

**Betwixt and Between:
Professional Identity Formation of
Newly Graduated
Christian Youth Workers**

Joanne Frances Griffiths, BA (Hons), MA

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Name of Student: **JOANNE FRANCES GRIFFITHS**

Student ID Number:

Date of Submission: **30/09/13**

School: **HEALTH SCIENCES AND SOCIAL CARE**

Signed:

(Authorised member of Staff)

Date:

Signed:

(Student)

Date:

Abstract

For Christian professional youth workers, the transition from student to employee positions them at the interstices of convergent and competing discourses. This thesis argues that Christian youth workers can position themselves within these discourses by articulating an authentic faith integrated with professional practice. This positioning is produced and reproduced by performative expectations and the influence of relations of power. The notion of one, unitary professional identity is deemed futile as Christian professional youth workers mobilize a complex range of identities within a range of liminal spaces. Youth workers are suspended within an extended liminal state, which opens up different possibilities for professionalism within Christian professional youth work.

This thesis contributes to knowledge particularly for the sociology of the professions and specifically with regard to training and subsequent employment of those within professional occupations. Theoretically, this thesis develops Turner's thinking in relation to the three phases of separation, liminality and reincorporation and how they apply to the understanding of transition from training to employment. Turner's phases appear to be incomplete for the understanding of the particular issues that individuals face in the forming of identity in late modern contexts. His thinking on separation and liminality adopt a more nuanced meaning in that the statuses are not as clearly defined as would be initially thought. Likewise, reincorporation is elusive, since Christian professional youth workers are suspended within a permanent state of liminality.

This thesis redeems the notion of professionalism from a secular liberal ideal, allowing spirituality to flourish once again. A Christian professional can, and does, express an authentic sense of self within different discursive domains. The crossing of discursive boundaries allows for creativity and experimentation that enriches faith and professionalism. The two influence each other in productive ways. Professionalism as the profane becomes the sacred through the experiences of Christian professionals. Of course, professionalism becoming sacred is not the domain of the Christian only. This is pertinent for a person of any faith belonging to a professional occupation and seeking to express their faith through their work.

**Professional Identity Formation
of Newly Graduated Youth Workers**

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Chapter One: Introduction

1 Introduction

This thesis seeks to address the issue of how the professional identity of newly qualified professional Christian youth workers is formed during their first year of employment after graduation. First, I will briefly state why this is an area of interest for me.

1998 marked the beginning of a new era of professional training for Christian youth workers in Britain. In that year, the Centre for Youth Ministry (CYM) launched its Honours Degree in Youth and Community Work with Applied Theology. Validated by Oxford Brookes University and endorsed by the National Youth Agency (NYA), students were able to combine theology with studies in youth work as well as gaining the JNC¹ qualification. This was the first such course of its kind for Christian youth workers in the UK, which aimed to professionalize Christian youth work. Prior to 1998, Christian youth work had been delivered by well meaning, but largely untrained, people. Certainly, a large number of those delivering youth work in the Christian sector were employed. But more often than not, the low wages and lack of training resulted in an early exit from the field. Since, collectively, churches in England were hemorrhaging youth workers – not to mention an estimated 300 young people per week – it was clear that something needed to be done to arrest this situation. The response was to develop a training course for youth workers that would integrate professional practice with theology.

At that time, the world of Christian youth work had only the secular JNC Level 2 professional youth work qualification on which to build. This diploma qualified youth workers to work full-time within the occupation with specific managerial responsibilities. This secular qualification has had a significant impact on the

¹ JNC is the Joint Negotiating Committee for Youth and Community Workers. JNC was established in 1961 in response to the Albermarle Report to negotiate pay and conditions for youth and community workers who worked in local education authorities. JNC agree salary scales, annual pay increases and other terms and conditions of work. JNC endorse qualifications, which have been professionally approved by the Education and Training Standards (ETS) Committee of the National Youth Agency. JNC also endorse youth support worker qualifications. Unless stated otherwise, when JNC is mentioned in this thesis it will be in reference to the professional qualification.

professional identity of the Christian youth workers who have trained and graduated from CYM. New professionals are supposedly armed with a body of knowledge and skills that can be used in any context, Christian or secular. They are considered able to reflect theologically on their practice, which immediately sets them apart from secularly trained youth workers. This leads to the Christian youth worker inhabiting a *betwixt and between* place; somewhere between the Christian and the secular. As explored in this thesis, this raises problems for the Christian youth worker in terms of professional identity.

Different forms of identity are not additive but interactive (Lawler, 2008:3). This thesis aims to explore the different identity domains of professionalism and ministry within which the Christian professional youth worker is located. On the one hand, we assume that Christian youth workers identify with the grand narrative of the Christian faith and consider their work to be an expression of that faith. On the other hand, we also assume that they identify with the metanarrative of what it means to be a professional youth worker. This study advances the field in the area of intersecting identities for Christian practitioners caught *betwixt and between* these two discursive domains. Specifically, my research question considers how a continuing professional identity for newly qualified Christian youth workers is constructed as they enter their first full-time post after graduation. The transition from student to employee is a key area for investigation, as is the influence of performative expectations on the shaping of professional identity. The interaction between faith and professionalism is explored and understanding is gained as to how Christian youth workers can express authentic selves when located within these two discursive domains. There has, to date, been little research generated around the subject of professional identity specifically for Christian youth workers. This study is needed because professional Christian youth work (as a contemporary understanding) is a relatively new phenomenon and will benefit youth workers, educators, employers and others professionals working within faith contexts.

2 Situating the research: Definitions

Before I introduce the research themes, it would be useful to explain how I utilize the key terms of 'Christian', 'professional', 'youth work', and 'church'.

2.1 Christian

Part of this thesis offers a unique exploration of the relationship between faith identity and professional identity. The construction of the professional identity of an early career Christian youth worker is one that is undertaken within discourses of professional youth work, which are constructed by secular paradigms. As such youth work policy and the standards that a qualified youth worker must achieve through gaining a JNC qualification are a form of authoritative secular language that regulates and perpetuates a secular performative identity (Bryan & Revell, 2001:407). This aspect of professional identity for Christian youth workers is explored in Chapters Four and Seven. However, Christian youth workers also identify themselves as 'Christian', a term that is loaded with different meanings and assumptions.

Theologian Jürgen Moltmann (1993:19) wrote, 'Christian identity can be understood only as an act of identification with the crucified Christ'. It is from this basic premise that practicing Christians claim their identification as Christians. The notions of vocation, calling and theology are significant concepts for many Christians and, indeed, youth workers. The participants in this study all expressed some sense of vocation and calling and had all graduated from theological education in youth work. Ward considered that Christians who are engaged in Christian ministry and seeking to reflect theologically on their work do so from an 'embodied commitment':

"Commitment for the minister is not simply a task, or a professional role. Neither is it simply a sense of self or of communal identity, it is a vocation, a calling. So the theological task forms a part of an active and vocational participation in the mission of God." (Ward, 2008:102-103)

Ward was making a claim to how Christians involved in Christian work view their professional role as more than a job. I did not want to research the area of calling and vocation in youth work, as it has already been well documented (Richards, 2005; Fusco, 2012). However, it is a key aspect of a Christian youth worker's commitment to their role. The contribution this thesis makes to the field is in the exploration of Christian commitment and professionalism.

Throughout this thesis, I do not conceptualize the term 'Christian' to denote people who associate themselves with particular cultural aspects of Christianity.

Rather, I use the term 'Christian' to mean a person who claims to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ as expressed through Moltmann's understanding of Christian identity above, and affiliates himself or herself to a Christian church. The participants within this research were recruited on the basis of their own self-identification of being a Christian in this sense.

2.2 Professional

The etymological root of the word 'professional' is located within theology. Relating to monastic life, use of the word 'professional' was first recorded around 1420, referring to the process of entering into a religious order. The Franciscan Order was the first to use this word. They regarded their service to a community as a 'profession' of their faith and therefore regarded their ministry amongst some of the poorest in society as 'professional'.

Throughout this thesis the term 'professional' and its grammatical derivatives of 'profession', 'professionalism' and 'professionalization' are all used to denote specific forms of meaning. Each one of these terms has comprehensible differences. I use the definitions provided by Julia Evetts (2003) to create a principal frame of reference. 'Profession' is a generic term for a certain type of occupation, usually one that involves a particular knowledge, a service to others, and an extended period of education usually involving work experience with an experienced practitioner. 'Professionalism' is an occupational or normative value and generally considered to be something that is a good thing and is a sign that someone is providing a service that benefits others and is generally doing a good job. 'Professionalization' refers to an occupation that is in the process of becoming, of being promoted into the status of what is considered to be a professional occupation. This status can be decided either by the occupation itself or external agents. In order to understand these terms more fully, and to locate Christian youth work within the wider contemporary concept of the professions, a brief historical overview of sociological thinking in relation to professions and professionalism will now be presented.

Emile Durkheim largely influenced the sociological understandings of the professions until the late 1960s. Durkheim (1957) recognized that the division of labour and occupational groups epitomized the moral basis for modern society.

This led him to focus on professions as institutions, which embodied the functional social forces he so valued. These institutions would be at the level between the individual and the State and, according to Durkheim, would save modern society from a breakdown in moral authority, which he perceived to be a threat. This view of professionalism as a form of moral community, based on occupational membership (Evetts, 2003:399), was developed further during the middle years of the 20th-century. Carr-Saunders and Wilson were among those who held this position arguing that professionals and the professions contributed to the stabilization of society. In reference to the professions, they wrote:

“Their members are conscious of the past; they are aware of a long chain of endeavours towards the improvement and adaptation of technique...they inherit, preserve, and hand on a tradition. They know that nothing is to be achieved in their own sphere by destruction or revolution...Professional associations are stabilizing elements in society. They engender modes of life, habits of thought and standards of judgment which render them centres of resistance to crude forces which threaten steady and peaceful evolution...The family, the church, the universities, certain associations of intellectuals, and above all the great professions, stand like rocks against which the waves raised by these forces beat in vain.” (Carr-Saunders and Wilson, 1933:497)

This is a fine example of how many functionalist thinkers viewed the social status of the professions, with Carr-Saunders and Wilson specifically concerned with the threat of encroaching industrial and governmental bureaucracies. Functionalists also adopted a ‘traits’ approach to the professions and took to listing the characteristics of an ideal-typical profession against which occupational groups could be assessed as being professional or not. Macdonald (1995:2) cited Parsons (1954) as a writer who adopted the traits approach to professionalism. Evetts (2003:401), however, disagreed with this reading of Parsons. Parsons (1951) took the view that the capitalist economy, the Weberian rational-legal social order, and the professions were all interrelated. This mutual balancing led to the maintenance and stability of a fragile social order.

However, there was an alternative view developing to this macro level functional analysis of the professions. The focus shifted from examining the traits of professions to the actions and interactions of groups and individuals within the professions. How these participants constituted their social world and

constructed their careers was the focus for sociological exploration, as Macdonald elaborated:

“The professional principles of altruism, service and high ethical standards were...seen as aspects of the day-to-day world within which members lived, worked and strove and which therefore appeared as less than perfect human social constructs rather than as abstract standards which characterized a formal collectivity.”
(Macdonald, 1995:4)

These ideas emanated from the school of symbolic interaction in Chicago. Everett Hughes (1958), in *Men and Their Work* was among the first to lead the way in significant studies of the professions, influencing such works as *Boys in White* (Becker *et al*, 1961) and *The Profession of Medicine* (Freidson, 1970). These studies focused on the actions and interactions of individuals and groups. They also considered how individuals and groups constituted their social worlds and constructed their careers. This approach gave rise to analysis of the professions, which portrayed trainee medical doctors as developing cynicism rather than altruism (Becker *et al*, 1961) and doctors as wielders of power rather than servants of the social good (Freidson, 1970).

The approach of Hughes *et al* was the starting point for many micro ethnographic studies of professional socialization in various places of work (for example, schools and hospitals) as is evident in the literature reviewed in Chapter Four. The development of a shared professional identity amongst new professionals and the maintenance of identity in existing professionals was, as Evetts (2003:401) argued, ‘associated with a sense of common experiences, understandings and expertise, shared ways of perceiving problems and their possible solutions’. A normative value system of professionalism in relation to the behaviour, responses and advice given by professionals is reproduced at the micro level in individual practitioners and their work contexts.

A general scepticism about the interpretation of professionalism as a normative value system grew in the literature of the 1970s and 1980s (Evetts, 2003:401). Johnson (1972), who analyzed the notion of power, focused on the relations between producers and consumers of professional services. The extent to which the producers could or could not control the relationship and benefit from it was considered. He also dismissed the claims of occupational groups who deemed themselves successful in their seeking of social status and income.

This kind of analysis represented a change within the study of the part that the professions played in the social order. Now the question being asked was how the professions persuaded society to warrant them with a privileged position whereby they could exercise power.

This change was evident in the work of Larson (1977) who developed the concept of 'the professional project', which is frequently cited in many academic works on the professions. Larson's approach, drawing on the thinking of Weber, was concerned with the ways in which possessors of specialist knowledge could build up and establish a monopoly of the services that stem from it. This was explicit in Larson's understanding of professionalization, which saw it as the 'attempt to translate one order of scarce resources – special knowledge and skills – into another – social and economic rewards' (Larson, 1977:xvii). Larson questioned how a set of work practices that characterized medicine and law came to form the basis for the professionalization of other knowledge-based occupations with very different employment features. Evetts (2003:402) viewed this question as pointing to the importance of the appeal of the concept of professionalism for occupational workers. Indeed the professionalization of Christian youth work, evidenced through, but not solely through, the development of a specific Christian professional youth work undergraduate program, is testament to the seductive nature of the professions. Also, JNC professional youth work courses have moved from qualifying with a JNC in two years to qualification in three years. This ensures that qualification is in alignment with undergraduate degree level; another example of seeking professional status. This is explored further in Chapter Two, in which an historical overview of the professionalization of Christian youth work is explored.

Evetts cited three ideological reasons for the appeal of professionalization for occupational groups today. First, the appeal includes 'exclusive ownership of an area of expertise and knowledge', accompanied by the power to define problems and control potential solutions to those problems. Second, a romantic image of collegial working relations which consist of mutual assistance and support is appealing, rather than 'hierarchical, competitive or managerialist control'. Third, there is an assumption of autonomy in decision-making and work practices. Decision-making can be made on behalf of the public interest,

restricted only by marginal financial constraints, 'and in some cases...even self-regulation or the occupational control of work'. As we shall see later, the reality of this, as Evetts pointed out, is very different for most service and knowledge-based occupations (2003:407). From these three ideological reasons, two broad points can be elaborated on within the context of the British Welfare State; first, the notion of professionalism as a means of organizing occupations and, second, the concept of expertise and the way in which it is institutionalized in professions.

The construction of the British Welfare State was organized by two modes of coordination: bureaucratic administration and professionalism. Clarke and Newman defined modes of coordination as, 'the complex of rules, roles and regulatory principles around which the social practices of organisations are structured' (1997:5). From these modes of coordination, the notion of public service as a set of values, a code of behaviours and forms of practice came to be institutionalized. These modes, through patterns of internal and external social relationships privilege certain types of knowledge.

In the development of the post-war welfare system, the particular role of bureaucratic administration was three-fold. First, bureaucratic administration ensured predictable and routine outputs. It emphasized the appropriate application of a set of rules and regulations by appropriately trained staff. It turned 'complex tasks of assessments or calculation into routinised processes and guarantee[d] that the outcomes of those calculations are stable or predictable' (Clarke & Newman, 1997:5). The second feature of bureaucratic administration was equitable treatment, which aimed to be socially, politically and personally neutral. Through bureaucracy, public administration developed on the premise that members of the public would be treated impartially despite their social status. This appealed to the field of social welfare due to the ways in which it had previously been delivered through organizations such as the Poor Law Boards where evaluations on social and moral status were made (Clarke & Newman, 1997:5). Third, bureaucratic administration was seen as a means of balancing the running of state activities in the light of the uncertainties of democratic politics. According to Clarke & Newman, however, the theory of this rarely works out in practice, arguing that the bureaucracy of government has

disciplined the development of policy and influenced its implementation through procedural controls (1997:6). Bureaucratic administration was not sufficient on its own for the provision of public welfare. Forms of expertise, which drew on distinctive bodies of knowledge and skills with regards to solutions for social problems, were needed. This was to be found in professionalism.

It has been claimed that professionalism stands in stark contrast to bureaucratic administration. If bureaucracy is concerned with predictability and stability, professionalism addresses the uncertainty of the social world and provides the intervention of 'expert judgement' (Clarke & Newman, 1997:6). As already noted by Evetts, professionalism makes claims of autonomy, which represents the space within which professional judgment can be exercised and trusted. In the post-war context, professions emphasized the necessity of professional behaviour, which sought to eradicate personal biases, prejudice and emotional involvement from its practice. However, this did not eradicate the practice of professional power, which was embodied in the individual professional and personalized in the professional-client relationship (Clarke & Newman, 1997: 6). This professional power was necessary in the tackling of perceived social problems and social needs which could not be addressed through political or administrative means. Professionals became indispensable in the task of social reconstruction, applying their expert knowledge for the public good.

The combination of bureaucracy and professionalism was in support of a particular ideological representation of the relationship between the State and the public it served. The combination became the 'institutionalised guarantors of the pursuit of the public good' (Clarke & Newman, 1997:8). With the Welfare State located at the intersection of economics and politics, it soon became subject to pressures during the 1970s, which treated public spending as a drain on the nation rather than collective or social investment. The Labour Government cut public spending due to the consequences of a major currency crisis, which resulted in a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Pressures from the IMF continued into the 1980s and the Conservative Government continued to cut back public and civil services (Hood, Emmerson & Dixon, 2009:1).

During these years, a politically attractive alternative to the old modes, or using Ball's term, 'policy technologies' (2003:215) to bureaucracy and professionalism were developed. The market, managerialism and performativity were the three interrelated policy technologies that, when employed together, are set over and against bureaucracy and professionalism. 'The markets' refers to the introduction of direct privatization and the contracting out of, and charging for, selected services. This was introduced largely during the 1980s. The Conservative Government argued for change in the management of public services based on the general conceptions of business management as a model for public services management. This aimed to engender tighter financial controls and increased productivity (Clarke & Newman, 1997:58). Discursive subject positioning² viewed the users of services as consumers and professionals as producers and entrepreneurs (Ball, 2003:218). The markets concept is closely related to the concept of 'managerialism', which refers to the values of the business world. These include values of efficiency, effectiveness, corporate culture, budgeting, innovation and strategy. These values are maintained through managers within the public sector who seek to ensure levels of performance are high (Ball, 2003 & Clarke and Newman, 1997). 'Performativity' is a mode of regulation that employs judgments and issues incentives and controls. The performances of individual professionals or professions are viewed in terms of measures of productivity or output. Targets and achievement are the main disciplines. Chapter Four provides a detailed discussion of the relationship between youth work, professionalism, and performativity.

These new technologies play a fundamental role in 'aligning public sector organisations with the methods, culture and ethical system of the private sector' (Ball, 2003:216). This alignment has created the conditions needed for various forms of privatization and commodification of core public services. Thus, the distinctive nature of the public sector is diminished (Ball, 2003:216). Ball argued that, within policy technologies, there are embedded and required 'new identities, new forms of interaction and new values' (2003:217-218). The fiscal crisis in recent years has seen a decline in services provided by the State. This

² Individuals are given positions or slots in 'culturally recognized patterns of talk' (Wetherell, 2001:23). In other words, discursive subject positions construct individuals as characters and provide ways of thinking about ourselves; our motives, experiences and reactions.

includes social work, policing, and even the armed forces. Fiscal crises have become a problem for a considerable number of Nation-States, of course. Many Governments, including our current Coalition Government under the leadership of Prime Minister David Cameron, suggest that these crises are in no small part attributable to rising Welfare commitments (Evetts, 2003:407). As a result of this position, the cutbacks introduced by the Coalition Government have influenced the reorganization of some professions such as nursing, teaching and, indeed, youth work. Accompanying this reorganization, the promotion of a managerialist culture within the professions of the public service sector has been explicit: 'in short the state is engaged in trying to redefine professionalism so that it becomes more commercially aware, budget-focused, managerial, entrepreneurial and so forth' (Hanlon, 1999:121).

Accountability and performance indicators have formed a fundamental aspect of professionalism. This has certainly been the case for teaching and youth work. Youth services were subject to a four-year Ofsted inspection program, which aimed to provide case studies of good practice and contribute to further improvement of the service (2005: Ofsted.gov.uk *Effective Youth Services: Good Practice*). A mere five years after the end of the inspection period, we have not seen an improvement to the service. Rather, it has been impacted dramatically by funding cuts. In some Local Authorities, youth services are virtually non-existent. There are no current statistics available, but observations of the field suggest that there is a marginal decline in employment within the Christian youth work sector, especially amongst those reliant on statutory funding streams. Large evangelical churches are still employing church youth workers and rely on their affluent church members to fund the work.

Christian professional youth work inhabits a different kind of professional space to that of its secular relation. It is located in an in-between position; in-between the sacred and the secular. This thesis explores the professional identity of Christian youth workers who hold a secular professional qualification and define themselves as Christians. This in-between position is not exempt from the impact of policy technologies. More than ever, the influences of the markets is affecting funded provision and reorganising it. Christian youth work is now morphing into mentoring programs, schools work, training to employment

programs, alternative education programs, teenage pregnancy programs. Policy driven targeted work is part and parcel of the Christian professional youth work landscape. More traditional church youth work appears, on the surface, not to be affected by policy constraints. However, the church has its own set of policy technologies, which are explored within this thesis.

2.3 Youth work

‘Youth work’ has come to mean a particular way of working with young people. Not everyone who works with young people is a youth worker. Teachers, social workers or vicars may work with young people but their particular approaches differ to that of a youth worker. Youth work is concerned with the personal, social and educational development of young people. The following is the definition of youth work provided by the National Youth Agency (NYA):

- Youth work helps young people learn about themselves, others and society, through informal education activities which combine enjoyment, challenge and learning.
- Youth workers work primarily with young people aged between 13 and 19, but may in some cases extend this to younger age groups and those up to 24. Their work seeks to promote young people’s personal and social development and enable them to have a voice, influence and place in their communities and society as a whole.
- Youth work is underpinned by a clear set of values. These include young people choosing to take part; starting with young people’s view of the world; treating young people with respect; seeking to develop young people’s skills and attitudes rather than remedy ‘problem behaviours’; helping young people develop stronger relationships and collective identities; respecting and valuing differences; and promoting the voice of young people. (NYA,2007:1)

Many Christian youth workers prefer to identify themselves as *youth ministers* rather than *youth workers*. In Chapter Three, the terms *youth work* and *youth ministry* are elaborated as I explore the discursive positions of these nuanced terminologies. The understanding of youth work for Christian youth workers is two-fold. First, the term ‘youth work’ for Christians is a broad one, encapsulating mission and evangelization as well as being about nurture into the Christian faith. Second, the secular principles of informal education, empowerment, equality of opportunity and participation, which are implicit in the definition above, are also employed in a Christian understanding of ‘youth work’. Ward (1997:3) recognized that a Christian youth worker is likely to be engaged in

work relating to both these areas. I use both youth *work* and youth *ministry* throughout this thesis to reflect the differing contexts that they represent.

2.4 Church

Definitions of 'church' are wide and far reaching. For the purposes of this thesis, I adopt a socio-theological position. The notion of the Christian Church is a New Testament concept. Etymologically, the word 'church' derives from the Greek term *ekklhsia* (*ekklesia*), itself being formed from two Greek words meaning 'an invitation, calling' (*klhsi~/klesis*) and 'out' (*ek/ek*). The New Testament Church comprised a body of believers who followed the teachings of Jesus Christ. This is a basic understanding of what it means to belong to the global Church. The local church is where a group of believers or congregation meets together physically for worship, teaching, prayer and fellowship. The Christian Church is composed of many different denominations but is united through belief in the teachings of Jesus Christ. We may consider the Church to have two main purposes. First, church members meet together to be formed in their Christian faith in an attitude of worship. Second, the Church seeks to transmit its message of belief in Jesus to those who currently stand outside the community of faith. This thesis makes reference to the universal Church, as well as the local church.

3 Research themes

It is too much of a generalization to suggest that there is a singular notion of Christian youth worker identity. That is particularly true of professional Christian youth workers. As has already been mentioned, new Christian professional youth workers embark on a period of transition from one social status to another, from student to employee. During this time they are located at the interstices of converging and diverging discourses of Christian professional youth work. They are positioned within a betwixt and between state, resulting in a liminal identity (Turner, 1969) which is marked by a sense of uncertainty. However, the everyday lived experience is also part of a youth worker's existence and implies a sense of stability within the uncertainty of the professional life. Throughout the empirical Chapters, I consider the effects of transition on professional identity formation and how discourses of Christian youth work constrain and inform a

continuing professional identity whilst also exploring the everyday lived experience of youth workers.

In examining the transition experience, I will focus on three subject areas that emerged through the literature review and through analysis of the data generated through the research participants: narratives of being a Christian professional youth worker; the constraining effects of performativity on a forming identity; and authentic faith and authentic practice. While these three areas intersect, they each provide a useful understanding of the formation of professional identity for newly qualified Christian youth workers. From these three areas, I present a model of liminality that provides creative possibilities for future professionalism within Christian youth work.

4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into three parts. The first part provides the theoretical and contextual background to the research. The second part presents the methodology and analysis of the empirical data collected. The third part interprets and discusses the data.

In Part One of the thesis, Chapter Two provides the historical context for an understanding of the professionalization of Christian youth work. Moments of critical development for the modern era are discussed, beginning primarily in the 19th-century with the work of the philanthropists. The juxtaposed emergence of evangelical youth ministry in relation to philanthropic work is considered, which explains the evangelical notion that the middle- to upper-classes were being ignored by the church due to its focus on the poor. The more recent history is examined, detailing the divergence between secular and Christian work, especially after the Second World War. Discourses of voluntarism and professionalism illuminate the tensions that arose throughout this history and which are still prevalent today. Chapter Three reviews the literature pertaining to Christian youth work and introduces the discursive positionings of Christian youth *work* and Christian youth *ministry*. It provides the current understanding of the discursive context that professional Christian youth workers are located within. I conclude that they are positioned within a betwixt and between state, which results in a liminal identity (Turner, 1969). Chapter Four introduces the

concept of identity generally and professional identity specifically. It gives an introduction to the social constructionist perspective and how this is applied to the notion of a constructed professional identity. Key themes relating to a constructed identity are explored through a review of the literature relating to performance, performativity, authenticity, transition and professional identity.

Part Two commences with Chapter Five, exploring details of the methodological approach of the thesis. The analytical lens of symbolic interaction is justified. The research design and data collection methods are outlined alongside a discussion as to how these methods were utilized and the process for recruitment of participants. A rationale for the use of discourse analysis is then provided, followed by a discussion of the ethical issues that arose. Chapter Six is the first of three data analysis Chapters. This Chapter explores the narratives of new professionally qualified Christian youth workers and how they narrated their experiences of being a professional and a Christian. It also considers the influence of transition on the narratives they present. Chapter Seven sets the scene for the performative constraints that Christian youth workers experience and how they negotiate the particular relations of power and accountability structures they encounter. Chapter Eight elaborates on the themes of the previous Chapter by considering the search for authenticity that the participants expressed, especially in relation to context, youth work orthodoxy and resistant identity. This chapter highlights the particular tensions that arise between a performative faith and performative professional identity.

Part Three comprises of the discussions and conclusions to the research. Chapter Nine draws together a number of themes relating to the previous three Chapters: narratives of new Christian youth workers, performativity, and authenticity. It offers a model of liminality for new Christian youth workers, which considers how the transition from student to employee is a multi-faceted liminal experience. Not only are graduates in a liminal state of changing social status (student to employee), they are also entering an ambiguous occupation which is influenced by both Christian and professional discourses. This produces complex dual allegiances for the youth worker. Christian youth workers are also considered to be occupationally located between voluntarism and ordained ministry. This is essentially an 'adolescent' occupational status. Chapter Ten

presents the conclusions to the thesis. It reviews the major findings and how it contributes to the sociological study of professional and faith identity. It also states how I have responded to the research question by ensuring I have explored the fundamental aspects of transition and identity for new Christian professional youth workers. The limitations of the study are identified and wider implications for the field are discussed. Finally, this Chapter suggests areas for further research.

5 Influences and Biography

The research is located within a social constructionist perspective with acknowledgement of researcher reflexivity. I address this topic in more detail in Chapter Five. But in order to provide context for the thesis, it would be helpful to give an account of myself at this stage; how and why this thesis came about.

