to derogatory preconceptions about their past and present behaviour as well as their future life courses (Sayer 2005: 122-126). As a consequence, professional assessments of young people's transgressions and their parents' childrearing that are partly distorted by judgments of aesthetic and other visible markers of class (Sayer 2005: 122) are often accompanied by clients' senses of worthlessness. In parallel to the already stated Rob's (father, 40s) observation that institutional treatment frequently makes the disadvantaged feel like they are 'worth nothing', the narratives of practitioners and young people also reflect that clients often feel disrespected when engaging with professionals:

> I've got a young man, who wrote to his teachers and said they make him feel worthless, but he wants them to know that he's trying. He told them they don't understand him, so they send him out and they

> make him feel worthless. And he very articulately said that some teachers do get him, but some don't, as they just don't see it. Children have a strong sense of justice and once that injustice grows - 'It wasn't me, but they never believe me' - they start following that and they can start disrespecting everybody else too because they feel nobody cares about them, so why should they care about others?
>
> (Mary, anti-bullying strategy coordinator, 50s)

> The best thing that I've ever done in my life is sit back and just watch everything that happens because that's what's made me realise what this world is actually about and what social services are about and what the police are about. What they're doing is not fair on anyone at all because they judge people from their backgrounds or from the way they've been brought up or what their family's done and that's not fair on anyone. Instead of judging someone straight away, they should get to know that person first, then start judging someone if they have to, but until then they shouldn't because some people actually get dragged down by people that judge them and they start thinking that they're not worth living on this Earth. I've had people literally sit down and break down to me and I've had to tell them that they shouldn't listen to what anyone is saying. They're not worth it. That's what I've learned in life. I've had to basically bring myself up and I've had to bring up my little brother and sister. I shouldn't have had to do that. Social services should have done that for me, but I've done it for them. And the police have always hated my family, because my family has supposedly caused a lot of trouble for them. They judge a book by its cover. People say to speak to someone like you would like to be spoken to, but when you do that, it just gets turned back on you for no reason. You try to be polite, but because of your background, they don't seem to think that you could pass from that. They think you're like your past. They think that you're like your other family. They judge you based on your family, especially in this town. They judge you for your past, not for who you actually are there and then.
>
> (Amelia, young person, 20-year-old female)

Amelia's account, particularly her belief that institutions 'judge people from their backgrounds or from the way they've been brought up or what their family's done and that's not fair', demonstrates evidently how some lower class subjects can experience as unjust agency contact that is officially aimed at amending their

behaviour and/or helping them with their everyday difficulties, but also passes moral judgments about their socio-familial circumstances in the process. Furthermore, Amelia's assertion that practitioners 'judge you for your past, not for who you actually are there and then' also resonates starkly with Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006: 151, 219-223) claim that assessments of individuals' moral worth ('who you actually are') can often be — especially for the less privileged — distorted by transfers of deficiency from their domestic sphere ('judge you for your past') and thus unfair, especially if systematic and present across different settings like in Amelia's case ('that's (…) what this world is actually about and what social services are about and what the police are about').

Contrary to the prevailing belief that, amongst the disadvantaged, resentment such as Amelia's stems from their unwillingness to take responsibility for their actions — in the case of this thesis, for their troubling behaviour and problems with their childrearing — both Sayer as well as Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh have argued that clients from the lower classes usually experience institutional involvement as unfair only when they feel it responsibilises them beyond their actions, specifically when it holds them accountable for class-conditioned circumstances that they are unable to control (Sayer 2005: 151, 226-227; see also Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 137). It is therefore crucial to take seriously participants' claims about organisational injustices, especially in light of Loader's (1996: 145) warning that while it is impossible to know whether young people's accounts like Amelia's are 'actually true', they are indeed far-reaching as they resonate widely amongst peers as well as impact how they perceive and react to professional interactions. In this respect, several other narratives in this study — most evidently Jamie's below — encapsulate the ways in which stories about unjust

treatment by the police or other practitioners provide a template for young people's views about the (un)fairness of agency contact in general:

> JA: How did you experience the interactions with the police?
>
> J: In my area, there's a group of us and I think the police get fun out of arresting us. They get points or something. Every time the police see me, they'll jump out the car and the car will still be running down the street like they don't even give you time, they'll just jump out. I'm stood there wondering why they are doing this, constantly searching me and harassing me for no reason. I had respect for the police before, but then one time, I was walking down the street and this officer beat me up for no reason, so I don't have respect for the police at all no more. I don't care if it was just that one officer that was like that, but he makes that whole group look bad...So every time the police come even near me now, I'll kick off.
>
> JA: So that's because of that one bad experience...
>
> J: Yeah, because I didn't do nothing wrong. Well, there was two officers on a push bike and I swore at one officer and he swore back at me, so obviously I knew I could do that with him. I know him and I mess around with him all the time. The other officer didn't know that and he started pedalling his bike, trying to chase me and I'd ran off through an alley and he went around and the other police officer was speaking to me and I just chilled out and I said I was sorry. So I stood there, he got off his bike and started hitting me. He put handcuffs on me and just started hitting me. Then everyone came out of their houses because in my area, I have respect from everyone. I even go to the shop for old people if they need something. I don't do stupid things in my area. They all came out of their houses when they realised what he's doing to me and they started going mad at him and he took the handcuffs off and told me to leave. But then I didn't have respect for them no more.
>
> (Jamie, young person, 21-year-old male)

Enduring feelings of worthlessness, unfairness and resentment were merely the most frequent amongst many other negative emotions (e.g. feeling 'pissed off and angry', 'furious', 'embittered', 'blamed', 'embarrassed', 'worried', 'suspicious', 'shattered', 'confused', 'ready to snap', 'disgusted', 'judged', 'invisible, isolated

and hurt inside' etc.) that the interviewed young people and parents expressed when asked about their interactions with professionals. According to Sayer, frequently articulated unfavourable emotions of injustice, resentment, indifference, humiliation and shame are sociologically relevant since they often result from and reflect — even if they are less intense — people's persistent experiences of being maltreated and disrespected based on their class belonging (Sayer 2005: 148-163).

Negative affective responses of participants in this research to questions about agency contact therefore provide another reason to believe that professional interactions breach Boltanski and Thévenot's *constraint of order* (1) when practitioners fail to evaluate lower class families only according to their acts and behaviour, but also silently base their perceptions and decisions on proxies of class, often making less privileged clients feel valueless and misrecognised. When accumulated, such institutional treatment at different levels and across settings also contradicts the second aspect of Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model (*constraint of equality* or *principle of common humanity*) (2) as it amounts to a structure that generally excludes the working classes from accessing worth of a particular kind — in this case, the value of being treated without classed associations, based only on their conduct and thus equally to middle class subjects (Boltanski 2011: 27-29; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 75-80, 130-131, 215) .

In all, the analysis in this section suggests that negative emotional reactions of some research participants to the ways in which they are treated within the multi-agency youth justice setting and children's services do not necessarily reflect their reluctance to face problems or deal with the consequences of their actions, but might indicate clients' dissatisfaction with a web of services and workers that indirectly diminish their worth through unwittingly classing dispositions,

perceptions and practices. According to Sayer, such affective responses are thus not irrational, but wholly reasonable since the need for recognition is universal for all humans based on their common ethical grounds, but the access to it is often unevenly distributed between individuals and groups of diverse social locations (Sayer 2005: 185, 226-227). To prevent the identities of less privileged children and parents from being unjustly mediated by their socioeconomic position (Charlesworth 2003: 126), Sayer has suggested that situations in which 'bads', including misrecognition and disrespect, are unequally allocated should be eradicated, while the experiences in which 'goods', inclusive of recognition and respect, are predominantly possessed by one group of people (e.g. the middle classes) should be redistributed to enable equal access of others (e.g. the working classes) (Sayer 2005: 227).

In this respect, Sayer's proposal, once more, corresponds well with Boltanski and Thévenot's theory (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 219-221, 307). Together, they imply that when assessing disadvantaged children's challenging behaviour and their parents' childrearing, *transports of deficiency* (1a) from other worlds of worth (e.g. their domestic world) should be eliminated. At the same time, *transports of worth* (1b) between the same worlds in evaluations of the privileged should be dispersed to allow the working classes an equally appreciative experience of agency contact and professional interactions. According to Boltanski and Thévenot, agents' judgments are therefore purer and more equitable when the advantages that the privileged gain from transports of worth are contested, but also and more importantly when transfers of deficiency experienced by lower class subjects are challenged, so that — when deciding in concrete cases — certain aspects from their domestic worlds (e.g. adverse socioeconomic conditions and

corresponding familial stress) are taken into account as burdens that 'weigh people down' (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 222).

To illustrate how class-conditioned deficiencies can be interpreted as mitigating circumstances and thereby neutralised in professional decision-making, Boltanski and Thévenot (2006: 222) have provided an example of a superior that does not punish an employee for being late for work when they realise that was because the worker is a single parent with a sick infant. The narratives of several practitioners in this case study also demonstrate how professional assessments of people's behaviour can be substantially more just and 'humane' if they acknowledge the disadvantages that might — if they remain unrecognised — diminish clients' worth in the world within which the decision is to be reached (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 219-223). In addition, such accounts of specialists also correspond well with lay viewpoints about the benefits of deescalating conflict in informal settings. Correspondingly, a more benevolent and class-neutral way of perceiving- and reacting to a child or their parents' difficulties is reflected in the accounts of Sam, Nicola, and an 11-year-old child participating in a state school focus group:

> Before coming here [to the Early Intervention Hub] I worked in a school for kids with behavioural problems. Some of the children were autistic and had behavioural problems, and some of them just had behavioural problems. Back then I really thought that if a kid just has behavioural problems, it's definitely because of their parents. Now I think that parents can sometimes try really hard and it's still not always their fault. I think loads of blame goes on parents and people are very quick to criticise them and really slow to praise them. When I see a mum yelling at their kid in the supermarket - instead of thinking 'Oh my god, she's yelling at her kid' like I used to - I now wonder what else had happened to her that day. I wonder if she got any sleep. I wonder if the kid has been yelling at her and running around pulling stuff of the shelves for the past three hours

and I think of all the possibilities. Now I believe that people shouldn't judge 'cause you don't know what goes on and you don't know what people have been through. What we are doing through judgment is escalating things. Within interactions we can escalate things by what we do. So that happens a lot with blame is very similar to what anger does in these families. A small problem gets elevated and this escalation has a big impact. Actually, if you try and deescalate, it's a bit easier to deal with things, isn't it? We all struggle with different situations, but if these families just escalate the whole time and then we escalate the situation on top of that, we're not helping them. And for de-escalation, you must have some skills. To get the problem to a lower level, and that's what we should be doing. We should eliminate the shame and embarrassment to avoid embedding everyone deeper into the argument

(Sam, early intervention support worker, 20s)

I try to think about how I react to something Elsie says and I try and deviate around it or try to deflect things away, so that I don't get more of her angry behaviour. I try to preempt any triggers that there might be, almost to the extent that I'm changing my behaviour to try and stop Elsie from kicking off with her behavior, which isn't necessarily the right way to go about doing it, but neither is turning away and saying 'Right, this is how it is Elsie, you've just got to accept it'.

(Nicola, mother, 40s)

C1: I think the best help that somebody who has been getting in trouble with the police could get is like a social worker or Childline or something, because that's probably the sort of help that you can get in this situation.

C2: I disagree quite strongly as I reckon Childline and social workers and stuff... They would probably help in the long term and psychiatrists would help too, however, I think that not for a kid like Matthew. It [the leaflet with a story about a boy named Matthew that the young people were given at the beginning of the focus groups to start the discussion] says 'Matthew's grades have dropped and he's been rude to teachers'. That kind of shows that he used to be a good kid and he just needs to be kicked back into line by some good friends, by some parents and by some teachers and some family members. 'Cause if, for example, you take social workers and Childline and stuff like that, he's gonna feel like he is special in a bad

> way and that he has to be 'dealt with'. Instead, he just needs a good old talk and kick on the... to sort of get him back into line.
>
> (13-year old female and 11-year-old male in FG 3)

A combination of Sayer as well as Boltanski and Thévenot's work therefore suggests that practitioners working across the youth justice nexus can consciously and affectively monitor class differentiation in professional interactions to some extent by preventing their own biased judgments of goods, practices, manners and people associated with them. To prevent classed dispositions, perceptions and actions from manifesting themselves as injustices in professional relationships, beings — either clients, their lifestyles or customs — should not be automatically undervalued when related to the disadvantaged and overvalued if associated with the dominant, but should be assessed according to their *actual* worth (Sayer 122-126) based on measures agreed upon between the interacting parties in each particular case, similarly to how conflicts are resolved informally in unofficial relationships. In other words and especially when dealing with personal issues like children's troubling behaviour and parenting problems, concepts of formal equality should thus, in part, adapt to what Sayer has called *lay conceptions of justice*, according to which treatment always takes into account the specificities of the situation or person, including their socioeconomic standing, thereby avoiding 'the harm done by treating unequals equally' (Sayer 2005: 151).

For Sayer, constructive social critique should therefore take the complexities of lay normativity seriously. In this light, a thorough examination of class relations should avoid concentrating only on the discrepancies and negative emotions between individuals of diverse social backgrounds, but should envision a more just social order in which interactions between people are also based on positive

sentiments that are common across classes. In milieus where people's worth is not supposed to be primarily measured according to the amounts and forms of capital that they possess (e.g. the justice- or welfare sphere as opposed to the market realm), qualities such as mutual respect, warmth and compassion allow for treatment and decisions that are fairer precisely because they can be adapted to the particularities of the cases and the personal qualities of clients (Sayer 2005: 47, 139-146, 175).

In this respect, it is important to acknowledge that while the young people and parents interviewed in this study were, as the analysis so far has shown, highly critical towards class-conditioned transports of deficiency and worth in professional interactions, they also — and often within the same narratives — expressed positive emotions about individual practitioners as well as spoke fondly of them, especially when they felt like they were treated with respect and recognition regardless of their social position ('the most important thing is to have someone caring about you', 'she was down to Earth and nurturing', 'he was open and honest', 'she made me feel proud and wouldn't give up on me', 'she had an open heart', 'she would never judge me, so I trusted and respected her', 'he was involved, he is still involved and he wants to be involved', 'she was compassionate, always attending to my needs and she gave me time'). When reflecting on their positive experiences with agency contact, children and parents also gave pertinent examples of how practitioners would, in Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006: 220, 307-308) terms, employ *transports of worth* from other worlds or, as Sayer (2005: 151) puts it, draw on lay notions of justice to sideline usual procedures and find solutions that fit the young person's specific needs, thereby encouraging them to change their challenging behaviour:

Lisa was a police officer and I don't know if it was because she worked with a lot of bad people and whatnot or just because of the way she is as a person, but she can pick up on different vibes and she obviously realised that I meant what I was saying, so she knew to focus on that part of me and push me in that direction and it worked. So I think it would be a lot better and important if schools would do the same thing. They should teach kids to have a better sense of self-worth and to find their source of self-worth. The problem that I see with a lot of people is that they attach their self-worth to one thing and that's really unhealthy (…) They think 'I'm the smart kid, that's who I am and if I don't get good grades, I am nothing'. We kind of teach people to fixate on one aspect of themselves and it's really not healthy to do that. With me, it was all about being a good role model for my brothers and sisters. So while I was in prison and they were all upset, I lost that motivation, but getting Lisa's help is the thing that turned my life around, really. I changed my work ethic, I changed the way I think about the world, changed the way I speak to people and interact, changed the way I open up. Everything was down to her intervention and her showing me that I can be something got me doing all these amazing things - being a young ambassador for a charity and doing talks for groups of people. She believed in me and always said 'You can do it. You'll smash it'. And I wasn't really into speaking to random people before. Since then, I've done loads of presentations and that's just because she pushed me and showed me that I can do something. I used to look at myself and think I'm just a fool and I didn't used to look at myself and think I can make a difference in somebody's life. So she focused on my positives and she told me that she's done bad things too, you know, which was great. Because if you're just sat down with someone with a piece of paper at the other side of the desk telling you that you know what you're there for, you feel like a moron and the worst person in the world, so you start disregarding your own life, drinking heavily, smoking weed.