I graduated from CYM in 2001 with a BA (Hons) in Youth and Community Work with Applied Theology and a JNC qualification. This was after working voluntarily for a number of years in churches in Northern Ireland, Scotland and England. I also volunteered with Local Authority youth work provision. My first full-time post was as a youth worker with Essex County Council, England. I had made a deliberate choice to work within secular youth work. The differences in how my professional qualification was valued within the Local Authority and how it was perceived within the church was stark. It seemed at the time that, although the church leadership and congregation were delighted that I had achieved a degree, they did not appear interested in the actual professional qualification I had received. This may have been due to lack of awareness about JNC or general lack of understanding about professional youth work. Conversely, Essex Local Authority demonstrated an air of respect with regards to my professional status and delegated responsibilities to me based on this.

This experience raised questions for me regarding the value of the professional status of Christian youth work within the church. At the same time, I was trying to process the significance of my faith in relation to the organization I was working for. Having spent many years as a Christian youth worker in a voluntary capacity within the church, my identity as a Christian and as a youth worker was never an issue. Working for the Local Authority, I was employed because I had

a professional qualification and my faith was not considered to be significant to my ability to work with young people. These ponderings remained with me during my years with Essex County Council.

Whilst I was doing an MA in Youth Studies at Brunel University, I decided to leave Essex County Council and take up a lecturing post with CYM in Cambridge, where I had done my first degree. The marked change back to a Christian context. Interaction with Christian youth work students brought my thinking to the foreground once more. I decided to research my MA dissertation on the socialization of newly qualified youth workers, but managed to avoid the area of faith. On reflection, I think I was trying to avoid the marked tensions between faith and professionalism. I firmly believed at the time that the two could and should be compatible companions.

It was during the research for my MA that I came across the work of American sociologist Howard Becker. Becker *et al* wrote a book in the 1960s called *Boys in White* about the experiences of young laymen who were training to be medical doctors. This developed my interest in the socialization and identity formation of professionals. It was the Chicago School, to which Becker had belonged, that sparked my interest in furthering my studies through undertaking a PhD. I enjoyed reflecting on how the social aspects of identity formation were considered important in the development of a professional. The focus on interaction and relationships and the symbolic nature of these provided a way of looking at professional formation that I had not considered in any theoretical sense until then. As time progressed, and my thinking around the subject developed, Becker's work became less significant to the research itself. However, I do owe him a debt of gratitude for capturing my imagination, which then motivated me to start PhD studies. As the PhD progressed, I recognized the absolute importance of the interaction between faith and professionalism. Researching whilst being part of the community of Christian youth workers, albeit in a teaching capacity, greatly influenced and challenged my own faith and sense of professionalism. Where appropriate I have attempted to make my own contributions to the story of the research, which will be evident primarily in Chapters Six and Seven.

Part One

Context

Introduction

Part One provides the context for the thesis. Chapter Two provides historical context for an understanding of the professionalization of Christian youth work. Moments of critical development are discussed, beginning primarily in the 19th-century. Discourses of voluntarism and professionalism illuminate the tensions that arose throughout this history, and which are still prevalent today. Chapter Three reviews the literature pertaining to Christian youth work and introduces the discursive positionings of Christian youth *work* and Christian youth *ministry*. Chapter Four introduces the concept of identity generally, and professional identity specifically. It gives an introduction to the social constructionist perspective and how this is applied to the notion of a constructed professional identity.

Chapter Two: The History of the Professionalization of Christian Youth Work and Christian Youth Ministry

1 Introduction

The historic practice of acknowledging two different disciplines is the starting point for the discursive positioning of Christian youth *ministry* and Christian youth *work*. According to Ward (1996:1), the former tradition starts with young people who are already part of the church community. The latter tradition concentrates on young people who are outside the church community. This Chapter explores the histories of these two traditions, from which the development of professionalization for Christian youth work can be traced.³ These histories share the same roots and the narrative is one of both convergence and divergence. In order to exemplify this, consideration will be given to four themes from historic engagement with youth: philanthropic foundations, responses to cultural shifts, the development of evangelical approaches, and State involvement. The historic competing discourses of voluntarism and professionalism will illuminate the particular tensions that Christian professional youth work still experiences in the present day. Voluntarism refers to the concept of youth provision being delivered by lay volunteers who have limited training and no specialist qualifications. This implies a very specific orientation and moral purpose and is fundamental to liberalism. Professionalism has been elaborated on in Chapter One. Within the context of this Chapter, it refers to the concept of employing paid, trained and qualified staff to manage, or otherwise make available, youth provision. This is pertinent to the thesis since most of the research participants worked within one or other of these modes.

Of course, the history of Christian youth work in the UK is long and complex. To identify a moment of origin is impossible. All that can productively be discerned with any clarity are moments of critical development (Griffiths, 2007:13). In *East End Youth Ministry 1880-1957*, Griffiths listed a swathe of primary sources from the late 18th- and early 19th-centuries of targeted work that could evidence the

³ Given the considerable historic convergence and shared historic roots of the two traditions, the terms 'youth work' and 'Christian youth work' in this Chapter (only) refer to both 'Christian youth work' and 'Christian youth ministry' simultaneously, unless otherwise noted in the text. The divergent discursive positions will be made clear in Chapter Three.

early beginnings of youth work. Yet he acknowledged that the origins may have been earlier still. To seek a first source, he argued that we must consider the work of tailor Thomas Cranfield, who started night and juvenile schools in London before he died in 1838, as well as the efforts the 1802 Instructive Institution, ‘founded in the Minories near the Tower of London for fifteen poor children’ (Griffiths, 2007:13). Griffiths even drew our attention to a treatise produced 150 years prior to that by the Reformed minister Thomas Brooks. His *Apples of Gold*, although originally preached as a funeral sermon, was written specifically for young parishioners for both their temporal and eternal well-being:

“My request to you who are in the primrose of your days is this, If ever the Lord shall be pleased so to own and crown, so to bless and follow this following discourse, as to make it an effectual means of turning you to the Lord, of winning you to Christ, of changing your natures, and converting your souls – for such a thing as that I pray, hope and believe.” (Brooks, *Apples of Gold*, 1657, in ‘The Complete Works of Thomas Brooks Vol. 1’, p.173)

Whilst the origins of Christian youth work may be impossible to discern, there is widespread agreement that the modern movement dates largely from the 19th-century (Ward, 1997, Davies, 1999, Griffiths, 2007, Collins-Mayo *et al*, 2010). Ward epitomized this view in his thesis *Growing Up Evangelical* (1996) by arguing that modern youth work emerged from the Sunday School movement through such Christian organizations as the YMCA (1844) and the Boy’s Brigade (1883). These organizations, and others like them, progressed the earlier agenda of literacy education by combining this with a clear evangelical focus (Collins-Mayo *et al*, 2010:21). Brierley (2003:30) argued a different case however, citing Hannah More, a friend of William Wilberforce, as being the first youth worker. Motivated by her Christian faith and working with a missiological social action agenda, she developed a program of education for young people as early as the 1790s, which incorporated reading, Scriptural knowledge and catechism. This commitment to social action as mission brought More into sharp conflict with the church at the time, whose evangelical Ministers accused her of Methodist sympathies. Perhaps these church leaders felt a moral obligation to the local farmers – tithers all – who were concerned that her ministry was disadvantageous to the stability of agricultural employment in the area. Whatever their motivation, local Church of England priests were increasingly vocal in their belief that Sunday School alone was sufficient to

meet the needs of young people. Following letters to the press and the publication of oppositional pamphlets, More was forced to suspend key aspects of her work. This conflict between a purely didactic catechetical model and a social action/catechetical model is one that remains for Christian youth workers even in the present time. This will be examined in more depth in Chapter Three.

2 Philanthropic foundations

In the absence of a Welfare State, the Settlement Movement (which was the cradle of effective youth work) was born out of a philanthropic response to the harsh realities of life in the late-Victorian period. Whilst there are a number of positive examples of philanthropic activities undertaken by women during this period (most notably Muriel and Doris Lester, who established Kingsley Hall), this response came usually from educated gentlemen. Griffiths (2007:25) claimed that philanthropic activists showed initial interest in the East End districts of London through reading sociological audits of London in the 1886 writings of Charles Booth, *The Life and Labour of the People of London*.

It has sometimes been cynically argued that philanthropy was used primarily as a form of social control to limit the disenfranchisement of the masses and thereby reduce the possibility of social and political agitation. Griffiths noted the revisionist trend amongst some historians to shed a negative light on the work of philanthropists by attributing to them condescending and patronizing attempts to raise the morality of the poor to a more 'civilised standard' (Griffiths, 2007:31). It is true that some were indeed motivated by fear of proletariat uprisings unless, as Samuel Smith noted, they were taught 'the same virtues which have elevated the other classes of society' (Samuel Smith, 'The industrial training of destitute children', *Contemporary Review* vol. xlvii, 1885). Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the 1880s were primary a time of selfless social action by those in privileged positions keen to alleviate the suffering of the poor and avoid the horrific excesses that had been witnessed in the French revolution. Working from kinder motivations than has often been credited to them, the philanthropists wanted to enable the poor to regain some power of their own. This compassion sparked a wave of charitable giving. As Fishman stated:

“The one growth industry in East London, at this time of social distress, was charity. Armed with the bible and the breadbasket, an army of individual and institution-based philanthropists marched across the City borders to aid...the growing armies of the poor.” (Fishman, 1988:230)

It has long been recognized that Christians were forerunners in the response to urban poverty. What Fishman made clear is that faith and social justice were not polemical ideas in philanthropic spirituality. Regardless of denomination or churchmanship, in this sense at least they stood firmly within the tradition of Hannah More rather than her detractors. Nevertheless, there was divided opinion, even amongst the most charitable Christians, about the deserving poor and the undeserving poor: ‘those who were suffering and unemployed as victims of circumstance and those who were considered to be beyond any reasonable help’ (Griffiths, 2007:29). This discourse in relation to the poor underpinned the social strategies of the day. Two reports published at the time⁴ stated that indiscriminate charity was prevalent in the East End. Griffiths claimed that activists blamed such activity for worsening the situation and increasing the levels of pauperism. However, in a pre-Welfare State era, philanthropic activity was essential for the alleviation of poverty:

“Philanthropy provided Education, Pensions, Hospitals, Dispensaries, Soup Kitchens, Free Dinners, Nursing, Thrift Societies, Penny Banks, Lunatic Asylums, Charities for Clothing and Apprenticeships and Relief in multifarious forms. Even the harshest utilitarians approved the principle of philanthropy, and Christians generally saw its scope and vigour sure evidence of the truth of the evangelical religion.” (Eagar, 1953:25)

It would be naïve to assume that churchmanship had no bearing at all on the practicalities and priorities of such ministry. Adherence to church tradition and practice resulted in two primary foci. For evangelical Christians, the chief concern was soteriological. Their belief was that the beginning of social reform would be located in individual salvation. As individuals adopted the life that God had intended for them, whatever that was, so it would follow that their material circumstances would improve. In 1883, Congregationalist minister Andrew Mearns echoed the concerns of the evangelical constituency, stating:

⁴ In 1877 (*Soup Kitchens – the Report of the Sub-committee of the C.O.S*) and in 1879 (*A Soup Kitchen in St Giles – A Report by the St Giles Committee on the condition and character of recipients of soup relief*)

“The churches are making the discovery that seething in the very centre of our great cities, concealed by the thinnest crust of civilisation and decency, is a vast mass of moral corruption, of heartbreaking misery and absolute godlessness, and that scarcely anything has been done to take into this awful slough the only influences that can purify or remove it.” (Mearns, 1883:1, cited in Griffiths, 2007:32-33)

The task of the evangelical was to bring God to the masses and, by conversion to the faith, lead the poor out of their miserable existence. Conversely, Anglo-Catholic Christians were motivated somewhat differently. The theological foundations for their ministry were located firmly in the incarnation of Christ. As Christ came to earth as incarnate God to dwell amongst us, so Anglo-Catholics sought to embody that by living alongside and ministering to the poorest in society. This view was epitomized in philanthropist Sir Reginald Kennedy-Cox’s simple maxim: ‘Warm hearted sympathy will...bring [young people] to the cross of Christ’ (Kennedy-Cox, 1939:231). Whatever the theological differences, the philanthropists worked towards much the same ends in meeting the spiritual and physical needs of the dispossessed.

One such philanthropist was Samuel Barnett, who established the first Settlement in Whitechapel, East London in 1884. In response to the rise in pauperism through indiscriminate charity Barnett stated:

“If, instead of official giving we can substitute the charity of individuals given by individuals to individuals, those who give and those who receive will be better for the meeting: human sympathy will add power to the gift, and break down the barrier which makes each class say, ‘I am, and none else beside me’.” (S. Barnett, ‘Outdoor Relief’, *Poor Law Conferences*, 1875:58)

Here is the basis for voluntarism, and a powerful alternative to professionalism, located within the acts of giving and witness. This empowering spirit was to underpin the youth ministry exercised within the first Settlement. Towards the end of the 19th-century, Settlements were a significant feature of city life. By 1926, there were more than fifty across England, with forty-one in London alone (Griffiths, 2007:40). Through Settlement activity, privileged people lived amongst the poor to develop relationships and do what they could to ease the suffering, as Griffiths stated:

“Settlements usually took the form of a large building in a poor city area. From that base, charitable, recreational and educational work was undertaken in the local community. In addition, undergraduates and new graduates were encouraged to stay in

the Settlement hostel to assist the work and gain first hand experience of slum conditions and the needs of the socially deprived.” (Griffiths, 2007:40)

Here we see the voluntary nature of recreational and educational work, as opposed to State provision. Volunteers were required to directly engage with the young people who predominantly used the Settlements, building highly personalized relationships and acting as ‘the carriers of the moral education to be achieved through youth work’ (Davies, 1999:11). This ethos was not confined to Settlement youth work, of course. The emergent voluntary Christian organizations, such as the YMCA, Boys’ Brigade and Boys’ Clubs, all considered relationships to be central in their practice and provision. Underpinning values were emerging within this early pioneering work that would endure the shifts and changes of the years ahead. The characteristic ethics of voluntarism were being established as service to the local community, an acceptance of the role of the church by the community and philanthropic giving (Bradford, 2007:294). This ethic of voluntarism was to remain a contentious area throughout the coming years, and still endures.

The intensity of philanthropic activity in this field began to diminish towards the end of the 1940s and had almost completely ceased within a decade. There are a number of reasons for this. First, most philanthropic activity had been based in buildings and Settlements that became severely damaged in World War Two bombing raids and were thereafter rendered unsafe for use. Second, the newly founded Welfare State began to take responsibility for activities that had previously been provided through volunteer agencies funded by philanthropists. Third, the rise of university courses offering sociological research opportunities within an academic environment led to a decrease in volunteers for Settlements. Fourth, many young people had been either killed during the war or moved elsewhere through evacuation programs and so the number of young people in areas where philanthropic projects had previously thrived had dramatically decreased. The demise of philanthropic activity in youth work inevitably forced the Christian constituency to reconsider the nature of appropriate provision. This moment of self-reflection was timely, given the advent at the end of the 1950s of a new social phenomenon: the teenager.

3 Responses to cultural shifts

Dr. Musgrove, in his book *Youth and the Social Order*, recognized that ‘having invented the adolescent, society has been faced with two major problems: how and where to accommodate him in the social structure, and how to make his behaviour accord with the specifications’ (Musgrove, 1964:14). It was this twin-issue of accommodation and behavioural inclination with which the Church, across all denominations, would wrestle throughout the 1950-1970s as it sought to make meaningful provision for young people. The Church in England was not slow to realize the need but struggled to comprehend the developing nature of youth culture and therefore how best to resource and train youth workers, as George Austin, Curate at St. Clement’s, Notting Dale, openly admitted:

“Youth clubs, youth camps, youth workers, youth chaplains - the church certainly cannot be accused of neglecting what is described somewhat vaguely as the “Youth Problem”. More time, energy and money must be spent by the Church on youth organizations and activities, both nationally and parochially, than on any other age-group. But with what success?” (‘Youth: The Clubable and the Unclubable’, *Church Times*, 11 September 1959, p.11)

In the same article, Austin noted the basic error the Church was making with regard to its understanding of contemporary youth culture: ‘Our failure [is] due to the fact that we have tried to have a policy for various groups which are not groups but collections of individuals.’ To develop such a nuanced approach to youth work would require professional training of an interdisciplinary nature. But such provision would be some way off yet.

Austin’s understanding reflected that of many commentators beyond the Church. Home Secretary R.A. Butler recognized that, ‘If there is any one truth about young people, it is that they have got to be personally handled’ (‘Young Delinquents’, *Church Times*, 13 June 1958, p.3). Likewise, Hartley Shawcross QC, speaking at the Public Morality Council in October 1958, displayed magnanimity when he stated, ‘The vast majority of [teenagers] are good, honest and law-abiding, and there is no reason to think that the trend of juvenile delinquency is worse here than in other countries’ (‘Delinquency Thrives When Religion Wanes’, *Church Times*, 7 November 1958, p.20). This contrasted strongly with the unremitting moral high ground claimed by some constituencies of the Church, personified in the Bishop of Coventry:

“[Delinquency] is the direct result of lack of a settled home life, lack of parental love and discipline, combined with the outward and visible signs of moral laxity – divorce, sexy novels, low-quality films and plays, cheap and sexy magazines, newspapers and advertisements...[Parents] should stand condemned by the whole of society and [at a juvenile’s appearance in Court] alongside them should stand their irresponsible parents.” (‘Parents Indicted for Crime Among the Young’, *Church Times*, 9 January 1959, p.1).

Whilst the Bishop was at least attempting to seek a cause and attribute blame elsewhere for antisocial juvenile behaviour, the same cannot be said for some of his peers who poured nothing but scorn on young people. In an open letter to young people, Harry Blamires exemplified generational arrogance by commenting, ‘We’re not ‘equals’, you know. We never can be, with [those] years of extra experience – pondered experience too – on my side’ (‘Letters to a Young Man 1’, *Church Times*, 7 February 1958, p.11). At the 1958 ‘Christian Action Conference’, Leslie Paul noted that, ‘[Teddy-Boys] have no idealistic witness...and [they] think only of sex, drink, money, and a good time’ (‘Teddy-Boys Championed by an Angry Young Man’, *Church Times*, 9 May 1958, p.20). Most damning of all were the comments made by the Archdeacon of Chesterfield in his final Visitation prior to retirement:

“[Teddy-Boys have] no roots or aims. They are the waste products of our society. Their girlfriends are nothing more than prostitutes. It is useless to condemn them. They are born into an age that takes supersonic speeds, electronic brains, nuclear power and space travel for granted.” (‘Useless to Condemn Teenagers’ Failings’, *Church Times*, 17 May 1963, p.24).

Attempting to arbitrate a centre ground, Martin Fagg noted that, ‘There is very little point in chiding the young for rejecting the lifestyle of yesterday when today’s is the only one they could possibly have acquired’ (‘Generation Gap’, *Church Times*, 14 May 1971, p.9). The older generation had developed a culture of meaning founded on the shared experience of endurance and fortitude in suffering. The younger generation did not have that experience. The Church was struggling to understand that cultural difference was not the same as a culture devoid of meaning. Few within the Church were able to interpret the symbols of youth as having any inherent meaning at all. For example, the Reverend C. Champneys Burnham commented on the experience of witnessing the Mods and Rockers clashes in his Hastings parish on the August Bank Holiday weekend in 1964. His analysis was crude, to say the least:

“Beat music...is to a large extent responsible for the madness affecting the minds and conduct of many youngsters who without it would be perfectly normal. It intoxicates them more effectively than would alcohol. I...regard it as one of the greatest evils of the age.” (‘Beat Music a Great Evil, says Rector’, *Church Times*, 21 August 1964, p.9).

It is little wonder, perhaps, that young people would be represented by pop stars who deemed the Church to be out of touch with contemporary cultural shifts. When the Archbishop of Canterbury denounced the ‘out of wedlock’ pregnancy of Marianne Faithfull with Mick Jagger as ‘a terribly sad instance of the way in which our society has disintegrated’, it is not surprising that the Rolling Stone should issue a withering response: ‘The Archbishop is entitled to his opinions, but I believe that we are on the verge of a spiritual regeneration of which he has no knowledge. It does not come under the tags, labels or pigeonholes he believes in’ (‘Primate Questioned on Mick Jagger’, *Church Times*, 11 October 1968, p.15).

This is not to say that the Church in its totality was unconcerned about comprehending the new norms of youth culture. Brian Rice spoke for those engaged in more positive approaches by recognizing the need for ‘a dialogue...between the pop culture and the Kingdom, between the musician and the missionary’ (‘Bridging the gulf between pop & the Kingdom’, *Church Times*, 20 December 1974, p.12). A decade earlier, the Bishop of Southwell had used the occasion of his enthronement to remind people that, ‘Without knowing what it is they really want, young people are groping for a sure foundation in a world which has built too much of its life on shifting sands’ and that the Church is predominantly comprised of ‘an older generation that often preaches to young people more than it practices’ (‘Bring Mods and Rockers to Christ’, *Church Times*, 15 May 1964, p.3). There were many within the Church who would actively seek to bridge that generational gap.

Fortunately, some were willing to go beyond empty pronouncements on the matter, epitomized by the Bishop of Chester who, in 1967, claimed that he headed up ‘a swinging Diocese’ (‘Swinging Diocese of Chester’, *Church Times*, 27 October 1967, p.16). The Reverend John Peers, Assistant Curate in Crayford, Kent, made a foray into the world of pop by winning a competition at a Christian Aid beat and folk festival with his song, *Mean, Mean, Mean* (‘Christian

Aid Week Begins with Music', *Church Times*, 14 May 1965, p.1). Eight years later, a Vicar from Cheshire entered a competition in Spain with his bizarrely-titled entry *Stumpy Fingers*, only to find himself numbered amongst the top fifteen contestants ('Song contest – vicar in top fifteen', *Church Times*, 8 June 1973, p.2). Perhaps he had been inspired by the Australian monk who had recently released a two-volume LP in Britain, entitled *Songs of a Sinner* ('Friar with a Guitar', *Church Times*, 14 March 1969, p.4). Of more significance than any of these attempts to connect with contemporary youth culture was the 1968 Youth Festival, held at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Martin Sullivan, Dean of the Cathedral, showed deep awareness when he declared that, for the duration of the Festival, 'we want to make St. Paul's a centre of life for [young people], a kind of laboratory. I think that young people are saying things we want to hear, and we ought to tell them that we are willing to listen' ('Pop Festival at St. Paul's in the Autumn', *Church Times*, 31 May 1968, p.1). Of course, not everyone was impressed with this Festival that incorporated such activities as steel bands, classical music, pop bands, Polish dancing, ballet, jazz, 'old-tyme' dancing and a *son et lumiere*. In a letter to the *Church Times*, Peter Myles asked, 'Is it not necessary to question whether many of the methods employed by [the Dean] are but symptoms of that seemingly perpetual orgasm expected by the Radio One generation from life today?..Perhaps the safety of angelic straps were assured by some satanic voice before the Dean's recent jump' ('St. Paul's Festival', *Church Times*, 2 August 1968, p.14). Popular with the older generation or not, such attempts to make connections were largely appreciated by many teenagers, even if they recognized the air of condescension that lay behind some of the more crass activities. David Trippier spoke on behalf of his teenage peers in a letter to the *Church Times* that laid down a challenge to the established Church:

"The Church, as a contrast to long ago when it dominated the country, goes on its knees to the quickly disappearing, long-haired, winkle-pickered, ton-up boys, and tries to entice them with jazz in its cathedrals and substitutes Twist sessions for Bible classes...Don't laugh at the boy who comes to church in the red shirt and winkle-pickers for, if he hears the Word of God – next time you see him he may wear a dog-collar." ('Plea from a Teenager', *Church Times*, 24 August 1962, p.15).

Despite the good intentions of various individual leaders, it remains the case that the Church as an institution failed to adequately understand the burgeoning

youth culture in the 1950s-1970s. With only a few notable exceptions (for example, The Mayflower Family Centre in Canning Town and the 59 Club in Hackney Wick), the Church seemed unable to develop either an appropriate language base or targeted responses to youth sub-cultural groups. No overview of this period can be complete without a cursory examination of the events of 1968 and the response of the Church to these. It is in this historic moment that we witness the Church's greatest failure during that period to grasp the importance of the need for effective youth work. This failure inevitably had a profound impact on the shape of youth work over the forthcoming decades, not least with regard to the role and identity of the professional youth workers who would be employed thereafter.

Whilst there was no British equivalent of the student activism that swept Europe and the US (with the possible exception of the Grosvenor Square Riots on 17 March), young people in the UK did not remain entirely passive in 1968. There were 'sit-ins' at the Regent Street Polytechnic and the Holborn College of Law and Commerce, the University of Essex, Croydon College of Art and Guildford School of Art, Birmingham University and Bristol University. Demonstrations were held at Enfield College, Birmingham Art School and the Universities of Aston, Leicester, Hull, Keele, Leeds and Bradford. In his excellent history of this period, *The Sixties*, Marwick cites an incisive comment from the *Wood Green, Southgate and Palmers Green Weekly Herald* to illustrate the outrage felt by many at this expression of youthful emotion:

"...a bunch of crackpots, here in Haringey, or in Grosvenor Square...can never overthrow an established system. They may dislike having to conform to a system in which they are required to study, and follow set programmes, and take examinations...[but] The system is ours. We are the ordinary people, the nine-to-five, Monday-to-Friday-semi-detached, suburban wage-earners, who are the system. We are not victims of it. We are not slaves to it. We are it, and we like it. Does any bunch of twopenny-halfpenny kids think they can turn us upside down? They'll learn." (Cited by Marwick, 1998:636f).

Many grassroots Christians wanted the leadership to condemn the behaviour of young activists. Just as many, however, were looking to the leadership to make a response that would finally show a meaningful connection between the institution and young people. These polarized expectations can be exemplified by two comments in the church press. Representing conservative believers, a

Church Times editorial looked askance at the behaviour of young people who 'occupy the buildings of the colleges where the taxpayer is giving them the chance to study' ('Cult of Anarchy', *Church Times*, 7 June 1968, p.10). Conversely, the Christian Anarchist Group, based in East London, provided a theological rationale for what was happening:

"Our Lord did not hesitate to break the laws of both private property and the Sabbath. [Anarchism is] not a hatred of law and order as such, but of its imposition from above...The rights of private property have always been challenged by Christian social thinking, which has generally distinguished between property for use and property for power. Our Lord came to transform the world. As baptized Christians, we are committed to sharing this task." ('In Praise of Anarchy', *Church Times*, 14 June 1968, p.12).

The Anglican Church was afforded the perfect opportunity in 1968 to review its youth work provision in the light of the worldwide revolutions and student activism. Bishops from throughout the Anglican Communion came together for the ten-yearly Lambeth Conference. The sense of opportunity was not lost on Valerie Pitt, a member of the Church Assembly and head of Arts and General Studies at Woolwich Polytechnic:

"Quite a lot of the world isn't, apparently, steaming itself up about the Burial Service or Anglican-Methodist reunion. A lot of it isn't talking about Lambeth at all, but about justice and the people. Some of it is talking revolution...[Revolution] *is* happening in the *here* of many of the bishops now packing for Lambeth. There are, aren't there, Anglican Christians in Haiti, in Southern Africa, in Asia? And some of the American bishops...are not sure that they ought not to stay with their flocks through a dangerous summer.' Social unrest and political activism will be, for a generation, the condition of their pastoral ministry. Lambeth has to help the Church to live with the Revolution." ('Comes the Revolution: or, Some Thoughts before Lambeth 1968', in the Lambeth Conference Supplement of the *Church Times*, 19 July 1968: viii).

Pitt was intuitive enough, however, to realise that her plea would not be heard. She was proved right in her assumption that, 'for a whole month, the shepherds of the Anglican flock will devote themselves earnestly, piously and with considerable learning to the problems not of the next ten years but of the past ten years'. Sadly, there was not a single agenda item concerning youth work at the 1968 Lambeth Conference. The leadership of the Anglican Church singularly failed to give any guidance, or sense of priority, to the needs of young people during a time of such deep social change. The institution of the Church had failed to grasp the semiotic value of the student protests and, again, proved

thereby that it did not comprehend youth culture as a culture of meaning. With regard to the development of youth ministry as a profession, it largely remained the task and responsibility of individual churches to make provision and resources available. Given the predominantly middle-class, and therefore wealth creating, make-up of the evangelical constituency of the Church, it is not surprising that the continuing professionalization of youth work would be located there. We now turn to a consideration of that.

4 Evangelical youth ministry

In *Growing Up Evangelical* (1996), Ward provided an historical overview of evangelical Christian youth work, with a particular focus on the emergence of the youth fellowship. Whilst that has proven a useful analysis in itself, I will trace the history of evangelical youth work with a view to exploring how discourses have emerged over the years that have positioned professional Christian youth work within conflicting discourses of youth *work* and youth *ministry*. This positioning is rooted within discourses of voluntarism and professionalism. Although the literature acknowledges the tensions between youth *work* and youth *ministry*, it has taken for granted the powerful effect these discourses have had on the current identity of professional Christian youth work.

We have already noted that evangelical philanthropists, alongside their Anglo-Catholic counterparts, were always concerned to alleviate hardship and poverty. But it is true to say that this social concern was integrally bound up with their desire to pass on the Christian message. In *Evangelicals Today*, John King suggested that the desire for a balance between social action and evangelization had become an increasing concern within that constituency as the 20th-century unfolded:

“Whether old-fashioned Evangelicals like it or not, evangelicalism today is a horse of a different colour, and not least of the changes is a switch of interest. Evangelicals today are not interested in the same issues as their fathers and grandfathers; without ceasing to have strong convictions about the incarnation, the resurrection, the atonement, justification by faith alone etc., they are much more concerned about the impact of the Gospel on the secular society that surrounds them.” (King, 1973:11).

The success of the contemporary evangelical approach to youth work is attributable, in no small part, to a dual blessing of rich financial resourcing and

the ability to develop a strategic pattern of ministry that strengthened volunteerism and professionalization in co-terminous fashion.

Although he was speaking at the AYPAs⁵ Conference in August 1964, Reverend Barry Till, the Dean of Hong Kong, could have been describing the Church of England at any time during the previous century when he called it, 'a private club of religion for a lot of chaps who are keen on religion, giving them a nice cosy feeling' ('Anglican Youth Must be Outward-Looking', *Church Times*, 4 September 1964, p.11). His concern was to inspire the Church of England to invest in youth work so that the *status quo*, both within the Church and within wider society, would be challenged and transformed. Till was not the first evangelical to recognize that need, of course. Josiah Spiers had led the way in 1867 through the introduction of the Children's Special Service Mission (CSSM), which was to later change its name to Scripture Union (Ward, 1996:27). Sustained and effective ministry under the banners of Boys Brigade, Crusaders, Covenanters, Jucos,⁶ and Inter-Varsity Fellowship would soon follow. What united all of these evangelical organizations was their bias towards middle-class constituencies. This was a deliberately strategic policy that would have a profound effect on the nature of voluntarism and professionalism in Christian youth work. Writing about the influence of Eric Nash, who founded the extraordinarily influential 'Bash Camps', Eddison commented:

"He aimed to concentrate his mission on a highly select clientele, the privileged and largely speaking the rich, who made up perhaps five per cent of our school population; not just the public schools but the top thirty or so...Why this intense concentration? The first answer is a simple one. These schools contained a high proportion of the future leaders of the country. Therefore to reach them with the gospel opened the possibility of reaching future rulers, men with an immense influence over their contemporaries. A phrase often used was that our converts could be a 'multiplication table'." (Eddison, 1982:19).

To a large extent, this strategically conversionist approach dictated the nature and quality of evangelical leadership in Christian youth work from the 1960s onwards. Considerable effort was invested in training students to play an active role in the nurture of their peers, not least at Oxford and Cambridge. Since 1947, Oxbridge had held triennial missions led by such luminaries as Dr Michael

⁵ The Anglican Young People's Association

⁶ Junior Covenanters

Ramsey, who was soon to become Archbishop of Canterbury. Some of his listeners may have agreed that his lectures were 'so comprehensive and profound, so brilliant and stimulating, that they cannot fail to have brought many young men and women near to our Lord' ('Primate's Great Mission to Oxford University', *Church Times*, 12 February 1960, p.1). Others, however, were clearly of the opinion that 'Christianity, as expounded, did seem to be a sort of personality-cult for simpletons who would not otherwise be able to behave well' ('Mission to Oxford', *Church Times*, 19 February 1960, p.13). As divided as opinion was, the impact of such missions was undeniable in forming young Christians as willing volunteer youth workers as well as inspiring many towards full-time vocational pursuit in the field.

Voluntarism was greatly strengthened during this period by the burgeoning ecumenical movement. The inability of major denominations to secure mutual recognition or, in the case of the Anglicans and Methodists, permanent reunion, did nothing to stem the flowing tide of local ecumenical youth work initiatives that flourished by the hand of willing evangelical volunteers. Arguably, frustration with such indecisive leadership at an institutional level actually strengthened the desire to develop grassroots ecumenical youth work. Youth work volunteers realized that denominational allegiance was far less important than engaging young people in social action projects and propagation of the Gospel. As a result, ecumenical youth work and, as a result, ecumenical youth work volunteering, flourished. In May 1960, fifty churches, chapels and missions in the Borough of Islington led a joint Youth Mission ('United Mission to Youth at Islington', *Church Times*, 27 May 1960, p.24). In Sheffield, five churches across three denominations committed to a three-year outreach youth work project under the leadership of full-time youth worker and Liverpool University graduate, Peggy Richmond ('Ministry Backs Extension of Youth Scheme', *Church Times*, 5 August 1960, p.11). Youth work volunteers headed up a team of young people from Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and Congregational churches in Charlton and Blackheath to make fortnightly visits to an elderly care home, offering social activities and worship ('Young Londoners' Care for Aged', *Church Times*, 14 January 1966, p.24). Other examples could be cited.

An inevitable result of this ecumenical partnering was the beginning of a shift in evangelical identity amongst Christian youth workers. By the early 1970s, youth workers were engaging with a kaleidoscope of spirituality and styles of worship. As a result, they were happy to develop a sense of personalized spiritual coherence that had previously been alien to their tradition. In years gone by, the local church had been the sole place of spiritual identity formation. That was no longer the case. Youth workers were now able to engage with a myriad of traditions and expressions of evangelical faith. It was evidently the case that local evangelical church leaders felt threatened by Billy Graham's 1973 SPRE-E rallies that had been attended by more than twelve thousand young people. With one voice, they urged that future rallies of this nature should involve 'imaginative training, sound theology, openness to the Spirit, and be firmly linked to the local church' ('SPRE-E: misgivings among Evangelicals', *Church Times*, 7 December 1973, p.3). But for Christian youth workers, volunteer and salaried alike, the die had been cast. Ecumenism was broadening their horizons. The 1973 launch of Greenbelt Festival opened their eyes to Christian spirituality beyond traditional evangelicalism, *Buzz* magazine was providing new insights and training resources, and Christian bookshops were not slow to cater for an inter-denominational market of young people eager to read, learn and be spiritually nourished by new forms of music and worship. No longer would the identity of youth work volunteers and professionals be formed in the local Youth Fellowship or Bible Study Group alone.

Brian Rice commented about evangelical revolutionary leader Arthur Blessitt that, 'He hates being labeled and analyzed. It's what he's got that matters. He's got Jesus. Nothing to join, nothing to pay, nothing to structure: someone to give' ('Meet Arthur Blessitt', *Church Times*, 5 May 1972, p.5). This free and self-giving spirit was a foundational feature of contemporary evangelicalism from the 1970s onwards and, as a result, voluntarism and full-time youth work flourished. Much of this was focused on social responsibilities overseas, such as steering fund-raising activities or taking a Gap Year to serve in a Christian project abroad. However, many thousands more were inspired to volunteer in British youth work projects that contained both a social justice and a Gospel-propagation agenda. It was an inescapable fact, however, that evangelical approaches to youth work were still encumbered by class issues. A fine example of this is the

reminiscence of Graham Claydon, youth worker at The Clubhouse, Great Portland Street, London. Claydon specialized in working with marginalized young men but was never able to escape the fact that he was not a 'local':

“A Cumberland teenager, Joe Sanders, put his finger on it for me one day: ‘All you Club helpers are middle class gits with guilty consciences about being better off. So you’re working out your guilt on us. We don’t need that. We can work it out for ourselves’. For the conversation to linger shows how critical it was for me.”
(*Forty Love – A Community Remembers*, n.p.).

It is clear that, in contradistinction to the Settlement Movement, evangelical Christian youth work had its roots firmly planted within the context of the wealthy and educated. This is not to say that evangelicals only worked with the upper-middle classes but work amongst this section of society thrived in a way that work amongst the poor did not. In part, this was due to the ongoing ability to secure finances for evangelical youth work. Given the wealthy constituency towards which it was aimed, resources came more easily than to a sector of youth work in which the influence of philanthropy was waning. The consequence of this has meant that the ethos and methods of evangelical Christian youth work has evolved from a public school and Oxbridge foundation (Ward, 1996:41). Many young people who attended the Bash Camps went on to become highly influential evangelical leaders; John Stott, Michael Green, David Watson and Dick Lucas to name but a few. These ordained men, as well as large numbers of other church leaders and lay people, have significantly influenced the evangelical expression of Western Christianity.

This voluntarism as a class and gendered enterprise, which relied on the cultural capital of the élite, was to cause tensions in the coming years as professionalization of work amongst young people emerged. Also, the nurturing of new (male) Christian leaders through youth work has had the effect that youth work is often only considered a temporary endeavour; a training ground for bigger and better things. This continues to undermine Christian youth work as a career for life and a valid ministry within the church. Indeed, this has mirrored what was happening in secular youth work training in the early 1950s where youth work was regarded as a lesser occupation to that of teaching. Training options were offered whereby people could transfer between youth work and related occupations. Youth work was therefore considered a preparation for other work. This undermined the claim of the time that youth

work had its own distinct body of knowledge that deserved professional status (Bradford, 2012:5). This adds weight to the liminal identity status of youth work, Christian or secular. As Bradford stated, ‘this confirms a view of youth work as in-between, neither entirely located in one occupational space nor in another, and with its knowledge claims poorly supported’ (Bradford, 2012a:6).

Ward’s thesis in *Growing Up Evangelical* has been instrumental in constructing the discourse that Christian youth work is a training ground for clergy and other church leaders. This liminal positioning of the work is akin to some kind of adolescent state. The symbolic notion of adolescence is a particularly patronizing but powerful metaphor for a profession that has been regarded as pioneering within the evangelical church community. Discourses about adolescence have tended to view youth as a period of ‘transition from childhood to adulthood’ (Bradford, 2012b:57). Transition is usually regarded as having an end-point; linear, structured horizontally and uni-dimensional (Bradford, 2012b:22). This liminal state (Turner, 1969) or *inbetweenness* has significant implications for Christian youth workers and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four. However, the history of youth work, and certainly Ward’s reading of it, has positioned Christian youth work in a perpetual state of professional adolescence, as opposed to a mature profession in its own right with a considerable contribution of educational, missional and pastoral knowledge to offer the church and the wider society. To view professional Christian youth work as a transitional training ground for *proper* church leaders is to minimize its potential and position professional youth workers in a continuous liminal state.

5 State involvement and divergent pathways

Rising tensions between the conservative and liberal wings of the church at the beginning of the 20th-century occasioned a further moment of critical development. As has already been noted, evangelical youth work that mainly focused on the middle-classes had emerged as the *successful* mode of Christian youth work. This coincided with a change of attitude towards young people and youth work by the State. The inter-war years saw the expansion of voluntary organizations such as Scouts, Boys Brigade and Girl Guides. However, the State was holding back on any involvement at this point (Brierley, 2003:38). According to Davies (1999:12), this was due in part to the resistance

to State intervention by voluntary organizations keen to maintain their strongly ideological and charitable roots. The State was regarded as a potential threat to 'individual and family responsibility and to community self-help' (Davies, 1999:12), which was spoken of earlier in the forming of movements such as the Settlements. The dominant culture of British society at the time was built on discourses of citizenship and community responsibility. Individuals and groups were willing to provide resources for young people within their locality, so there seemed to be little need for a centralized youth provision (Brierley, 2003:38). Also, particularly in the 1930s, there was a growing fear that the State would be regarded as being in alignment with the totalitarianism of fascist governments in Europe who were banning voluntary youth organizations and establishing youth organizations of their own (Davies, 1999:14).

The First World War had a significant effect on youth policy. Rising crime led the Home Office to establish local Juvenile Organization Committees in order to stimulate youth provision. Clearly driven by a moral panic about young men who were not at war, the national Juvenile Organization Committee (JOC) for the first time enabled voluntary organizations to contribute to public policy and so a relationship between voluntarism and the State began (Davies, 1999:15). Voluntary organizations provided ingenuity and human resources whilst the State provided much needed funding. Only thirty-six JOCs were still in operation by 1936. Economic prioritizing by the government had discarded youth provision and so the work, as is often the case today, was considered dispensable.

The result of so many young men being killed during the war and the increase in paid employment opportunities for women led to a shortage of volunteers to serve voluntary organizations (Davies, 1999:16). As a response, local committees diverged from their propensity to protect their independence (in the sense that these organizations were not governed by the State in any way) and began to establish new national organizations. The National Association of Boys' Clubs and the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs were both formed as a result of this (Davies, 1999:17 & Brierley, 2003:39). From the 1930s onward, Christian influence within youth work became a focus of debate. The State became increasingly involved in the intervening years of the two

World Wars. This change saw the beginnings of youth work as a more educationally focused endeavour (Brierley, 2003:38). However, Brierley's observation was more ambiguous than he suggested. State involvement oscillated between education, leisure and welfare, compounding a kind of liminal status (Turner, 1969) for young people. Briefly, liminal status refers to a boundary state of being 'betwixt and between' social categories and for young people they are betwixt and between childhood and adulthood. This concept will be explored further in the following chapters. The transmission of the Christian faith was no longer the main thrust of youth work activity. The more evangelical and missional aspects of youth work became colonized within Christian organizations.

The onset of the Second World War in 1939 sparked an era of critical social change. The impact of evacuation of children and young people to the countryside, families separated through enlistment, and women working long hours in jobs undertaken by men was obvious for all to see. More insidiously, the crime rate was also rising. Government attention focused again on youth work organizations in order to prevent the social problems that had occurred during the First World War (Brierley, 2004:42-43). Gradually, the State became more involved in youth provision and the church became less involved. This caused a fissure within Christian youth work and so began what is now known as secular youth *work* and Christian youth *ministry*. Government policy makers during this period exploited a general sense of fear that young men, likely to experience major disturbance due to the War, would embark on a juvenile crime spree as had been experienced during the Great War. Thus they justified proposals for key State interventions in young people's lives.

Publication of Circular 1486 (HMSO, 1939) led to the creation of the modern Youth Service. This Circular recognized the contribution made by voluntary organizations and sought to give the Service of Youth an equal status in relation to other educational resources offered by the Local Authority. The report assumed that youth organizations were educational resources and that therefore it was necessary to 'give the service of youth an equal status with the other educational services conducted by the local authority' (Davies, 1999:18). In response to lacking youth provision in some parts of the country, the Circular

recommended the establishment of a new initiative. The Board of Education became responsible for youth welfare with another branch of the Board responsible for grants, as well as maintaining and developing facilities. The Circular also recommended that a National Youth Committee should be appointed to advise the Minister. This prompted the Archbishop of Canterbury to comment that the events were ‘the beginning of a new epoch’ (cited in Davies, 1999:19).

Another reason for policy focusing on young men prior to the Second World War was the concern that young men should be ready to go into combat when required. This led to the passing of a *Physical Training and Recreation Act* (1937) giving Local Authorities the power to fund provision which raised the levels of national fitness. Some local authorities took this opportunity to start their own youth centres. Funding was made available to help clubs hire premises, buy equipment and provide competent leaders’:

“The authority may also provide and, where necessary, arrange for the training of, such wardens, teachers and leaders as they may deem requisite for securing that effective use is made of the facilities for exercise, recreation and social activities so provided.”
(HMSO, 1937:4)

1,700 new clubs had started by September 1940. The Central Council of Recreative Physical Training was given grants to train leaders. This support was bolstered the following year by the Carnegie Trust, which provided bursaries for full-time youth leaders in training (Davies, 1999:19). Local Authorities were now funding and organizing their own youth work. So began wholesale State involvement in the Youth Service.

No formal youth work qualification was required when the Youth Service came into being. This, however, did not quench the debate over what a good ‘youth leader’ should be. The tension between a tradition of voluntarism and the looming notion of professionalization dominated discussions about the future of youth leader training (Bradford, 2007). The debate had been ongoing since the 1920s and 1930s when the idea developed that being a ‘good youth leader’ necessitated more than ‘personality’ and ‘zeal, tact and energy’ of the largely middle class leaders (Bradford, 2007:298). Previously, these had been the

accepted qualities of a good leader. Middle class cultural capital was thought to have been sufficient then but this notion was now being challenged.

In the 1920s, the Church of England introduced knowledge from the social sciences to their leadership training. The training was structured by formal assessment and certification (Inter-diocesan Council for Women's Church Work, 1925, Bradford, 2007:299). The NCGC considered the merits of this kind of training, introducing a more instrumental and rational approach by theorizing and reflecting on supervised practice. According to Bradford (2007:299), this approach sought to form youth leaders in new ways and according to new spheres of knowledge. During the 1940s and 1950s, debate ensued between universities about their role in professional and vocational training. The Board and Ministry of Education (MoE) recognized that formal knowledge had a role to play in the formation of the professional self. Bradford cites 1941 as a critical time in the professionalization of youth work. At Queens College, Oxford, Government representatives, academics and practitioners met to discuss the nature of a 'good youth leader'. These were difficult conversations because of the ongoing nature of the debate between voluntarism and professionalization. However, a committee – The Informal Youth Training Committee (IYTC) - was organized to identify schemes of training. The IYTC, informed mainly by voluntary organizations, produced the first definition of what was necessary to form a professional youth leader. This was the basis for the first *emergency* youth work courses to be delivered under Circular 1598 (Board of Education, 1942b, cited in Bradford, 2007:300-301) until 1948. This supported the institutionalization of expertise into the youth work profession, which has been explored in more depth in Chapter One. In response to the 'youth problem', The Albermarle Report (1960) significantly expanded the Youth Service. The effects of this Report on professional youth work have been well documented within the literature. I will give here only a brief overview of its effects on Christian youth work specifically.

The Albermarle Report pronounced youth work as educative – but not in the formal sense (HMSO, 1960). Reestablishing work that had begun in the 1940s, the Report led to the professionalization of youth work, affirming the professional place of full-time youth leaders (Bradford, 2012a:11). By 1968, the

number of full-time youth workers employed by local authorities had increased from 700 to 1,500 and new training qualifications, career structure and better terms and conditions emerged. This new emphasis weakened the role of volunteers and so the conflict between voluntarism and professionalism continued, thus destroying any integration between secular youth *work* and Christian youth *ministry*. This polarization between Christian youth ministry and secular youth work will be discussed further in Chapter Three. However, it is prudent to say at this point that much of the tension experienced within Christian youth work presently can be attributed to this particular period of youth work history.

As noted earlier in the Chapter, it was during these years that the *youth fellowship* was promoted as a *safe* alternative to the emerging popular youth culture at the time. Parents of Christian young people were relieved to have their children protected from the 'extremes of main-stream culture' (Brierley, 2003:49). This evangelical youth ministry provided spiritual formation and a social program for these mainly middle-class young people. Personal and social development marked out as significant for young people in the Albermarle Report was less significant for the evangelical middle-class community.

During the 1970s the Fairbairn-Milson Report was published. The report recognized political, as well as physical and social education, as being important in the governing of young people. It celebrated the right of young people to question ideas and attitudes, and 'advocated a more person-centred critical dialogue between youth workers and young people' (HMSO, 1969:153). The National College for the Training of Youth Leaders, set up as an emergency training college in 1961 after the Albermarle Report, began to develop a new pedagogy for youth work through publications by the staff at this time. Bradford (2012a:7) located their pedagogical approach within an ideology of humanistic and romantic individualism. Later work of the College would be informed by a more radicalized discourse deriving from counter-cultural movements such as feminism and civil rights. The response of the evangelical church to this pervasive secularization, as we noted above, was to develop a subculture of its own. Christian young people now had music, arts festivals, and magazines as platforms to express and inform their faith. Organizations such as

the Jesus People emphasized the importance of charismatic spirituality and community living. As Brierley (2003:51) cited, 'Faith and culture were beginning to develop a symbiotic relationship'. However, it is clear from the history of youth work that this had existed in its earliest days.

In 1982, *Experience and Participation*, or the Thompson Report, was published. With the political backdrop of Thatcherism, consumerism was the dominating feature. This Report recognized the major structural divisions within the UK; class, race, sex and discriminatory attitudes towards people with disabilities. Thatcher reduced State involvement in the lives of its citizens and imposed an increased State intervention through Quality Audits. Local Authority spending cuts affected the Youth Service significantly; a contributing factor to the demise of funded Christian projects.

Many involved in Christian youth work recognized a need to draw on the professionalism and resources of the Local Education Authority (LEA) funded youth service. Churches encouraged Christians in the Youth Service to apply for grants that would fund part-time and full-time workers: 'The youth service was recommended as a career and Christians were encouraged to share in the post-Albermarle world where "considerable thought and effort have been given to the...proper professional training and status" of the youth leader' (Ward, 1996:72-73). It would appear that Christians engaged in this partnership conversation were not threatened in any way by the much debated discourse within voluntary organizations as to the undermining of religious principles that professionalization would bring. There appeared to be a pragmatic spirit of openness within the shift from voluntarism to professionalization of its staff.

Funding from the LEA also involved an expectation for professionally recognized training for Christian youth workers in such projects. This was a purely secular qualification and did not adhere to the evangelistic or missional ethos of Christian work. Ward (1996:73) viewed this approach to training as being to the detriment of the mission of Christian youth work. The tensions between professionalization of Christian youth work and secular training are evident. There is much to be said here with regards to the transformation of the self through training. The issue of what kind of 'selves' both secular and

Christian trainers are trying to produce is discussed in ensuing Chapters. Ward's view, however, was that secular training alone would not prepare youth workers for the specific task of doing mission theology. Ward considered this problem as essentially being one about identity:

“It is one thing to be as professional a youthworker as possible and operate essentially a secular and largely non-evangelistic youth project. Such a person may well seek to maintain a witness and even see young people come to faith. I would maintain that it is quite another thing self-consciously and incarnationally to enter into a community as a mission agent of Christ.” (Ward, 1996:75)

Ward was identifying the effects of secularism on Christian youth work. He was making a distinction between a youth worker who is a Christian – working in a project demonstrating professional ideals – and a youth worker who decisively works within a community with a primary focus on mission. Ward (1996:75) continued, ‘Evangelical commitment which embraces secular frameworks has in my view led to dualism and possibly elements of liberalism’. His belief was that seeking partnerships outside the church and embracing secular models of training has distanced youth work from the mainstream church. Ward was commenting on the tensions within Christian youth work in the early 1990s. This mirrors the anxieties that voluntary organizations were experiencing in relation to professionalization forty or more years previously. As Bradford commented:

“For the voluntary organizations professionalization jeopardized a vital civic and democratic sphere in which bonds of obligation and connectedness consolidated familiar social relations. Some voluntary organizations feared that the secular state's practices - professionalized youth leadership, for example - would undermine the religious principles that formed the ethical foundation of good leadership” (Percival in Bradford, 2007:302)

The response of the Christian constituency to this anxiety was to devise a new professionally validated undergraduate youth work course that also addressed the missional and theological criteria that Ward was so passionately defending. The first cohort of students began in 1998 under the name of the Centre for Youth Ministry (CYM). The course was validated by Oxford Brookes University. Since this time, a number of professionally validated and theological based Christian youth work courses have come into being. In the UK, this has caused an overcrowded market for would-be Christian professional youth workers to choose from. As a result, many of these courses and colleges are closing at the present time. In 2010, youth work became an all-graduate profession for full-

time workers. Bradford (2007) suggested that the demand for social closure, which had been sought by the advocates of professionalization in the 1930s and 1940s, has therefore demonstrably progressed. This is an interesting turn for professional full-time youth work as posts have been dramatically cut in light of the Coalition austerity measures. A different kind of professional capital is emerging in the form of Foundation Degrees, youth support qualifications and indeed qualifications for volunteers, strengthening Bradford's claim that, 'A singular professionalism remains elusive' (Bradford, 2007: 307).

6 Summary

Current professional youth work has its roots firmly located within a Christian heritage. From the earliest philanthropic and evangelical traditions of youth work, voluntarism has been the dominant feature of the work. By the time World War Two broke out in 1939, Christian voluntary organizations were working alongside the beginnings of the statutory sector without having to conceal their faith. The partnership between voluntarism and professionalism was eroded. But the focus of the Coalition Government on local communities has provided once more for the governance of young people. As a result, voluntarism and professionalism are again beginning to develop a more pragmatic accommodation.

This Chapter has provided an historical context that provides an understanding of the discursive debates present within Christian youth work for many years. The following Chapter will elaborate on these discursive positions offering a review of the literature in relation to youth *work* and youth *ministry*. This will enable further insight into the tensions resulting from faith work and professionalism.

Chapter Three: The Sacred and the Profane: The discursive positioning of Christian Youth Work and Christian Youth Ministry

1 Introduction

This Chapter introduces the present divergent discursive positions represented by the phrase 'Christian youth work', hinted at in the previous Chapter. These are Christian youth *ministry* (as sacred) and professional Christian youth *work* (as profane). The literature relevant to these discursive positions is discussed, exploring the relationship between Christian youth *work* and Christian youth *ministry* and how the latter conflicts with the concept of a professional identity. Finally, the limitations of the literature, and how this thesis addresses such limitations, will be presented.

2 The Sacred and the Profane

In the early part of the 19th-century, Emile Durkheim based his ideas of the sacred and the profane on studies of religion in primitive societies. He made a distinction between the sacred and the profane, understanding them to be two different orders of meaning (Durkheim, 1995) or, in a sense, different forms of knowledge. The profane refers to the ordinariness of life, particularly the responses of individuals to their everyday world. Essentially, the profane is concerned with the 'practical, immediate and particular' (M. Young, 2008:146). Conversely, the sacred is regarded as a collective product of society and unrelated to any real world problem. For Durkheim, the sacred was not constrained by everyday practical problems or getting a job done. The sacred was the paradigm for different kinds of conceptual knowledge including science, philosophy and mathematics, which he considered to be removed from the everyday world (Durkheim, 1995).

Whilst Durkheim accentuated the differences between the sacred and profane as two distinct orders of meaning, one is not superior to the other. However, the two orders are in tension and Durkheim took for granted the challenge that crosscutting boundaries present. Durkheim tended to minimize the unequal distribution of power within these two different orders of meaning, which Young (2008) suggested is due to the small-scale, undifferentiated societies on which

Durkheim's theoretical approach was built. Consequentially, for Young, if not for Durkheim, concerns regarding relations of power became marginalized. Considering this theory with regard to Christian professional youth workers, these different orders of meaning are the basis for division between the concepts of 'ministry' and 'professionalism' or, more generally, between faith and secularism.

This thesis challenges the crude judgments that sacred and profane polarities present within the evangelical community with regards to Christian professional youth work. It argues that Christian professional youth workers are positioned within these intersecting and divergent discourses of Christian faith-based youth work and a secularized liberal notion of professional youth work. In brief, youth *work*, or youth and community work, is usually associated with the caring professions and the domain of the Local Authority as part of the secular, liberal State. Youth *ministry* has emerged within the evangelical church as a response to the spiritual needs of young people (Brierley, 2003). At this point, it is useful to gain an understanding from the extant literature of what is meant by Christian professional youth *work* before exploring the nature of Christian youth *ministry*.

3 Christian Professional Youth Work

It is pertinent here to discuss the theoretical stances that are used in defining Christian youth *work*. As discussed in the previous Chapter, the origins of Christian youth work lie within the idea of social responsibility and witness undertaken in the 18th- and 19th-centuries. As time progressed, youth work became a largely secularized activity in the wider society, with Christian youth work becoming a discreet practice, but related to this broader field (Shepherd, 2009). This context was one of the first whereby a hybridized form of Christian youth worker was emerging. This new form of Christian youth worker was motivated by their faith whilst, at the same time, adhering to the professional values of a secularized occupation.

Youth work as a secularized and (now) as a Christian profession, requires workers to achieve local or national accreditation to agreed occupational standards (K. Young, 2006). According to Jeffs and Smith (1987), these standards provide a philosophical basis for youth work as informal social

education. Christian youth work, as noted in the previous Chapter, has progressively adopted these standards to govern its youth work. This process has been contested amongst the evangelical community especially. However, the Christian constituencies are not the only ones to contest the professionalization of Christian youth work. I have been involved in NYA validation panels on behalf of CYM having to argue the case for professional qualification within Christian youth work. The tensions relate to suspicions with regards to evangelization and a dominant value base that will not reflect a more liberalized notion of society. JNC endorsement has always been granted, but not without its difficulties. However, this has not deterred other Christian professional qualifying youth work courses being developed.⁷

From the secular youth work standpoint, 'good youth work' should:

- Offer quality support to young people which helps them achieve and progress;
- Enable young people to have their voice heard and influence decision making at various levels;
- Provide a diversity of personal and social development opportunities;
- Promote intervention and prevention to address individual, institutional and policy causes of disaffection and exclusion;
- Be well planned, focusing on achieving outcomes that meet young people's needs and priorities. (NYA 2007:7)

Christian youth workers who have been theologically and professionally trained approach their work with this notion of 'good youth work'. Through the adoption of JNC qualifying standards, the State controls the professional/occupational boundaries of youth work. Collins-Mayo *et al* (2010:25) viewed professional Christian youth work as 'engaging directly with the interaction between a Christian narrative and the ethics of secular liberalism'.