(Leroy, young person, 21-year-old male)

Some of the police officers were like friends and they used to come to our house to deal with [my sons] Dominic and Jamie. They would sit at the kitchen table and relax. When Stephen [a police officer] would come around, he was like family. Well, he still is. Instead of arresting the boys, he would take them to McDonald's or KFC and have a good chat and then bring them back to the house. He wouldn't immediately take them to the police station and arrest them or lock them up. He just wanted to chat with them. And the children have respect for him now because he knew that although they've been to

> prison and all that, they're not really as bad as a lot of other people. They have their moments like everyone else.
>
> (Rob, father, 40s)

Several interviewed practitioners shared the view that moral evaluations are relatively independent of social divisions, including but not limited to those based on class. As a consequence, people of similar social locations can behave disrespectfully towards each other, while individuals of disparate socioeconomic backgrounds can draw on common norms of fairness and agree on benevolent solutions to concrete problems regardless of differences between their class-conditioned habitus (Sayer 2005: 49-51). As can be inferred from Alice's (bail support officer, 30s) account below, professionals can therefore avoid automatised decision-making based on practical sense and diminish the chances of indirect discrimination according to class by being reflexive and employing '"intelligent dispositions"' (Wood 1990: 214; cited in Sayer 2005: 27-28) about their own cognitive and affective prejudices:

> Exploring your own beliefs and how that may impact on your work comes up a lot. Even as far as your background is concerned and how your political or religious beliefs may impact on the families that you work with. If you have good supervision, your supervisor will pick up on your possible prejudices - if you are making assumptions about people - and try and explore that and unpick it. But do we always have good supervision that does that? No, I don't think so. I think it's important to have conversations with colleagues. I think it also depends on where you live. So I live in a city in the county where lots of different cultures, races, classes live, whereas in another part of the county, it's predominantly White middle class people and the staff there are also predominantly White middle class (…) If you're not aware of your biases or if you're not aware of how that impacts, then that's a concern. Again, we're all human and we all do it, but I will step back from a situation and think 'Oh, I really need to read this. I think there was something underlying there that actually meant that I didn't get that quite right'. It's having the

> awareness and the reflection to do that. The thing is that magistrates certainly don't sit down at the end of the day and talk through a series of reflective practice. Not in the same way that we're expected to.

The quotation above as well as the analysis in this section as a whole imply that both lay people and professionals can reflect on their own biases and have the ability to deliberate about class-related issues so that prejudices about socioeconomic differences do not necessarily affect their viewpoints and decisions. In addition, people's dispositions are mixed, so they are partly impacted by their social and familial backgrounds, but, in part, relate to common norms of fairness and sympathy regardless of social location (Sayer 2005: 28-30, 167-168).

Nevertheless, the examination in the last two chapters of this thesis, at the same time, shows that practitioners sometimes still employ classing transports of worth and deficiency when working with young people and their parents, particularly with those of lower social standing. The aim of the last chapter is therefore to explore whether, how and why specific organisational circumstances within and between agencies that deal with families in trouble might hinder reflexivity and conscious deliberation about the impacts of class, thereby tacitly steering the interacting parties towards more habitual perceptions and decisions-making based on 'class ideologies' (Carlen, Gleeson and Wardhaugh 1992: 79-80), which can lead to discriminatory treatment.

4.3. Concluding comments

This chapter has confirmed the relevance of combining Bourdieu's notions of habitus and field as well as Sayer's moral understanding of class with Boltanski and

Thévenot's polity model to understand classed differentiation in professional negotiations about youth deviance and parenting. In the first part of the chapter, I have shown that the accounts of the interviewed research participants support Boltanski and Thévenot's assertion that when trying to reach an agreement — including a decision about a young person's delinquency or their parents' childrearing — clients' behaviour is not necessarily assessed merely according to the official principles through which it is supposed to be measured, but is often also silently evaluated based on unacknowledged criteria from other 'worlds of worth', especially the familial realm. In addition and by corresponding with Sayer's finding that the social world is imbued with class contempt, the narratives of the interviewees also confirm that distortions in the modalities of judgment are classed, so privileged subjects and their habits are regularly overvalued through transports of worth, while the disadvantaged and their lifestyles are frequently devalued through transports of deficiency.

In the second section, I drew on Donzelot's historical examination of how poor families have been monitored by 'the social' since the 18th century to find that classed discrepancies in professional assessments and decision-making still seem to occur across institutions that constitute the multiagency web of youth justice. As a consequence, constant organisational surveillance of working class families thus practically amounts to what Boltanski and Thévenot have conceptualised as a wholly biased evaluative framework that systematically prevents the less privileged from being treated equally to middle class clients. Moreover, the accounts gathered in this chapter confirm that such institutional practices do not only hold lower class subjects accountable for their acts, but also responsibilise them for uncontrollable

class-conditioned circumstances, so their experiences of agency contact are often accompanied by enduring negative emotions.

In the concluding parts of the chapter, I have argued that negotiations between practitioners on one side and behaviourally challenging children and their parents on the other could become socially fairer if cases of misrecognition for the less privileged were eliminated and the treatment in which subjects — usually of the higher classes — benefit from imports of worth from other worlds was distributed more equally amongst clients regardless of their social location. As a solution, I have suggest that formalised professional interactions draw on mutual ethical understandings across classes and take into account lay perceptions of justice in which disadvantages are acknowledged as mitigating circumstances that enable substantially fairer decisions in each particular case. However, it remains unclear whether such reflexive perceptions and decision-making are hindered by organisational constraints within and between institutions, and I attend to analysing this in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: CLASSED DISTORTIONS IN DECISION-MAKING: THE IMPLICATIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL DISCOURSES AND ORGANISATIONAL WORKING PRACTICES

The analysis in the third chapter has shown that class-conditioned habitus can be acquired in childhood subconsciously and may gradually unify an individual's dispositions, perceptions and practices across different domains. On the other hand, however, habitus might also be shaped by a person's later life experiences and thereby become fragmented as well as subject to more conscious deliberation about how it impacts an individual's viewpoints, motivations and actions in a particular field as opposed to another. In addition, the third chapter has also indicated that while people of diverse social locations can differ in the material and aesthetic aspects of habitus, which can, to some extent, shape the interactions between them, subjects across class backgrounds are, at the same time, more likely to share an affective habitus and a corresponding moral sense of what matters when dealing with a particular situation, including a 'dispute' about a young person's challenging behaviour or their parents' childrearing.

Nevertheless, the fourth chapter has demonstrated that people's senses and decisions about individuals from different classes can be distorted by transports of deficiency or worth from other domains, e.g. the familial sphere. In other words, an agent's opinion about- or action towards the transgression of a subject from a diverse socioeconomic background can sometimes be based on their classed associations rather than on their moral understanding and reflexivity about what is important in resolving a specific case. Furthermore, the accounts presented in the fourth chapter also imply that if and when classing distortions in decision-making are repeated across institutions and at different organisational levels, such a covertly biased evaluative framework can become systematic and encourage unwitting

undervaluing of people from the lower classes and overvaluing of the privileged in professional treatment.

Notwithstanding the possibly far-reaching influences of class habitus on the outcomes of interactions between practitioners on one side and children and their parents on the other, Bourdieu argued that the results of institutional contact are not only subject to the similarities and/or clashes between the interacting parties' habitual dispositions and perceptions, but are also impacted by the characteristics of the event. As the previous two chapters have explored the ways in which class prejudices manifest themselves in professional relationships due to the inculcation of the social world into the cooperating parties' rational and affective dispositions (Bourdieu 1991: 14), this chapter aims to examine how classing differentiation might be evoked and/or bolstered by organisational working practices and rules (Bourdieu 1991: 15-25, 51; see also Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 473) within the youth justice milieu, broadly defined.

This perspective seems especially important since Bourdieu also concluded that habitus might have been the prevailing reason for class reproduction in pre-capitalist societies, but discrimination according to class is nowadays also partly imbedded in and/or aggravated by institutional constraints (Bourdieu 2000: 215). Similarly and by drawing on Kitsuse (1964), Emerson has suggested that trouble is exacerbated or deescalated relationally not only based on the distance between the interacting parties, but also depending on how social control is organised in a particular field according to the prevailing institutional discourses and guidelines that professionals have to follow (Emerson 2015: 536, 566-572). In parallel and according to Harvey, an education, training and employment YOT officer in his

40s, the specific organisational climate can shape practitioners' interactions with their clients and possibly impinge upon their professional decisions:

> I've come across staff in schools (…) and the way they talk about a young person or a family makes you question whether the young person has had a kind or a fair treatment. I also think that within a school, you are dealing with an institution and I'm very aware when I go into a school that there's this kind of force field around it and it's an institution and you don't understand how it works until you've spent a lot of time there. Even then, you'll never understand it fully because it's a big beast with its specific rules, so you have to try and keep that in your head at the same time. Having been to different schools around the county, I am also aware about how different they are, which I think is really interesting and I think I'm someone that picks up on atmosphere. So I'm not an observant person in the sense that I could tell you about the things that are in the room, for example, but I do pick up on the atmosphere in the room very quickly. I've noticed that rules within the school can influence body language and how groups interrelate and how people get on. I would notice whether people are really interacting and how they are interacting. So the school is an institution and like any other institution, it moves slowly, it changes slowly and some bits of it are very slow to change and resistant to change.

The last chapter of this dissertation therefore investigates the ways in which organisational discourses and practical constraints within agencies might hinder the interacting parties' reflexivity when they are negotiating a behaviourally challenging young person's treatment and/or their parents' cooperation, about which they — unlike academics (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 11) or people in everyday situations (Emerson 2015: 35, 485) — have to reach a decision. In this task, the chapter does not provide a systematic analysis of official discourses within youth justice and children's services that might impact professional perceptions and decisions, but explores the topic by making sense of what all three groups of interviewees across nine research settings exposed as characteristics of agency

contact that may impede professional interactions in a classed manner based on their own experiences and critical evaluations (Boltanski 2006: 20-23, 43).

5.1. Institutional discourses: The risk-vulnerability dyad

In the first section, this chapter attends to the institutional discourses that frame and steer the ways in which behaviourally challenging young people and their parents as well as their troubling conduct and desistance processes are perceived, whereby it also examines the possible classed implications of such organisational rhetoric. In this task, the chapter follows Bernstein's appeal that it is insufficient to merely reveal and denounce classing differentiations across the social nexus, but it is also crucial to understand them by explaining the '"discursive rules" of pedagogy' that produce and preserve them (Bernstein 1996: 3). Bernstein argued that contemporary 'pedagogic relations' reach beyond the educational realm (Bernstein 1996: 21, 107) as they entail interactions between professionals and their clients across a range of organisations and social spheres. For Bernstein, the pedagogy of the institutional web is nowadays shaped by liberal discourses that seemingly promote individuality, difference and equality on a horizontal level, but actually silence the classing consequences of a vertically unequal distribution of resources, including its negative impacts on working-class children's behaviour (Bernstein 1996: 13).

In parallel to Bernstein's findings, Willis has argued that progressive practices in schools or across other agencies that engage with young people and their parents usually proclaim improvements in traditional paradigms, but actually serve to mask the old versions of *status quo* and the forms of consent that preserve it (Willis 1977: 83-90). By drawing on Fraser (2000: 108) and when exploring school exclusions, McCluskey et al. have confirmed that recognising a myriad of

‘differences’ when addressing young people’s troubling conduct is nowadays prevalent across educational institutions, but this seemingly benevolent move to individualising children’s difficulties usually silences the damaging consequences of maldistribution and resulting misrecognition of lower class children (McCluskey et al. 2015: 8). Correspondingly, several accounts in this research reflect that institutions cater to children’s specific needs and personalise their familial and social difficulties, yet simultaneously sideline the effects of uneven distribution and inequality on the young person’s actions and identity:

> The main thing that the diagnosis brings is help in schools and access to services, so if you've got a child who has difficulties and doesn't have a particular label, it's very hard to go to societies and groups and get extra support. It's very hard to get into specialist playgroups and specialist activities. It's very hard to get schools to help. Nowadays, schools aren't particularly good at saying 'This child has a range of problems and therefore we need to help them'. They're much better at saying 'They've got autism and therefore they need extra support'. And there's also something about how you label children or if you label them at all. So ADHD is usually about children that are naughty because they're not well parented, but they’re actually not parented well because of parents *and* their living conditions and that’s why they're naughty children. They should just be understood as a child with additional difficulties and encouraged to engage better in school. ADHD tends to be associated with poorer learning outcomes, poorer school education outcomes, more involvement in risky activities, which can involve crime or delinquent behaviour, which tend to mean you go on to have worse jobs, which means that there's a cycle (…) I had a SENCO [Special Educational Needs Coordinator] on the phone to me the other day and she said that a child either has autism or she's just a really nasty girl instead of saying that it is a girl who's had a really difficult upbringing. So they can’t say: 'This kid is quite damaged for whatever reason and therefore needs extra support', but they can say: 'She's either ill or bad'. I don't think society is very good at understanding the complexities of people who have difficulties that make life harder for them. In reality, there are very few truly bad people. I'm sure there are some, but there are very few people who are bad to the bone. Even some of the dangerous young people that do some quite unpleasant stuff have bits of them that aren't bad. That are very human and socialised, but their difficulties are also socially

constructed and the functional ability of children very much depends on how the world around them responds. When the child and the environment they live in is very supportive and very resilient - and it's not just the child that's resilient, but everything around them - then the negative effects are mitigated. It's a bit like being in a wheelchair. If there is no wheelchair access to anything, you're disabled, but if everything's got wheelchair access, you can be as able as anyone else. It's tricky because the genetic material is passed down from generation to generation, but if you look at it from another point of view, so are the material conditions, especially in Britain, where the social mobility is quite low. We're still quite tribal as a country.

(Isabella, consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist, 30s)

Elsie's class [in school] is quite complex as there are lots of children with different additional needs. There's a young diabetic lad, a lad with ADHD, two asthmatics, a girl with conduct disorder and two pupils with something else. That's within a class of 27 children, so put all of that together and it can be quite challenging for a teacher. I'm not convinced that teachers have enough skills and training to deal with the wide range of young people that they are expected to deal with now. They have to deal with children that have quite specific learning needs, different learning styles, behavioural issues and other cognitive things. To be able to differentiate their learning needs, well actually that's a really huge job. I'm not sure that it's realistic.

(Nicola, mother, 40s)

JA: What were some of the things you did in school?

D: Fighting, being rude to teachers, skiving lessons.

JA: I see, a whole range of things...When you look back, was there anything specific that triggered these events?

D: Not really, the school said it was anger issues.

JA: Did they ever address these anger issues?

D: I went to counselling [in school], but that didn't help. Because social services were involved throughout my whole life, since I was a little kid, a baby, but the school didn't say it was family problems, they would just say it was anger issues. The school would say it was anger problems and social services would say it's family issues.

JA: What do you think it was?

D: I don't know, I've been in care for about three years, so since I was 12. Before that, I lived with my mum, then my mum kicked me out when I was in year five and I went to live with my nan, but I moved back to my mum's. Then in secondary school, I got took off my mum and put with my step dad. Then from my step dad I went into a house in an area within the research city and I got kicked out of there and went to a town near the research city. I've never had a stable life and I've lived everywhere, you know. I lived in two counties in the Midlands and a county in South West England. We moved around. So I don't know. I feel like I just had to hold it all in and it was all bottled up and I released it.

(David, young person, 15-year-old male)

These accounts help clarify how a predominant understanding of children as individuals at risk of- and their families as the key risk factors in the development of youth troubling behaviour can provide a classing lens through which professional perceptions of familial difficulties get filtered. More specifically, when young people's behavioural problems are ascribed to determinants within the child's psyche (e.g. anger issues) or their parents' childrearing (e.g. bad parenting), while the material circumstances that might impact both are simultaneously silenced, such structurally decontextualised paradigms can encourage practitioners to bypass more complex interpretations of the ways in which a young person's conduct might be influenced by a set of interrelated, rather than isolated, risk factors that are, together, imbedded in the family's social situation, including their possible disadvantage. As a consequence of discourses that support focusing on particular risk factors to explain delinquency in children, professional evaluations can be more easily, albeit often unwittingly, distorted by judgments based on officially unacknowledged markers of class, including familial (non)conformity (Bourdieu 1998: 71-73; see also Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, 1990: 85-89).

Utilising risk-centred rationales to comprehend young people's behavioural problems and their parents' hardship as well as to choose appropriate corresponding institutional treatment — in parallel to reaching more concrete sentencing decisions with the help of risk assessment tools — takes into account a number of socioeconomic factors and thus silently suffers from an in-built class bias, which, according to van Eijk, nowadays replaces and hides more direct forms of class discrimination within the justice system (van Eijk 2017). In reference to the analytical framework of this thesis, judgments of conduct based on risk-factor analyses are thus formally legitimate, but often substantially unjustified as they are preoccupied with *transports of deficiency* from the familial sphere for individuals of lower socioeconomic standing and *transfers of worth* for the privileged, thereby possibly encouraging classed distortions in professional perceptions and decision-making according to Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006) model of fairness (1).

In addition and by analogy, such classed distortions in assessments and decision-making about the intensity of supervision or the choice of treatment programmes for young people in trouble and/or their parents mirror situations in which sentencing, according to van Eijk and Tonry (1987; 2014), violates the ethical rule that no personal characteristic for which an individual bears no accountability (e.g. race, gender, social class) should be taken into account when determining the type and weight of their punishment (van Eijk 2017: 472). In parallel to Abby's (mother, 40s) account — stated in its entirety in the previous chapter — that 'society orients itself on (…) council estate kids from broken families', several narratives of practitioners and young people in this case study also illustrate how classed perceptions and choices about troubling children and their

parents are reinforced by a risk-focused institutional rhetoric that seems to provide a framework for professional assessments:

> I think it's very difficult to come to any firm conclusions about families with problems because we don't dig deep enough. Our assessment tools are broad, but shallow. We look at specific parenting needs of the family, which would be the Thriving Families, Troubled Families territory, but we don't drill down more deeply to understand that. In the core Asset [the currently used risk assessment tool], there is a token gesture to try and capture some information, but it's mostly related to whether the family is on benefits or not, which isn't necessarily a good indicator. It's not the same as talking about the educational level of parents or talking about their socioeconomic status and I think that we, as a routine, don't record that information. There's nowhere in our system that we capture that. We capture other issues about diversity in terms of gender or ethnicity, but in terms of thinking about deprivation or a parent having aspirations for their children – educationally and occupationally – I think that is very much left to the discretion of the practitioner as to whether they think that is a specific diversity issue that might impact. Our primary focus are individuals, so thinking about the meso or macro level, and their impact on families depends on the practitioner's background and their interests and experiences. In the world of risk, we usually take a view on people without actually asking them about it. And that would be in social care or the police. We judge risk based on the information that we've got and without properly understanding it. If someone is gonna hurt themselves, we don't ask if they're gonna do that tomorrow, but if someone's gonna hurt someone else, we presume that they *are* gonna do that tomorrow. Disadvantaged young people are also gonna be overrepresented in the system because they have more general risk factors for offending behaviour, so they have quite a lot of community risk factors like disorganised and chaotic neighbourhoods, poverty, disorganised parenting etc. So they're going to be overrepresented because they'll have risk factors for general antisocial behaviour amongst adolescents and also for access to weapons, access to estates where there's drug availability, so all of those. You're going to have an overrepresentation of the disadvantaged group because you're concentrating on some of those risk factors in there.
>
> (Leila, forensic psychologist, 30s)

> With groups of teenagers, say you've got one group of teenagers between the ages of 16 and 18 and you've got another group that's

> absolutely the same, but the first group drinks and smokes outside and the other does that indoors. The police will focus more on the first one even if they know about both because they're just gonna assume that the first one is gonna get in trouble more than the other ones. But what they don't realise is that you never know. The second group could be the one causing trouble. They focus on the people that have a bad reputation, but then when other things start happening, they lose out because they kept their eye on one group. Fair enough, obviously people have bad backgrounds, but I reckon that it has a lot to do with money... People that have a lot of money are just the ones that are not gonna be outside and even when they do get in trouble, the police won't look at that because they've had a good upbringing. Say you'd have a person from a good family and a person from a bad family hanging out with each other. If the person from a good family gets into trouble and you both get arrested, they will look at the person from the bad family and point their finger at them first because of their background. The other person won't get in trouble in the end because obviously they've had a good upbringing. Money can control people and it takes over people's brains. It's the same if you're thinking about drug issues as class issues. Drug *dealing* is a working class issue and drugs fundamentally, so drug taking, is more of an upper class issue. There's more drug taking amongst the upper classes.
>
> (Amelia, young person, 20-year-old female)

The narratives above provide ample support for Harcourt's (2007) conclusion that risk assessment tools as well as a widespread 'risk and vulnerability' logic can have — if prevailing and socially decontextualised — a 'ratchet effect'. More specifically and according to van Eijk and Harcourt, even if and when the link between deprivation and the risk of crime is real, the intended consequence of risk-management, which is to ensure public safety, might also trigger unanticipated unfavourable moral and social outcomes. Namely, assessments and decisions about young people and their parents based on elements that are partly class-conditioned can expose already disadvantaged subjects that cannot afford to be protected by the 'institution of privacy' (Loader 1996: 26) to further marginalisation, which may

lead to their overrepresentation in the system (Harcourt 2007: 145-174; see also van Eijk 2017: 467-469).

In other words, the constant gaze of agencies that encircle the child and parents according to their individual, familial and environmental risk factors can result in what Choongh has conceptualised as 'summary punishment' (Choongh 1998: 625) of deprived individuals and communities through perpetual social control that does not only depend on assessments of their actions, but also derives from judgments of their class origin, as indicated by socio-spatial and familial markers. In the extreme, persistent 'criss-crossing' (Charlesworth 2003: 80) of underprivileged families with a range of diverse organisational regimes at different levels can gradually transform membership in the lower socioeconomic strata itself into a risk factor (Armstrong 2004: 108), thereby constituting a *de facto* class-biased evaluative framework according to Boltanski and Thévenot (2) (2006). For Choongh (1998: 625-627) and the interviewees in this case study alike, the aim of such institutional discourses and corresponding organisational processes is not to demonstratively punish the lower classes, neither does institutional overpolicing always solve their social and familial problems, but might draw symbolic lines between different social groups and discipline the disadvantaged by reminding them that their sense of normality is imbued with constant surveillance:

> It might be that the offense triggers a lot and then we're all kind of swooping in at one go and I think it's important to be very mindful of that. Somebody can be open to social care the entire time, I've also had home-school link workers and health visitors that have been raising concerns. It's not uncommon for parents to have their own issues and have probation or adult mental health involved. That's why it's so important to ask the family who else they are working with and to see if there's a correlation between the problems that all these workers are dealing with. A young person that's being looked after, for example, is certainly seen as higher risk, but that is by no

means certain. I think you will see more mental health, substance misuse, and unemployment in some families because those opportunities have been absent for a long time. Nevertheless, I wouldn't say that coming in from all these different angles is the solution because even the majority of parents that are unemployed or suffer from substance misuse, mental health problems etc., will sit down and say to their child 'You don't want to be me. I don't want you to be me'. Even if they have issues, there are not many parents you meet who are trying to sabotage our work or trying to conspire against us. There's lots of research about over-intervening and that's dangerous or as dangerous as not intervening. I think it's about whether it's the right services and whether that young person understands what they're for, otherwise it will just be a burden. We've had cases before, especially with young people that are open to social services, where there's an incident and people will panic and they'll just throw resources at it and they'll refer them to everybody to try and cover everything, but actually it's unlikely that those people will do any work, 'cause you're asking somebody to engage with lots of new people and they might not even really understand what they're there for. That's not therapeutic intervention. If you keep changing people, you lose the relationship and that's actually quite important. You have to get someone alongside to seriously have a look at their behaviour and want to start to make changes.

(Anne, YOS officer, 20s)

JA: At the beginning of the focus group, we talked about Mathew [a vignette with a story about a boy named Matthew was used at the beginning of the focus groups to start the discussion] and the institutions that might be involved with somebody like him. How do you think that involvement influences a kid like Matthew?

C5: He could just get drained talking to one person after another. So you kind of think 'This person is trying to help me and this other person is trying to help me', but, especially if progress is slow, it just drags you down.

C1: It can have a negative impact if it's too much.

C5: You have to make sure you get the kid to talk because that's what many kids that get in trouble miss. They are thinking; 'Oh, there's another one trying to help me out', but they never get to speak. You have to make sure they get them to speak and get to know what the problems is. Also, you need to make sure that behind the counsellor, there's a real person (…) It also has to be step by step.

> You can't just expect him to change straight away. You must start somewhere. Bringing in too many people can put you off, you know like you can start thinking: 'Here we go again'.
>
> (15-year-old female and 15-year-old male in FG 4)

> It depends what the problem is or what that phone call is about. If it's domestic abuse, then the police are all over you and it's the police that get social services involved and they bring in a bunch of other people to help. The problem is that it's just paperwork from then on. You do get some good workers that actually care. There is some, but then for a lot of them you're just a piece of paper. You're a file. If there's a phone call and your name is mentioned they'll get the police out there again, but until then, they don't care. They're not there. They're not bursting the bubble. They're just swimming around it. They throw a rubber ring, but it's too much trouble for them to deal with anything.
>
> (Rob, father, 40s)

The above quotations provide some support for Gray's assertion that organisations dealing with behaviourally challenging young people and their parents nowadays often blur the lines between welfare and punishment by engaging in what Hannah-Moffat and Maurutto have, albeit in the context of specialised courts in Canada, called the 'architecture of needs/risk management' (Moffat and Maurutto 2012: 215; see also Gray 2013: 525). Specifically, contemporary welfare-oriented interventions within the multiagency youth justice setting often conflate familial and social assistance with tackling risks of reoffending and thus deem families' needs as sufficiently addressed only if their risks have been reduced or eliminated at the same time, which rarely happens in its entirety since both risks and needs are embedded into the family's inadequately addressed material reality. More concretely and in Anne's (YOS officer, 20s) words: 'If the parents and children are as proactive and prosocial as possible and the intervention is still not working, it

becomes almost a punishment for them to be put through that'. In addition to being covertly punitive, Gray has argued that approaches such as YOT partnerships also have classed implications as they often pathologise and individualise the effects of structural circumstances by treating them as the child or their parents' personal deficiencies and failures (Gray 2013: 525-527).

When researching contemporary social policy in the treatment of young people in need, Brown (2015) has, similarly, exposed the concept of vulnerability as the current *zeitgeist* across a range of domains and, at once, a conceptual cousin of risk (Brown 2015: 16). Based on her analysis, Brown has concluded that institutional care for vulnerable people is nowadays often meshed together with the tendency for their social control, especially when the individuals in need are simultaneously perceived as 'risky' and thus undeserving (Brown 2015: 62-66; 190-192). Employing the concepts of risk and vulnerability when dealing with children in trouble and their parents is thus not problematic only since correlations between specific risks or needs and the development of troubling behaviour, including crime, are often interpreted as causation, but also because needs and risks are conceptually mixed. As a consequence, initially benevolent agency contact based on a person's vulnerable position can translate their welfare requirements into risks of antisocial behaviour through further institutional control, whereby this propelling, as van Eijk has argued, seems to be classed (van Eijk 2017: 473-474).

To show that children and/or parents in need can quickly become perceived as 'risky' individuals and therefore legitimate targets of intrusive interventions or referrals, Brown has exposed that victims of domestic violence are often regarded as vulnerable at first, but their welfare-oriented treatment can eventually trigger separate punitive processing of their behavioural issues (Brown 2015: 31-34, 54-

55). Equivalently, van Eijk has used Ward's concept of 'bias laundering routines' (Ward 2015; cited in van Eijk 2017: 475) to explain the ways in which institutions recycle vulnerabilities into risks. In addition, she has emphasised the classing implications of such processes by indicating that they are usually based on concrete antisocial acts and thus seem neutral, but they often sideline and/or individualise the causes of troubling behaviour that are actually largely class-conditioned and thus beyond clients' control. In this light and in parallel to 15-year-old David's narrative above that the school treated his socially- and familially triggered misconduct as personalised anger issues, the accounts of the interviewed parents and professionals also demonstrate that the need to protect vulnerable individuals is sometimes employed by agencies as further justification for surveillance that is supposed to prevent existing or anticipated antisocial behaviour:

> JA: Did you refer yourself to the parenting course?
>
> G: No, I was suggested to do it when I was going through the whole thing with my partner's domestic abuse. When I split from my partner and came to get the boys help, they suggested that I try the parenting course. They said that it would be good for me to come over and try it.
>
> (Gabrielle, mother, 50s)

> Sometimes I think it's a shame that we can't offer our services to all young people 'cause actually we do lots of interventions that all young people should get regardless, but perhaps they're not involved in agencies and they're not gonna get it. At school, people sometimes need to get in trouble to get some of the information they need to not be so vulnerable. What I also find is that courts are giving longer sentences to people that are more vulnerable. We shouldn't be criminalising people for welfare issues that aren't their responsibility. I have a bit of an issue with that. They're assuming they need to do more work with vulnerable children, which means that they give them a longer sentence, but actually, if it's a welfare issue, that isn't

> something that they ought to be punishing people for. Another thing is that every school gets an automatic report from a household where domestic violence is going on, which is good because it makes the school aware of who might be vulnerable, so they can notice any changes. But there is also a dilemma in their safeguarding about what avenues to take when a kid's at risk or they're in a vulnerable position. I think that criminalising is something that we generally don't want to do, but actually we also have to criminalise young people in a certain way sometimes if they're putting themselves at risk by say using drugs and running or dealing or exploiting somebody because at the end of the day we are working with young people that are breaking the law no matter how vulnerable they are.
>
> (Jane, drug and alcohol misuse worker, 20s)

The analysis in this chapter so far might help clarify why — when deliberating and deciding about the treatment of behaviourally challenging young people and/or their parents — distortions that Boltanski and Thévenot have identified as *transfers of deficiency* (1a) for the working classes and *transports of worth* (1b) for the privileged as well as their possible accumulation into an entirely *classed perceptive framework* (2) (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 151, 219-223; see also Boltanski 2011: 28-29) are more likely to develop in an institutional milieu, imbued with the rhetoric of needs and risks. Particularly, when a 'needs-risks' logic is ingrained in the assessment tools and everyday professional discourses that the system favours when evaluating young people and their parents' conduct on the ground at different levels (from decisions about the types of treatment and further referrals, through parole, to sentencing), practitioners are inevitably caught up in a cultural process that possibly reproduces inequalities according to socioeconomic background (van Eijk 2017: 469).

In such an institutional climate, professionals' cognitive classifications of clients according to risks and vulnerabilities that are class-conditioned and therefore

not easily amended or eradicated are quickly linked to- and possibly trigger the (mal)distribution of resources, including recognition. More specifically, in assessments of children and their parents, a covertly classing risk-and-needs-centred organisational focus might thus push practitioners to unwittingly translate their initially personal mental and affective sorting of individuals according to markers of social class into actual inequalities when they distribute worth and recognition, including through fair and unbiased treatment (van Eijk 2017: 469-470).

In other words, a class-prejudiced 'risk-needs' rhetoric is more likely to hinder workers' reflexivity about what matters in resolving a particular case and prompt what Sayer has identified as an almost automatic devaluing of the behaviour displayed by the lower classed and overvaluing of the same conduct when performed by the privileged (Sayer 2005: 27, 45, 122-126). In addition, the over- and underestimations of people's conduct in such an organisational climate are usually not based on assessments of their actions, but especially on what Boltanski and Thévenot have conceptualised as exports and imports of worth from other spheres, including and mainly the domestic realm (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 151, 219-221; see also Boltanski 2011: 28-29).

It therefore becomes apparent that both benevolent welfare-focused interventions and more punitive law enforcement or judicial measures against families with difficulties — so their policing by 'the social' in a Donzelotian sense — based on evaluations of their risks and vulnerabilities do not only help people in need, fight crime and/or preserve general order, but actually guard what Bradford and Loader have, in the context of examining police stop and search, called a 'certain type of classed order' that marginalised subjects, especially young people of

the lower classes, are believed to threaten (Bradford and Loader 2016: 253-257). In a similar manner and by drawing on Douglas (1992), Girling, Loader and Sparks have indicated that a critique of risk perceptions does not dispute their potential in predicting crime, but is nevertheless necessary since the logic of risk reveals a lot about how we think about unfavourable phenomena, — including crime — the scope of their outcomes, the people that we blame for their existence and the ways in which we choose to treat them (Girling, Loader and Sparks 2000: 14-15).