The *Second Ministerial Conference on the Future of the Youth Service* in 1990 brought into being the core values of youth work. The values were described as: informal education, empowerment, equality of opportunity and voluntary participation. This still remains the definitive Government statement on the

⁷ BA (Hons) Degrees with JNC in youth work and theology are offered through such organizations as Centre for Youth Ministry, Oasis College and Moorlands College.

nature of youth work. The following are the four main points, which were presented in the Conference Report:

- Educative – enabling young people to gain the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to identify and pursue their rights and responsibilities as individuals and members of groups locally, nationally and internationally;
- Designed to promote equality of opportunity – through the challenging of oppressions such as racism and sexism and all those which spring from difference of culture, race, language, sexual identity, gender disability, age, religion and class; and through the celebration of the diversity and strengths which arise from those differences;
- Participative – through a voluntary relationship with young people in which young people are partners in the learning process and decision making structures which affect their own and other people's lives and their environment;
- Empowering – supporting young people to understand and act on the personal, social and political issues which affect their lives, the lives of others and the communities of which they are a part. (National Youth Bureau, 1991)

It has been noted that 'activity that is not informed by these values is not considered to be youth work' (Brierley, 2003:7). Christian professional youth work in the UK strongly relates its intentions for young people to these four core values. Christian youth work has adopted the principles to provide theoretical insight and methods of practice for its work, and 'integrate[s] these perspectives into the overarching nature of the larger gospel story' (Ward, 1997:27). The positioning of Christian youth work within a secular liberal agenda has been the site of much contestation. Thomson (2007) and Ward (1997) have both argued for a ministerial focus for youth *ministry* whilst Davies (2005) and Green (2005) have argued for youth *work* to be done within Christian contexts. Brierley (2003) has sought to bring the two together. Consideration will now be given to how the core values have been understood within Christian youth work and how they have influenced its practice.

3.1 Informal Education

Informal education forms an aspect of a professional ideology within the youth work occupation, rather than one of a range of educational methodologies (Mayo, 2000). To be an informal educator is an attractive aspect of professional identity for many Christian youth workers. The title itself provides an immediate distinction from a schoolteacher, which as Jeffs and Smith (1996) commented, is indeed what youth workers are not. Jeffs and Smith took a comparative

approach to schoolteachers and youth workers in order to develop an understanding of informal education, highlighting features of formal and informal approaches to education. They were keen to stress that the goal of any good schoolteacher or youth worker is that 'they seek to educate not indoctrinate' (Jefferies and Smith, 1996:17). They claimed informal education and formal education are both similar in ethos. Each will be concerned with educational process and have a range of purposes in mind. The schoolteacher and youth worker have to learn to trust in their professional judgment and assessment of what learning has taken place. Jefferies and Smith defined the task of an informal educator here:

“...it means, first and foremost, being an educator. This involves seeking to foster learning in the situations where we work. It entails cultivating environments in which people are able to remember significant experiences, and to work at understanding them. It also means creating situations where people can experience new things.” (Jefferies and Smith, 1996:19)

Jefferies and Smith drew mainly on the work of American pragmatist and educationalist John Dewey to inform their thinking on informal education. At the core of informal education is life experience. The role of the informal educator is to harness the life experience of those with whom they work and create opportunities within contexts whereby these experiences can enable young people to learn in groups and as individuals. Experiential learning has historically been considered as the distinctive approach associated with the Youth Service:

“Youth Service has a major contribution to make to what we refer to as the experiential curriculum which all young people have a right to expect. Responsibility and progressive achievement are essential elements of maturation, however indirectly approached...Hence our emphasis on the need for an experiential curriculum.” (Department of Education and Science, *The Further Education Curriculum and Development Unit Review*, 1981:6-8)

This ethos suggests that the professional youth worker is not there to influence, direct or guide 'but rather to enable, facilitate and reflect' (Mayo, 2000). Learning is gained through experience. The role of the youth worker is to enable young people to consider their actions and the possible consequences of these. A youth worker should provide opportunities, in a Deweyan sense, for reflective reorganization, reconstructive and transformative experience (Mayo, 2000).

Collins-Mayo *et al* (2010), in their research with young people who attended Christian youth work projects, wanted to find out how non-practicing Christians developed in faith and whether the Christian youth projects they were involved in helped develop a 'Christian consciousness' (2010:x). They found that Christian youth workers, in the use of informal education techniques, focused primarily on the young person's experience of the world around them, rather than taking the missional approach to youth work which focuses on the young person's relationship with God. The youth workers hoped that young people would ask them questions about their faith due to the lifestyle they lived. This rarely happened and so young people would not become any more informed about the Christian faith. The findings of Collins-Mayo *et al* suggest that, although there was an environment in which learning (in this case, about God) could take place, the youth worker was constrained by the Deweyan notion that 'we never educate directly, but indirectly by means of the environment' (Dewey, 1916:19). This is the fundamental point of contention for Christian youth work. However, this example also points to the *in-between* nature of the Christian youth worker whereby they bring secular youth work values to their practice in Christian contexts but do not feel able to fully participate in Christian youth work's main task of sharing the faith.

I return to Jeffs and Smith's plea to ensure that education is not misconstrued as indoctrination. Brierley (2003) developed this line of thought for the Christian sector in relation to dialogue. He remarked that there is a fine line between education and indoctrination. This is an area of contention for Christian professional youth work. From the field of secular youth work, there have been accusations, sometimes appropriate, of Christian youth work imposing its values and beliefs on young people, focusing mainly on conversion (to the Christian faith) and proselytizing, as indicated earlier. Brierley commented that:

"Youth ministers usually start from the premise that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life and that what is contained within Scripture is sufficient and necessary for all young people. This means that, despite their creative methods, youth ministry tends to rely upon more formal approaches. However, the issue is not the validity of the Christian gospel, but the attitude by practitioners to engagement with the young. Many youth ministers assume they know what's best for the young people they serve and that their role is to supplement the formal, but non-proselytizing religious education they receive from school. It is this that proponents of

youth work find objectionable. Surely this is brainwashing?" (Brierley, 2003:10)

Brierley challenged the church and Christian youth workers in their formal approaches to education with a mind to secure converts to faith. However, the term brainwashing and, indeed, indoctrination are strong expressions to use. In response to those who accuse Christian youth work of indoctrination, Brierley stated:

"If conversion is primarily about change then all informal education is in the business of conversion. Any youth work that does not result in change must be deemed ineffective. Informal educators must surely hope that, as a result of their interventions, young people engaged in criminality will change their ways. So Christians are not alone in looking for conversion. The issue is what role youth workers play in the conversion process." (Brierley, 2003:86)

Brierley shifted the focus of faith conversion to conversion and change in behaviour, making this about education *per se*. He was making the claim that the purpose of informal education is about change but the overall goals may be different. However, a challenge is also issued to certain evangelicals who consider conversion to faith to be something that is 'done' to others. Brierley understood this egotistical understanding of conversion to be challenged in the light of informal education. It provides a theological rationale that understands people responding to God through the Holy Spirit, rather than having conversion 'done' to them by someone else. Christian youth work should enable young people to question matters related to faith without fear of indoctrination or manipulation. He believed that youth workers should share their own beliefs, as it would be unethical not to do so. 'It involves a willingness to embrace conversation, not preaching; questions, not answers' (Brierley, 2003:87). In withholding values, young people are denied the information they require in order to make informed decisions.

Brierley's approach to informal education is considered as an educational method whilst Christianity is the substance. Youth workers are encouraged to enable young people to make choices for themselves hoping that young people will choose Christianity. The overall aim is that young people will make informed choices about faith, whether that is Christianity or not. As mentioned earlier, Collins-Mayo *et al* stressed that this presents problems in terms of mission in

that young people are not sufficiently informed enough to be able to make decisions related to faith. They claimed that the assumption amongst youth workers is that if they act out a Christian life (being loving and kind), then young people will be curious about their lifestyle and ask them about their faith. Collins-Mayo *et al* see how informal education is used in practice by Christian youth workers as detrimental to the passing on of the Christian faith. Youth workers consider that young people want authenticity;⁸ therefore the youth worker will reflect this back as being important. 'The logic of liberalism is that any choice is as valid as any other' (Collins-Mayo *et al*, 2010:97).

3.2 Voluntary Participation

Voluntary participation requires the relationship between youth worker and young person to be based on a mutual and voluntary contract. Youth workers invite young people to take part in their projects but they are never forced or coerced into participating. Voluntary participation means that young people are free to opt in or opt out of the project or relationship. This section will briefly review the literature in relation to voluntary participation and its influence within Christian youth work.

The Albermarle Report (1960) stressed the importance of voluntary participation for young people. The Report identified young people as the fourth partner in the Youth Service alongside Government, Local Authorities and voluntary organizations. Voluntary attendance by young people was viewed as a main strength of the Youth Service, and was regarded as the distinguishing feature of professional youth work. However, voluntary participation is more than willingness on behalf of young people to attend a youth provision. K. Young (1999, in Banks 1999) stated three underlying ethical premises relating to voluntary participation. First, the intention of the work should be made known to young people. Second, young people should be encouraged to ask questions. Third, young people must give their informed consent to participate in any activity as well as the underlying process. The notion of voluntary participation appears to be essentially about power with Young reflecting a zero-sum notion

⁸ Authenticity is often thought to mean 'being true to oneself'. This does not imply that the term 'authenticity' does not have any wider social meaning, but 'being true to oneself' is always constrained by wider social meanings (R. Erickson, 1995). This will be discussed further in the next Chapter.

of power. However, someone either has power or does not have it. Foucault offered an approach to power, which views power as a relation and not a commodity:

“Power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free. By this we mean individual or collective subjects who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several reactions and diverse comportments, may be realized. Where the determining factors saturate the whole, there is no relationship of power; slavery is not a power relationship when man is in chains.” (Foucault, 1982:790)

Foucault’s argument viewed power, or the exercise of power, as useful to the understanding of voluntary participation. It views young people not as subjects who are to be given power by youth workers who relinquish some of their power. Instead, it is recognized from the outset that young people are free (in Foucault’s terms). However, youth workers want young people to be formed in very particular ways. That formation is an example of power and subjection in Foucault’s terms, meaning that youth workers are the agents. This nuanced understanding of voluntary participation sees youth workers and young people as being involved in a complex relationship of mutuality where the young person is as active in constructing the power relation as the youth worker (or so the youth worker would like to think).

Given the nature of church, with a significant number of attendees being families, the question needs asking; to what extent are young people with Christian parents given the choice to participate in church activities on a voluntary basis? Brierley explored this in a lengthy discussion, focusing on the relationship between parents, young people and the youth worker. It is not unusual, within Church contexts, for parents to insist that their children attend at least one church related activity per week. Christian parents are keen for their children to learn about the faith in the hope that they will decide to accept it for themselves. This throws into question the appropriateness of voluntary participation as a value for Christian youth work. Brierley (2003) believed that such enforced participation can damage the relationship between parents, young people and youth workers. Through being denied the opportunity to opt out of church activities, Brierley argued that young people may display their dissatisfaction by blaming the youth worker, who becomes guilty by association.

Forms of resistance by young people may be exhibited due to the lack of choice on their part. Brierley's approach asks the youth worker to protect their unique, voluntary relationship with church young people, reminding youth workers that, 'they [youth workers] are not parents and do not act as agents for them' (Brierley, 2003:75).

Providing a theological rationale, Thomson (2007) perceived weaknesses in Brierley's approach and questioned the appropriateness of voluntary participation within Christian youth work. In brief, he argued that authentic human freedom can only be found in relationship with God. Intentional human action is constrained by internal and external factors. The Christian faith is interested in freeing people from the power of sin that can restrict their lives, actions and choices (Thomson, 2007). Thomson conceded that the principle of voluntary participation is important for the correction of coercive ways of working with young people but he questioned the validity of voluntary participation as a value for Christian youth work. He viewed young people as 'not yet mature adults' who may need to accept limitations upon their freedom of action, citing antisocial behaviour as an area that may need challenging, which may lead to an exclusion from an activity. This he viewed as denial of participation and not coercion. He considered how many young people miss opportunities for learning and personal development due to the freedom of choice young people are given through voluntary participation. This he considered a challenge to voluntary participation, and not a denial of it. Responding to Brierley's assertion that Christian youth workers should not be agents for the parents of church young people, Thomson warned that youth workers should be wary of undermining the authority of parents.

Brierley and Thomson, although not in agreement with one another, have recognized the influence of power relations within Christian youth work. Youth workers are placed in an uncomfortable position, as church communities are usually close knit. More importantly, church youth work is usually funded by church members, many of whom are parents. Christian youth workers directly experience performative demands by stakeholders of the work, in terms of what and how young people should be learning.

3.3 Empowerment

The caring professions, specifically social work and health care, have increasingly used the theory of empowerment to influence how they work with individuals and groups. The term is difficult to clarify. However, Neil Thompson provided one straightforward definition (2007:21): 'Empowerment can be defined as helping people gain greater control over their lives and circumstances. It is therefore closely linked to the notion of power'. The relationship between empowerment and power will be developed later, but it is pertinent here to understand empowerment as process.

Fitzsimons (2011) stated that literature relating to empowerment refers to it in three differentiating ways: 'as a theory, as a process and as a concept' (Fitzsimons, 2011:4). Fitzsimons preferred to think of empowerment as a process rather than a theory or concept. Indeed, this is a useful way of thinking about empowerment in relation to youth work as the youth work process should be an educational activity and liberating experience in order to support the participation of young people in society (Young, 2006).

According to Fitzsimons (2011), the term 'empowerment' first appeared in development and gender studies literature during the 1970s, which emanated from the work of Freire, who was best known for his work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972). Academic disciplines such as psychology, education, sociology and research organizations for community development then began to apply the concept to their work:

“...the key terms that empowerment is posed against are 'oppression, 'powerlessness', 'control' and 'marginalisation', and it can be viewed as *A process of increasing interpersonal or political power so that individuals can take action to improve their life situation.*” (Gutierrez, 1990:149)

Developing Thomson's view that empowerment is closely related to power provides a useful starting point in understanding the term more thoroughly. Weber (1947) made a distinction between authority and power. He considered authority to exist when citizens give their consent and accept the authority of others as legitimate. Weber's view was that power is only held within legitimate authority. Weber recognized three sources of legitimacy; traditional authority which has already been established within a society, charismatic authority

which is held by an exceptional human being based on their personal qualities and rational legal authority, which is based on an office or position within a society and not on personal qualities. This understanding renders powerless the individual who does not fit into any of these categories. It was Foucault who provided a challenge to Weber's approach. Foucault's concept of power will be explored in more detail in the following Chapter. Here, I will provide only a brief overview in order to provide a deeper understanding of empowerment.

In *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1* (1979), Foucault opposed the Weberian view that power is something that can be possessed by some but not others. Of this conceptualization, he wrote:

“it allows power to be only ever thought of in negative terms: refusal, delimitation, obstruction, censure. Power is that which says no. Any confrontation with power thus conceived appears only as transgression. The manifestation of power takes on the pure form of ‘thou shalt not’.” (Foucault, 1979:53)

Foucault's approach argued that if repression was the only product of the exercise of power, it could not explain how power produces things such as pleasure, knowledge and discourse. Foucault's critique allowed a liberating and emancipatory analysis of power, which is useful when considering Foucault in relation to youth work. Opposing power as a possession, Foucault argued that power is imbibed within the social network with productive effects rather than negative:

“What gives power its hold, what makes it accepted, is quite simply the fact that it does not simply weigh like a force which says no, but that it runs through, and it produces, things, it induces pleasure, it forms knowledge [savoir], it produces discourses; it must be considered as a productive network that runs through the entire social body much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression.” (Interview in Morris and Patton, 1979:36)

Applying this to empowerment in youth work, it recognizes that young people, including those socially marginalized, also exercise power. This means that power can be considered at the micro level of society, in everyday practices. From Foucault's perspective, power is held not only by the State but also by individuals, and is always relational.

Based on this brief explanation of the approaches of Weber and Foucault to power, empowerment within youth work is now understood as a significant

value. What Foucault offered, and Weber did not, is a more subtle and nuanced approach to power. Power resides not only in the State, but in the individual.

The notion of empowerment became more prominent in the youth work domain during the 1980s. It was during this time that a more radicalized professional discourse informed the value of empowerment, which focused on young people as gendered, classed and racialized. This discourse had its roots in the National College for the Training of Youth Leaders, where thinking by the College's staff 'formed the youth work canon and the College's practices soon became the orthodoxy in youth work training' (Bradford, 2012a:7). This was during the late 1960s and 1970s, when the more radicalized approach to youth work had an underlying humanist aspect. This thinking derived from the broader counter-cultural backdrop of feminism and civil rights. A neo-Marxist lens developed the discourse of young people as one hegemonic group to a more politicized notion of young people that, in turn, influenced ideas relating to informal education. The redressing of social injustice and power imbalances became the overarching imperative of the youth worker within this radicalized discourse (Bradford, 2012a:7).

Within the field of Christian professional youth work, the empowerment value carries varying weight. The tensions and contested nature of the 1970s' tenacious secularization are still being experienced within Christian youth work today. Youth work projects with a community and social justice agenda take seriously the challenge posited by the concept of empowerment. Some church work less so. This can be seen in the writing of Brierley and Thomson, where the actual definition of empowerment has been more or less ignored. At best, they have considered their reader constituency and offered a theological rationale of empowerment (Brierley especially). At worst, they demonstrate a complete lack of awareness for any theoretical foundations for empowerment and its relation or appropriateness for Christian youth work. Perhaps this suggests a wider misunderstanding of this slippery term.

Brierley drew from Jeffs and Smith (1996) who challenged the notion that one person can empower another:

“...problems arise when we talk of empowering others. This implies that as educators we give power to people. We make them powerful or able. This position is neither possible nor desirable. As educators we work with others to create environments for learning. We don't change people, people change themselves in interaction with others. To talk of empowering people is, thus, to risk being anti-liberatory.” (Smith and Jeffs, 1996:16)

This Weberian approach to the understanding of empowerment can lead to dependency on the empowerer by the empowered. In a Weberian sense, youth workers can be in danger of viewing young people as mere objects to be acted upon. Jeffs and Smith's view, more in sympathy with Foucault, was that 'power is a feature of relationships' (Jeffs & Smith, 1996:16) and it cannot be given away or gifted to young people.

With Foucauldian undertones, Brierley pointed to fostering positive environments for young people in which they can empower themselves. In Jeffs and Smith vein, this requires the youth worker to deflect attention away from themselves and onto the young people with whom they work. In relation to Christian youth work, he saw the role of the youth worker as creating the environment whereby young people can discover faith for themselves rather than the youth worker doing it for them. This creates a dilemma for the professional youth worker. One of many professional claims is that the youth worker possesses a wealth of knowledge and expertise. The dilemma is that they acquire authority through this knowledge and expertise, yet they may have to relinquish that authority through the process of empowerment, resulting in a shift in their professional status. This de-escalation in professional status was advocated by Griffiths (2013). He believed that Christian youth workers, because they are Christians, should not be claiming the power and authority that arises from their position as professional. His view was located within the notion of incarnational youth ministry, which will be discussed later. This view will also be discussed in the following Chapter when considering professional power.

When writing of empowerment, Brierley explicitly drew attention to ethical issues for Christian youth workers who work to this value, particularly in reference to young people who inquire about other faiths. Brierley argued that the Christian youth worker should be promoting genuine spiritual inquiry, whilst

he held onto the belief that, once young people have looked at other faiths, they will find the Christian faith irresistible. However, he neglected to mention what he would do if his Church youth group decided to collectively embrace Islam. Brierley recognized that many within the evangelical church would take issue with this approach and viewed the youth worker as the challenger of what he considered to be a disempowering church. Again, the youth worker is placed in a contentious and possibly isolating position.

Brierley had legitimate reason for considering the church to be less than empowering to young people. For many in leadership within the church, empowerment of young people has meant that, if young people are playing their instruments on a Sunday morning in the worship band, then this is true participation and empowerment in action. From this Brierley asserted that, 'Youth work *and* ministry recognizes that young people have much to contribute and, more than that, have a right to self-determination' (Brierley, 2003:110, italics author's own). He emphatically asserted, again reflecting Jeffs and Smith (1996), that young people should not be merely consumers of the church youth work projects but active contributors to them. It is by no means wrong to challenge the church on the empowerment of young people. However, it is difficult to identify a robust enough account from Brierley as to what this actually means in practice.

Discussions on empowerment are nonsensical if the concept of power relations is ignored. Brierley wrote loosely when referring to parents of churched young people and adult leaders of churches. For Foucault, discourses are always related to power. Foucault's understanding of power was such that power is not only held within the State or structures of the State, but functions pervasively throughout all relations within society by means of discourse. These discourses construct and reinforce power relations. The influence of power relations for Christian youth workers has been ignored and needs to be explored. It will be discussed in more detail later in this thesis as part of Chapter Seven.

3.4 Equal Opportunity

Equality, as a concept, is vague and contested. Often it is thought of in economic terms, focusing on differences in wealth between individuals, groups

and even countries. However, equality can be considered in reference to human dignity, privileges, power in relation to others and fairness (Roberts, 2009:32). The term 'equality' is a misnomer as it is impossible to achieve equality for all and can ignore differences between individuals and groups. Equality of opportunity, however, is not about denying difference. Rather, it seeks to ensure that all people have an equal opportunity to succeed in life. Equality of opportunity, as in the removal of disadvantage in competition with others, is often thought to be more achievable in practice. Banks argued that, in youth work, there is much rhetoric regarding equality of result, i.e. the removal of disadvantages altogether (Banks, 2001:67). Anti-discrimination has been linked with equality (Thompson, 1993) in that it seeks to challenge negative stereotypes in order to work towards developing structures and systems that do not embody unnecessary discrimination (Banks, 2001:67).

The UK does not have a written Constitution that safeguards equality. However, it does have an Equality Commission, which came into being after the Equality Act in 2006. The Equality Act stated:

- A single Commission for Equality and Human Rights;
- Duty on the public sector to promote equality between women and men;
- Access to good facilities and services without discrimination based on religion or belief

In addition, the Employment Equality (Age) Regulation 2006 stops age discrimination in employment and vocational training (cited in Roberts, 2009:39). Other legislation pertaining to equality relates to gender, race, disability and sexuality. Roberts (2009:39-42) comments that the law demonstrates where a society sets its standards. However, legislation is limited in the UK as most of it focuses on the categories of people (listed above) in relation to the workplace. Youth work has developed its own way of working with individuals and groups of young people who are at risk of discrimination. However, equality of opportunity is more in line with a liberal secular value base. Rather than dealing with equality, equal opportunities merely attempts to construct a level playing field, which, of course, is a nonsense in unequal societies.

After the *Second Ministerial Conference* in November 1990, equal opportunities became the benchmark for the activities of the Youth Service. In response to this, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education wrote:

“The Youth Service has now nailed its colours to the mast as an education-based service promoting equality of opportunity and enabling more young people to participate more fully in society.”
(Foreman, 1992)

The most influential and key Christian writers in this field have virtually ignored all literature concerning equal opportunities. If we are to accept Mayo’s (2000) assertion that equal opportunities is a given in informal education, then it could be deduced that equal opportunities is alive and well within Christian youth work as informal education has been held up as an important aspect of work with young people. However, as has already been suggested, within the literature on Christian youth work, the use of informal education has focused on how the Christian story is mediated to young people as opposed to being the means for a transformative influence.

4 Youth ministry as a distinct discourse

Distinctions between Christian youth ministry and secular youth work focus mainly on three integrating areas; education, mission and pastoral care (Shepherd, 2009). The common thread within this framework is the discipline of Practical Theology. As noted in the previous Chapter, education and mission have historically been prevailing discourses within the Christian youth work domain. But more recently, Christian youth work has sought to develop a robust theology for its work.

Collins-Mayo *et al* (2010) provided a distinction between Christian youth *work* and Christian youth *ministry*:

“Youth work is seen more broadly as educative, not overtly Christian, community focused and with a mission agenda at the social action end of the spectrum. Youth ministry is work with young people who are already part of the Church and incorporates evangelism and discipleship.” (2010:23-24)

Here, Collins-Mayo *et al* stipulated the key ideas of youth ministry as they see them; education, mission, evangelism and discipleship. The defining characteristics of what constitutes ministry are made clear through the distinction that involves Christian youth *ministers* working explicitly with young

people whom they enable 'to engage with Christianity's 'chain of memory' (Collins-Mayo *et al*, 2010:24). Thomson (2007) agreed with this line of thought from an educational viewpoint, stating that the church must pass on the Christian curriculum. Youth ministry is one vehicle for this. Conversely, youth *workers* work within community focused contexts and 'have to balance their passion for mission with their desire to take seriously the professional values of being educative, participative, empowering and committed to equal opportunities' (Davies 1999, in Collins-Mayo *et al*, 2010:24).

In his unpublished thesis on young people's participation in youth ministry projects, Shepherd (2009) considered youth ministry within a threefold theoretical framework: youth ministry as education, youth ministry as mission, and youth ministry as pastoral care. This template is useful to adopt here as it provides three points of reference in understanding the youth ministry ethos. However, Shepherd's work, although he considers the youth *ministry* youth *work* debate, does not factor in the lived experience of Christian youth workers trying to work within these diverging discourses. This thesis addresses just that and how Christian youth workers inhabit the in-between space created by these discourses.

4.1 Youth Ministry as Education

The origins of education in youth ministry lie in the way Christian communities have sought the nurture and catechism of the young (Shepherd, 2009). The emergence of this approach has been explored in the previous Chapter. The influence of informal education within Christian youth work has already been noted. Here, I will provide a brief context for Christian education in the UK. Until the 1960s, religious education in schools had been taught on a confessional basis. The purpose of this was to ensure that young people would adopt the Christian faith, which was the 'established' faith of the nation (Wright and Brandom, 2000:72). A shift then occurred after this time where RE became teaching *about* Christianity as opposed to teaching *into* Christianity (Westerhoff, 1994). This was a reflection on the movement of the British society from Christendom to post-Christendom, 'in Christendom, Christians enjoyed many *privileges*, but in post-Christendom we are one community among many *pluralistic* others, (Pimlott & Pimlott, 2008, *italic's author's own*). Westerhoff (1994) viewed Christian education as a socialization process referring to

teaching *into* as nurture, formation or instruction. He considered this to be a valid function of the community of faith, whereas teaching *about* Christianity belongs to the realm of general education.

From this, it can be taken that the work of Christian education in churches is to provide Christian nurture. Shepherd (2009) noted that the discussions within the youth ministry literature do not represent well these discussions, citing the focus of youth ministry on informal education, culture and faith transmission for this. However, Shepherd was also keen to point out that, in general, writing about education and Christian nurture youth ministry has not been well represented with the focus being on inclusion in whole church practices or supporting parents in their role as educators (Shepherd, 2009).

Earlier in this Chapter, Brierley's view of informal education was discussed. Thomson (2007) disagreed with Brierley's adoption of a predominately informal educative approach to Christian education amongst the young, arguing for more formal approaches which are intrinsic to passing on the Christian faith, but being complemented with informal educational methods. He challenged the use of the term indoctrination, recommending that this should be distinguished from the process of socialization. Thomson, akin to Westerhoff, adopted the position that Christian youth work is about socializing young people into faith. He warned that a fully informal educative approach could deny or postpone the participation of young people in their spiritual formation, arguing that it is not a neutral course. 'It is as much (and as little) socializing them – into practical atheism – as to socialize them alternatively – by bringing them up within the Christian faith' (Thomson, 2007:227). He viewed the purpose of youth ministry as passing on the Christian faith. This involves an educative approach that is concerned with Christian formation as rather than indoctrination or brainwashing. Here, he distinguished youth ministry from youth work:

“...if formal education (in the sense of passing on the Christian faith and story) is intrinsic to youth ministry, then youth ministry cannot be understood as a subset of youth work, defined in terms of informal education.” (Thomson, 2007:229)

Thomson's concern was that churches have educationally failed many young Christians. '[Young people] have been deprived of encouragement to learn the

scriptures and to learn how to handle them responsibly' (Thomson, 2007:229). Thomson commented that the core values of youth work, and in this case informal education, are not intrinsically antagonistic towards Christianity. However, he considered there to be significant limitations in the overall goals of a secularly defined understanding of youth work stating that youth ministry cannot be subsumed within it. Therefore, Thompson argued for a distinction between youth *work* and youth *ministry*.