Correspondingly, the reasoning in this section demonstrates that the class-biased conceptual dyad of risk and vulnerability seems to bolster discriminatory representations and treatment of behaviourally problematic children and their parents according to their socioeconomic background. As a consequence and as Rob, a father in his 40s puts it, agency contact often makes the disadvantaged feel like 'black spots'. In addition and according to Sylvia and Toby's accounts below, such organisational involvement often fails to distinguish between the clients' acts and their identities, thereby possibly turning belonging to the lower classes alone into a risk factor for troubling behaviour and/or the development of deviant personalities:

> I oversee cautions and sometimes they are very exposing of decision-making. It's interesting to see how and why decisions are made. If you look through the youth conditional cautions, you can tell a lot about the first time entrants into the system by what the cautions are saying about the young person, their background, their family. Some of the reasons about why they are going for a caution reveal a bit of a narrative about the poor, which exposes quite a lot about police thinking. It's usually all about 'risk, risk, risk'. But it's actually not the person being bad, it's their behaviour that needs to be dealt with. It's separated, so we have to make a distinction between the individual and the behaviour instead of assuming the behaviour for the individual.
>
> (Sylvia, YOT manager, 40s)

T: I only feel comfortable if I'm with people that get in trouble, so people that go to this school [a pupil referral unit].

JA: Do you think that kids that go to private schools don't get in trouble?

T: No, they don't. It's because they're smart. We're not very smart. Our brains are wired differently to other people's, so we get in trouble. We get in trouble, that's just the way we are.

JA: Did you ever get diagnosed for anything?

T: Yeah. ADHD. I have to take tablets in the morning.

JA: Do they help you?

T: I don't feel no difference. Some days I'm better than others, but I don't really feel a difference. It don't affect me.

JA: Why do you think it's good to take them then?

T: Well I have to take them. If I don't take them, it messes my body up. I get cold and things like that and I get ill.

JA: If you *don't* take them?

T: Yeah, I turn quite ill or I'll get sleepy quite often and really hungry and I would eat more than I would normally.

JA: Do you remember how it was before you started taking them?

T: I was probably a bit livelier, but that could also be because I got older now and have calmed down a bit more, so...

(Toby, young person, 14-year-old male)

Taken together, Sylvia and Toby's narratives illustrate how a risk- and/or vulnerability-centred institutional ethos might support what Currie (2013) has called 'conformist interventions' or — put more broadly and in line with the topic of this thesis — conformist approaches of agencies and professionals that deal with troubling youth and their parents. According to Currie, conformist programmes do

not attempt to challenge or eliminate the circumstances that make people vulnerable, put them at risk or trigger their offending. Rather, they usually encourage their addressees to take responsibility not only for their acts, but also for the social conditions that their misbehaviour is embedded in, thereby making it seem like underprivileged individuals can easily desist from their challenging conduct by managing unfavourable social conditions more effectively (Currie 2013: 5) or, alternatively, accept that — in Toby's terms — being deviant is 'just the way they are'.

Similarly and when studying professional interactions in children's services and other 'caring professions', Edwards has drawn on Engeström (2007) to argue that — within an institution or across a web of services — a problem is interpreted and solutions to it importantly shaped by the prevailing organisational rhetoric. For Edwards, assessments, policies and treatment similar to Currie's conformist interventions merely utilise bureaucratic 'how' tools that deal with the most obvious current manifestations of the dispute, rather than employing 'why tools' that investigate its underlying causes or 'where to' tools, with the help of which all of the parties involved in the professional relationship discuss and plan both personal and broader social long-term solutions to the client's troubles (Edwards 2010: 48).

Based on Currie and Edwards's observations, it therefore becomes clearer that a multiagency youth justice milieu, imbued with a risk-needs-vulnerability discourse does not seem to support the pursuit of common knowledge between agencies about the family's behavioural and social problems (Edwards 2010: 57), but concentrates on isolated and often classed factors for the child's delinquency and/or their parents childrearing difficulties. As a consequence, institutions and

practitioners are encouraged to work on ‘separate bits’ (Edwards 2010: 66) of the child and their family, rather than attending to the causes of their behaviour that therefore often remains unresolved:

> It's very difficult to split a child up into the different bits of the work that needs to be done. It should be really well coordinated and if possible, you should be maintaining a continuity of attachment and care for them. As much as possible, keeping the same professional involved. Goffman talked about institutions being for the people that work in them and a lot of the processes are that way. They're directed at the children and the family, but you have multiple professionals supposedly working with the same family, rather than a few who get to know the family well and get the continuity right. It's very easy for parents to get confused about what's happening, because each agency has its own multidisciplinary meeting. They have their review meetings and they are in slightly different format although they should be very similar and yet they might have three or four of those, because the child's involved in health, social care, education etc. These might come to slightly different conclusions and action plans and then you end up with confused parents and lots of different professionals doing the bit they're supposed to be doing with the child, which is very confusing for the child if it's not coordinated. I think system miscommunication is a massive difficulty. Often the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing. People also often make referrals to this, that, this, that... and there's not a coordinated planning around those families that are then left working with several different workers and there's a lack of continuity between them. You could have the social worker telling the parents to do this and CAMHS will be telling the parents to do that, so actually you've got a lot of confusion that just makes the problems worse.
>
> (Michael, consultant child and mental health forensic psychiatrist, 50s)

> Sometimes when you're talking to other agencies, it seems like we're passing the buck around to each other to try and resolve the problem. We go around in circles, and we don't end up with a solution at the end of the day. We're trying to resolve these really complex issues and we're going around in circles again and again and we don't seem to achieve anything. People put a lot of effort and a lot of time in trying to resolve these issues and I think that it just causes frustration. Most of the families that come to our attention again and again probably have numerous different agencies involved and these

agencies are trying to achieve conflicting things. Traditionally, some of these families - particularly if there's antisocial behaviour issues there and if they're causing problems for their neighbours – will have the police and the housing association dealing with them. What tends to happen is that they get them evicted, which doesn't solve the problem. It just moves the problem somewhere else and somebody else picks up the issues, rather than actually looking at the underlying cause and if there's anything that we can do about that.

(Richard, neighbourhood inspector, 40s)

C5: If the child is acting bad, the teacher will just expose him and give him a detention and they wouldn't ask him what the problem is or why they are doing it. I think that the teachers are quick to punish, but they don't really understand why students are actually behaving badly. Even people that are doing bad things deliberately have reasons. They might have family issues and stuff.

C9: I agree with what C5 is saying. I don't think some teachers probe deeper. You look at somebody that is not quite coping and you think: 'Why aren't the teachers helping them?' I think it's because some teachers actually don't want to know or don't know whether they should take on the responsibility or feel like they would be the right person to do it, so they just back away from it a bit. And I think that should change because if no one actually intervenes and somebody has trouble at home, that means nobody is going to help them, so nothing is going to improve. I think that people - teachers and other workers - need to probe a bit deeper and not back away.

(11-year old female and 15-year old female in FG 3)

On Friday I was upset because one of the kids [my two sons] had a hospital appointment at four o'clock, and I said to Deborah from social services 'They have an appointment, I have to take them to the hospital' and she said 'Oh no, you'll have to cancel that because you have an appointment here'. The hospital appointment was about my son's tuberculosis and they really needed to go. After I had to reschedule that, I was thinking that if I'm being neglectful, then so are the social services. I also think that if the social services spent more time with some of the parents, rather than only with the kids, that would solve some of the problems with the kids. It should be all family care, not just helping the children. I can't see any attention put on the needs of the parents. Mainly, my problem is that I am a single father and I sometimes need an extra pair of hands. If somebody could help me for a couple of hours a week with my ironing that would be great. I've also got a house that is so cluttered

> up with stuff at this point that I don't actually like going into my own house. I wanna get all of this stuff out. I wanna paint and decorate it. Who would have thought that I might just need some practical help here [sarcastically]?
>
> (Alan, father, 50s)

In all, the combination of academic literature and interviewees' accounts in the first part of the last chapter demonstrates that — in institutional treatment — practitioners more often attribute worth and recognition to young people and their parents of the middle classes, while they are more likely to deny value and respect to working class families since they do not assess the behaviour of the underprivileged only according to their actions, but also by judging social and familial indicators of lower class background. Furthermore, the analysis in this section also exposes that while classing practices are not supported by official organisational rules and policies within youth justice, they may be silently reinforced by the use of risk-assessment tools that are permeated with class-biased components as well as by consequent professional reasoning about families in trouble that the employment of such means might generate on the ground.

In light of the analytical framework of this thesis, it therefore seems that thinking about children and parents through the prism of classed risk- and vulnerability factors possibly hinders what Sayer has conceptualised as conscious and ethical deliberation about what matters (Sayer 2005: 3-5, 47-49) when professionals try to resolve concrete cases of particular clients. As a consequence, practitioners' dispositions, reasoning and decision-making may be limited to more automatic transports of worth for the middle classes and transfers of deficiency for the disadvantaged that might result in solutions preoccupied with class-conditioned biases (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 219-221; see also Sayer 2005: 27, 45, 122-

126, 205).

Furthermore, when combined and occurring across a range of agencies within the multidisciplinary youth justice nexus, such distortions of Boltanski and Thévenot's *constraint of order* (1), broadly defined, can amount to a system that is wholly class-biased and therefore breaches what Boltanski and Thévenot have called the *principle of common humanity* (2) (Boltanski 2011: 27-29; see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 65-80, 130-131, 215). By frequently excluding members of the lower classes from being able to obtain the worth that is granted to privileged clients when they are treated merely according to their acts and not also based on indicators of their social status, such a conceptual framework seemingly disregards, but actually exacerbates the effects of class on troubling behaviour and parenting as well as — and more importantly for the topic of this thesis — on professional interactions.

Consequently, risk- and needs-focused assessments of children's challenging conduct and their parents' childrearing are more likely to encourage interventions that require clients to accept their social positions and amend their behaviour as well as ease the impacts of their class-conditioned material hardship, rather than confronting the socio-familial circumstances that possibly impact both the development of delinquency and the desistance from crime (Currie 2013: 5; see also Edwards: 48). However, preserving the *status quo*, rather than challenging it as well as the increased probability that practitioners will engage in swift decision-making that is thus more sensitive to class biases do not only stem from an institutional focus on risks and needs, but are further bolstered by economically-driven perceptions of time and agency as well as by practical hindrances that, according to the interviewees in this case study, prevail within institutions working

with troubled young people and their families. It is therefore to exploring these two sets of organisational constraints that I devote the following and last section of this chapter.

5.2. Organisational constraints: Economic perceptions of time and practical obstacles in working with families

The previous section of this chapter has disclosed that an institutional setting imbued with a rhetoric that focuses on risks and needs may encourage and strengthen a structurally devoid perception of children in trouble and their parents as subjects that can control their challenging behaviour and desistance regardless of the socio-familial circumstances in which they are embedded. The second section aims to, however, show that such professional viewpoints might be — at least according to the participants in this research — additionally reinforced by an economic understanding of services that has spread from industrial realms into principally welfare-oriented spheres, including social work and youth justice. In addition, it endeavours to expose some of the practical constraints that the interviewees believe hinder the flexibility and reflexivity of professionals working with families on the ground.

According to Willis, the 'capitalist industrial logic' that claims all forms of work can be compared according to their cost-effectiveness has not only changed the nature of profit-driven services, but has also impacted the functioning of agencies that primarily focus on helping marginalised people with complex difficulties. Specifically and as a consequence, occupational areas such as education and welfare have ceased to adapt their working practices merely to the needs of their clients, but are also substantially driven by demands to use as little time as

possible to process the highest number of cases (Willis 1977: 134-135).

Similarly and in the domain of policing, Loader has argued that the managerialist shift has bolstered the pursuit of effectiveness and efficiency at the cost of fairness and social justice (Loader 1996: 2, 15-18). For Gray, a comparable 'business-like ethos' has also permeated the functioning of YOT partnerships (Gray 2013: 519). In this research and in parallel to the view of Nicola, a mother in her 40s, that 'schools and other institutions are running themselves more like a business', several narratives — including Leroy's below — also reflect the prevailing view of young interviewees that organisational pursuits to resolve the behavioural difficulties of children in trouble are nowadays often sidelined by the aims of practitioners to close the cases as quickly as possible. In addition, Mark's quotation provides some flavour of how the industrial rhetoric has invaded welfare services and provided an economic lens through which professionals now often perceive troubled youth and their parents as well as their needs:

> I know there's no divine intervention, but I can say that in my case they just didn't pick up the right stuff. They don't highlight the right stuff in interventions. No one takes their time and really sits down with you and listens or hears the alarm bells. They're probably just transcribing things and waiting for the meeting to be over, so they can go on to the next one.
>
> (Leroy, young person, 21-year-old male)

> M: The statistic that every fourth child in the UK is born into poverty sounds quite shocking to me, but I guess if those families [families of lower class backgrounds] are having a lot more children than other families, then that would really bump up that statistic. I bet if they were having the same number, it would probably be just one in 12. If you think that one lower class family has the same number of children as three or four upper class families, you're likely to bump that stat. It's also interesting with the cuts now… Some people say

> that the cuts will be horrible for these families, but I think we're in a bit of a laziness crises here. I certainly see a lack of enthusiasm in this country to work. It's a significant problem we have in the UK that other countries probably don't have as badly as we do. I think our welfare state has - probably with the best intentions - rewarded bad behaviour. And a lot of people have realised that if they don't go to work, it's not the end of the world in the UK. They will still continue living. Not in the same way the rich in this country can and the 1% with 90% of the wealth can, but their life still goes on and they will not go hungry.
>
> JA: In these families, where the behaviour is passed down from generation to generation…Do you think there is a class aspect of this phenomenon given the class divide in the UK?
>
> M: Well, not entirely. I think that's a confounder of it all, but over generations, it's probably likely that people that aren't as successful at human interactions are going to end up lower down the socioeconomic ladder. You will see these parents not really being able to get out of bed or really get motivated, so then the child is like that as well and that tends to be a class issue. But how I see it is that if you can't do it, you are working class. If you have motivation, then you're going to be middle class or however you describe it.
>
> (Mark, learning mentor, 20s)

Mark's account — especially the ways in which he ascribes the family's social position predominantly to their personal (in)effectiveness and assesses families across class backgrounds according to their productivity ('people that aren't as successful at human interactions are going to end up lower down the socioeconomic ladder'; 'if you can't do it, you're working class', but 'if you have motivation, then you're going to be middle class') — resonates significantly with what Willis has called the ideological ramifications of the capitalist notion of time. Namely, Willis has argued that, in capitalist societies, time is believed to run straight and pass equivalently for individuals across social groups. As a consequence, people's functioning — including their family lives, the development of their difficulties and the desistance from their possible troubling behaviour — can always be foreseen

and thus compared according to the same standards of evaluation (Willis 1977: 135).

Nevertheless, Bourdieu and Wacquant have stressed that in reality life stories are never linear (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 207), so the experiences of people from different socioeconomic backgrounds cannot be measured according to the same principles, let alone equated. In addition and in the field of criminology, Maruna has argued that in cases of transgressions or offending, desistance pathways are not straightforward, but different people often move back and forth between further criminal behaviour and ceasing to offend in diverse ways (Maruna 2001: 43). The views of several participants in this research resonate well with Maruna's conclusion that the lifeworlds, criminal paths and desistance trajectories — including those of troubling young people and their parents, especially the less privileged — are 'zig-zag' (Maruna 2001) and thus unpredictable, so they cannot be easily aligned with the experiences of law-abiding subjects, particularly those of upper class backgrounds:

> Kids that get kicked out of school have a disrupted education and they bump along and that might upset them from enjoying a vocational course, because they're so fed up with the process and the system, they eventually go out and find alternative routes, either smoking weed, stealing cars, whatever. The ones with backgrounds and environments that are quite chaotic have things happening to them all the time. They might go into care if social services decide that their parents' care is not good enough or they go to prison, they go to court and that effects their behavior, so even if they had somebody working with them and there have been changes in behaviour, you never know if that's sustainable, because new problems might crop up, which means that their behavior drops again (…) Unfortunately, what still exists - and I have seen it in other agencies over the last few years - is that when certain families from certain areas are mentioned, practitioners go: 'Oh, it's them again. Why do they deserve a big house if they get in trouble etc.?' It does still exist, which is a shame. It shouldn't exist. People should be given the support they need when they need it. What tends to happen is that at some point the police are not interested, social services

aren't interested, housing aren't interested, so these people might just carry on being bad. They can't just move out the area or something and you can't wave a magic wand and get unlimited resources and money for them to get away and start their life over. Everyone wants that, but we know that they can't move, so we've got to give them the chance to try and create that life. If they want to be like the majority of people, let them do it, be patient with them, give them time.