4.2 Youth Ministry as Mission

The literature pertaining to young people and mission is vast within Christian youth work. The term 'mission' is a contested notion with a range of differing factors involved. However, within Christian youth work literature, a major focus has been on transmission of the Christian story. Collins-Mayo *et al* firmly equated the term 'Christian' in Christian youth work with transmission of the Christian story:

“...to call itself 'Christian' youth work at some point needs to explore the idea of transmission of the Christian story past and present and how young people are being drawn into the Christian community.” (Collins-Mayo *et al*, 2010:25)

The authors were clearly making a distinction between Christian youth work and its secular counterpart. Christian youth work is about the transmission of the Christian story, as well as bringing young people into the faith community. The focus on this aspect of mission is also reflected in earlier texts. Ward (1997) stated this imperative:

“To be truly Christian, youth work must carry within it the essential dynamic of the gospel story. We are called to proclaim this gospel in both our words and deeds in ways that young people can understand.” (Ward, 1997:26)

Ward continued in this vein, demarking Christian youth work as a distinct practice from secular youth work. Ward claimed that Christians do youth work for no other reason than to tell the gospel story. He recognized the usefulness of integrating youth work theories, such as educational theory, community work and so forth, into missional practice. Ward regarded the overarching nature of the gospel message as the story within which other commitments as a youth worker are understood and have meaning. Therefore, it is a fundamental aspect of the Christian youth work identity:

“When the relationship between the gospel and other theories of working with young people is reversed the youthworker ceases to be a Christian youthworker and becomes a youthworker or community worker who happens to be Christian.” (Ward, 1997:27)

Thinking about mission within the youth ministry literature is often accompanied by the concept of contextualization. Contextualization refers to ensuring that the gospel is made relevant, understandable and accessible for young people. As Shepherd (2009:128) noted, ‘contextualization is not the process of reflection upon culture, but the process of participating within young people’s cultural worlds’. Contextualization then requires a robust understanding of the cultural worlds of young people. For contextualization of the gospel to be put into practice, the responsibility of relationship building is placed on the Christian youth worker. The role of the youth worker, in a missional approach, is to be present wherever young people are (Ward, 1997). There is much weight placed on this aspect of Christian youth work, and it is usually referred to as relational youth ministry.

Borgman (1997) and Ward (1997) both understood the youth worker as constructing a process of relationally-based activities within their work in order to bring about transformation for young people. Borgman, Ward and Brierley, amongst others, were of the mind that young people cannot be offered cultural interpretations of the gospel if the youth worker has not spent time absorbing himself or herself in the culture and adequately learning how to do so. To emphasize this approach, Ward proposed that relational care is a distinct Christian approach to work with young people. Here the term ‘Christian’ defines the work as it is connected to the ongoing mission of God. It is a spiritual enterprise involving discernment and prayer in order to connect with young people who have been created as spiritual beings (Ward, 1995). Ward argued for a theological understanding of the relational aspect in Christian youth work, stating that a theological understanding of relationality advocates for the centrality of personal relationships with young people, as these are affirmed in the nature of God as trinity. Ward made an interesting comment in stating that these relationships are personal as opposed to professional, and demonstrate a commitment to be with and advocate on the behalf of young people (Shepherd, 2009:131). Through these relationships, young people are encouraged to form

relationships with others, especially within the community of faith. It is through this form of contextualization that it is hoped that young people will form a relationship with God (Ward, 1995). According to Ward, care is both a value and a symbol. Youth workers show care as a sign and symbol of the grace and love of God, not in any hope of reciprocation, but in the hope that such care might be active in the transformation of young people's lives and offer support while this process is occurring. This aspect of relational youth work is implicit in the understanding of incarnational youth work and demonstrates a pedagogy at work.

Ward regarded incarnational youth ministry as being built on the notion of 'God becoming a human being to build relationship with humanity' (2008:13). Fundamental to the Christian faith is the belief that God became human in the person of Jesus Christ. This was God's revelation within human history and culture. Jesus was born 2000 years ago, in Palestine, as a Jew: 'when God chooses to communicate his message he does so using the language, customs and social relationships of a particular group of people in a particular time and in a particular place' (Ward, 1997:90). Incarnational ministry is based on this premise and, according to Ward (1997), requires the youth worker to have particular skill sets and expertise. These fall into three categories. First, the youth worker needs to 'step outside' the adult way of relating and find relevant ways of communicating with young people in their own environment. Second, the youth worker needs to be able to overcome cultural barriers, understanding and communicating within language patterns, social systems and symbolic frameworks of a particular group. Third, the youth worker needs to be able to communicate the faith from one subculture to another. It is this third requirement that marks Christian youth work out as distinct from secular work.

American youth ministry writer Andy Root (2007) developed Ward's thinking on incarnational ministry and youth work. He claimed that a more robust theology of incarnational ministry is needed in order for youth workers to avoid using relationships to influence young people. Root suggested that a theology of the incarnation structures a position of 'place-sharing' where the youth worker and young person share a relationship of trust and mutual respect as, in theological terms, this is where Christ's presence is. This challenges the basis of forming

relationship as a means to an end, especially as a young person may reject any affiliation to the Christian faith (Shepherd, 2009). Root's thinking echoed the concerns of Brierley in his argument for the importance of informal education in youth ministry. Passmore argued that incarnational theology is the motivating factor for youth work:

“Valuing humanity naturally leads to a relational approach, which was demonstrated so well by the incarnation, which in turn enables a youth work approach rooted in, emancipatory education, a discovery of equality, joint participation, and empowering of the other towards humanity, that when practiced with integrity takes us beyond the old dichotomies of kingdom and church, youth work and youth ministry etc.” (Passmore, 2013)

Here, Passmore viewed incarnational theology as that which will see the integration of youth *work* and youth *ministry*. However, this still does not address the problem raised by Collins-Mayo *et al* of informal education as inadequate in enabling youth workers to talk about the Christian story. If incarnational youth work is about being with young people and the forming of relationship, then the telling of the Christian faith to young people remains elusive.

4.3 Youth Ministry as Pastoral Care

A third distinct aspect of Christian youth work is in the realm of pastoral care. Christian youth work has had to shake the misconception that it is all about entertainment and the provision of fun activities for young people, which has been influenced by the discourse of youth culture as a leisure culture. However, it does remain a temptation for youth ministry to slide into this entertainment approach as much of the resources available to youth workers advocate for this (Shepherd, 2009). The professionalization of youth work has facilitated a shift towards the more educative value of the work. Dean and Foster (1998) advocated for the centrality of pastoral care within youth work, coming to the conclusion that youth work has become more about the provision of educationally enriching programs rather than about pastoring young people. They espoused the notion that the Christian youth worker role is as the primary pastoral agent but within the context of the Christian faith community. The pastoral task of the youth worker is to enable young people to engage with their faith rather than provide answers to problems or dilemmas. This places another performative expectation on the Christian youth worker, as well as creating

further tension between what can be perceived as the more professional aspects of the work pitted against the more ministerial tasks of the work. Dean and Foster wrote specifically for a youth *ministry* audience and drew less on professional practice within their thinking. Therefore, it is not surprising that they take this view.

Green and Christian (1998) provided a differing approach to pastoral care in Christian youth work, written from a professional practice perspective. In *Accompanying*, they outlined their pastoral approach as 'being there' for a young person (1998:21). This relationship is not formal and does not relate to mentoring. But it is one in which mutual trust and transformation can evolve by both parties listening to one another's experiences. In relation to youth ministry, they understood the young person as being on a spiritual quest, searching for meaning and understanding. This search is accompanied by an adult or peer. Both young person and accompanier share the journey together. This is a less directive approach to pastoral care than that of Dean and Foster. The more liberalized secular values present within informal education are made explicit.

4.4 Youth Ministry as Practical Theology

Every accredited course that CYM offers to potential youth ministry students has a significant focus on practical theology. Indeed, all the research participants in this study graduated with a BA (Hons) in Youth and Community Work with Practical Theology. Practical theology is one stream within the broader discipline of theology, sitting alongside biblical theology, systematic theology, and church history, to name but three. Practical theology is considered an appropriate theological basis for Christian youth work, since its primary task is 'concerned with finding ways to reconcile practice and theory' (Ward, 2008:33).

Practical theology, as an academic discipline, has developed from interaction between correlating, or mediating, methodologies such as 'experience and revelation, practice and theory, social science and doctrine' (Ward, 2008:33-34). It is this interaction between dualistic methods that provides Christian youth work with a pragmatic theological tool as it enables the practitioner to relate theory to practice and *vice versa*. Practical theology should also enable the

professional to reconcile the binary elements of professionalism and ministry. Christian youth workers are encouraged to actively reflect on their practice. For the Christian, this is 'both professional and theological' (Shepherd, 2009:10). Reflection relates to personal professional conduct, the tasks that youth workers perform, and how God is deemed to be active in these areas. Borgman (1997), viewed this type of reflective practice as a theological task of connecting a threefold exegesis of scripture (awareness of God), culture (awareness of the world in which we live) and self (awareness of motivation and conduct as youth ministers) (Borgman, 1997:34-35). From this practical theology is understood as a fundamental aspect of the Christian youth workers practice. It is all encompassing.

The pastoral cycle is a key structural tool used to enable Christian youth workers to theologically reflect on their practice. Whilst the pastoral cycle takes on many forms in the literature, I will specifically focus on the form discussed in Ballard and Pritchard (1996). They considered the cycle as a series of stages that the practitioner moves through in order to implement the methodology: experience, exploration, reflection and action. The first stage refers to the starting point, which is the present situation. Events are experienced that demand a response or expose a tension and it is no longer possible to continue as before. Exploration demands an analysis of the experience. Reflection raises questions relating to values and beliefs that were brought to light in the exploration of an event. Finally, action is the point where changed patterns are introduced in practice in light of what has been learned through the process. Ward (2008) regarded the pastoral cycle as a problem-solving method for practitioners, and considered it helpful as such. However, he did note some problems with it. The pastoral cycle tends to reinforce the dualisms between reflection and the everyday lived experience, even though this is what the model aims to eradicate. The model separates the analysis of a pastoral situation from theological reflection, as these are particular stages in the method. Theological reflection (not to be confused with the pastoral cycle as that is used as a tool to theologically reflect) has become a key methodology within practical theology. Graham *et al* commented:

“Theological reflection is still easier said than done. Received understandings of theological reflection are largely under-theorized and narrow, and too often fail to connect adequately

with biblical, historical and systematic scholarship.” (Graham *et al*, 2005:1)

Whatever the pros and cons of the pastoral cycle, it is a significant borrowing of Kolb’s learning cycle (1984), which is grounded in humanistic practice. This could raise some contentious issues for those advocating a theological framework.

The discourse of Christian youth ministry has been articulated as education, mission, pastoral care and practical theology. I will now discuss the differing discourses of youth *work* and youth *ministry* in order to provide an understanding of the liminal context that Christian youth workers inhabit.

5 Discursive Positioning of Christian Youth Work/Ministry

The secular liberal framework of the four values of professional youth work has significantly influenced the ethos and practice of Christian professional youth work. As noted, there are varying discursive positions within the literature about the appropriateness of this framework for Christian youth work. Thomson (2007) deemed the values as an inadequate framework, locating his concerns with uninformed Christians who may adopt the principles without questioning the ‘liberal political agenda that the values partly represent’ (Thomson, 2007:244). Brierley, on the other hand, positively advocated for the use of the values in Christian youth work. Brierley’s approach asserted that the youth worker who is a Christian in a statutory setting can have a fulfilling ministry through witness whilst adhering to the professional (in the sense of a youth *work* discourse) and educative responsibility of youth work. The Christian youth worker in a church context can exercise ministry (lead acts of worship, bible teaching and so forth), doing so through the methods that adhere to the core values, which simultaneously maintain the principles of informal education.

Christian professional youth work has endured years of a divisive polarized discourse pertaining to ministry and professionalism. The discourse has mainly taken root within mainstream evangelical churches that have adopted a binary view of what Christian youth work should be. This has been unhelpful for Christian youth work as it has constructed the notion amongst some of the evangelical Christian youth work constituency that *ministry* is equal to *good*

(sacred) and professionalism is equal to *bad* (profane). A consequence of this is that two conflicting positions have emerged and are debated between Christian youth work employers and employees. This, in turn, has influenced youth work provision, funding, training and, indeed, a youth worker's identity.

The respective work of Ward (1997), Brierley (2003) Thomson (2007) and Collins-Mayo *et al* (2010) has been influential in constructing and maintaining this discursive debate. Ward, writing at a time when evangelical Christian youth work was experiencing a resurgence, was the first to articulate the perceived distinctions between the terms youth *work* and youth *ministry*. However, Ward developed his stance articulating a distinction between youth *ministry* and youth *work* in relation to methods, commenting that youth *ministry* 'operates within a different code to that developed within secular youthwork' (1997:3). Here, Ward identified a faith/secular divide, equating youth *work* with the secular and youth *ministry* with the church. Ward's argument regarding the term *ministry* recognized that youth ministry shares a close relationship to ecclesial clergy practice. This exacerbated the liminal positioning of Christian youth workers further. Not only were they positioned between secular and faith work, they were now positioned occupationally somewhere between ordained minister and volunteer. As a result, it therefore becomes all the more important to explore the meaning of professional identity for Christian youth workers.

A further problem recognized by Ward was that many Christians who work in secular organizations have a deep sense of vocation and feel that their work is of profound spiritual significance. Ward acknowledged that the use of the terms youth *ministry* for work inside the church and youth *work* for work outside the church perpetuates a sacred/secular divide, which is unhelpful, especially for the understanding of Christian youth work within and without the church context. Ward was undecided in 1997 as to whether a distinction between youth work and youth ministry should be institutionalized in training. However, the work of Brierley (2003), as we have just seen, developed Ward's thinking further on this binary positioning.

Akin to Ward, Brierley (2003) located the source of the youth work/youth ministry divide within the understanding (usually amongst evangelical

Christians) of youth *ministry* as the work of ‘the kingdom of God and all that is sacred’ and professional youth *work* being the profane, ‘representing the world and all that is secular’ (Brierley, 2003:5). He attributed these perceptions to both Christian and secular youth work. Brierley cited differences of ideology and practice between the Church and State as the source of division, recognizing that ‘the statutory sector labeled youth *ministry* as unprofessional and proselytizing and the Church responded with the claim that youth *work* was devoid of spiritual significance’ (2003:57, italics author’s own). From this, Brierley premised youth *work* as secular and youth *ministry* as Christian, arguing against an *either/or* approach but suggesting a *both/and* position (Brierley, 2003). Brierley suggested a reconciled relationship between the two, claiming secular youth work and Christian youth ministry could provide a ‘genuinely holistic approach to working with young people’ (Brierley, 2003:5). However, Thomson (2007) considered these binary positions further, contesting Brierley’s concept of a reconciled approach. Thomson’s view, akin to Ward’s, was that the distinction between youth *work* and youth *ministry* should remain distinct.

Brierley’s seductive call to youth work and youth ministry to become compatible bedfellows has more or less been consummated. The field has moved quickly, even within the past five years. Collins-Mayo *et al* conducted their research⁹ in 2005/06 where they observed the Christian youth ministry/youth work divide still existed. However, most of the participants in this study who work for Christian churches/organizations are engaged in both aspects of the youth work/ministry discourses. Indeed, many of the students at CYM are involved in both youth work and ministry within their churches, indicating that these discourses are no longer as clearly defined as before. But the old stereotypes still exist.

In speaking about the discipline of Christian youth work, Collins-Mayo *et al* (2010) have misunderstood the foundational premise from which Brierley was arguing. Brierley was talking about secular youth work and Christian youth ministry, Collins-Mayo *et al* have portrayed his argument to be about Christian

⁹ Collins-Mayo *et al* (2010) conducted their research with young people who were born around 1982 onwards who attended Christian youth and community work projects. They were interested in the effects of the Christian youth work that the young people engaged with and if that engagement raised their levels of ‘Christian consciousness’.

youth work and Christian youth ministry. This may, at first glance, seem to be a nuanced reading of Brierley's text. However, it highlights an interesting turn. Christian youth work has developed since 2003 in that more churches are employing professionally qualified youth workers. What Brierley called for is secular youth work and Christian youth ministry to be reconciled, as both can provide 'a genuinely holistic approach to working with young people' (2003:5). The divergent discourse between secular and Christian is no longer about the differences between work within a secular community context and ministry within the church. It has become about professionalism and ministry for the Christian evangelical constituency. Collins-Mayo *et al* specifically wrote about Christian youth work and began from this sacred (Christian youth work) and profane (professional) divide, albeit, from a particular reading of Brierley.

6 Summary

This chapter has discussed the discursive positioning of Christian youth work and youth ministry. Professional Christian youth workers are located at the interstices of this converging and diverging discourse. The sacred and the profane are enmeshed within each other and can never be solely one thing or the other. Indeed, secular youth work could also be spoken of in terms of education, mission and pastoral care and practical theology. The difference between the two is the meaning that is attached to these terms. Everyday practice for the Christian youth worker would be difficult on the basis of the sacred alone and restricting the work to the profane would limit creative possibilities and perhaps strip the work of its deeper meaning for the youth worker. The polarity of the sacred and profane for the understanding of professional identity for the Christian youth worker is futile. The result is that Christian youth workers are mobilized into identifying with different allegiances that do not account for the multi-faceted and fluid spaces encountered in their everyday work. As Christian youth workers, the binary way of thinking of 'professional' is reduced to either/or as opposed to both/and. Due to these discourses, Christian professional youth workers are symbolically located in-between sacred and profane positions.

The major limitation within the literature concerning youth *work* and youth *ministry*, and an area that this thesis will address, is the lack of understanding of

the tensions present in the interaction between faith and professionalism. This is a root cause of much of the anxiety and conflict that new graduates experience in their first posts. Clashes occur with employers and other stakeholders within church contexts around the philosophical and pedagogical underpinning of the work. This thesis explores how this secularized agenda for Christian youth work has impacted on the professional identity of new graduates, and specifically how faith and professionalism are in tension with one another. The following Chapter will review the literature on identity formation and the particular influences that performative constraints present for the identity of a professional Christian youth worker.

Chapter Four: Self, Identity and Professional Identity

1 Introduction

As discussed in the previous Chapter, Christian youth workers are positioned in the interstices of convergent and competing discourses relating to Christian professional youth work. However, this positioning is constrained by the effects of transition that new professional youth workers experience when they embark on their first post after graduation. As a means of elaborating on this, it will be useful to consider the literature of professional identity formation. This Chapter will consider sociological thought on the formation of identity conceptualized within a social constructionist framework. This will be expanded to consider the features of professional identity formation. Finally, limitations of the literature are considered.

2 Identity – a Social Constructionist perspective

The concept of 'identity' had been a focus of philosophy, psychology, sociology and theology for the best part of the 20th-century. It continues to be so in this century. It is a late modern obsession, with vast swathes of literature available. Therefore, it is no surprise that identity research is thriving in certain disciplinary domains, such as management, teaching, social work, higher education and medicine, to name but a few. The fixation with the identity concept has naturally caused a divergence of discourses. This 'veritable discursive explosion' (Hall, 1996:15) makes it difficult to render one overarching definition of identity. There are so many ways to talk about identity that they become confused and convoluted. At times, they are unusable in any practical sense. So, definitions of identity can only ever be realized through theorizing in different ways (Lawler, 2008). With this in mind, it is pertinent at this point to state the conceptualizing framework for this thesis, namely that of social constructionism.

This research began from the viewpoint that a professional identity for newly graduated professional Christian youth workers is not fixed by virtue of achieving a professional qualification, being employed within that occupational domain, by naming one as a professional youth worker and/or by identifying with the Christian faith. Rather, it is a category that is socially constructed, multi-

faceted and continually in flux. This social constructionist perspective posits that identity is not ‘an irreducible, essential sense of self and belonging’ (Scully, 2010:20). Rather, identity is being continually constructed through interaction between the self and social experience. In late modernity, identity provides the means for individuals to ‘define the contours of their own selves in relation to others’ (Bradford, 2012b:55). Bradford (2012b:55) argued that ‘identity is constituted through practices of classification, boundary definition and the making of meaning that these practices entail’. To clarify, identity is always about boundaries, categories and the processes by which they get made and remade through lived experience. This interaction between self and the social relies on the notion of ‘similarity and difference’. This seemingly paradoxical combination rests on the notion that not only are we identical with ourselves, meaning that we are the same person from birth to death, but we are also identical to others, meaning that we share common identities; for example, as women, men, white, black. However, are also different from one another. Late modern notions of identity rely on this notion of people being understood as ‘simultaneously the same and different’ (Lawler, 2008:2).

To help in understanding this concept further, Mead considered the relationship between the notion of self and the social experience:

“The self has a character which is different from that of the physiological organism proper. The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of the social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process.” (Mead, 1934:135).

Mead’s theory rested on the premise that the becoming of a person is an ongoing process. It is never fixed. It is always in relation to others. It is through social experience and activity that we learn to assume the roles of others and regulate our own behaviour accordingly. Hall (1996) developed this notion of identity in relation to the self and within the context of social categories such as class, gender and race. He considered it to be ‘strategic and positional’ (Hall, 2000:17). Hall argued that identity should not be reduced to an essentialist sense of self. Rather, the construction of identity is ongoing and never completed. He helpfully explained:

“...this concept of identity does *not* signal the stable core of the self, unfolding from beginning to end through all the vicissitudes of history without change; the bit of the self which remains always-already ‘the same’, identical to itself across time.” (Hall, 1996:17, italics author’s own)

Hall understood identity as, ‘increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions’. It is ‘constantly in the process of change and transformation’ (Hall, 1996:17). However fragmented the nature of identity may be, it does not prevent an essentialized, stable, core identity being given (Hall, 1996:17). This stable, definitive and essential identity is a seductive call for new professional youth workers, as well as for the profession as a whole at this uncertain time. This notion, then, of a definitive identity for the Christian youth worker becomes something to which some aspire or, indeed, deviate from.

It is widely agreed amongst the extant literature on identity that individuals do not have one fixed identity. There are various forms of identity with which individuals identify. Identity therefore involves ‘identification’. Feminist thought has influenced the concept of identification, especially within gender studies. From this, theorists have understood man/woman, homosexual/heterosexual to be mutually exclusive. However, there is still a relational aspect to these opposing identities. To be a woman is to reject identification as a man. To be homosexual is to reject identification as a heterosexual. The notion of identification is helpful in understanding the interplay between similarity and difference. There is always a relationship, one with the other, making mutual exclusivity untenable (Lawler, 2008 & Hall, 1996). Similarity and difference can be construed as simply identification with individuals or groups that are similar to you. In doing this, natural boundaries are established to ensure allegiances are maintained, thus ensuring difference remains outside the social bond. Hall offered an explanation of this:

“...identification is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation.” (Hall, 1996:16)

However, Hall offered a contrasting view of this rather naturalistic definition by arguing for a discursive approach to the concept of identification:

“The discursive approach sees identification as a construction, a process never completed – always ‘in process’. It is not determined in the sense that it can always be ‘won’ or ‘lost’, sustained or abandoned. Though not without its determinate conditions of existence, including the material and symbolic resources required to sustain it, identification is in the end conditional, lodged in contingency. The total merging it suggests is, in fact, a fantasy of incorporation [...] Identification is, then, a process of articulation, a suturing, an-over-determination not a subsumption.” (Hall, 2000:16-17)

Hall was arguing that a discursive approach to identification allows for process and movement. Identification is not fixed in one way, although it does require some sense of stability to sustain it. Identification is constructed through language, always changing but never all consuming. As such, it can be a site where similarity and difference interact in the formation of identity that resists being natural, essential or always and already the same.

On this premise, there is nothing natural or essential about the identity of a Christian professional youth worker. Christian professional identity is formed through processes of identification. These processes are shaped by discourses that serve to construct the identity of a Christian professional youth worker. Christian professional youth work can only exist if practitioners continue to participate in the idea of Christian professional youth work and perform the discursive processes through which the field is understood. The discourses and processes involved in identification are sufficiently strong that participation in them produces a sense of ‘naturalness’. Therefore, Christian youth workers cannot simply opt out of the idea of what it means to be a Christian and a professional. But neither should they be subsumed by prevailing discourses at play within the discursive domains.

As stated in the previous Chapter, the term ‘Christian ministry’ is loaded with different meanings. Some consider ordained ministry to be the closest relation to the youth minister in that there are shared foci, such as education, mission, pastoral care and practical theology within a church context. However, those who identify themselves as youth *ministers* may wish to dis-identify themselves with certain aspects of being a youth *minister*. The same can be said for those who consider themselves to be a professional youth *worker*. They may wish to dis-identify with certain aspects of what it means to be professional youth

workers. At the same time, others will identify Christian youth workers as being one or the other. On occasions, these identifications may be formed within a very limited understanding of what it means to be a youth worker. This thesis explores the complex processes of identification for the novice Christian youth worker and will be discussed in more depth in Chapter Nine.

3 Resistance Identity

The complex processes occurring within identification, especially in relation to dis-identification, can manifest as, or be understood as, resistance. Rose (1996) considered it unsurprising that ‘human beings often find themselves resisting the forms of personhood that they are enjoined to adopt’ (Rose, 1996:319). His argument, in line with Hall and drawing on Foucauldian analysis, stemmed from the view that human beings are not ‘unified subjects of some coherent regime of domination that produces persons in the form in which it dreams’ (Rose, 1996:319). He contended that human beings ‘live their lives in a constant movement across different practices that address them in different ways’ (Rose, 1996:319). It is within these different practices that the individual is addressed as a different sort of person. As such, the individual exists in a contentious and conflicted state:

“Techniques of relating to oneself as a subject of unique capacities worthy of respect run up against practices of relating to oneself as the target of discipline, duty and docility. The humanist demand that one decipher oneself in terms of the authenticity of one’s actions runs up against the political or institutional demand that one abides by the collective responsibility of organizational decision-making even when one is personally opposed to it.” (Rose, 1996:319)

Rose was directly contradicting Durkheim’s notion that society works as a moral power towards which we act in accordance. Rose drew on the concept of authenticity, suggesting that an individual will be subjected to a level of conflict within himself or herself when they experience the powerful effects of the social. This converges with Raby’s (2005) thought on the concept of resistance, which can be justified as rebellion or deviance on the part of those making such a judgment. Resistance identity, in this case, expresses the refusal to be consumed by essentialized identities constructed within and by discourse. Raby was keen to ensure that theories of resistance should be committed to human agency, address political inequality and social change, as well as acknowledge

resistance being grounded in the material environment. Relating this to the Christian youth worker, it should follow that they have the ability to respond to their environments and construct new meanings within their contextual settings, even within the constraints of the discursive resources they have at their disposal. Thus a professional identity for the Christian professional youth worker is constructed through discourse. Resistance to being subsumed by a discursively constructed Christian professional identity is likely to occur if the youth worker exercises human capacity to enhance their sense of authenticity and agency in resisting performative demands placed on them by the church and the profession.

Although resistance can be viewed as the result of the struggle between human agency and dominating power relations, it is not necessarily a negative force. Izberk-Bilgin (2010) conceptualized resistance as a 'personally enriching and liberating lived experience' (cited in Fry, 2012:359). Fry, writing in relation to alcohol consumption, considered resistance as being aligned to long held core values and beliefs. This aspect of Christian youth worker identity is significant for this study, specifically regarding the identification with the values and beliefs of the Christian faith, as discussed in the previous Chapter. This thesis examines the specific forms of resistance that occur for Christian youth workers in their everyday practice, with attention given to the impact of the values and beliefs of their faith and, indeed, what exactly they are resisting.

It has been notably argued by Foucault that, 'there are no relations of power with resistances' (1980:142). Bearing in mind the extent to which a Christian professional identity is being shaped by ministerial and professional discourses, which includes Foucault's concept of relations of power, it is pertinent to examine the concept of professional identity formation.

4 Professional Identity Formation

Research into Christian youth worker's professional identity is in its infancy. It is imperative to develop this field of knowledge so that adequate support can be given by educators, supervisors and employers. Research in this area helpfully enhances understanding of what it feels like to be a Christian youth worker in today's employing organizations, Christian or otherwise. As discussed in the

previous Chapter, discursive positioning of Christian youth ministry has been well debated within the field. However, the influence and effects of these discursive debates on individual youth workers has not been considered, until now. The youth *work/youth ministry* discourses are located within secular and faith frameworks. It is in the interplay within these frameworks that tensions arise for Christian professional youth workers. The literature available specifically relating to professional identity formation of Christian youth workers does not exist at present. Consequently, a review of the journal articles relating to novice professionals within the caring professions (teachers, social workers, and medical professionals) has been considered, as well as the limited articles about faith and professionalism.

4.1 Descriptive overview of the studies

Because of the significant body of literature available on professional identity formation, the selection of journal articles has been confined to the period 2001-2013. This correlates with the period in which the first Christian professional youth workers graduated from CYM. Focusing on the three occupational areas, a general web search of e-journals was conducted using various combinations of the following key terms; professional identity formation; Christian; graduates; ministry; nursing; social work, and teaching. Fifteen studies were selected out of thirty. As much as possible, I selected qualitative studies that considered the transition made from student to employee. Three articles specifically related to the interplay between the Christian faith and professional identity. The studies have been analyzed with regard to their 1) purpose, 2) definition of professional identity formation, 3) concepts relating to this definition, 4) methodology and 5) major findings. Beijaard *et al* (2004) conducted a similar review relating to teachers identity and their framework for analysis proved useful for this study.

[see Table 1 overleaf]

Table 1: Overview of Profession Identity Literature

Author, year, profession	Purpose of the study	Definitions of professional identity	Related concepts	Methodology	Findings
Gregg & Magilvy (2001) <i>Nurses</i>	To explore the process of establishing the professional identity of Japanese nurses.	No explicit definition; commitment and identifications are viewed as an integral part of the self. P.i. understood as process and can be viewed as career development	Self	A grounded theory design, data were generated by interviews, multisite participant observations and theoretical memos. 18 Japanese nurses were selected by theoretical sampling and formally interviewed.	Six categories emerged from the data: (i) learning from working experiences; (ii) recognizing the value of nursing; (iii) establishing one's own philosophy of nursing; (iv) gaining influence from education; (v) having a commitment to nursing and (vi) integrating a nurse into self.
Sachs (2001) <i>Teachers</i>	Focusing on issues of professional identity of teachers in Australia under conditions of significant change in government	P.i. is a set of attributes that are imposed upon the teaching profession either by outsiders or members of the teaching fraternity itself.	Communities of practice	An examination of 2 influencing discourses of professionalism; democratic and managerial.	Emerging professional identities from these discourses are entrepreneurial and activist.

	policy and educational restructuring.				
Stronach <i>et al</i> (2002) <i>Teachers & nurses</i>	To look at the epistemological, methodological and narrative strategies whereby 'professionalism' is currently conceptualized.	No explicit definition; p.i. is inherently problematic, complex and fragmented	Self	An examination of the ways in which 'discursive dynamics' come to re-write the professional teacher and nurse as split, plural and conflictual selves	Teacher and nurse are located within a nexus of policy, ideology and practice. A nuanced account of professional identities is given, stressing the local, situated and indeterminable nature of professional practice, and the inescapable dimensions of trust, diversity and creativity.
Cook-Sather (2006) <i>Teachers</i>	To analyze how nearly graduating teachers engage in the process of identity formation within an asynchronous, non-dimensional, liminal space made possible and shaped by email and with	No explicit definition; p.i. is a social process and multiply informed	Rites of passage, reflective processes, transitions	5 experienced teachers, 8 beginning teachers. Analysis of annual feedback from beginning teachers' feedback on mentoring by experienced teachers via email.	Liminal space created by email helps revise the particulars of a contemporary transition. Beginning teachers' p.i. is influenced within email exchange through dialogue, not through practice or initiation. Beginning teachers' p.i. is influenced through a relationship one step removed within the hierarchy.

	the support of experienced mentor teachers				
Smith (2007) <i>Teachers</i>	To explore the interaction between knowledge and identities and the extent to which specific subjects may be salient in their identities as general class teachers, and whether those identities are stable and coherent or shifting and conflicting.	No explicit definition; p.i. viewed as multiple, fragmented and prone to change	Trajectory, social, self	Longitudinal study of 4 pre-service teachers. Interviews were conducted periodically during their 3 year training. An observation and interview conducted at the end of their first qualifying year.	The centrality of pedagogic knowledge and skills should be acknowledged. Identity work should be seen as connected to knowledge growth.
Heggen (2008) <i>Teachers, nurses & social workers</i>	To analyse how the knowledge students are offered and acquire in three- to four-year college programmes for	No explicit definition; professional knowledge has an influence on formation	Situated learning, boundary crossing, communities of practice	Data of undergraduate students from the 3 professions. Data collected at the beginning end of their programmes and from candidates three years after finishing college.	Low value of academic knowledge in teaching and social work especially. A notable gap between the need for relational competence in the workplace and the acquisition of that competence in college programmes, especially for

	social work, primary school teaching and nursing relates to the kinds of competencies they need as professional workers.			competencies for practice were analysed.	teachers.
Nystrom (2008) <i>Teachers</i>	To explore the development of p.i. in students transitioning from higher education into working life	p.i. is a dynamic and changeable relationship expanding over the whole of life	Sense of being, interacting life spheres, communities of practice	Longitudinal study of 19 graduates spanning 3 years. Data collected via semi-structured interviews, prior to graduation then 2.5 years after graduation	Three different forms of p.i. 1) non-differentiated identity 2) compartmentalised identity 3) integrated identity These show different negotiated relationships between professional, personal and private life spheres. 3 forms are sequential. Negotiations between the personal and social derived imperatives that identity formation progresses throughout working lives.
Black <i>et al</i> (2010) <i>Physiotherapist</i>	To explore the experiences, learning and development of novice therapists	No explicit definition; a process of change influenced by social experience, context	Socialisation, Communities of practice,	A longitudinal multi-site qualitative case study. 11 new graduates followed through their first year of practice.	4 themes emerged; The clinical environment influenced the therapists performance. Participants learned through

	in their first year of practice	and education	self	Semi-structured interviews conducted every 3 months for 1 year. Reflective journals completed at regular intervals. Academic and clinical education records and resumes reviewed.	experience and social interaction and learning was primarily directed towards self. Growing confidence was directly related to developing communication skills. Therapists were engaged in professional identity formation and role transitions.
Bryan & Revell (2011) <i>Teachers</i>	An exploration of the relationship between elements of the three discourses of faith identity, emerging professional identity and the requirements of a performative teacher training context.	No explicit definition; p.i. considered to be socially constructed	Values, morals, secularism	Semi-structured interviews of 184 teacher training students from 3 universities	Christian student teachers viewed their faith as personally important for them but it was not something that contributed to their understanding of a 'good teacher'
Craft, Foubert & Lane (2011) <i>HE Faculty staff</i>	To investigate how Christian faculty members integrate their religious identity with their	No explicit definition of p.i.; identity is fluid, continually being constructed, co-constructed, and reconstructed over	Spirituality, religious calling	Semi-structured interviews with 12 Christian faculty members	Faculty members viewed their career as a religious 'calling'. Faculty members highlighted challenges to overtly communicating a Christian worldview and shared examples

	professional identity within public colleges and universities.	time. Moreover, outside influences impact the construction of identity; often, dominant values dictate norms and expectations.			of how they covertly integrate their religious faith into their teaching and research. The perceived religious calling of faculty members propels them to more fully and covertly integrate their religion into their work but that they feel hindered within their profession. Therefore, they feel they must be covert to appease their personal convictions and fulfil their calling.
Thaller (2011) <i>Social Workers</i>	To examine whether and to what extent social work students and practitioners who describe themselves as devoutly Christian have experienced discrimination in the university or workplace because of their religious affiliation. To gain understanding of	No explicit definition; p.i. considered to be complex and multi-faceted	None	Semi-structured interviews with 7 self-described devout Christians	Acts of resilience and resistance revealed. Christian social workers perceived more challenges to their religious identity in the classroom than in the workplace Respect for client self-determination mediated possible conflict between religious and social work values Christian social workers disagreed with specific practices within social work but also critically examined policies adopted by their church communities

	the types of discrimination these individuals may have experienced, and to learn in what ways they may have negotiated their religious identities in order to adopt a social work identity.				
Pillen <i>et al</i> (2012) <i>Teachers</i>	To contribute to understanding what tensions beginning teachers experience in their professional identity development, including the accompanying feelings and ways of coping.	p.i development is seen as the process of integrating one's personal knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, norms and values, on the one hand, and professional demands from teacher education institutes and schools, including broadly accepted values and standards about teaching, on the	Self	A literature study regarding teachers' tensions. Also, 24 beginning teachers (12 final-year student teachers and 12 first-year in-practice teachers, teaching in primary education, general secondary education or secondary vocational education) were interviewed about the tensions they experienced. 182 teachers completed a questionnaire about	Tensions that are often mentioned by beginning teachers concerned conflicts between what they desire and what is possible in reality. Female teachers reported more tensions than their male colleagues, while final-year student teachers did not differ from first-year in-practice teachers in the number of tensions they experienced. Tensions were often accompanied by feelings of helplessness, anger or an awareness of shortcomings. Most beginning teachers tried to cope with their tensions by speaking to

		other.		their experience of tensions.	their significant others or by searching for a solution themselves.
Trede <i>et al</i> (2012) <i>Higher Education graduates</i>	To examine the extant higher education literature on the development of professional identities of graduates.	P.i development is fostered by the authentic experiences of students in the workplace. It manifests in the intersection between personal and professional values. It is dynamic and fluid, implying a shift and transformation by students of personal and professional knowledge, skills and dispositions. P.i. development draws on different types of knowledge, including troublesome and uncomfortable knowledge.	Self, being, identification	Literature review of 20 articles that in some way discussed p.i. development in higher education	Areas for further research; To better understand the tensions between personal and professional values, structural and power influences, discipline versus generic education, and the role of workplace learning on professional identities.

Ruohotie-Lyhty (2012) <i>Teachers</i>	To explore the professional identity development of two foreign language teachers during their induction phase from a narrative perspective.	No explicit definition; p.i. understood in relation to a narrative definition of p.i. that serves to understand how continuity is constructed by the individual in the flow of discontinuous events and how individuals as agents strive to maintain a stable understanding of themselves in shifting contexts.	Reflection, self	A longitudinal study with 11 teachers. They wrote down their experiences in the form of reflective essays twice a year and were interviewed annually during the first three to four years in the profession.	The participants' stories display two different experience narratives: a painful and an easy beginning. The findings show the importance of the teachers' initial identities and the storytelling process to their professional identity formation.
Wiles (2012) <i>Social Workers</i>	To explore how professional registration affects the way that social work students talk about—and thus construct—their personal and	Identity viewed is fluid and constructed in relation to changing discourses and discursive practices; accordingly, professional identity is one of the	Socialisation, reflective practice	Semi-structured interviews with 7 final year social work students	Social workers thought of p.i in three ways p.i. as desired traits. P.i thought of in a collective sense to convey the 'identity of the profession'. P.i regarded as a process in which each individual comes to have a sense of themselves as a

	professional identities.	multiple subjectivities that a person occupies across their day-to-day lives.			social worker.
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4.2 Purpose of the studies

Whilst all the studies had different purposes, two common themes have been identified. First, eight of the studies focused on the processes involved in professional identity formation. The influence of knowledge and learning were significant aspects for some (Gregg & Magilvy, 2001; Smith, 2007; Heggen, 2008; Black et al, 2010 & Trede et al, 2012) whilst others focused on how new professionals engaged with the process of professional identity formation specifically in relation to the effects of mentors (Cook-Sather, 2006), the personal (Nystrom, 2008), meaning the influence of the personal and private life spheres, and narrative constructions of identity (Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2012). Second, four of the remaining studies considered the tensions resulting from positioning discourses and how professionals construct identity within the constraining effects of these (Sachs, 2001; Stronach et al, 2002; Bryan & Revell, 2011 & Wiles, 2012). Three studies drew attention to specific issues that influenced professional identity formation such as faith discrimination in the workplace (Thaller, 2011), conflict over teacher's aspirations and what is possible in reality (Pillen, 2012) and the effects of professional registration on identity (Trede *et al*, 2012). The remaining study focused on how Christian faculty members integrate their religious identity with professional identity in their work (Craft *et al*, 2011).

4.3 Definition of Professional Identity

Table 1 shows that ten out of the fifteen studies offered no explicit definition of professional identity. For those that did provide a definition, a range of aspects were highlighted. The majority of the studies deemed professional identity to be a developmental process, integrating the personal and professional aspects of life and influenced by changing workplace and occupational discourses (Nystrom, 2008). The study by Wiles on social workers described professional identity as:

“...fluid and constructed in relation to changing discourses and discursive practices; accordingly, professional identity is one of the multiple subjectivities that a person occupies across their day-to-day lives.” (Wiles, 2012:2)

In similar vein, professional identity involves a process of integrating personal knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, norms and values as well as integrating demands

from the professional domain (Pillen *et al*, 2012). Regarding these demands, Trede *et al* (2012) referred to professional identity development as 'being fostered by the authentic experiences of students in the workplace' (2012:379). These four studies implied a degree of agency on the part of the professional in the formation of their identity. However, one study viewed professional identity as merely a set of attributes imposed by outsiders or other members of the same professional body (Sachs, 2001).

Based on the findings of these studies, it is very clear that the formation of a professional identity is a social process. The studies that did not provide an explicit definition of professional identity indicated this. They viewed professional identity as being multiply informed, complex, fragmented and continually under construction (Stronach *et al*, 2002; Cook-Sather, 2006; Smith, 2007; Craft *et al*, 2011 & Thaller, 2011). Other studies defined professional identity as a commitment to, and identification with, a particular profession, and viewed these as integral parts of the self (Gregg & Magilvy, 2001) as well as elements of a process of change influenced by social experience, context and education (Black *et al*, 2010).

'Process' is the overarching theme within this particular set of studies on professional identity. The various components of that process involve both the personal and the professional. This includes beliefs, attitudes, changing discourses and discursive practices. This is conducive to the social constructionist position of this thesis.

4.4 Related concepts

The concept of the self, often combined with other concepts (Table 1), appears to be an essential aspect of understanding professional identity, (Gregg & Magilvy, 2001; Stronach *et al*, 2002; Smith, 2007; Black *et al*, 2010; Trede *et al*, 2012; Pillen, 2012; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013). According to Gregg & Magilvy's article on nursing (2001), the identification as a professional is assumed to be integrated into one's concept of self. Stronach *et al* (2002) considered that the professional is usually given a substantial core identity (stable, definitive, essential), which enables them to be categorized and typologized. However, with professionals self-accounting, a different story emerges with individual

identities being 'fragmented, unstable, shifting, sometimes contradictory or expressed as conflicts' (2002:116). This self-accounting belies the professional as 'type'. Following this late modern conceptualization of identity as fragmented and unstable, Smith (2007) noted the move away from assuming a stable and coherent professional identity. Professional identity is more likely to be seen as multiple, fragmented and prone to change. Smith, citing Holstein and Gubrium (2000), viewed the construction of the self as 'an increasingly complex project of daily living'.

I analyzed the major findings of the studies through four key terms that are of significance to identity formation: performance, performativity, authenticity, and transition. As such, these categories offer a helpful framework for this section. These will now be discussed in light of current literature pertaining to each of these themes.

5 Performance

All the studies argued that professional identity is continually in flux, fragmented and multiply constructed. Identity is made, achieved and accomplished. It is not innate. This constructed identity does not occur in isolation. It is made up in the interaction between the self and the social. It is important at this point to develop the Meadian notion, as discussed earlier, that through ever-changing social experience and activity, we learn to assume the roles of others. Through this internalization, we regulate our own behaviour. This is reflected in the journal articles of Smith (2007) and Heggen (2008), who concluded that the recognition of the significance of social experience in the professional identity formation of teachers, nurses and social workers was seriously lacking within academic training institutions. They asserted that the centrality of pedagogic knowledge and skills was regarded as the dominant contributing factor of professional formation. Communities of practice were highlighted within this research as providing formational opportunities based on peer support and the accompanying social experience. The notion of 'communities of practice' (Wenger, 1998) was also highlighted in articles by Sachs (2001), Nystrom (2008), and Black *et al* (2010). The ideas of Wenger (1998) have been drawn on in these studies, pivoting on the idea that identity is not a solid core but is comprised of different parts that can all be seen within a nexus of multi-

membership (Wenger, 1998). Wenger's notion is that people behave differently and take on different perspectives as a way of coordinating their identity (Nystrom (2008:4). Individual performance is dependent on, and shaped by, others within the community of practice. This notion will be expanded later within the concepts of performativity and authenticity, specifically in relation to the idea of human agency.

The discursive positioning of the Christian youth work field and influencing technologies have been discussed in the previous Chapter. My attention now turns to how these discourses make up the identity of the Christian professional youth worker, specifically focusing on the concepts of performance and performativity. In doing this, I draw on the work of sociologists Lawler (2008), Goffman (1959) and Butler (1993), who all considered how identity is socially produced. This discussion will be interspersed with analysis of the journal articles presented in Table 1. Later in this Chapter, I will discuss the concept of performativity. But first, it is important to clarify distinctions between performance and performativity.

There has been significant confusion in sociological thinking around the differences between performance and performativity. In order to avoid this confusion, I will briefly highlight the distinctions between the two. First, there is an inherent weakness in the understanding of the language that is used when defining *performance*. As Lawler (2008) stated, '...*'performance'* tends to indicate the adoption of a character more or less at will and, further, the adoption of a character that neither we nor others take to be our own'. Lawler recognized a separation between the identity of the self and the performance given and argued for a Goffmanian (1959) understanding of performance; this being that repetition makes us the persons we are. Goffman considered how the individual creates an impression for an audience that resembles a performance on a stage, 'when an individual plays a part he implicitly requests his observers to take seriously the impression that is fostered before them' (Goffman, 1959:28).

The work of Butler developed Goffman's approach to performance in that she identified the difference between performance and the effects of performance,

namely the differences between performance and performativity. Butler made this distinction when talking about gender:

“In no sense can it be concluded that the part of gender that is performed is therefore the ‘truth’ of gender; performance as bounded ‘act’ is distinguished from performativity insofar as the latter consists in a reiteration of the norms which precede, constrain and exceed the performer and in that sense cannot be taken as fabrication of the performer’s ‘will’ or ‘choice’; further, what is ‘performed’ works to conceal, if not to disavow, what remains opaque, unconscious, unperformable. The reduction of performativity to performance would be a mistake.” (Butler, 1993:111-112)

For Butler, identities are not an expression of an inner nature. Rather, they are performed in the sense that they are constantly being repeated. They are performative in the sense that they generate that which they name. Longhurst (2007), following this line of thought, also drew on the work of Butler, naming the *subject* as being constituted and volitional: ‘...performance can be said to involve intention and action on the part of a constituted and volitional subject, whereas performativity is the processes that constitute the subject’ (Longhurst, 2007:38). In other words, the performativity of an identity is not the same as a staged performance. Butler elaborated on the position of the subject:

“It is important to distinguish between performance and performativity: the former presumes a subject, but the latter contests the very notion of a subject... What I’m trying to do is think about performativity as that aspect of discourse that has the capacity to produce what it names.” (Butler, 1996:112)

Here, Butler made the distinction between performance and performativity in relation to identity construction and how identity is done. Butler’s view (and in Goffman’s terms) considered that there is no person behind the mask. As Lawler noted, ‘The mask (the performance) constitutes the person’ (Lawler, 2008:114). Likewise, Goffman argued that there is no pre-existing performer. He was not saying there is never a subject, because where there is a performance there will always be a subject. However, he was making the point that the subject is not where they are assumed to be, behind or in front of the mask. Performances occur within social milieu that determine what role can and cannot be taken, how it can be performed, and so on. This echoed Butler’s understanding that the performance of an identity is a ‘practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint (Butler, 2004:1). These scenes of constraint refer to

the performance that is constrained by performativity, which will now be explored.

6 Performativity

The term 'performative' assumed precise meaning in language theory, especially in the work of Austin (1975), who explored the relationship between performative utterances and modes of being. He explored the uses of language and how, when it is used, it signifies that the person who is speaking is also doing something. Language is considered a performance, which brings into being a new status (Bryan *et al*, 2011). All societies have customs and practices, the meanings of which are conveyed by the use of language:

“Austin is suggesting that the words we use are not mere formalities, but as performative utterances are embedded in social practices and norms that contribute to the formation of all social relations and interactions.” (Bryan *et al*, 2011:404).

This point is worth raising in relation to professional Christian youth workers because it implies that practices, attitudes and skills communicated through professional youth work's occupational standards and principles are not only words that can be accepted or dismissed through choice. In accordance with the reflection of Bryan *et al* (2011:404) with regard to teachers, language becomes the very core of a youth worker identity. Couple this with the performative utterances implicit within the Christian community of faith, and Christian youth workers have a double dose of performative standards to absorb.

Ball took a view of performativity that suggests it is tied into relations of power that are played out in the bodies and souls of teachers. He described it thus:

“Performativity is a culture or a system of 'terror'. It is a regime of accountability that employs judgments, comparisons and displays as means of control, attrition and change. The performances of individual subjects or organizations serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality', or 'moments' of promotion or inspection. These performances stand for, encapsulate or represent the worth, quality or value of an individual or organization within a field of judgment.” (Ball, 2008:49)

He was making the point that teachers are encouraged to think about themselves in terms of productivity. They are encouraged to calculate about themselves in terms of adding value. They are to pursue an excellence that will

deem them to be considered worthy within their professional domain. As Ball wrote, 'commitment and service are of dubious worth within the new policy regime' (2008:217).

Some clarification of how Butler and Ball used the concept of performativity is needed here. There are both similarities and differences. Butler considered the term principally within the realm of speech acts, meaning that speech acts do not express an identity. Rather, they 'perform' that very identity. Butler, who used this notion of performativity most significantly for her work on gender development, located the concept within the idea of discourse and described performativity as, 'that reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains' (Butler, 1993:2). Identity is therefore constructed through performative actions within the social context, and driven by discursive power.

Conversely, Ball used the notion of performativity in a somewhat more specific manner. He applied the concept within the domain of education, considering performativity as referring to a new form of regulation that drives practicing teachers to organise 'themselves' in order to respond to targets, goals and evaluations set by the State. However, for Ball, like Butler, discourse plays a fundamental role in the construction of identity. The difference between the usage of the concept by Butler and Ball is in how it is applied. Butler applied it to the macro area of gender whilst Ball focused on the more micro area of education.

A significant number of the journal articles – Sachs (2001), Stronach *et al* (2002), Heggen (2008), Bryan & Revell (2011), Craft *et al* (2011) for example – raised tensions related to the constraints of what could be deemed as performativity in relation to professional identity formation. Sachs (2011) cited managerialistic professionalism as being reinforced through policies on the professional development of teachers. Emphasis was being placed on accountability and effectiveness that influenced the emergence of two types of identity, that of entrepreneur and activist. Stronach *et al* (2002) viewed the formation of professional identity as being influenced within the performative nexus of policy, ideology and practice. Bryan and Revell (2011), who wrote

about performativity, faith and professional identity, noted the tension of a professional teacher considering himself or herself as a 'good teacher' (neutral and objective), which made their faith position problematic. Christian student teachers reported that, although their faith was very important to them, it was not something that contributed to their understanding of what a 'good teacher' is. It would appear from the definition by Ball, and the findings within the journal articles, that performative structures clash with the notion of a sense of the authentic self and are essentially alienating. A performative culture is one in which accountability and control is central to neo-liberal societies and organizations. Control is demonstrated through Christian youth worker's individual performances. These are then gauged against externally determined measurements of success. As we saw in Chapter Three, external measurements for the Christian youth worker are located within discourses of what it means to be a professional and simultaneously a Christian youth worker.

Lawler, who took a Foucauldian view, commented on the use of regulatory power at a micro level in relation to performativity: 'Regulatory power is dispersed throughout the social network rather than being concentrated in the hands of the state. Power is thus *exercised*; it is not owned' (Lawler, 2008:56, italics author's own). This view considers performative power as regulating the behaviour of social groups, through individuals. This power, then, always individualizes. Indeed, Christian youth workers and their contemporaries exemplify the use of performative power in their practice. Lawler was careful to point out that that everyone does not equally use this power and, whilst the State may not be considered to 'own' the power, it does exercise it. Lawler was making the point that it is not the use of power that is important. Rather, it is 'who' is making use of the power that is important.

7 Authenticity

It is not unusual for individuals to utter phrases such as, 'I need to be true to myself', or 'it's just not me'. The search for a true authentic self has become a feature of our age. This quest for authenticity can be traced back at least to the intellectual and artistic élites of the Romantic period as they searched for an authentic, expressive way of living (Taylor, 2007). Taylor suggested that, in late modernity and against the backdrop of individualism, 'this kind of self-orientation

seems to have become a mass phenomenon' (Taylor, 2007:473). Lawler, too, located this fascination within the socio-cultural, recognizing a 'social and cultural preoccupation with authenticity' (2008:102).

Lawler (2008) identified a perceived gap between an authentic identity and how individuals go about performing their identity: 'People in the West conventionally counterpose *being* an (authentic) identity against *doing* an identity (performing)' (Lawler, 2008:107, italics author's own). The term 'being' is assumed to mean who we really are (substance), whilst 'doing' is assumed to refer to a part we are playing, acting out, which is denying and concealing who we really are (semblance). There is a tacit understanding that deep within us all is a true person who will emerge in similar fashion to a butterfly emerging from a chrysalis. It implies an assumed wholeness that will be magically achieved and recognized by the individual when it happens. However, anxiety arises when this true, authentic self does not emerge. As Lawler pointed out, 'a normative insistence on the authenticity of identity suggests that identity is held to spring from somewhere 'deep within' us, and that, when it does not there is a problem, (Lawler, 2008:121). If semblance and substance do not match, then an attempt by that person to deceive others is often assumed. The perception that there is a gap between semblance and substance with a hidden 'real person' lurking behind a mask is testament to the anxiety that is experienced in relation to the authenticity question, 'who am I?' (Lawler, 2008).

The old adage that most of us will 'wear masks' at one time or another is a much-used allegory. It assumes that a real, authentic person is behind the mask. Goffman (1959), in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, analyzed social interaction and social identity using the metaphor of a dramatic performance. Drawing on the work of Park (1950), he used the etymology of the word 'person', derived from the word *persona*, in reference to the masks worn by characters in Greek tragedies. Thus he began to develop his argument:

"It is probably no mere historical accident that the word person, in it's first meaning, is a mask. It is rather a recognition of the fact that everyone is always and everywhere, more or less consciously, playing a role...It is in these roles that we know each other; it is in these roles that we know ourselves." (Park, 1950:249, quoted in Goffman, 1959:30)

Goffman continued to cite Park in stating:

“In a sense, and in so far as this mask represents the conception we have formed of ourselves – the role we are striving to live up to – this mask is our truer self, the self we would like to be. In the end, our conception of our role becomes second nature and an integral part of our personality. We come into the world as individuals, achieve character, and become persons.” (Park, 1950:249, quoted in Goffman, 1959:30)

Goffman’s point here was that masks do not conceal a truer self. Neither do they trick others into thinking we are something that we are not. As Lawler (2008) pointed out, Goffman was suggesting that we become persons and achieve authenticity through the masks we wear. There is no person behind the mask. Rather, our authentic self is constituted of the mask(s) we wear. Goffman argued that the masks we wear, or the performances we present, are, in actual fact, the people we aspire to be.

This has much to say about the notions of being and becoming. However, for Goffman, ‘to be’ does not imply a notion of an innate self. His view of identity was such that he did not recognize an innate self with which we are born. We become ‘persons’ through the playing of a repertoire of parts or roles. I am in agreement with this point. However, one might challenge Lawler’s critique (2008) that Goffman’s work dispelled the essentialist/constructionist binary. My understanding is that his approach constructed another form of binary thinking about identity. The view that we have no innate self, but we construct a self, is yet another essentialist/constructionist way of thinking. It is more helpful to think of identity in terms of both/and. I am not arguing for the idea of an innate self, as I am inclined towards Goffman’s thinking (which, fundamentally, is Durkheimian) that there is no self that is untouched by the social. However, a both/and perspective implies a dynamic interactive process between ‘being’ and ‘becoming’. The two are inextricably linked. The socially constructed sense of self cannot be separated from the socially constructed becoming of the self.

This argument about authenticity relates to Durkheim’s notion of the sacred and profane as discussed in a previous Chapter. Durkheim considered the sacred and the profane in relation to society. However, Goffman (1961) considered the distinction between the sacred and profane in relation to the self. Goffman challenged what he viewed as the ‘vulgar tendency in social thought’ (Goffman, 1961:41) to consider the sacred as the self, which is detached from interaction

revealing a somewhat more authentic version of the self; for example, when being with a lover or being alone. He believed that social thought considered the profane as 'that self 'exacted by society' and obedient to social rules' that produced a rather 'false' self (Lawler, 2008:108). Goffman did not accept these homogeneous categories of the sacred and the profane as a helpful theorization of the self. He considered that 'there is no self which is untouched by or is outside the social world' (Lawler, 2008:108).

The relation between 'being' and 'acting' is considered in the work of Goffman. If viewed through his lens, a sense of authenticity can occur in the here and now. Authenticity is something that is accessible to us in our everyday lives rather than an intangible concept that is somewhere 'out there', far off in the distance and never quite within our grasp. 'Being' and 'acting' are inextricably linked in a dynamic, interactive process. They are mutually dependent in the forming of an identity. Goffman's concern was not to determine knowledge of what is true or false. Rather, his concern related to whether or not our performances are convincing or unconvincing. This is not a cynical view of authenticity. It means that the performance of an identity is inevitable (Lawler, 2008). We cannot help but perform who we are in any given social situation.

Goffman's concept of 'role distance' provides a useful example in challenging the binary thinking between the false and authentic self. The term 'role' can also be read as the 'performance', or 'mask', that individuals seek to live up to. Role distance is enacted when individuals distance themselves from their social roles and invite the audience to view them as they really are, or what they would like the audience to think they really are. Lawler (2008:108) provided the example of politicians appearing on TV in casual clothes to exemplify that they are not only politicians, but a little more like 'you and me'. Role distance not only challenges the homogeneous categories of the sacred and profane, false and authentic. It also demonstrates how the self is more than a social product in surpassing its roles. Here, we see Goffman's idea of reflexivity. It shows how, as social actors, the individual participates in constituting a self that can play at multiple roles and 'make and remake the social every day through our social interaction' (Lawler, 2008:109). The intersection between faith and professionalism provides a rich space in which to assess the variety of roles that Christian youth

workers must negotiate in their everyday practice. This also exposes the tensions experienced, as well as points of convergence. Performance of roles requires a context in which the individual can act.