(Barry, police officer, 34-year-old male)

At the age of 15 I got arrested for 27 robberies at the time. So while I was on remand in prison, I spent two months in there and they let me out on a rehabilitation order and that was my first intervention from the crime and justice system. After I came outta jail, I was still in the same mentality. I went to prison, it wasn't as hard as I thought it would be. It was pretty easy for me. It was like an all day youth club. Everybody around me was just cracking jokes and I felt like even more of a man, so I came out with a bigger ego, my ego got fed because I got a name for myself in there. Everybody loved me 'cause I'm charismatic and I'm in your face and a lot of people in there were shy and whatnot, but the way that I am as a person, it just got me through, so I was alright in jail. I came out and I had a chip in my shoulder, I just carried on doing the same thing so within a month, two months, I got arrested again and all this time I was getting kicked out of my mum's house. I was out there still robbing vehicles and I got arrested and that's when I got my big sentence. I got arrested for two more robberies and I got two years when I was 16. So then, I was in prison for longer and that was like a wake up call. I got to do a year in prison, but I got out on good behaviour, 'cause while I was in there, that's when I kind of got rehabilitated. I was speaking to people, seeing the people around me and seeing how their mentality was. I knew that I wasn't like them, so I knew I was in the wrong place. I was looking around and people seemed like they fitted in. I didn't fit in at all. While I was in there, (…) I had time to reflect on myself and see where I was going wrong and why I'd been left here on my own, even though I tried to do good. 'Cause I've always had a good heart and mentality, I always wanted to help people and protect people, but sometimes I had these flashes. I got involved with a charity while I was in prison and I did every single course that was available. I did every job. I was a cleaner, a cook, a waste-manager, a gardener, everything... That gave me motivation to think and I realised I've got good work ethic. I realised I can make something out of myself as I'm not like most people, who just sit in their cell. I got early release for good behaviour and when I came out, I did all these courses, I moved straight into a hostel, 'cause my mum kicked me out. I went into the hostel on my own and it was the first time that I was living on my own. I loved it because I felt independent. I was on tag for six months, so I had time to just be comfortable where I am. Then the independence just drove me to

> start falling back into the same crowd. They moved me from where I was living to a flat, like public housing. I started having parties 'cause I was in the middle of town and my brother got stabbed at one of the parties. When he got stabbed, I went outside and he stabbed the geezer four times while I was there, so I ended up getting arrested again. I didn't get done for that, but that was like a start of me just being the same as I was. At this point I got a random phone call from Lisa [the police officer that he met while in prison that then helped him]. She phoned me and I told her about the situation. I told her what was happening and how I was feeling and she said she would sort something out for me. She got back to me and said 'If you wanna move to a city in the Midlands, I have an opportunity for ya. You'll have to work as a mentor for a charity'. It was the course that I did before when I got out of prison. I did it and since then, I've turned my life around.
>
> (Leroy, young person, 21-year-old male)

> You need the school and the workers - PCAMHS and the rest of them - to communicate with you. You will also need to communicate with your child and talk to your child, but PCAMHS should answer phone calls and get back to families. Workers should talk to each other and find out what's going on along the way instead of just leaving things. They shouldn't let people wait so long, so they should keep appointments more regular and more close together. Because when you're having problems with your kids, a lot can happen between that point and the next one. I think sometimes they think they're alright because they've given you an appointment, but actually you're really desperate for that next appointment because things happen in between. I think communication, more than anything, is a huge thing. I also know that miscommunication is just because the services are so underresourced, so I don't actually blame workers personally.
>
> (Gabrielle, mother, 50s)

Taken together, the accounts above demonstrate that the trajectories of less privileged young people in trouble and their parents are often unstable and interrupted by unforeseeable events, so their lifeworlds and ability to plan might not resonate well with the expectations of agencies that perceive time as running straight and individuals as agentic future-predicting subjects. In this context and

when exploring temporality in relation to cognitive-behavioural rehabilitation programmes for juvenile offenders, Rajah et al. have stressed that, for middle class subjects, delinquent involvement and other forms of deviance usually present a break from otherwise normative life experiences, so treatment schemes that encourage swift desistance from crime based on linear time-planning are adapted to their lifestyles and thus more likely to be successful. However, the behavioural transgressions of disadvantaged youth are often not isolated incidences, but events that are meshed together with other aspects of their social marginality, so institutional strategies that promote expeditious shifts to conformity are unadapted to their pathways and therefore usually — and at least immediately — ineffective (Rajah et al. 2015: 186-192).

In this light, Rob's (father, 40s) account, summarised at length in the previous chapter, that he 'went to prison, having been through children's homes (…) and different foster homes and everything else', corresponds well with his son Jamie's narrative as well as the practitioner's quotation below. Together, the three accounts support the findings of Rajah et al. that the more frequent development of alternative life trajectories — including, but not limited to deviant pathways — for the less privileged does not only depend on their individual and familial dispositions for delinquency. Rather, the formation of people's marginality can also partly be attributed to inadequate prior institutional (over)involvement with children in trouble and their parents as agencies too often fail to coordinate their treatment methods with the temporal experiences or families from the lower classes (Rajah et al. 2015: 195):

> I don't like social services at all because they don't do things properly. They made me live in hotels and places like that for a year and that's why I was even more unsettled. When I was living in hotels, I also got bad influences from people living there. Looking back it's all so stupid. I was there for a year. I was constantly in and out of hotels or staying at B&Bs, and that was in three cities in the county. I thought they have some kind of system in place for people like me, but obviously they just kept putting me in and out, in and out, so everything was even less stable than before. They kept putting me in hotels and obviously I was unsettled, I didn't know where I was gonna stay for the night, so I ended up staying awake, selling drugs all night and doing silly things. It was friends and drugs that were the main things that then led to my offending.
>
> (Jamie, young person, 21-year-old male)

> The young people that we work with are engrossed in criminal backgrounds historically or currently. In their families, there are often difficulties with mental health, substance abuse, offending history of parents, social services involvement, poor coping around parenting etc. I would say that long-term or sustained changes are usually extremely difficult. We're working from a public protection aspect as opposed to thinking that the child is going to change because their experiences have been so damaged that we just don't have that time. So it's very difficult. It's tricky when you know that a young person can be in a particular way when you're working with them, but that's a really small window in terms of what's going on in the wider scheme of life, you know what I mean? You know, what's going on with their friends, what's going on in school, what's going on with their family.
>
> (Sylvia, YOT manager, 40s)

The stated accounts — particularly Sylvia's observation that agencies just 'don't have the time (…) [to capture] the wider scheme of life' — demonstrate the temporal dissonance between some institutional working practices and the everyday lives of families with complex and multifaceted difficulties that are partly embedded in their socioeconomic background. Coupled with the prevailing tendency to assess behaviour according to class-conditioned risks and needs, such narrow organisational understandings of the relationship between the passing of

time and the improvements in conduct make it less likely for disadvantaged young people and their parents to be identified, processed or further referred based on practitioners' thorough and conscious deliberation about their transgressions and what matters in resolving their cases (Sayer 2005: 27-29, 45).

On the contrary, limited temporal institutional frameworks might hinder careful professional assessments of behaviour in each particular situation and encourage instant agency contact as well as automatic decision-making (Sayer 2005: 122-126, 205) about children in trouble and their parents according to class-embedded 'beings from other worlds', including the domestic realm (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006). Paradoxically, however, the treatment in settings imbued with such normative conceptions of time and agency may later sideline precisely those socio-familial circumstances — in Sylvia's words: 'what's going on with their friends, what's going on in school, what's going on with their family' — that initially triggered the family's institutional involvement, so such interventions are therefore less likely to contribute to children's desistance from troubling behaviour or improve the conditions for more satisfactory parenting especially in deprived families with the most ingrained difficulties.

In Edwards's terms, agency contact based on linear understandings of young people's deviance and their parents' childrearing as well as the ability of both to improve their behaviour is socially decontextualised and thus more likely to exacerbate familial problems, rather than amending them. To capture the complexities of some domestic situations and their impacts on the family's conduct, professional interventions should adopt a cyclical concept of time and deal with, rather than sidelining, socioeconomic difficulties as well as take into account that

they can often get worse before they improve. According to Edwards and all three groups of my research participants alike, practitioners and their clients should thus engage in what Engeström (2008:194) has called ‘negotiated knotworking’ that is flexible and tolerant to momentary lapses, but seeks consensus about what is best for the family and the common good in the long run (Edwards 2015: 60-71):

> There is often a suspicion about authority and about services. I think the services don't necessarily help with that. They often give a kind of hard line and they talk about the possible consequences, rather than talking in terms of positive outlooks, support and help. It just feels crazy to me that the services are trying to engage some of the most vulnerable people in society and they come along with a big stick and they say 'You must, or else'. How is that a way to engage somebody? Sometimes you meet a family where everything is crap, you know. It’s just all horrible and stressful, there’s ill health and therefore really bad outcomes looking ahead. Yet you still pretty much have to do the same little piece of work with them, even though you think there's so much work to do there. You want to be really involved for a long time and intensively with lots of people, but you don't get the opportunity because of how our support is structured. So many of these families come to our attention again and again and in time, because we cannot help them properly, negative attitudes towards that family can develop. I think that attitude then starts to get ingrained amongst people that are dealing with these families. I think not just amongst the police that are called to their address, but other agencies as well. Because you will offer these families help and support, and quite often they don't take it or they start to take it and then don't follow through for a variety of different reasons. I keep saying to my coworkers that we need to try and support these people and look at them as victims, and think about how we can try and help them get out of this situation. The answer I get back is 'Well, we offered them help, but they never take it, we keep offering them help'. What I keep saying is that even if you’ve asked the family nine times, they might say yes the tenth time, so then that's a positive result. I let people know that it's not enough to just offer help and refer on one or two occasions. We have to keep doing it, because the person will get to a point where their home life or their family life is in such a crisis that they will take that help. The fact that somebody has said no several times doesn't mean we should give up.
>
> (Richard, neighbourhood inspector, 40s)

> The first time I came on the [parenting] course, I couldn't listen to what they were saying, because I was in a group of people and I was afraid they will think I'm really stupid, so I couldn't even listen for the entire 12 weeks. The second time I did the course, I didn't feel as bad in the group of people anymore, although they were different people. I didn't feel as bad, so I started listening to what they were saying and a lot of it made sense to me, but as soon as I went out the door, I was faced with my boys. There was no way I could use anything that I've learned. But now I'm alright with being in the group and I can listen to the course leader. I just started to be able to think about the exercises at home. I'm starting to do some of the things and they work. I think people should be given the opportunity to do the course over again. Because I struggled through my education and was never able to pay attention, so I always dread workers, feel disorganised and feel upset at first.
>
> (Linda, parent, 57-year-old female)

> They expect kids to change quicker than what they should. What services need to understand is that if you try and rush a child that is really naughty and gets in trouble into doing things right and becoming a better person, you're gonna make him worse. 'Cause if you tell him to be good and you're constantly nagging him, he's gonna do the opposite. You can't expect people to do something different and change within 24 hours.
>
> (Amelia, young person, 20-year-old female)

Altogether, the analysis in this part of the thesis demonstrates that professional interventions and interactions between practitioners on one side and troubling young people and their parents on the other are not hampered only by the institutional focus on risk and vulnerability factors, but could also be affected by perceptions of time as abstract and flowing in a unified way across class backgrounds, rather than being viewed as concrete and passing diversely for individuals and groups of different social locations. However, the examination of participants' accounts in the following part of this section will show that — in negotiations between families and the specialists that work with them within the multiagency youth justice web — conscious deliberation about deviance and parenting based on common ethical

principles about what is important (Sayer 2005: 3-5, 47-50) may also be hindered by practical organisational obstacles, including increased formalism and a consequent drop in professionalism.

When exploring shifts within education, children's services and welfare more broadly, Edwards has found that professional perceptions, motivations and actions have become profoundly automated and thus habitual since the managerial turn in the 1980s and 1990s. Due to increased bureaucratisation, practitioners have gradually become subject to more consistent rule-following and formalised procedures — including, but not limited to the already explored evaluations based on utilising risk-assessment tools — as well as accountable for achieving results in the form of pre-set targets, which has substituted professional discretion and specialists' responsibility to negotiate the most appropriate treatment for their clients (Edwards 2015: 1-10).

Such organisational changes have resulted in practices that are less client-centered and socially-reflexive, which might have limited practitioners' '"intelligent dispositions"' (Wood 1990: 214; cited in Sayer 2005: 27-28) and exposed their thinking and decision-making about young people's behaviour and their parents' childrearing to quick solutions that are, according to Edwards, more likely to be 'implicitly mediated' (Edwards 2015: 10), possibly also by aesthetic, material, social and familial markers of class. While some workers, like Amber, perceive mechanical target-following in their interactions with clients as a guarantee for objectivity and the correct choice of treatment, most interviewed practitioners, including Lucas, criticise the ways in which overly formalised procedures limit their professional reasoning about the problems in question:

> The risk assessment leads the intervention, so the intervention depends on what comes out of the risk assessment. That then guides the work you do with that young person. It's been even more formalised since the scaled approach came in. Prior to that, I remember working with cases and it wasn't as directive at all, whereas the scaled approach has really formalised the risk assessment process. So now, we're very guided and it's quite prescriptive as in what we do with young people. For example, if a young person comes to me and his offence was committed under the influence of alcohol, work around substance misuse is an absolute given for him as that's probably the trigger for his offending. I would say that the system is better now because it's more guided. You do lose some creativity, but it's kind of good to know that you are targeting what needs to be targeted, rather than pulling something out and working on that**.**
>
> (Amber, YOS support officer, 30s)

> I think the word discretion has changed a lot over the years, especially in terms of whether we've got it or whether we don't. I think if you go back to the mid 90s, there was a lot more of discretion around. I think it was encouraged a lot more, but that's a long time ago. I think people got scared of the responsibility that discretion brings and wanted it to change. I also think there's now a culture out there that's performance-related. It's performance-related and people wanna look good on paper. But that's been forced down from above, so you can't blame that on the individual officer. We have to be looking at management and the government and the statistics for that. If you can't quantify work, then you can't and nobody's interested, but in reality it's not the clear-up that we're looking at. What is actually important is working with the public and prevention, but they can't measure that. The only way they could measure that is by counting how many children haven't come through and that's impossible. And you know, it's hard for police officers because they've got a lot of targets to meet to presumably stop bad behaviour, but the less you attend to what's actually going on in a particular family, the less of their needs you meet. For the public, it's still about being listened to and understood, because that's what we all want as human beings.
>
> (Lucas, police officer, 47-year-old male)

Lucas's account resonates well with Bourdieu's observation that bureaucracy and formalism often provide merely a pretence of humanity, but usually 'exclude from it, under the appearance of humanism, all those that are deprived of the means of realising it' (Bourdieu 2000: 65). Many young people and parents in this research share Lucas and Bourdieu's views that measuring the success of an intervention

according to generic objectives predetermined based on abstract individuals and groups nowadays hinders meaningful professional interactions, especially with clients of lower class backgrounds. According to Leroy, (young person, 21-year-old male) the treatment that he received while engaged in troubling behaviour, including the help he got from YOT officers, felt like it was 'just for words on paper [and] to sign the legal stuff'. In parallel and while involved with the social services, Rob (father, 40s) also perceived the workers as 'just (…) ticking boxes and not really listening or caring'.