From a Wengerian (2008) perspective, a youth worker experiences her job, how she makes interpretations, how she does what she does. The choices she makes are not a series of individual choices on her part. This raises the issue of structure and agency. All this is not 'simply the result of belonging to the social category' (2008:146), in this case, 'youth worker'. Wenger claimed that this has been shaped by belonging to a community that has a unique identity. However, this raises difficulties for a Christian professional youth worker. As has been pointed out, a unique identity for Christian youth workers is not unitary. It is continually in flux. Wenger argued that 'it is as misleading to view identities as abstractly collective as it is to view them as narrowly individual' (2008:146). Wenger was not arguing that the community alone shapes the identity of the worker, or that the individual remains somehow untouched by the social world around them. Rather, there is a proactive interaction between the two. Through the worker's participation in the community, as with being a member of any community, the worker absorbs, thinks, does and becomes a 'youth worker'. Also, the youth worker will be changing, developing, and challenging the community through their own sense of belonging to that community.

Beijaard *et al* (2004) conducted a review of literature relating to the professional identities of teachers between the years 1988 and 2000. From this, they found that there was a lack of consideration of the impact that context had on the formation of professional identity. I have found this to be the case in the literature after this date. There is an emphasis on structure (that which is socially given) and agency (the personal dimension). Indeed, the context, or situatedness, of the professional is underestimated as a key factor in the forming of a professional identity. For the Christian professional youth worker, context is intimately connected to their sense of self. Context plays a pivotal role in the forming of not only their identity as a professional but also the forming of their identity as a Christian. The participants in this study, bar one, worked in churches or Christian charities. As will be explored in Chapter Seven, context

had a significant impact on their identity formation across the first year of their first post.

Payne (2004) commented on how professional identity is under constant negotiation within workplaces and organizations. He noted that managerial responsibilities have been particularly influential on professional identity (2004:5). Giddens reflected a similar view in considering how the self engages with external demands:

“The self is not a passive entity determined by external influences; in forging their self-identities, no matter how local their specific contexts of action, individuals contribute to and directly promote social influences that are global in their consequences and implications.” (Giddens, 1991:2)

Giddens was making reference to ‘the emergence of new mechanisms of self-identity which are shaped by – yet also shape – the institutions of modernity.’ (1991:2) His point was that the self is not a passive entity that merely reacts to external factors. The implications of this for professional Christian youth workers are that they are not only constrained by performative expectations but they display a level of human agency, which also influences the formation of the Christian youth work field. This is the space in which the self and performative constraints meet and interact.

Within many of the journal articles - particularly Nystrom (2008), Craft *et al* (2011), Thaller (2011) and Pillen *et al* (2012) – tensions were identified between the self and professional expectations. Craft *et al* made an interesting finding through their research on how Christian faculty members in Higher Education Institutions integrated their religious identity into their work. The notion of ‘religious calling’ to their work had significance and was a motivational factor. They understood their calling to the work as being no less important than that of the clergy. Tensions arose when faculty members wanted to be open about their faith. This resulted in both overt and covert behaviour. Overtly sharing their faith with others was gauged very carefully in order not to step over boundaries and put people off. Covertly, faculty members talked of how they integrated biblical principles into their work, but without divulging the source. Principles such as ethical behaviour and a commitment to social justice were cited as covert integration. Here, it is clear that a faith and professional identity can

converge at a certain level but diverge in other ways. Participants felt that their faith identity was not valued, but still constructed a salient religious identity, providing evidence that individuals are capable of making decisions on how to act. Religious calling, then, supersedes performative constraints, albeit resulting in covert action or resistant action at times. My research uncovers the particular tensions for Christian youth workers relating to faith and professionalism. What is interesting here is that Christian youth workers do not have to hide their faith. They are employed for the very reason that they are Christians. However, problems arise when the seemingly secularized values and practices of professionalism intersect with the values and practices of their faith. Questions around authenticity are put into stark reality for youth workers who are trying to make sense of themselves during a time of change. This leads me to the final theme emerging from the literature review of journal data, that of transition.

8 Transition

Throughout this thesis, Christian professional youth work is presented as a socially constructed concept, influenced by professional and ministerial discourses. Christian youth workers are located at the interstices of these sometimes conflicting and convergent discursive positions. In addition, newly qualified Christian youth workers are also grappling with the effects of making the transition from university to employment. This period of transition can be particularly problematic for novice Christian youth workers as they leave the relative comfort of a three-year course and enter a new context in which they will seek to belong, learn a new job and demonstrate professional and ministerial proficiency.

There has been much sociological thought on the concept of transition (Wyn and White, 1997; Becker *et al*, 1961; Becker, 1963; Giddens, 1991; Bradford, 2012b, and so forth). In his analysis of youth and transition, Bradford (citing Jones, 2002) asserted how sociological thought on transition reflects the conditions of late modernity, deeming it to be fragmented, extended (in relation to youth) and non-linear. With this in mind, my starting position for researching transition is that it is not a linear process but involves 'multiple dimensions' (Wyn & White, 1997:95). Wyn and White discussed how the concept of transition evokes imagery of 'process, fluidity and change' (1997:95) yet, in their

application of the concept to young people, transition has been 'harnessed to a static, categorical notion' (1997:95).

'Successful' is a word often used in a broad range of theoretical writings about transition, alluding to the notion that there is a place of 'arrival' for anyone experiencing transition. However, this place of arrival is rarely articulated within the literature. I want to avoid using fixed markers for transition. The use of markers in transition presents difficulties for new professionals in that all are individuals and all experience different life pressures that can affect their achievement of these. De Vaus (1995), cited in Wyn & White (1997), suggested that the evidence for 'life-cycle stages which are predictable and uniform is rather thin and can only be sustained by ignoring the complexity of human interaction' (1997:98). Giddens (1991:145-146) talks in terms of the 'lifespan', which in late modernity, is a 'distinctive and enclosed trajectory' that separates 'segments of time, distanced from the life-cycle of the generations'. He argued that lifespans and phases of transition tend to form the basis for an identity crisis. The notion of the lifespan, therefore, has been constructed to confront the anticipated crisis, which must be resolved.

'Transition' as a concept is often thought of in metaphorical terms, such as 'pathway', 'road' or 'journey'. These metaphors evoke images of directional choice that will enable the traveler to reach the 'right' destination. Unfortunately, these metaphors are of limited usefulness for the understanding of transitional effects. They essentialize the destination, determining a finishing position that has to be reached in order to achieve success. One such ideal-typical example of this thinking is the model of transition devised in the late-1960s by Davis (1967). Transition, in this case, focused on the process of professional socialization of student nurses over a five-year period of training. Davis produced six stages of professional socialization. By the last stage, nurses claimed that they 'felt' and 'were' professional. Davis regarded this as having achieved successful completion of all six stages of socialization. There are inherent weaknesses with such categorical models, however. First, they tend to trivialize the complex issues that are present in the experience of the individual during the assumed categorical stage. Second, categorization of any transitional experience negates the individuality of the people who are in

transition. Certainly, categorization can be useful for a profession in charting formation and the becoming of a professional. But for the individual professional, categories can limit personal creativity and sense of professional autonomy that can motivate and energize the individual professional. Third, categorization implies a docility amongst those being categorized, projecting a stated way of being onto individuals because they happen to belong to one specific social group. Fourth, categorization of a transition present within a profession can normalize that profession. Fifth, the notion of successful completion of transitional process is normally governed by a professional body or Government department which will have decided what that looks like. Normative models such as these are potentially disciplinary in Foucault's terms. Davis' theory did not consider the specific anomalies that are active during a period of transition. This thesis identifies such anomalies and so develops Davis' theory.

I now move to Turner's theory of 'liminality' (1969) for a more useful approach to transition. The essence of liminality can be captured in his phrase, 'betwixt and between' (1969:95). This denotes the central feature of his framework in explanation of rites of passage within tribal socio-cultural systems (Cook-Sather, 2006:110). Turner borrowed from the thinking of Arnold Van Gennep (1960) and used the term 'liminality' to develop an understanding of the multi-step transition process experienced through a rite of passage. Liminality refers to the simultaneous processes occurring through rites of passage; that of the place within which the transition takes place and the state of being experienced by those in the transition (Cook-Sather, 2006:110). This liminal phase denotes a time of separation from one social status to another. To use Turner's language (1969:95), 'liminal entities' are considered as being:

"...normally passive or humble; they must obey their instructors implicitly, and accept arbitrary punishment without complaint. It is as though they are being reduced or ground down to a uniform condition to be fashioned anew and endowed with additional powers to enable them to cope with their new station in life."
(Turner, 1969:95)

This is in order to support a transformative process from one status to another. It is a process of becoming. The symbolic domain within which all this occurs is the 'inbetween place'. This place has few or none of the familiarities or attributes of the past or future states. For the liminal entity (or 'liminar'), this

place is a 'betwixt and between' place. The liminars are neither one thing nor the other. They are suspended within a liminal space.

The liminar has the rare opportunity to contemplate the mysteries of life, including personal difficulties. They must learn from those wiser and more experienced than they. An important condition of this is in a reversal of hierarchical order and status (Cook-Sather, 2006:110). This contemplative phase is, according to Turner, critical to the process of becoming during periods of transition. It is during this time of contemplation that the liminar, in this case those moving from student to employee status, can 'try on' different identities in real or unreal ways. This compliments Goffman's theory of performance and the wearing of masks, discussed earlier. This conflation of Turner and Goffman will be developed further, in light of the data generated, in Chapter Eight.

Rites of passage (or the rituals that accompany transition) can refer to a variety of changes of status. They can refer to moving house, getting married, starting a family, or, as in the case of this study, moving from Higher Education into work. For the graduates in this research, this occasion was marked in a particular way by a graduation ceremony. Turner viewed transition as being demarked by three phases: separation, margin and reincorporation: 'The middle phase – *margin* – can be seen as a threshold across which individuals pass in order to become re-incorporated in their new cultural and social status' (Bradford, 2012b:59, italics author's own). As well as ritualized occasions such as graduation, this phase is marked with uncertainty and ambiguity. Liminars have begun the process of detaching themselves from the individual or group (separation) and are in limbo, waiting and looking to the future when a relatively stable state of being can be achieved (reincorporation). Reincorporation is marked by expected behaviours 'in accordance with certain customary norms and ethical standards' (Turner, 1969:95). Again, we note the connections that are to be made with performativity, elaborated later in Chapter Eight.

New graduates of professional Christian youth work are held in Bradford's middle phase; that of marginal space. They have left the relative comfort of three years study, surrounded by peers, tutors and supervisors who are all familiar to them. They have been schooled in the culture of Christian youth work

and leave with the knowledge and skills that have been academically assessed. They have been deemed fit to be called professional and possess a JNC qualification to prove it. The graduates within this research all secured jobs and started work; sometimes towards the end of their degree or one or two months after finishing. They embarked on a new experience, very often in a new context, with new relationships to build. Alongside all this, they were transitioning from the social status of student to the social status of employee. For the Christian youth worker, this liminal status is multi-faceted. Not only are they experiencing the transition from student to employee, they are also experiencing an 'inbetweenness' in reference to the discursive positioning of Christian youth work, that of youth *ministry* and youth *work*, as discussed in Chapter Three.

This thesis suggests that newly qualified Christian professional youth workers are located at the interstices of convergent and competing discourses about what Christian youth work is. Discourses in relation to Christian youth *work*, which is considered to possess a secular liberal agenda, and Christian youth *ministry*, which is believed to come from a faith based theological agenda, have been explored. These discourses suspend graduates in a symbolic, liminal state whereby they identify with their new professional identity as well as with their established, but fluctuating, faith identity.

The third liminal state they find themselves in is as professionals in an occupation that is often misunderstood in the church. The role of youth worker is often thought of as being somewhere between voluntarism and ordained ministry. Often, it is deemed to be not quite a proper profession. Youth workers are considered ambiguous individuals who defy categorization or classification. They are not easily positioned within a cultural space. Turner used the phrase 'threshold people' (1969:95) to describe such individuals. As we shall see, Christian youth workers experience this threshold position in a simultaneous multi-faceted form but are rarely (if ever) afforded the benefits of re-incorporation.

In adopting the phrase 'betwixt and between', I elucidate the in-between period, location and experience of transition for newly qualified Christian professional

youth workers. I focus on the spaces and processes that facilitate transitions into normative states or a means to promote resistance to normative states. Turner's theory provides a useful interpretive framework with conceptual ideas that can be applied in a practical sense to the graduates' transitional experiences. However, Turner's theory has its limitations. For Turner, when individuals enter a liminal space, life appears to stop. For the world of the youth worker, life goes on. They shift within other life spheres that make up the contemporary world. In his research of tribal societies, Turner defined identity in a more essentialized and fixed way than is true for the contemporary self. As I discussed earlier, this thesis takes a social constructionist perspective that views identity as multiple and fragmented whilst taking into account the more stable aspects of identity. I offer a developed theory of liminality that focuses on the process of identity formation. I recognize the influences of transitioning from student to employee, being betwixt and between discourses of faith and professionalism, whilst inhabiting an ambiguous occupational space.

9 Summary

This Chapter has considered the notion of identity conceptualized within a social constructionist framework, specifically focusing on similarity and difference in the light of identification. Resistance identity was thought about in relation to the complex processes involved in identification, which is significant for Christian professional youth workers considering their perceived dual allegiances to ministry and professionalism. A descriptive overview of journal articles about professional identity formation was provided, which enabled an understanding of the wider research conducted in this area. The major findings within the journal articles were analyzed, using four key themes that are of particular interest in the formation of a professional identity in late modernity: performance, performativity, authenticity and transition. These four have provided a framework for analysis of the data, which will be presented in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight. Before the data is presented, however, my methodological approach to the research will be discussed.

Summary of Part One

Part One provided the historical context for an understanding of how Christian youth work came to be professionalized. Chapter Two considered the discourses of voluntarism and professionalism and how they influenced the process of the professionalization of Christian youth ministry and how these discourses are still prevalent today. Chapter Three considered the sacred and profane discursive positions of Christian youth *work* and Christian youth *ministry*, highlighting the particular tensions that exist between the notions of faith and professionalism. This was achieved through a review of the current literature in relation to both discursive positions. Chapter Four reviewed the literature in relation to a social constructionist approach to identity formation. Journal articles relating to professional identity formation in particular were analyzed using four key themes that run through this thesis; performance, performativity, authenticity, and transition.

Part Two

Methods and Analysis

Introduction

Part Two provides an exploration of the methodology and analysis of the data collected. Chapter Five explores details of the methodological approach of the thesis, where the analytical lens of symbolic interaction is justified and my research position as insider/outsider researcher is considered. Chapter Six explores the narratives of the research participants and considers the influence of transition from student to employee. Chapter Seven explores the influence of performativity as a constraint and producer of professional identity formation as well as how relations of power and accountability impact the formation of graduates. Chapter Eight examines the search for authenticity in relation to context, orthodoxy, and resistance identity.

Chapter Five: Methodology, Data Collection and Analysis

1 Introduction

The task of presenting many years of thought and process is brought into stark reality within a methodology Chapter. As has been noted elsewhere, ‘The reader needs to understand what you did and how you thought about [the research problem] in order to appreciate the links among the research problem, the method, and the results’ (Rudestam & Newton 2001:90). It is a truism that developing methodological approaches throughout a period of inquiry both inform, and are informed by, the data being collected. With regard to the current thesis, the interplay between method and data has been crucial. A work that began as an exploration of the effects of transition on professional identity formation shifted to include interest in the effects of discourse on professional identity formation. Maintaining a broadly social constructionist approach to identity, I began to see that how graduates were talking about their thoughts, feelings and experiences in their first post was not simply attributable to only being in transition. Expanding data resulted in developing approaches of methodological enquiry and *vice versa*. Transition cannot be easily observed. Therefore, methodological decisions regarding data collection had to ensure that youth worker experiences of transition were identifiable and open to analysis. This Chapter will first explore the epistemological position of social constructionism. Second, the usefulness of symbolic interaction as an analytical lens for the research of professional identity formation will be considered. Third, this Chapter will provide a rationale for my chosen data generation methods, followed by the narrative of how the methods worked in practice. Fourth, the selection of participants, including a brief biography of each, will be provided along with an analysis of how the methods were used in practice. Fifth, Discourse Analysis as the tool for analysing the data will be discussed. Finally, the ethical implications of the research, specifically the notion of insider-outsider research and reflexivity, will be evaluated.

2 An epistemological position: Social Constructionism

Before discussing what it might mean to approach the question of professional identity formation from a symbolic interaction perspective, it is necessary to

define social constructionism. First, the broader concept of ‘constructionism’ will be explored. Second, it will then be pertinent to develop an understanding of what constitutes the ‘social’ in social constructionism. Third, how this epistemological approach is useful for this study will then be considered.

The term ‘constructionism’ is deliberately used in this thesis rather than the term ‘constructivist’. The term ‘social constructionism’ originally derived from the work of Mannheim (1893-1947). Berger and Luckmann developed its use further in *The Social Construction of Reality* (1967). There is rarely a consistency in the use of the term within the literature. However, Schwandt (1994:125) offered a helpful distinction, stating that constructionists ‘are deeply committed to the contrary view that what we take to be objective knowledge and truth is the result of perspective’, adding that constructionists ‘emphasize the instrumental and practical function of theory construction and knowing’. Schwandt was regarding constructivism to be an individualistic understanding of constructionist thought. He elaborated on this by insisting that constructionism examines the process of knowledge construction by focusing on individual minds and cognitive processes. Alternatively, Schwandt saw constructionism as being concerned with knowledge construction which is turned outwards to shared, social constructions of meaning and knowledge:

“...the focus here is not on the meaning-making activity of the individual mind but on the collective generation of meaning as shaped by the conventions of language and other social processes.” (Schwandt, 1994:127)

There are parallels here with the construction of discourses, discussed in Chapter Four. This relates to my preferred mode of data analysis (discourse analysis), which will be explored later in this Chapter. Crotty illuminated further the distinctive use of both terms by stating:

“It would appear useful, then, to reserve the term *constructivism* for epistemological considerations focusing exclusively on the ‘the meaning-making’ activity of the individual mind’ and to use *constructionism* where the focus includes ‘the collective generation [and transmission] of meaning.” (Crotty, 1998:58, italics author’s own).

This study is focusing on the social processes that form the meanings inherent in transitions into professional life. Transition implies a change from one state to another, as discussed in the previous Chapter. This could also be considered

as a process of transformation from one state to another. Therefore, the term 'constructionism' is used throughout this thesis.

Constructionism is generally considered by sociological thinkers to be the antithesis of objectivism that is found in the positivist school of thought. For Western science, the belief that there is objective truth, and that appropriate methods of inquiry produce knowledge of that truth, has been its epistemological foundations from the time of ancient Greek philosophy, through the Middle Ages and on into the Enlightenment (Crotty, 1998:42). Constructionism has been the counterargument to this understanding of truth and knowledge. It views all knowledge as constructed through the engagement between human beings and their world, as Crotty stated in his definition:

"It is the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context." (Crotty, 1998:42, italics author's own)

From this definition, it is clear that meaning is not discovered, but constructed. Knowledge, or meaningful reality, is not inherent in an object and waiting to be discovered. The object is full of potential meaning, which emerges when a human being engages with the object. From this viewpoint, meaning (or truth) cannot be described as objective; neither can it be considered as wholly subjective. From a constructionist perspective, meaning should not be imposed upon reality, as this would imply an outright subjectivism. Some constructionist thinkers implied this (Gergen, 1999). But Crotty (1998:43) was quick to repudiate this, pointing out that to do so would be 'to reject both the existentialist concept of humans as beings-in-the-world and the phenomenological concept of intentionality'. This denotes the difference between *creation* of meaning and the *construction* of meaning. Human beings have something to engage with; the world and the objects within it. As separate entities, the world and objects in the world are considered meaningless. Therefore, objectivity and subjectivity need to be conjoined in the construction of meaning for human beings. Constructionism does exactly that. This may imply that meaning making from a constructionist viewpoint is somewhat individualistic. Therefore, it is important at this point to explore what constitutes the 'social' in social constructionism.

Social constructionists argue that the world we engage with, and the people we are and are becoming, are predominantly the product of social processes. However, this description is misleading if it is not set within a historical and social perspective (Crotty, 1998:54). A Durkheimian approach considers that we are each born into a culture which is already imbued with symbolic meaning and which contains institutions that pre-date us. When we first attach meaning to the world around us, it is likely that we are viewing it through the lenses that have been produced by our culture. Therefore, the 'social' in social constructionism is about how meaning is generated, and not necessarily about the object on which meaning is being interpreted. An object can be either natural or social or both. However, the generation of meaning is always social, as meaning is always generated in and out of social human interaction.

Considering the historical and social context for Christian professional youth workers, they usually enter Christian youth work as volunteers, within churches or Christian charities. Very few trainee youth workers coming through CYM have started youth work in secular organizations. As discussed in Chapters Two, Three and Four, Christian youth work culture is already endowed with significant meaning. Historically, contemporary Christian youth work has been formed by the values of the Christian faith and secular professional youth work and is located somewhere between these two discourses, resulting in an ambiguous occupation. The terms 'volunteering' and 'professionalism' have been influenced by historical construction of a particular meaning within the faith sector. By the time newly qualified Christian youth workers graduate, they have made the transition from volunteer to professional. Then they embark on the transition from student to employee. This dual-transition results in tensions. The social contexts within which new youth workers are located, and which the participants in this study experienced, involved relationships not only with other employed youth workers but also with volunteers, employers, parents, management committees, board members, church members, community members, school staff, funding bodies and, of course, young people. Added to this assortment of relationships, youth workers had developed their faith and professional knowledge at college which involved an understanding of different theologies, secularized values of youth work and new (for them) methods of practice. This social milieu is the place where meaning has already been

constructed, but also where meaning is being constructed and reconstructed in and through the interactions with people and knowledges. It is from this view of social constructionism that this thesis explores the formation of professional identity for newly qualified Christian youth workers. Christian youth workers are instrumental in constructing the Christian youth work profession, as well as being constructed by historical and social perspectives.

3 A theoretical position: Symbolic Interaction

In considering what it might mean to approach the question of professional identity from a symbolic interactionist perspective, it is first necessary to define what 'symbolic interaction' is. Second, consideration will be given to why it is useful for the research of professional identity formation for Christian youth workers. Third, consideration will be given to what kind of data may be of interest to a symbolic interactionist.

Symbolic interaction first emerged in the 1930s through the influence of American pragmatists, Mead (1863–1931) and Blumer (1900–1987). In Mead's thinking, every person is a social construction. We become 'persons' in and out of interaction with our social world. Mead's approach embodied an ultimately social position. He considered human behaviour to have originated in the social and to be shaped by social influences. Even biological and physical aspects of human life are infused by the social. Mead asserted that our ability to develop socially was built on 'entering into the most highly organized logical, ethical, and a aesthetic attitudes of the community' then recognizing 'the most extensive set of interwoven conditions that may determine thought, practice, and our fixation and enjoyment of values' (Mead, 1943:337). It is on this premise of Mead's thinking that the relationship between social constructionism and symbolic interaction is embodied.

Becker developed the symbolic interaction approach within the Chicago School. The approach was used to illuminate small-scale interactions and the relationship between symbolic meanings and identity. Blumer identified the basis of social order as being located within these underlying principles of symbolic interaction:

- Humans act towards objects on the basis of what those objects might mean for them;
- This meaning is derived from or arises out of social experiences with fellow human beings;
- Meanings are handled and modified through an interpretive process (Blumer, 1969:2)

The symbolic interaction approach has broadly been derived from Weber. It has a 'preoccupation with meaning and the experience of active agents' (Bradford, 2012b:11). Taking class, gender and race as examples of objects of the social order, Bradford noted that there is a comparison to be made with Marxism. A Marxist analysis may read these examples as being 'aspects of structured *social division* or *social difference*' (2012:11, italics author's own). A Weberian analysis may consider the emergence of specific meaning and significance of class, gender and race 'through the processes and practices of social life and social interaction' (Bradford, 2012b:11-12).

Bradford added that this is all done within the context of power relations. This is an interesting point to make in relation to symbolic interaction, since it has been criticized by sociologists in relation to power and its perceived inability to deal with questions relating to social structure and power. Symbolic interaction has long been represented as a limited perspective due to its focus on *micro* aspects of social organization, and therefore unable to offer adequate conceptualizations of the *macro* phenomena such as 'social structure, patterns of inequality and power' (Dennis & Martin, 2005:191). Giddens, for example, has asserted that, 'symbolic interactionism is open to the criticism that it concentrates too much on small-scale. Symbolic interactionists have always found difficulty in dealing with more large-scale structures and processes' (Giddens, 1997:565). However, Dennis & Martin (2005) have taken issue with this micro/macro debate. They rejected the characterization of symbolic interaction as an approach that cannot, or does not, provide an understanding of the main objects of sociological concern, specifically concerning the concept of power. Citing research in deviance and education (drawing mainly on Becker's work), Dennis & Martin asserted that symbolic interaction has in fact focused on 'the ways in which authoritative and consequential power relations are enacted and sustained by real people in ways which do contribute to the 'structuring' of societies' (2005:207). They went on to refute the claim that

symbolic interaction is subjective or micro in its approach. The different approach to power that symbolic interaction brings can be located in the importance it places on the 'realm of human group life' (Dennis & Martin, 2005:208). Society is viewed as an ongoing accomplishment and not as a set of structures, institutions or universal processes that can be defined or measured from an objective viewpoint.

Having provided a broad overview of symbolic interaction, I will now discuss the relationship of symbolic interaction to professional identity and explore the meaning of 'interaction' within symbolic interaction. The starting point for symbolic interactionists, quite simply, is to realize that symbolic interaction deems identity to be constructed:

"All interactionists, however distinct their theoretical grounding, methodological choices, and assumptions about the proper level of stability and reification, agree that self is not an object that has inherent meaning, but is a construct that is given meaning through an actor's choices, mediated by the, relationships, situations, and cultures in which she or he is embedded." (Fine, 1993:78)

This position underpinned my approach towards the research participants of my study. As discussed earlier, the social constructionist approach assumes that there is no innate self. Rather, the self is constructed through interaction with, and within, relationships, experiences, context, culture and other social influences. Essentially, symbolic interaction enables an understanding of becoming in the sense that, as human beings, our identity does not remain the same once and for all, as argued by Erikson (1950:57). Rather, we are always in a state of becoming persons. Symbolic interactionism attributes this becoming to the interactions we have with the people and situations with which we relate. This interaction is made up of a number of features as presented by Blumer (1969:108-102). Before considering these, it is useful to understand the theoretical context of Blumer's day with regards to how the depiction of human group life was formulated.

Blumer's preference for the study of interaction in accounting for human group life rested on four contested theories/schemes of how contemporary social psychologists arrived at the claims they made regarding human association. First, he asserted that the claims made were founded on given ideas (usually from psychology) as to the nature of a human being. From this, a constructed

idea of the human group would be developed. Second, Blumer reputed the imported image of human association as an analogical construct. This usually took the functionalist approach in explaining group life, which, according to Blumer, deems interaction within the group reduced to being 'merely instrumental to the unified action of the group' (1969:104). Third, Blumer regarded claims about group life as not being founded on the 'basis of analogical reasoning, but on the basis of speculative reflection' (1969:105). To clarify, the claims made about human association avoided the inductive study that Blumer felt was necessary for a realistic view of human group life. Finally, Blumer argued that the nature of human group life could not be evaluated through the idea that culture, social structure and role-playing constituted its life. His argument rested on the assertion that the claims made regarding human association had not been derived from the study of human group life as an on-going process. Rather, they had been formed through certain products of human association (1969:107). Blumer argued:

"The conceptions have not been reached through a careful study of what happens between people who are engaged in interaction with each other. Instead, these conceptions were formed by the comparison of group ways of living, or through the observation of relationships, or through the differentiated positions or parts taken by individuals in the context of the group. To conceive of human association in terms of culture, status position, and role playing is actually to employ imported conceptions." (Blumer, 1969:107-108)

This sums up Blumer's starting position of arguing for an exploration of human interaction that will illuminate the nature of human group life. For Blumer, the most important feature of human association was that individuals take each other into account (1969:108). This rather innocuous premise meant that there was an awareness of the other person; they were identified in some way, a judgment or appraisal was made of that person, an identification was made of that person's actions as well as trying to find out what that person had on his mind or was intending to do. Comprehending this was to orientate oneself in order to direct one's own conduct. This process occurs throughout the whole of the interaction with the other person and not just at the point of contact. As Blumer noted, 'Perceiving, defining and judging the other person and his action and organizing oneself in terms of such definitions and judgments constitute a continuing or running process' (1969:109). Developing this notion further, the fact that two individuals take each other into continuing account means that the

individuals are brought into relationship with each other, of subject to subject, not object to object or subject to object. The relationship between subject and subject in this mutual way intertwines the action of both, which Blumer referred to as 'transaction'; described as 'a fitting of the developing action of each into that of the other to form a joint or overbridging action' (1969:109). The result of this interrelationship constitutes a singleness rather than still being considered as two separate lines of action.