Apart from reinforcing more formalised and target-centered interventions that are less able to grasp the socio-familial realities of behaviourally challenging youth and their parents, the bureaucratisation of services has, according to Edwards, also resulted in an increased façade of professionalism amongst practitioners in caring occupations (Edwards 2015: 32-34, 105-107). Correspondingly, the narratives of participants in this study also illustrate that — in their interactions with children and parents — practitioners nowadays often fail to act as guardians of specialist knowledge about why the behavioural problems have occurred ('why' tools) or negotiators of the directions in which the professional interventions will lead clients' desistance processes in the long run ('where' tools), but often substitute the use of their core expertise with liaison and referrals to other specialists ('know who' tools and 'networking without knowledge') (Edwards 2015: 32-34). In other words, all three groups of interviewees seem to regret the fact that professional treatment and meaningful therapeutic relationships have recently made way for less knowledge-informed and overly generalised interventions as well as continuous directing to other practitioners across a myriad of realms for further support:

The problem is often about how it [support for behaviourally challenging young people and their parents] is done, rather than the principles. I think that in general people would need more individualised, rather than manualised help. I think some of the original cases of multi-systemic therapy were well founded. Now, it's run by a family therapist, who supervises graduate workers so to speak, so it's not the same (…) Many of the people that we come into contact with say 'I've done the parenting course and it doesn't help' and it really doesn't because partly it doesn't speak to parents' problems and partly it's not delivered by experts, I'm afraid. I mean, some people are very good, but I can often feel myself slipping into criticism and that's because people complain about it to me. People are good at doing their job, I'm sure. It's not about that. It's just about the way that it's done, isn't it? In parenting groups, you have largely mums and there's mums who are struggling because of a 6-year-old boy who throws everything and shouts and swears and they are poorer, and then you have some middle class mums, whose problems are more about getting the kids to school on time and a bit of rudeness and you kind of think 'Really?' And of course, the middle class mums pick up the material, they learn it, they get it, they do it and they're off and they are fine. Whereas the other group struggles with the material and can't relate to it and for me, that's about their education, about taking something and generalising it. The help is generalised and not adapted to the needs of particular families. And that's because there's not enough resources and if an agency has a worker who knows at least something, they let them supervise people who know a little bit less. I'd say that happens in all professions, so in psychology, teaching, youth work... There's a sort of dumbing down approach across agencies. If you're an academy, you don't have to employ an actually qualified teacher, so what does that do? The quality drops. It's cheaper, so you manualise it and put in loads of tests to make sure those people can do it. But then, it doesn't necessarily meet what you need to meet. And that's also happened in mental health and in youth services. So the level of qualification goes down, you manualise work, so that people can still do it, but you actually have only a few really qualified people, so the outcome isn't always hitting.

(Austin, consultant clinical psychologist, 40s)

I don't mind if workers are young or old, as long as they know what they're doing, I'm fine. You don't want an older person that has no idea what they are doing, if the young one does. And you don't want a really young person who has no idea what he's doing. It's best to have someone with experience (…) My meetings at the YOT just took up my time, to be honest. I didn't miss any appointments, I went to all my appointments because I was fully committed to changing, but, at the same time, I'm sitting there and I'm thinking 'I'm wasting my time'. I was out there searching for jobs myself, and I came in for

> the meeting and they were telling me that while I'm waiting, we can play some pool. They were treating me like a kid. And they often asked questions like: 'How are you feeling?' when that was the last thing on their mind. What's on their mind is the charges on the sheet that they've got for you and how you feel about those charges. They're not getting to any root cause or root problem at all. Never. Never once did I get asked about my childhood, never ever... Not by the YOT or anybody else. There was no heart to heart, you know. They don't like that. If someone had sat down heart to heart with someone and said 'Look, I wanna help you, but you're gonna have to open up to me'. And if they spoke to people like that, they'd get somewhere. They'd have a basis to build a mentoring relationship. Instead, it's: 'Hello, I'm this person. Nice to meet you I'm gonna be your mentor for your probation period on licence' and that's it. All of it is so formal, when you just need someone to get you under their wing. And there's none of that. You don't get that feeling from a mentor, whereas you should.
>
> (Leroy, young person, 21-year-old male)

> It seems to me that kids that are in trouble keep getting referred to someone new that is supposed to be better at speaking to them. And then they get stuck in the system because there's no way back. Once you go past the threshold of 'Oh, we can't deal with you as teachers, you're gonna have to go somewhere else', there's no way back. And half the time you want them to go back because those new people are even worse. They're just asking more questions and looking like they really care, but deep down you know they don't give a damn. Maybe they're all too scared from the legislation, so people have just become afraid to interact too much because they've got so much rules and boundaries when they speak to pupils.
>
> (Dora, mother, 50s)

In sum, the examination of the research participants' accounts in the second part of this chapter indicates that practitioners' reflexivity about the impacts of class on young people's deviance or their parents childrearing may not only be constrained by an institutional framework that promotes perceptions of troubling behaviour as triggered by isolated risk- and vulnerability factors or by narrow temporal understandings of crime and desistance as developing and passing in a unified way

for individuals across class backgrounds. Rather, the analysis in this section also exposes the bureaucratisation of services; targeted interventions; decreases in discretion; and a drop in professionalism as possible organisational hindrances for specialists to engage in more conscious deliberation about how to approach and resolve concrete cases of children's (mis)behaviour and their families' difficulties in a socially more just way (Sayer 2005: 3-5, 47-50).

While the preceding two chapters of this dissertation have explored how class biases might emerge between professionals and their clients due to the different ways in which the social order is inscribed into their cognitive and emotional dispositions as well as *vice versa* via habitus, the last chapter as a whole exposes that differentiations according to class might also be triggered and possibly exacerbated by specific institutional discourses and practical constraints (Bourdieu 1991: 10-25, 51; see also Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 473) within the multiagency youth justice nexus. The findings in the last chapter thus resonate well with Bourdieu's conclusion that while habitus might have been predominant in reproducing class inequalities through interactions on a micro level in the past, indirect discrimination according to socio-familial location may nowadays also be, in part, ingrained in- and/or aggravated by organisational rules and working practices within a particular field (Bourdieu 2000: 215).

In other words and in line with Emerson's viewpoint, the ways in which social control is exerted in a specific setting — in the case of this thesis, within youth justice, broadly defined — does not seem to be contingent only upon the distance between the interacting parties' habitus, but might also be affected in a classed manner by institutional protocols that guide practitioners when they interpret, negotiate and respond to families' troubles (Emerson 2015: 536, 566-572).

As a consequence and in light of the analytical framework of this dissertation, organisational paradigms and practical commitments that are, albeit unintentionally, imbued with class prejudices may hinder professionals' reflexivity and encourage *transports of deficiency* from the domestic realm for clients of working class backgrounds (1a) and *transfers of worth* for the privileged (1b) as well as contribute to the accumulation of these distortions into a *biased evaluative framework* (2) (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 65-80, 215-225; see also Boltanski 2011: 27-29).

Nevertheless, it seems important to note that providing a systematic analysis of all the discourses permeating official youth justice policies is beyond the scope of this research. The current chapter therefore presents merely the circumstances of agency contact that the young people, parents and practitioners interviewed in this study exposed in their critical reflections as impeding their interactions in a way that was classed (Boltanski 2006: 20-23, 43). Although the findings in this chapter cannot be generalised, they do support Bourdieu's assertion that formalised customs and procedures in a broad sense — so abiding by the law; accepting predominant institutional discourses; and adhering to proscribed practical commitments — are never, in themselves, a guarantee for the fairness of treatment or its outcomes.

Namely, Bourdieu argued that rules can draw their legitimacy merely from having been adopted and continuously used over a prolonged period of time, regardless of their substantial fairness. However, Bourdieu also clarified that laws and guidelines amount to empty proceduralism if applied with a 'genesis amnesia' that denies the symbolic violence of the dominant classes that these regulations were initially and historically meant to sustain (Bourdieu 2000: 65, 94-96, 187; see also Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, 1990: x). Similarly and in reference to individual and group identities, Honneth has argued that valid and operating institutional

commitments are formally legitimate, but might be socially unjust if they result in denials of subjects' recognition in practice (Honneth 2003: 129-131). Correspondingly, one of the most prominent views amongst the research participants in this study was that there is often a classed discrepancy between the proclaimed and actual fairness that rules and regulations within the youth justice milieu are meant to preserve as they too often protect the upper strata and target the less privileged based not only on their behaviour, but also on markers of class:

> I think there are parallels between children from poorer backgrounds and children of the well off and these parallels go further than just saying that neither get enough care and attention. There's so much drug use, there's probably as much drug use in the upper classes as there is in the working classes, probably even more 'cause they can afford it and access it. There's also more alcohol-related delinquency I would say, but it's kind of acceptable. There's more acceptable forms of violence too. It's been made acceptable. For example, you might have the resources to go out and shoot, whereas, if someone was fighting in the street it would be frowned upon. We have to think about why it's become more acceptable to go and shoot an animal than it is to fight in the street. We really have to work this out because I'm not sure which of the two forms of violence is actually more evil. I'm saying all this because I think it's more a matter of policy across different areas. Policy has always been designed around the upper classes because it was designed by the upper classes and for the upper classes. The standards of living and the ways of doing things actually haven't changed that much, so a lot of the things the upper classes do are still supported by the law and in practice. The more formalised the procedures, the less the lower classes are willing to engage with you because they will always see you as a representative of that unfair state that implemented these rules.
>
> (Tom, charity worker, 20s)

> The thing is that the only people that are affected by laws in the UK are the lower classes, so working class people, because they are the people that get caught. Rich people have a mansion or house where they can take the drugs inside. They don't get caught. It's the people who are forced to sell because of their economic position and that are forced to take drugs on the street. You wouldn't take drugs on the

> street if you were wealthy. So it's a law that targets the working class.
>
> (Danny, young person, 21-year-old male)

> To be fair, institutions need to make things a bit more approachable for young people, they need to get the interaction a bit better and focus less on the written bit. Yeah, it's important to follow rules and regulations, but the level of the interaction isn't as high as it should be because they don't take into account the different people and their different backgrounds.
>
> (Carol, mother, 30s)

Based on the stated accounts and the analysis in this chapter altogether, it seems reasonable to follow Choongh's suggestion that when examining the possible unfairness of policing practices — and, in parallel, the practices of 'policing' by agencies of 'the social' as defined by Donzelot (1979) — legal rationality cannot fully grasp the injustices experienced by certain groups of individuals that come in contact with the police. According to Choongh, even when the actions of police officers are legally regulated and do not result in direct criminalising of subjects through the official criminal justice pathway, it is due to their constant informal contact with- and disciplining of marginalised groups, including and especially the disadvantaged, that the police's formally justified procedures might, nevertheless, feel unjust to certain members of society (Choongh 2015: 625-628).

For similar reasons and drawing on Dubber (2005), Bradford and Loader have exposed that relying on law to tame the social injustices caused by policing — both in the narrow sense of uniformed police and the broader notion of institutions responsible for the ordering of the state — is a 'myth that we no longer need to live by' (Bradford and Loader 2016: 253-258). Furthermore, Bradford and Loader have

suggested that since some policing procedures seem to have classed side effects, they should not only be conceptualised in light of their official aim, which is to protect general order, but should also be recognised as tools that help reproduce social marginality and thus present one of the liberal state's illiberal practices (Bradford and Loader 2016: 253-257; see also Willis 1977: 160).

In parallel, the examination of participants' narratives in this study implies that there might be a gap between families' legal rights and the substantive equality of treatment that these rights are supposed to ensure when professionals interact with behaviourally challenging children and their families on the ground. While young people and their parents across socioeconomic backgrounds are officially equal, subjects of the lower classes do not seem to be worthy of what Sayer has called the same recognition and well-being in practice (Sayer 2005 58-61). The misrecognition of less privileged families is thus often manifested in what Boltanski and Thévenot have conceptualised as *transports of deficiency* (1a) from the familial realm that preoccupy professional assessments of young people's conduct and their parents' childrearing as well as in the possible *accretion of such biased assessments* across a range of diverse agencies that assist them (2) (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 65-80, 215-225; see also Boltanski 2011: 27-29).

Regardless of whether they can be ascribed to clashes between the interacting parties' class habitus, as the preceding two chapters imply, or to the intrinsically discriminatory institutional discourses and organisational constraints that guide the work of professionals in a biased way, as this chapter indicates, the classed distortions in professional perceptions and decision-making derive from a failure to acknowledge that behaviour deserving recognition may not only depend on the individual's agency, but might also, in part, result from distributional

inequalities (Sayer 2005: 61-62). As a consequence, assessments of misconduct that fail to recognise social disadvantage as a mitigating factor or, further, take markers of poverty into account as aggravating circumstances are more likely to have classed implications and less likely to be perceived as fair by subjects of the lower classes. While the previous parts of this thesis aimed to disclose and explain whether, how and why classed distortions might emerge in interactions between children in trouble, their parents and the practitioners that work with them, the concluding part of this dissertation will be utilised to suggest some of the ways in which professional relationships could become socially more just.

5.3. Concluding comments

The analysis in this chapter confirms Bourdieu's view that while discrepancies between individuals' habitus may have been decisive in triggering and encouraging differentiation according to class in pre-capitalist societies, the reproduction of social inequalities through professional relationships might nowadays also be, in part, inherent in and/or exacerbated by institutional discourses and organisational constraints within a specific field, including the multiagency youth justice setting. In this regard, I firstly expose that practitioners' reflexivity about the impacts of their clients' social location on behaviour as well as on the interactions between them might be hindered in institutional settings that favour thinking about young people's challenging conduct and their parents' childrearing as prompted and sustained by risks and vulnerabilities that are also class-embedded. In addition, a 'risk-needs-centred' organisational rhetoric might encourage interventions that are,

in Currie's (2013) terms, conformist as they are triggered by circumstances that form part of families' material reality, but often fail to address or improve them.

Secondly, I argue that professionals' conscious deliberation might also be limited in a milieu imbued with economic perceptions of time and agency. In other words, services and interventions that understand the development of- and the desistance from young people's troubling behaviour and their parents' inadequate childrearing as linear and foreseeable for subjects across class backgrounds are less adapted to the often unpredictable and 'zig-zag' lifeworlds of the underprivileged. As a consequence, the temporal discrepancies between the trajectories of lower class clients and the dynamics of institutional working practices might result in less class-sensitive and thus more automatic professional decision-making that could aggravate socio-familial difficulties, rather than improving them.

Furthermore, I demonstrate that classed distortions in practitioners' perceptions of, and decisions about, young people's transgressions might also be reinforced by increased formalism and bureaucracy; the focus on target-centred results; a drop in professionalism; and continuous referrals to diverse services in the absence of thorough assessments based on specialist knowledge. I thus indicate that the formal legitimacy of adopted laws and policies, prevailing organisational discourses, as well as accepted working practices, does not guarantee their substantive justice, including equal treatment regardless of class background when resolving concrete cases. I conclude by arguing that legal rationality sometimes hides unjust practices as legitimate interventions — including those within youth justice — and often still misrecognises less privileged clients on the ground.

CONCLUSION

6.1. Summarising the key findings of the study

Motivated by exploring the processes behind the selection effects of institutions that deal with behaviourally challenging youth and their parents (McAra and McVie 2007: 317, 336-340) (*Chapter 1*), this doctoral dissertation aims to advance the theoretical and empirical understanding of whether, how, and why the interactions between practitioners on one side and children in trouble and their parents on the other might differ according to the clients' social class. Furthermore, the thesis also intends to examine the ways in which the relational dynamics between professionals and the families that are referred to early intervention, welfare, penal and medical treatment within the spheres of youth justice might contribute to directing young people from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds towards different trajectories.

To achieve these goals, the study drew primarily on Bourdieu's 'philosophy of action' (Bourdieu 1998: vii-ix) and its contemporary variations (Lahire 2004; see also Silva 2016a and Silva 2016b), including narrative criminology (Presser and Sandberg 2015; see also Brookman 2015, Fleetwood 2015, Fleetwood 2016, and Sandberg and Fleetwood 2016); Emerson's (2015) work on negotiated trouble; Sayer's (2005) moral understanding of class; as well as Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006) polity model. Empirically, the research employed a qualitative approach and used participant observation, semi-structured interviews and focus groups to gather the views of children, their parents and practitioners involved in professional interactions within the multiagency youth justice setting and children's services (*Chapter 2*). Taken together, the accounts assembled in this doctoral study disclose that the family's social location, institutional discourses, and organisational rules all

impact upon how practitioners perceive and respond to young people's troubling conduct and their parents childrearing within an institutional context.

Firstly, the participants' narratives resonate well with Bourdieu's conception of habitus as developing subconsciously through gradual inculcation from childhood onwards, thereby practically uniting individuals of similar socio-familial backgrounds and dividing those of diverse class origins as a consequence (Bourdieu 1990: 90, 108; see also Bourdieu 1984, 2010: 238-239, Bourdieu 1998: 54-55, Bourdieu 2000: 142-150, 173, and Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 127-128). In this part, the analysis confirms Emerson's notion of trouble — including young people's deviance and their parents' childrearing difficulties — as negotiated, rather than predetermined (Emerson 2015: 25-55). When interpreted jointly, the gathered empirical data, as well as Bourdieu and Emerson's understandings, suggest that the troubling behaviour of children from the lower classes might be perceived less favourably and thus aggravated through professional interactions not only according to the severity of their acts, but also based on the social gap between less privileged families and the practitioners that they are working with.

Nevertheless, a more careful investigation of the ambivalences in interviewees' accounts discloses that habitus is also impacted by circumstances beyond class background and can thus be fragmented (Lahire 2004, cited in Silva 2016a: 76-77; see also Silva 2016b: 169-171) as well as consciously controlled and thereby not necessarily decisive in guiding interactions (Bourdieu 2000: 64; see also Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 131-137). In addition, the participants in this study confirm Sayer's reasoning that — in concrete situations or disputes, broadly defined — people across social locations might also assess each other's behaviour according

to uniform ethical understandings of what matters and is considered fair in resolving a particular case (Sayer 2005: 3-5, 27-30, 45-50, 119) (*Chapter 3*).

However, the findings in this research reveal that practitioners' dispositions, perceptions and decisions about how to treat young people in trouble and their parents can sometimes have classing implications despite the general capacity of professionals to reflect about challenging conduct objectively and class-neutrally. To conceptualise such unwitting class differentiations, the thesis uses Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model and clarifies that when dealing with concrete cases of youth deviance or parental rearing practices, specialists frequently fail to assess behaviour only based on individuals' actions, but might also covertly evaluate their clients according to class-conditioned criteria from other 'worlds of worth', especially the familial sphere.

In particular and according to Boltanski and Thévenot, Sayer, and the participants in this study, professionals often overvalue middle class subjects and their conduct due to transfers of worth that stem from positive assessments of their lifestyles in the domestic realm. On the other hand, practitioners devalue individuals from the lower classes and their actions based on negative judgments about their familial practices that are transmitted as deficiencies into the youth justice sphere. Since the latter could be happening across diverse institutions and at different organisational levels, it might amount to what Boltanski and Thévenot have classified as a 'prejudiced evaluative framework' (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 65-80, 130-131, 159-212, 215-223; see also Boltanski 2011: 27-29, Sayer 2005: 122-126) that is more likely to further encourage unequal professional treatment of less privileged clients on one side as well as trigger their corresponding resentment on the other (Sayer 2005: 20, 36, 67, 133, 148-150). By drawing on Sayer, the

analysis in this dissertation therefore suggests that to achieve socially fairer professional relationships and outcomes of youth justice interventions, practitioners should not only balance competing pressures of welfare and punishment, but could also consider the disadvantages of clients from the lower classes — as expressed in material, aesthetic and other socio-familial markers of class — as mitigating circumstances that guide the choices and courses of treatment in each specific case (Sayer 2005: 121-126, 150-151) (*Chapter 4*).

However, the thesis concludes by exposing that the contemporary multiagency youth justice setting seems to be imbued with a risk-vulnerability discourse (van Eijk 2017) that suffers from an in-built class bias and might thus encourage evaluations of subjects based on socially conditioned factors, thereby possibly exacerbating the classed implications of professional interventions instead of preventing them. In such a milieu, the ability of practitioners to adapt their assessments and selection of treatment to the ways in which clients' class background impacts both their behaviour as well as their interactions with professionals may be hindered. Lastly, workers' reflexivity could be additionally constrained by increased bureaucracy; decreased discretion; targeted interventions; and drops in professionalism that are believed to have affected youth justice, welfare and children's services (Edwards 2015: 1-10, 32-34, 105-107).

In all, the application of the analytical framework to the collected empirical data in the last three chapters of this thesis has identified some of the unintended classing mechanisms that might hide behind the formalised relations between youth justice professionals and their clients. My analysis suggests that, on the ground, unwitting differentiation according to class may derive from tensions between the

interacting parties' class habitus; transports of worth and deficiency; and from adhering to specific institutional discourses and organisational working practices.

My purpose in the next part of this concluding chapter is therefore to provide a view of young people in trouble and their parents that better grasps how their material reality and behaviour as well as the ways in which professionals treat them are shaped by the processes of class-conditioned maldistribution and misrecognition. In addition, I intend to suggest an alternative concept of fairness as negotiated and the interacting parties' agency as relational, rather than merely personal, which may, together, encourage formally legitimate interventions with families in trouble that are less likely to covertly sustain unequal treatment of less privileged clients in practice. Rather than providing concrete policy recommendations, the overarching aim of the last section is to demonstrate that the current professional perceptions and practices within youth justice are but one option, while other — possibly socially more just — alternatives that incorporate both professional and lay conceptions of fairness exist.

6.2. Negotiating youth deviance and parenting: Acknowledging the effects of social class on professional interactions

6.2.1. Intersections between youth deviance, parenting and social class: The impact of (mal)distribution and (mis)recognition

When behaviourally challenging children and their families interact with specialists that help them with their difficulties, it seems important that interventions are not only formally equal, but also substantively just regardless of the clients' class background. To find solutions that are fair on the ground, I will draw on Edwards's (2015) suggestions on how to improve professional work with clients across a range of practices, but especially in caring professions. Particularly, I will introduce and

defend Edwards's theoretical principles of *negotiated justice*, *relational agency* and *autonomy in dependence* to indicate how and why their application within youth justice might be appropriate to achieve socially fairer relations on the ground. However, to put these analytical proposals in social context by acknowledging the class-conditioned material circumstances of families, I will first provide an alternative understanding of the intersections between children's deviance, parenting and social class that encapsulates the *wider aspects of socioeconomic (mal)distribution and (mis)recognition*, in which all relationships — including professional interactions between practitioners and their clients within 'the social' (Donzelot 1979) — are embedded.

Drawing on Taylor (1994), Sayer has asserted that recognition is always denied or granted to individuals on two levels. Apart from *unconditional* acknowledgement of all people based on the principle of humanity, contemporary liberal democracies also allow for *conditional* respect that subjects have to earn according to their achievement, behaviour, or other qualifications (Sayer 2005: 60). In this light, Sayer's view corresponds profoundly with Boltanski and Thévenot's polity model that presupposes a unified identity and an equal value shared by all people based on the fact that they are human beings (*requirement of common humanity*) as well as, at the same time, permits attributing different relative worth to individuals according to how they — in a broad sense and through their actions — contribute to guarding this humanity (*the constraint of order*) (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 76-77).

When applied to the topic of this thesis, this two-level conception of recognition thus helps clarify that not every punishment and/or professional treatment of behaviourally challenging young people and their parents amounts to

unjust differentiation by those called upon to grant recognition (Sayer 2005: 60), e.g. youth justice workers and other practitioners. Specifically, while individuals and groups always deserve the application of unconditional worth based on the principle of common humanity, their conditional respect might be thwarted or evoked if they behave in ways that endanger general order, broadly defined, including when they engage in delinquency or employ unsuitable childrearing practices (Sayer 2005: 60-61). At the same time, however, Sayer has argued that contemporary institutional classifications of people according to their actions are often doubly class-prejudiced and thus problematic.

Firstly, professional perceptions of- and responses to misbehaviour *suffer from an inherent class bias* if and when the framework in which they operate fails to acknowledge that acts worthy of recognition — including children's appropriate conduct and adults' adequate parenting — are not equally accessible to the rich and the poor in the first place. Since individuals and families of different social locations function within diverse social conditions and corresponding living arrangements, professional assessments of their behaviour that do not simultaneously recognise lower socioeconomic standing as a mitigating circumstance or even regard it as an aggravating factor (e.g. assessment tools or ideologies that judge conduct based on class-conditioned risks and needs) may be *de jure* legitimate, but remain socially unfair. More concretely, such evaluations inevitably ascribe a surplus of responsibility to disadvantaged subjects by making them accountable not only for their actions, but also — at least in part — for the uncontrollable material position in which their behaviour is embedded (*the macro politics of recognition in relation to class*) (Sayer 2005: 60-69, 232).

Secondly and in addition to systemic sidelining of the ways in which the family's socioeconomic reality impacts their conduct, organisations sometimes also dismiss the effects of maldistribution on their own functioning and their worker's evaluations on the ground. Specifically, specialists might discursively acknowledge that individuals across social locations deserve equal respect for the same behaviour or disrespect for similar transgressions, but they may still unwittingly misrecognise their clients in a biased way when their professional assessments of actions are simultaneously *de facto* contested by hidden judgments according to material, aesthetic and cultural markers of class. Namely, the analysis in the previous chapters of this thesis has shown that — in an institutional context — subjects from the lower classes and their actions are more likely to be undervalued, while privileged individuals and their acts are frequently overvalued based on existing or expected socio-familial indicators (e.g. manners, speech, clothes) that essentially derive from maldistribution, rather than being externalisations of diverse moral values in people of different class backgrounds (*micro politics of recognition in relation to class*) (Sayer 2005: 60-69, 122-126).

It is therefore possible to agree with Sayer's view that the social field — including the youth justice realm and the domain of children's services — is not only entrenched with disproportionate allocation of assets (maldistribution), but is also imbued with class-prejudiced assessments of practices (misrecognition) (Sayer 2005: 122) that are, nevertheless, embedded in and thus stem from social inequalities. Moreover, the denial of worth according to class differs from discrimination based on other personal characteristics (e.g. gender or ethnicity) as it is not only guided by unjustified, but controllable, judgments of individual or group identities (*identity-sensitive mechanisms*), but also partly arises from independent

macroeconomic processes that exist even if differentiation at the micro level is eradicated (*identity-neutral mechanism*). In class-related issues — along with the implications of the family's social location for the interactions between youth justice professionals and their clients — identity-neutral socioeconomic mechanisms can have identity-sensitive effects when the corporeal, social and cultural differences that they generate are translated through judgments into misrecognition of individuals on the ground (Sayer 2005: 67-69, 87-88).

When it comes to differential treatment of young people in trouble and their parents according to their class background in practice, the *macro-* and *micro politics of (mis)recognition* thus seem to be intertwined and, at the same time, impacted by *maldistribution.* As a consequence, the solutions for substantially fairer youth justice responses should always be twofold: in the long run and at the systemic level, they should strive for a *social order less permeated with unequal distribution*, while *preventing identity-neutral economic processes from having identity-sensitive consequences at the interactional level* in the meantime (Sayer 2005: 88-89). As changes on the macro level are beyond the scope of this thesis, I therefore use the last section to merely outline general suggestions for neutralising structural imbalances before attending to recommendations regarding ways to make professional interactions between practitioners and troubled children as well as their parents more class-sensitive in practice.

6.2.2. Towards substantively fairer institutional contacts: Negotiated justice, relational agency and recommendations for theory and further research

According to Sayer, individuals are responsible for their own chances, behaviour and trajectories, but their lives are profoundly shaped by class long before they are

mature enough to exercise their accountability (Sayer 2005: 232). Based on this observation and to mitigate the effects of maldistribution, Sayer has argued that a just social order should balance granting recognition according to achievement with attributing worth in line with the principles of solidarity (Sayer 2005: 63). In a similar manner and to show an appropriate way in which a system can prevent excessive social imbalances, Honneth has provided the example of the post-war welfare state and explained how it eased the consequences of unequal distribution by acknowledging basic levels of economic stability and social wellbeing as the individual rights of every subject regardless of their actual accomplishments (Honneth 2003: 149).

To help reduce both socioeconomic inequality and the symbolic domination that it encourages in countries like the UK, Sayer has suggested broader structural changes like more progressive income and inheritance tax; reduced working hours to prevent unemployment; a decent living wage; and shared standards in private and public education (Sayer 2005: 230-231). Equivalently, the research participants in this case study frequently framed their calls for fairer interactions between clients and professionals in practice within a wider matrix of propositions to move from an unequal capitalist social order (back) towards a more egalitarian welfare state through changes in policy beyond law enforcement, including improving the benefit system; lowering property prices and rent; stopping gentrification; and paying young people in vocational training, to name a few.

For Fraser, however, such propositions are *affirmative* in relation to class imbalances as they aim to reduce social injustices without challenging the underlying reasons for maldistribution. On the other hand, Fraser has argued that radical *transformative* attempts also have drawbacks since they strive to change the

root causes of social hierarchies through eradicating unequal distribution and corresponding binary oppositions between the rich and the poor, but are often too abstract and thus experientially distant from the everyday wishes of the oppressed that want to gain more immediate socioeconomic benefits (Fraser 2003: 72-78). As an alternative to both 'politically feasible, but substantively flawed' affirmative attempts and 'programmatically sound, but politically impracticable' transformative means of social change, Fraser has suggested a middle way through affirmative action that can have — if pursued consistently across time and in appropriate contexts — transformative outcomes (Fraser 2003: 78-79). In line with Fraser's call for such double-faced reforms (Fraser 2003: 79), my proposals below thus remain *affirmative* at present, but attempt to encourage *transformative* effects on the long run.

More specifically, my recommendations aim to increase the substantial fairness of the interactions between practitioners and the families that they work with on the ground, but do not suggest more holistic shifts in the current multiagency youth justice setting. For now, my propositions remain embedded in current models of sanctioning and welfare-oriented interventions based on the child's misbehavior or their parents inappropriate childrearing without radically challenging the broader social order and conditions of unequal distribution, in which the families' conduct as well as the institutional responses to it are embedded.

Nevertheless and in time, my appeals could have transformative implications, as their overarching aim is to reconstitute the relationships between youth justice professionals and their clients — both young people and their parents — beyond the 'law and order' paradigm. Particularly and in the long run, I intend to encourage that the negotiations between children in trouble, their parents and the

specialists that they are referred to draw not only on academic and professional, but also on lay understandings of class and fairness (Sayer 2005: 4-5, 36-39, 47-51), in order to slowly challenge the *macro-* and *micro politics of (mis)recognition* that affect professional interactions.

Firstly and to alleviate classing *misrecognition on a macro level* (Sayer 2005: 60-69), assessments of behaviour based *directly* on risk and vulnerability factors that are, in part, ingrained in families' socioeconomic circumstances and thus imbued with class bias (van Eijk 2017: 472) should be supplemented by alternative perceptions of young people in trouble and their parents as a foundation for interventions. To avoid the indirect discrimination and harm caused by dealing with socially unequal clients based on equal measures, a novel perceptual and evaluative framework should not encourage the understanding of class-conditioned markers of disadvantage as factors that increase the severity of punishment or the intensity of treatment. Rather, it should follow lay conceptions of justice and interpret indicators of class as consequences of the family's unfortunate, but possibly amendable social reality, thereby treating them as dynamic mitigating circumstances that steer the choice and careful planning of, as well as the subsequent adaptations to, individualised treatment in each particular case (Sayer 2005: 151).

Secondly and to prevent *micro-level misrecognition* in relation to class, practitioners should become more reflexive about the ways in which their own evaluations of young people's troubles and their parents' childrearing are *indirectly* impacted by signs of the clients' socio-familial background (Sayer 2005: 126). To achieve this aim, specialists should strive to eradicate possible assessments and decisions in which they unwittingly devalue individuals from the lower classes,

while they should redistribute granting recognition to privileged subjects based on signals of their class belonging alone. This way, clients across social locations could gain more equal access to unbiased and respectful institutional treatment in line with common ethical standards, rather than classed associations (Sayer 2005: 227).

In other words, professional assessments of the young person's conduct or the adults' parenting should not be preoccupied with *class-conditioned transfers* of deficiency or worth from the domestic world (e.g. how a child or their parent is dressed or the ways in which they speak should not in any way influence professional decisions about their acts). At the same time, however, when searching for the most suitable punitive or welfare-oriented intervention, practitioners should allow for *transfers of value from the familial sphere that are based on moral principles shared by subjects and groups across social locations* to find the most humane solutions to the problems behind misbehaviour (e.g. professionals can sometimes rely less on specific legal or procedural requirements and more on common norms of compassion to find the most appropriate support for the family) (Sayer 2006: 126-127, see also Boltanski and Thévenot 2006: 134, 146-148, 219-223; 307-308).

Nevertheless, to start interpreting clients' socio-familial circumstances as particularities of each case that require unique and ongoing attention, rather than treating them as generic factors that trigger system contact and formally determine the type and severity of treatment, while later often being sidelined within resulting interventions on the ground, it seems necessary to move beyond perceiving behaviourally challenging young people and their parents merely through a youth justice lens. In delicate and complex personal matters of children's deviance and their parents' childrearing, institutional responses might become more class-

sensitive if professional interventions draw on alternative conceptions of justice and agency, in particular those that Edwards (2015) exposed as suitable for improving the relationships between practitioners and their clients in caring professions, especially children's services.

In multiagency settings, akin to the contemporary youth justice sphere, Edwards has argued for *negotiated justice* when specialists interact with their clients to find appropriate solutions to the problems in question. For Edwards, negotiating fair interventions — rather than following predetermined aims of punishment or prioritised goals of a particular expertise within a multidisciplinary web of services — requires that assessments of every practitioner are aligned with the interpretations of other professionals as well as the lay perceptions of clients about their own difficulties. According to Edwards, replacing strictly expert categorisations of trouble with confronting professional and everyday views of problems can generate a mutual- and thus deeper- as well as qualitatively different understanding between the interacting parties about what is really important in resolving a case, including a matter of delinquency and/or childrearing difficulties (Edwards 2015: 1-17, 49-61, 87).

Edwards's notion of negotiated justice therefore avoids the disadvantages of rigid conceptions of fairness that Sayer has criticised as encouraging officially equal, but possibly substantially unjust treatment of socioeconomically diverse individuals (Sayer 2005: 151). On the contrary, consensual justice that is open to discussion helps professionals avoid schematic dealing with clients and encourages their engagement in what Edwards, drawing on Engeström, has called non-linear 'negotiated knotworking'. According to such approaches, practitioners do not choose from fixed and ready-made one-size-fits-all punitive, medical or social

interventions, but use the available channels of assistance differently each time depending on the particular client and their personal and social situation. In this task, they sometimes reject formal institutional objectives or denounce standard procedures, whereby their discretion is, at the same time, always both limited and led by professional motives (Edwards 2015: 49, 62-75, 92).

More specifically, pursuits for negotiated fairness are not arbitrary, but are firmly grounded in expertise and have the potential to avoid indirectly biased decision-making — including based on social class — precisely because they do not treat problems and responses to them as routine, but push professionals to use their specialist knowledge more constructively by engaging with their clients' interpretations to co-produce a consensual and thus unique solution in each troubling matter (Edwards 2015: 9-14, 33-34, 96). As Terry, a YOT manager in his 50s put it: 'Equality isn't about treating everybody the same or giving everybody exactly the same. You can have different expectations from different children (…) because they have different justifications for their actions, so you can react to the same behaviour differently depending on the plan that you have in your head for that particular individual'.

Negotiating just institutional practices to make them more class-sensitive, instead of perceiving justice as rigorous equality of treatment thus also requires an adapted view of human agency within professional interactions as a relational, rather than a strictly individual phenomenon. From the specialists' perspective, *relational agency* limits their capacity to define and approach the problem — including the child's challenging behaviour or their parents' childrearing difficulties — solely from their own professional viewpoint. Rather, every specialist is required to engage with the outlooks of other practitioners involved as well as to

acknowledge the voices of their clients to find *common knowledge* about the dispute, broadly defined. As a consequence, the professionals that are mobilised to find the most viable solution for their clients within a multiagency setting are less likely to work on separate bits of the child and their family, but therefore more likely to take into account the complex needs exposed by other workers and the socioeconomic reality that the familial difficulties are embedded in (Edwards 2015: 1-17, 61-78). Furthermore, a relational understanding of agency is also more class-conscious and thus beneficial from the clients' point of view, as it makes resolving the trouble in question a *shared responsibility* of all the parties involved in the professional intervention, rather than being only a pressing matter of the child or their parents' personal accountability.

In other words, practically applying the abstract concepts of negotiated justice and relational agency might assist in gradually reconstructing solutions to personal and familial problems — in the case of this thesis, desisting from delinquency and/or improving parenting — as pursuits for the common good (Edwards 2015: 61-63), rather than socially decontextualised duties of particular children that transgress and/or parents that find childrearing difficult. To illustrate the ways in which youth deviance and parenting problems could be perceived as shared within the youth justice setting or children's services more broadly, it is worth summarising the account of a YOT officer at length:

> I think trying to maximise young people's life chances, opportunities and abilities whilst they're with us [involved in an intervention with the YOT] and whilst we're involved with their family for a short period of time is vital. It is about maximising their individual and social capital and their links with other aspects of the community. Obviously, parents who have a higher income are more able to advocate on their child's behalf in terms of educational opportunities or work opportunities, so those children are gonna have an

> advantage. But I think that we have a responsibility to try and make sure that the children that don't have that advantage are not overly disadvantaged within the system. I think we could get stuck with just our criminal justice hats on, so we must look at these issues more widely and in the context of the community. We should stop looking at crime as an individual thing and that we're the only ones who have the responsibility to affect change. I think it should be more about how we manage referrals and how to better engage local members of the community as panel members and involving them in other ways. We've only touched the surface of actually involving a wider group of people in helping out young people to make the best of their lives. And our culture meditates against that. If you think about the Jamie Bulger case… In France or in Scandinavian countries, there would be a totally different way of looking at a case like that. They would say 'It's not these two children's fault. They've been failed and it's too easy to say that it was the parents'. I think the community has to take more responsibility and say that these are *our* children and they're not just the families' children. But the trouble in general is that things have become so fragmented that people are retreating to their own immediate reference groups. Solidarity is just being eroded and I think that the duty of agencies that have resources is to build up solidarity locally and negotiate a consensus. OK, people need to be responsible and children have to be responsible for the decisions that they make, subject to their age and maturity, but we can't just turn our backs. It's not good enough to say 'Oh, children of today, blah, blah, blah' because every generation has said that about the next one coming up. So if we want to change things, we need to start thinking in more creative ways and looking at problems beyond the responsibility of the individual or their family. We need to take things forward, really.
>
> (Lincoln, YOT officer, 50s)

Lincoln's narrative resonates importantly with the proposed theoretical notions of negotiated justice and relational agency as it demonstrates that an alternative view of young people in trouble and their parents as well as their responsibility is possible and could thus become more accepted on a systemic level within youth justice practice if carefully thought out and applied. Lincoln's account suggests that while children are — subject to their maturity and age — liable for their delinquent acts and parents can be held accountable for their unsatisfactory childrearing, the

responsibility for socioeconomic circumstances that contribute to the formation of their transgressions as well as for the solutions to their difficulties should be shared between the family and the wider community.

In other words, Lincoln's viewpoint implies that a relational turn within professional practices does not only require a reconstituting of agency and fairness, but also suggest a shift in how we perceive individuals and families in trouble more generally. While social policy since the 1990s has predominantly portrayed people as fully agentic and thus responsible for their material circumstances and acts, as well as for building resilience to overcome individual and social problems, Lincoln's beliefs support Edwards's proposal to stop understanding subjects — including and especially disadvantaged children and their parents — as either completely independent or determined by their structural position in abstract terms, but, rather, to start realistically perceiving them as *autonomous in dependence*. More precisely, Edwards has argued that people can only control the effects of broader socioeconomic influences on their behaviour to some extent, so their agency should always be evaluated on a personal level and in each particular case, rather than being compared to the effectiveness of an ideal-typical individual (Edwards 2015: 81-82). A similar viewpoint also resonated widely amongst the research participants in this study:

> You can't make a child make a plan for a month. As far as the child is concerned, they're thinking: 'Yeah, I've got that work that I need to do, but I can get high today and it's gonna be fun. I'm gonna hang out with my friends'. The one thing a child can't do is forward plan. You can't make a kid take responsibility for their own actions. That's the issue. You can't look at their actions and think it was only them making that decision. There's a reason why they're making those decisions and in their mind, they might be making these decisions, but they don't know that there are all these external factors influencing them to make that decision seem like the most

> favourable one. Even though every normal person can see that they shouldn't do that, they can't see that or see why they're making that decision because to them it's completely rational, but they can't see beyond that. So if you put all responsibility on someone like that, it's unfair.
>
> (Danny, young person, 21-year-old male)

It is thus possible to agree with Sayer that the autonomy of a person's perceptions and actions is not unconditional, but actually depends on the confidence that they develop in relation to external factors — including their material reality — and the moral support that they receive from others through recognition (Sayer 2005: 55-56). As a consequence, less privileged young people in trouble and their parents can only be expected to build up their potential to overcome difficult familial situations in conditions of relative financial stability and availability of practical help that might be more accessible within a *structurally fairer social order* on one side**,** and through inclusive, meaningful, non-judgmental and unbiased *professional interventions* on the other (Edwards 2015: 91-98).

While proposing concrete shifts on a macro level exceeds the breadth of this study, but might, in time, result from slowly accumulating social reforms similar to those suggested by Sayer and my research participants at the beginning of this section, it is possible to make interactions between youth justice professionals and their clients socially fairer on a micro level in the meantime. Specifically and in line with Edwards's understanding of resourceful expertise, practitioners are less likely to base their decisions about a young person's challenging conduct or their parents' childrearing on classed associations if interventions are conceptualised as ongoing negotiations between equal parties about the changing specificities of the case,

rather than rigid services imposed by professionals according to class-conditioned individual, familial and environmental risk and vulnerability factors at a particular time.

Edwards has exposed that the risks and needs of disadvantaged families are not fixed categories, but are accumulated throughout the lifecourse (Edwards 2015: 28, 44). Therefore, professional interventions should not be generic and brief, but should offer clients continuous opportunities for, and assistance in, disrupting not only their specific zig-zag trajectories of deviance and 'bad' parenting, but also, albeit slowly, the pathways of the family's social exclusion in which their behaviour is embedded. Correspondingly, the interviewees in this case study proposed solutions like adapting the working hours of services to the needs of clients; better coordination of referrals; offering practical help to parents who are struggling with their time and finances in addition to dealing with their child's misbehaviour; more activities within the community involving people of diverse social locations, etc. For Edwards and the study participants alike, changes in professional interventions similar to these could thus gradually — but possibly not without intermittent failures and temporary deterioration in the child's behaviour or their parents' care — supplement clients' damaged transitions with safer paths to desistance and inclusion (Edwards 2015: 81-98).

In sum, the analysis in this thesis has confirmed Sayer's view that social distancing — including differential treatment of troubling children and their parents by professionals — nowadays rarely happens only through direct discrimination according to the allocation of goods (*distribution*), but is often concealed in everyday micro-politics of granting or denying worth to individuals according to

their social location on the ground (*recognition*) (Sayer 2005: 58). More concretely, while agents across socioeconomic groups are considered formally equal, Sayer has argued that people often still recognise only subjects of their own class as actually worthy of fair and respectful treatment. In a similar manner, this dissertation suggests that delinquent children and their families of lower social standing are often not assessed merely according to their behaviour, but are also judged through overly punitive and/or patronising attitudes of practitioners based on markers of their class background (Sayer 2005: 56-58, 207).

In other words, although class inequalities predominantly derive from unequal distribution, individuals can be additionally disadvantaged through denials of respect in practice based on existing or expected aesthetic, material, social and cultural signs of their social location. As a consequence, every system of reform in relation to class — including suggestions for improving the social fairness of professional interventions within youth justice — should take both identity-neutral and identity-sensitive forms of differentiation into account as well as suggest both shifts on a macro level to prevent the former and changes on the interactional level to improve the latter (Sayer 2005: 67-69, 87-89).

In this light, I have indicated that structural transformation towards a more equitable social order could result in a generally less differentiated society. Furthermore, relational concepts of justice, agency and human autonomy (Edwards 2015) should be employed when designing interventions to deal with behaviourally challenging children and their parents within the multiagency youth justice web to minimise and prevent the negative consequences of misrecognition based on class background within professional interactions. Since acknowledging others as worthy

of respect is crucial for the wellbeing of individuals across class backgrounds, repeated and long-lasting refusals of recognition — e.g. through indirect professional discrimination of disadvantaged clients across a range of services — can damage a person's self-worth and their secure transition to adulthood as well as hinder the ability of an entire group of people to feel and function as equal members in wider society, so they should thus be eliminated (Sayer 2005: 52-58).

Nonetheless and before concluding, it seems important to note that this study has shortcomings, so its findings should be relativised accordingly. Firstly, due to temporal and financial constraints, I focused merely on relational differentiation according to social class, but sidelined other personal characteristics that clients might be indirectly discriminated upon, including, but not limited to gender and ethnicity. Furthermore, there are additional aspects of social class in reference to young people's deviance, their parents' childrearing, and institutional responses that could be explored, but I concentrated only on how the participants believe class background impacts their relationships in practice and on the institutional determinants that the interviewees exposed as possibly triggering or exacerbating the classing implications of professional interventions.

Although my research sample is quite large for a qualitative doctoral study, I nevertheless analysed the accounts of children, their parents and the practitioners that they work with in one local authority, so the results cannot necessarily be generalised to the whole of the UK. Moreover, I chose my research participants from YOTs and eight other sets of agencies that work in partnership with YOTs to tackle the needs of young people who have offended or are exhibiting other kinds of troubling behaviour. However, I did not grasp the perceptions of professionals and

clients from across all partner organisations, so the outcomes of my enquiry are also limited in this respect.

Most importantly, the recommendations as set out in this conclusion — both the calls for changes on a systemic level, as well as the suggestions for relational understandings of justice, agency and autonomy within youth justice theory and practice — remain unapologetically utopian, albeit in a reasonable and practical way according to Bourdieu. Specifically, as the key aim of this study was to explore the processes behind the classed selection effects of institutions and examine if they might be contributing to young people's deviant pathways, its findings cannot provide a foundation for more concrete proposals. Accordingly, its propositions serve to show that a different and socially more conscious way of dealing with families within youth justice and children's services is imaginable, but do not encourage unrealistic perceptual and practical transformations at the same time (Bourdieu 1998: 40; see also Bourdieu 2000: 108, Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 196-197, Boltanski 2011: 32). Therefore, further criminological research is needed for more explicit policy recommendations.

In particular, the analysis in this dissertation has disclosed that while some differentiation according to social class happens on a macro level and thus directly based on unequal distribution, classing discrimination nowadays often occurs indirectly and relationally between individuals of different social locations or due to seemingly class-neutral institutional discourses, and therefore remains hidden within interactions on the ground. To expose other ways in which systemic violence based on socioeconomic background might work 'through people in everyday life' (Gordon 2008: 197), future research in the field of criminology should explore what

Gordon has called the 'expanded empirical' that entails injustices that are visible as well as those that remain concealed, but, nevertheless, 'haunt' existing relationships in a socially unfair way (Gordon 2008: 199-204).

In this task, criminologists should look for new modes of knowledge as well as employing both existing and novel research methods across a range of disciplines to truly grasp the voices of marginalised individuals (Gordon 2008: xviii-xix, 21-25, 194-195, 204), including behaviourally challenging young people and their parents, especially of less privileged backgrounds. In other words, prospective research should side with the oppressed and expose the differentiating institutional processes that accelerate their difficulties and hinder their desistance processes. Accordingly, academic endeavours should stop treating people's socio-familial problems merely as objects of analysis, but should start perceiving them as collective matters to encourage slow transformations of the social order and its fundamental concepts, including class (in)justices.

The broader aim of future criminological enquiry and social sciences more generally is therefore to help transition from a 'society of blindness' that treats class stratification within the justice system as a concept in discursive academic practices (Gordon 2008: 201-208) towards acknowledging differentiation according to social class as an actual and pressing unfairness that makes people's everyday lives worse and should thus gradually be eradicated in all of its forms. This study has aimed to expose some of the hidden mechanisms behind institutional class bias within the youth justice realm and children's services. It has also intended to outline the ways in which these processes could be leading young people of different social locations towards diverse trajectories. The study has suggested that applying more nuanced

conceptions of justice and agency when professionals deal with behaviourally challenging youth and their parents might be the first step towards addressing the classing implications of professional interactions.

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