It is at this point that the transaction being constructed through process is subject to variability. Interaction is fluid in the sense that each of the persons are defining and redefining one another's actions. This flowing process, whereby each person's actions are being guided by the other, suggests a degree of change and flux for each. This thesis considers this particular feature of professional formation for Christian youth workers. Indeed, the literature reviewed in Chapter Four is awash with the notion. However, Blumer noted the occasions in which human group life is noticeably constant and stable. He surmised that 'the prevalence of relatively ordered and stable human group life in face of the fact that such group life is constantly being built up brings to light the controls that enter into the development of a transaction' (1969:110). This is an interesting point for the formation of a professional identity. The youth worker has to mobilize himself or herself in relation to the other person they are taking into account. How the youth worker identifies and interprets the action of the other is not, according to Blumer, 'predetermined by that action' (1969:110). The interpretation depends on how the youth worker defines the action of the other person and on the nature of his or her own actions in relation to his or her purposes, aims or directions. In interaction, the youth worker's schemes of definition will be incorporated with the others involved in the interaction. This will include expectations of how one should act in any situation. Additionally, the youth worker will incorporate schemes of his own that have come from his or her own experience. Blumer understood that, in both these cases, they introduce order and continuity into how he or she defines the actions of the other, therefore functioning as controls over his or her own actions. It must also be borne in mind that, in response to the youth workers own developing act, he or she can exercise selection between the schemes of definition they implement and also respond differently to the actions of the other person. Again, process is

important here in the generative production of meaning and for the research of transition.

An individual, or youth worker in this case, not only interacts with the other person, but he or she will be interacting with his or herself (as has already been hinted at above). A 'self-interaction' (Blumer, 1969:111) takes place inside the interaction with another and is the means by which the action of the self is mobilized and organized. Mead (1934), in his discussion of the relation between 'I' and 'Me', explored the features present in this self-interaction. It is through this that an individual enters into the wider community, even though the wider community is not present. The normative behaviours of the wider community may be adopted by the individual and his or her actions are guided by these behaviours. This is an important aspect for the youth worker, especially when considering the impact of performativity (discussed in Chapter Four) on a youth worker's identity.

A further feature of interaction that relates to performativity is through the possibility that individuals may, at times, be required to inhibit their tendencies to act when in interaction with others. 'Inclinations, impulses, wishes and feelings may have to be restrained in the light of what one takes into account and in the light of how one judges or interprets what one takes into account' (Blumer, 1969:111). In the interpretation of the other's and his or her ongoing developing acts, a youth worker will be orientating him or herself and checking his or her action, withholding feelings and recognizing certain actions that must be restricted or contained. This situation can cause an inner conflict for the youth worker especially as they are in a period of transition, moving from one social status to another (student to employee) and working in a context that draws on faith and secular values. This thesis considers the points of resistance for Christian youth workers and what particular aspects of their context and community are points of tension for new youth workers.

At this point, I return to Blumer's concern that the study of group life should be an inductive process. In researching transition and professional identity formation, I was aware that this thesis could not come from a purely inductive position. Neither was I taking a deductive approach. I entered the field in order

to hear the voices of the graduates themselves. I was keen to hear what was important to them and what caused them concern. However, I was working from an already existing body of knowledge (Chapters Two, Three and Four) about the field as well as my own personal knowledge and experience of professional Christian youth work (explored later in this Chapter). This thesis sits somewhere between inductive and deductive; meaning that data was generated which emanated from the Christian youth work field but this data was analyzed in the light of a body of knowledge, specifically that taken from the literature on Christian and secular youth work, professional identity and transition.

Symbolic interaction has been a useful approach for this study for a number of reasons. First, youth workers were regarded as central to the creation of meaning. Second, interactions of the youth workers, and who those interactions were with, could be scrutinized. Third, through these interactions, common meanings emerged that were interpreted into findings and conclusions. Fourth, the focus was on the world that exists for new Christian youth workers and how they come to make sense of that world. Fifth, concepts of interaction and expectation play a significant part in the life of the youth worker, which are implicit in a symbolic interactionist approach. Sixth, the youth workers' participation in group life was all important, allowing for an exploration of individual conduct and collective behaviour. Next, I will provide a rationale of the design of the study and the methods used.

4 Design and Methods: a rationale

This study took place over a period of one year. This aligned with the youth workers' first year of being in employment after graduation from a three-year undergraduate degree course. In alignment with the social constructionist approach, and in consideration of the graduates experiencing a transition process, I was interested in the lived experience of change and continuity and how new youth workers expressed this. I also wanted to know if the agency of the graduates shaped or accommodated the experiences of their transition from student to employee.

The literature review was conducted over the duration of the study. It was the first piece of work I drafted in Year One of the thesis and was still being edited

during the final weeks before submission. Having begun with the work mainly emanating from the Chicago School, my reading progressed to engage with the ideas of Goffman, Foucault, Butler, Ball and, eventually, Turner. It was the reading of Turner's notion of liminality that consolidated my theoretical position for my overall thesis. Also, collecting and analysing the data influenced subsequent reading concerning ideas such as performativity. Throughout the research period, this emerged as a significant aspect of a new youth worker's identity. In each part of the PhD process, the literature review was a constant feature, always changing and developing my understanding of professional identity formation for new youth workers.

Having completed a first draft of Chapter Two, which provided the historical context for the professionalization of Christian youth work, it was clear that I needed to include more primary sources. There has been little primary research on the professionalization of 'Christian' youth work, so I had to look beyond key secondary writers in this area, such as Ward (1996). I was in the unusual, but fortunate, position to have a collection of *Church Times* articles at my disposal. Prior to me, another researcher, Rev Dr Steve Griffiths, had collated and photocopied historical articles about young people that were contained within *Church Times* archives in London. As he happens to be my husband, the copied archives, unknown to me, were conveniently in my home. I therefore set about reading through each of the *Church Times* papers to find articles relevant to my thesis. Thus I had a reliable source of evidence that illuminated the social thinking of the time they were written. The *Church Times* articles were a source of primary material that documented attitudes towards young people during the 1950s and 1960s, which was a culturally significant time for youth in the UK (and the world), and which saw many changes that would influence Christian youth work for years to come. As a source, the *Church Times* articles are inevitably limited they are an Anglican source and therefore exclude other denominations. This is an area that could be researched by others in the future.

Within the sociological literature on professional identity and the transition from higher education to work, there is often an emphasis on how professional knowledge is developed in college and how this continues once in work (Smith, 2007; Heggen, 2008; Black *et al*, 2010). These studies usually focus on

different individuals or different cohorts of student/graduates. It is rare to find research on the same individuals or groups over the period of the longitudinal study. It is equally rare to find studies where the research participants are the same individuals or groups from beginning to end. More rare still are studies that focus on the interface between professional identity and faith identity. Those that do (Bryan & Revell, 2011; Craft *et al*, 2011; Thaller, 2011) consider professionals who happen to be Christians working within a certain profession, rather than Christians who are employed as qualified professionals within Christian contexts. I wanted the study to focus on the same individuals over a period of time. I wanted to trace the narratives of each of the graduates' experiences, as well as identify the collective discourses they were employing with regards to the professional identity of Christian youth work. This was important to me as I considered my existing relationship with the graduates a fundamental aspect of the generation and collection of the data. This is discussed in more detail later in this Chapter.

Reflective practice diaries and interviews were the methods used to generate data for this thesis. I requested one diary per month from each graduate throughout the 12-month duration of the study. The diaries complemented the interviews, which took place every three months throughout the year. Slicing across the year four times enabled me to identify changes as well as spot continuity. Researching the first year of practice upon graduating was influenced by Turner's (1967) thinking on liminality, as discussed in Chapter Four. As graduates were moving from one social status to another, that of student to employee, it seemed appropriate to research the first year of employment. Also, there is rhetoric amongst some youth work practitioners, clergy, and even some youth work educators, that Christian youth workers do not last long in the profession. Two years is the average timeframe expected for participation in this field of work. Poor self-management on the part of the youth worker is the usual reason given for this, without a mention of poor management or non-existent career trajectories. Such is the strength of this belief, Fields (2002) even produced a book called, *Your first two years in youth ministry: a personal and practical guide to starting right*. However, the statistics to prove this are yet to be seen. My decision to conduct a year-long study was not motivated by these claims. Rather, I was interested in seeing where these

claims may come from. Tracking a group of graduates for a year would enable me to identify imaginary futures and changing aspirations. I hoped to identify how their employment experience had been forged, enabled and constructed and a year would provide this opportunity.

Next, I will provide a rationale for the decision to utilize my chosen data collection methods of diaries and interviews.

4.1 Diaries

The use of diaries as a data collection method was influenced by the research conducted by Catherine Theodosius (2008) in *Emotional Labour in Health Care*. Theodosius recorded verbal diaries of nurses at the end of their shift in order to hear about their experiences at work. My research differed from Theodosius' in that she was specifically researching emotions and had chosen audio diaries as a method that enabled nurses to talk about critical incidents and their emotions at the end of a shift. I was concerned with youth workers' practice and was keen to see the more reflective aspects of this in order to identify formational aspects of their professional development. Therefore, written monthly diaries were chosen as one of two data collection methods.

It is generally agreed amongst research theorists (Denscombe, 2007; Robson, 2002 & Bryman, 1989) that diaries for research purposes are important in terms of recording retrospective incidents that participants consider to be important in some way. Diaries can be used in three ways (Denscombe, 2007:229). First, they collect factual data. This is a log of things that have happened, decisions that have been made, and the people involved. Second, they record significant incidents. They identify things that are viewed as particularly important and describe the writer's priorities. Third, they offer personal interpretation. They give account of personal reflection and interpretation of incidents, including an account of feelings and emotions surrounding the events. The use of diaries within this research sought to capture the reflections of the participants on their practice and involved aspects of all three features, particularly the latter two. Significant incidents, or as Bryman (1989) preferred, 'critical incidents', are those things that the researcher wants diary writers to separate out and notice. 'Critical incidents' are specific happenings that diary writers consider important.

Reflection and interpretation on these happenings provided further thought (and data) on what the person was experiencing during and after the event.

The purpose for collecting data from monthly diaries was fourfold. First, I could guide the graduates' thoughts when writing their reflections as opposed to a free-flow of thinking. Although I am not averse to hearing the free-flowing reflections of new graduates on their practice, I was keen to keep the diary as focused as possible. This would not only benefit me with data analysis but the graduate would know exactly what was being asked of them, why and when (Robson, 2002:259). Second, diaries created a space whereby graduates could complete them at their own pace. They did not require a time and place to meet; only to have responded by a certain date (which did cause some problems at times and will be discussed later in the Chapter). This offered graduates the reflective time they needed to consider their practice without interrupting questions from a researcher or other interpretations being communicated back by a researcher. Third, the diaries represented a particular moment in time (Plummer, 2001:48). Plummer noted that diaries build up a representation of a person's life experience due to the extended nature of diary writing. I was keen to trace the formation of graduates over a period of a year. Tracking this trajectory would enable me to identify changes, learning and development during that time. Fourth, diaries would be a useful precursor to the interviews that I would conduct every three months, particularly for the generation of interview questions (Burgess, 1981).

4.2 Interviews

Alternative data collecting methods have risen in popularity in recent years. This is especially the case as a result of the evolution of social networking sites, internet-based communication and differing forms of arts based media (Becker, 2007). As a result of this increase in new data collection methods, it could be assumed that interest in the interview for social science research is on the wane. However, it would appear that social constructionist research still holds interviews in high esteem, generating data that can be analyzed in a range of ways.

The legitimacy of interview data has been questioned due to it not being naturally occurring (Scully, 2010:111). Scully noted Holstein and Gubrium's (2004) contention that this distinction is more porous than it would appear. Seemingly spontaneous natural talk is not necessarily as effortless or bias-free as it might first seem. It has already been explored in Chapter Four, through the thinking of Goffman, that persons adopt roles and characters when interacting with one another. In the case of spontaneous natural talk, another scene has been staged by other non-interviewing persons in a non-interview setting. Holstein and Gubrium contended that the developing 'interview society' has made the interview 'a naturally occurring occasion in its own right for articulating experience' (2004:155, in Scully, 2010:111). The idea of an interview society conceives the interview to be a routine feature of everyday life. This has arisen through the prominence of chat shows and news bulletins, as well as job interviews. For many people, interviews 'will come almost as second nature' (Scully, 2010:112).

As has been noted in the epistemology section of this Chapter, how participants talk about their practice is not taken as actual evidence of their experiences but 'only as a form of talk – a 'discourse', 'account' or 'repertoire' – which represents a culturally available way of packaging experience' (Kitzinger in Silverman, 2007). This raises an issue with reference to meaning. It is clearly inappropriate to expect individual participants to attach one single meaning to their experience. In abeyance with symbolic interactionist thought, there will be multiple meanings regarding the experience of being a newly qualified professional Christian youth worker. This, of course, created a methodological problem for this research. I could not expect to have direct access to experience. I could only approach the interview data as actively constructed narratives (Silverman, 2004:32). This approach had significant bearing on the chosen analysis method, which is discussed later in this Chapter.

5 The research process: Selection of participants, putting methods into practice

5.1 Selection of participants

A phenomenological study such as this, whereby participants will have experienced or are experiencing the phenomenon under investigation, required

identification of appropriate participants. In this instance, a theoretical, or purposive, sampling approach was implemented, selecting participants who closely matched the criteria of the study, that criteria having been defined by me. Purposive sampling allows a case to be chosen because it illustrates the feature or process under investigation. However, this should be conducted critically, with thought about the parameters of the group that is relevant to the study. As the aim of this research was to investigate the formation of a professional identity for newly qualified Christian youth workers, I deliberately chose Christian youth workers who had just graduated from a three-year degree course and were about to start their first full-time post.

A Christian organization, CYM represents the church in its broadest sense. Students from a breadth of denominations graduate from its courses, including Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Catholic, United Reformed, Pentecostal and Independent Churches. This means that students fall within a broad spectrum of belief, from liberal to conservative evangelical. Therefore, CYM's theological orientation is one that can embrace all these particular approaches. In comparison with other courses, such as those hosted by St. Mellitus College and Moorlands College, CYM does not follow any particular theological persuasion, seeking instead to be inclusive.

My interest lay in the effects of transition on professional identity, with the immediate concern being the transition from student to employee. This sample of graduates was relevant to the study as they held an in-between status; that is, in-between university and work. They were also entering an ambiguous occupation of Christian professional youth work that is discursively positioned somewhere in-between faith and secular work. This sample would represent the wider category of Christian professional youth work graduates, therefore offering an opportunity to glean generalizations from the findings that could be regarded as being of use to the field upon completion.

The participants were selected amongst graduates from the Centre for Youth Ministry (CYM) who had just completed a BA (Hons) Degree in Youth And Community Work with Applied Theology in 2009. All graduates had studied at the Cambridge centre. There are five CYM Centres in total within the UK. My

initial concerns with choosing a sample from the Cambridge centre focused on two potentially problem areas. First, I was concerned that our prior tutor/student relationship be detrimental to the reliability and validity of the research. This is discussed in more depth later in the Chapter. At this stage, it is enough to note that I recognize prior relationships of this status may have its drawbacks. However, I believed that our already established relationship and my knowledge of them as people, as well as knowledge of the course they had just completed, would enable me to go beyond surface level exploration. I hoped I would be able to explore the more in-depth aspects of their experiences much sooner in the process. Second, I hoped that the participants would be representative of not only students graduating from Cambridge CYM but of other graduating students from Christian professional youth work courses. I was aware that gathering data from peer-participants would present a rather homogenized group. I had considered two other approaches to participant selection. First, I could have approached graduates from the other four CYM centre's in Bristol, Oxford, Nottingham or Ireland. Although the same curriculum is taught in each of the centres, each one has its own culture and ethos, mainly arising from the denominational theological institution within which they are located, as well as cultural features associated with geographical positions. Second, I could have approached graduates from the range of professionally qualifying Christian undergraduate courses that are currently operating in this market place. This would have offered a more diverse group of graduates who had experienced different training through different institutions. Both these options would have had a bearing on the kind of data I was hoping to generate, especially in terms of my prior relationship with the participants, as I would not have known any of the participants personally. This is discussed in more detail later in the Chapter. Also, I had to consider personal practicalities. I work full time in Cambridge, have three children and a husband. I needed to consider time and finances. So in this sense, the participants could also be seen as a convenience sample.

It is usual for qualitative studies to have small sample groups. With eight participants, I needed to ensure that my chosen methods would be adequate in terms of quantity and quality of in-depth data. The year-long research period had already been decided, as discussed earlier. The focus on transition dictated that I should gather data at regular intervals throughout that year in order to

identify changes in learning and development. With eight participants, I calculated that I would (if all went according to plan) have a total of 96 diaries and 32 interviews. I considered this to be an adequate amount of data for the purposes of generating reliable and valid findings.

From this sample, I hoped to make some theorizations that would relate to those newly qualified professionals with the Christian youth work field. Theorizations can be made in relation to the transition from student to employee, the tensions experienced between faith and professionalism and working within an ambiguous occupation, which is viewed by many with the church as being somewhere between voluntarism and ordained ministry.

5.2 Biographies of the participants

I will now introduce the sample group, known as the participants, research participants, graduates or youth workers within this thesis. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the identity of the participants.

Mel: Mel, in her late-20s, was employed by a local Anglican, evangelical charismatic church. This church also employed other youth workers in various roles. Her post was reliant on funding from a number of sources, including the Local Authority that funded the schools aspect of her work. Her work consisted of church based youth work, with a proportion of her time devoted to children's work. She was also required to do mentoring work in the local school. Mel was a single woman. She had moved from home, which is a two-hour drive away. She bought her first house with a mortgage and ended a long-term relationship when she graduated. Mel bought her house in the community where she worked. Mel was mostly concerned with social justice issues and sought to portray this through her work. During the data collection phase, Mel found out that the funding for her schools work post was being cut and they would not be renewing her contract.

Steve: Steve, in his late-20s, was employed by a Christian youth work charity. Steve was on placement at the charity as a student and was promoted to Director upon graduating. The charity's work involved supporting young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) into further education or

employment. Steve's role focused on securing funding from whatever source he could. He managed a large, mostly employed, staff team with some volunteers and a small number of student youth workers and social workers. Steve was a single man. He bought a house lived in the same town in which he worked. The town had a population of over 80,000 people. Steve wanted to see the lives of marginalized young people transformed. His organization had a Christian ethos but they were averse to openly evangelizing. Steve was very comfortable with this approach.

Scott: Scott, in his late-30s, was employed by an independent, charismatic church, situated in a large university town. Scott was on placement as a student at the same church, but was now employed and had overall responsibility for the youth work. The work involved discipleship of young people, running youth groups and developing social enterprise opportunities. The work was very focused on the young people that attend the church. However, he was pressing for change in this area and hoped to develop stronger community links. Scott was married and was hoping to adopt a child during the time of the data collection. He lived in a small village outside the town where he worked. He was keen to see young people nurtured in their faith but without being forced.

Maddy: Maddy, in her early-20s, was employed by an independent church in a city. Her work consisted of running youth groups and discipleship groups. She also worked in partnership with a range of other agencies, including the Local Authority, which concentrated on youth within the local community. She was the lead youth worker and managed a large team of volunteers. Maddy moved away from home and was living in accommodation provided by the church. Her flat was above the church in which she worked. Maddy was a single woman. She was keen to see young people nurtured in their faith as well as sharing the Christian faith with young people outside the church community.

Beth: Beth, in her early-20s, worked for a Christian schools work charity. She also worked part time for a local Anglican church, mainly running a generic youth club for young people from the local community, detached work and a discipleship group. The charity work involved mentoring and the development of prayer spaces within schools. Beth was on placement with the charity when she

was a student. She was offered a part-time post when she graduated and was the first JNC qualified member of staff employed by the organization. Beth was in a relationship and became engaged during the collection data process. She lived in rented accommodation in the town where she worked. The town has a population of approximately 150,000 people. Beth was keen for young people to realize their worth and potential, especially young women.

Pete: Pete, in his mid-20s, worked for a Christian schools work charity. His job entailed mentoring, PSHE lessons and work with pupils at risk of exclusion. Pete was first employed on a part-time basis but his role became full-time during the year of the study. Initially, Pete worked a few hours a week for an independent, charismatic church where he was on placement while he was a student. This work consisted of running the church discipleship youth group and the generic youth club for the wider community. Pete was single and had remained living at home with his mother. Pete was keen for as many young people as possible to know about the Christian story.

Holly: Holly, in her early-30s, worked for a Christian youth work charity in a city. Her work consisted of developing provision for young people in the community. The work focused on relationship building as a means to assess need. Her main focus had been the development of a project specifically for young women from the local community. The project was not averse to sharing the gospel, but neither was it a priority. Holly was single and lived in a rented room in a house owned by friends. Holly worked in the same city in which she did her placement. She stayed within the same area when she got the job. Holly was especially keen to see young women overcome barriers that may limit their potential.

Lee: Lee, in his mid-30s, worked for a secular charity that enabled young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) into further education or employment. Lee was married with one child and remained living in the same house that he had lived in while he was a student. Lee was the only participant who did not work for a church or Christian charity. During his training, he had been on placement for a church but deliberately chose to work for a secular organization thereafter, as he had become disillusioned by the expectations of church work. Lee worked within a reasonably large team of other youth workers,

most of whom were not professionally trained. Lee enjoyed youth work and was keen to forge a career path for himself within the sector. During the year of the research, Lee found out that the funding for his post would be cut and so his contract would only last another few months after I had finished data collection.

5.3 Use of diaries

A rationale for the use of diaries as a data collection method has been provided above. The following will provide a narrative of how the diaries worked in practice.

I was conscious of the fact that graduates had been well practiced in the art of reflective journal writing whilst at university. For two years of the course, the professional practice modules were partly assessed through this format. They would choose a critical incident from their practice and reflect theologically and theoretically on that incident. This insider piece of information was useful, as I constructed the diary format in a similar style to the reflective journals with which they were familiar. A variant of the reflective journal, combined with the critical incident approach, seemed appropriate for the task. I explained to the participants that critical incidents are events they want to separate out from other events, things they want someone to notice, something specific that is important to them. In order to ensure that I had the participants' cooperation, I decided against a free-flowing diary and used some questions to guide the reflections. I was satisfied that participants were aware of what they were being asked to do. Why they were doing it had been addressed during the consent phase (discussed in the ethics section of this Chapter). When they were to return the diary presented challenges.

My intention had been to form a closed Facebook Group, which would act as the forum for diary writing. The idea was that the diary proforma would be accessible by participants through the Facebook page. They would each complete it and send it back to me *via* the messaging service. They would not be able to see the diaries of others. I would place points for discussion on the group page, which would be seen by all participants, which would provoke thoughts and ideas for the participants to talk about. This would have provided a different kind of data in that it would have been generated through group

discussion, rather like a focus group. This approach had been agreed by Brunel University Research Ethics Committee. However, this proved to be unsuccessful early on in the process. Many of the participants did not engage in the use of the group as I had thought or hoped they would. I decided to stop the Facebook Group and email diaries directly to each of the participants. The first set of diaries from participants had all been returned by the date I had stipulated. After this, I had to email many of the graduates two or three times in order to receive a diary. This was reminiscent of our tutor/student relationship, which is discussed in more detail within the discussion on insider-outsider research. I was also careful not to overwhelm the participants in terms of their time, as I would be conducting tri-monthly interviews with them too.

I had wanted to build up a representative picture of each individual's practice experiences over the span of a year and the diaries did mirror this. The diaries reflected aspects of the lives of the graduates from October 2009 to October 2010. During that time, some of the youth workers were overwhelmed by the new challenges they were facing whilst others relished being stretched and challenged in their new jobs. For example, Mel had difficulties with her Line Manager and other working arrangements that led to time off work with stress. Then funding ran out for her post and she had to look for another job. Other aspects of life were also recorded, such as Scott's adoption of a child during his first year, which then caused him to reassess his priorities in relation to his whole life. The diaries characterized the highs and the lows of a youth worker's first twelve months in post, whilst offering insight into the inner thoughts about specific aspects of their practice and their feelings and attitudes towards them. The daily grind of everyday normal life was also evident within the diary sample.

The diaries were particularly helpful in tracking a trajectory for development from the beginning to the end of the year. This will be discussed further in Chapters Six and Seven. The graduates' style of writing became more decisive over the year. Responses within their reflections were less formulaic. Critical incident was followed by theory, which was then followed by theology. An integration of these three aspects was apparent for most, but not all, participants. This recognition proved to be useful in generating questions for the interviews towards the end of data collection. I was careful, however, not to

view the diary accounts as 'objective fact'. This was in abeyance with the epistemological position of social constructionism. Diaries are retrospective accounts, and I was aware of viewing the graduate's reflections as a version of things as seen by them. All this was being filtered through the participants' past experiences, aspirations, identity and personalities (Denscombe, 2007:230). The data therefore, was used to enhance interview questions, which allowed them to talk to the incidents they raised in the diaries.

As a stand-alone data collection method, diaries would not have provided the deeper and richer data that I needed in order to gauge identity formation. Diaries as a method of inquiry for this research had particular problems in terms of reliability and validity. The graduates were all very positive about being part of the study. This could mean that some misreporting occurred in the writing of their reflections. This is where the prior relationship of tutor/student could have been problematic, as the participants may have had a sense of wanting to impress me by changing their behaviour to portray themselves in a good light. This would appear to be a more positivist critique of the use of diaries, however. With this in mind, using diaries as the sole method would still have been insufficient. Combining interviews, whilst using diaries as a precursor to generating interview questions, ensured that the enquiry had more confidence in the reliability and validity of the research.

5.4 Conducting interviews

The use of interviews was threefold. First, I aimed to hear the stories of graduates' work and practice during their first year in post. Second, I aimed to plot their experiences of transition over the year. Third, interviews provided an opportunity for dialogue with regards to the critical incidents that the youth workers raised in their diaries. As interviewer, I was able to probe about feelings and further reflections on these incidents.

Interviews were conducted every three months across the year of data collection. Before interviews took place, the diaries were analyzed in order for questions to be generated in relation to the incidents they reflected on. Each interview was personal to each graduate, in order to provide an opportunity for the youth workers to explore and reflect on their own personal experiences of

life at work. However, I ensured that the research focus was maintained throughout all interviews. It was important that individual participants talked about their particular experience. Often, interviewees would raise the critical incident that they reflected on in their diaries without me prompting them. I viewed this as a reflexive response by the graduates to the research process, in that being part of the research was influencing their ongoing development as they continued to reflect on their practice.

Later in this Chapter, I provide an in-depth analysis of my position as insider-outsider researcher. However, it is important to mention here within the context of the interview experience a few brief thoughts. If I were to consider myself as an insider-researcher coming from the same professional field and a graduate from the course that my participants did whilst experiencing a transition after graduating, then this extremely reflexive piece of research would be rich in unarticulated meaning. I assumed a benefit of this was that I intuitively connected with the youth workers during the interview process. This was reflected in part but not fully as, on reflection, one cannot fully appreciate another's experience as human beings; we bring a multiplicity of difference to any social setting. However, I was able to probe deeper when they made throwaway comments about a practice experience that exposed certain feelings towards that experience. Another researcher without this prior relationship may not have got a response like this. However, the benefit of this is that it evidenced to me exactly the struggles and tensions that the youth workers faced in their work. Without these responses, I would not have been aware of where the tensions were. On the other hand, there may be much more that the youth workers did not want to say at all, due to my position. However, I continually made it clear to them that I was not there to judge practice or to feedback to them on their practice. The research was about the highs and lows of transition into work in that space and time as well as the everyday stable lived experience of life.

Unstructured in-depth interviews were used over the year. The unstructured interview has been compared to 'a lengthy, intimate conversation' (Robson, 2002:278). These provided me with the opportunity to talk with the youth workers as individuals about their individual experiences. Lofland and Lofland

(1995), cited in Robson (2002), advocated an interview guide when using this approach to interviews. A guide is not a structured set of questions. It is a set of ideas and themes that may be talked about. Using an interview guide enabled me to stay focused on the aims and it ensured that the data I was collecting would be reliable in terms of maintaining constancy with each of participants throughout the year.

6 Data analysis: a discursive approach

The central premise of this thesis is that Christian professional youth workers, in making the transition from student to employee, are suspended within an extended liminal space. This space is constructed by the discursive positioning of Christian professional youth work, which leads to an ambiguous profession and a professional identity, which has to respond to explicit and implicit performative constraints. The analytical tool employed to investigate this premise is outlined below.

In analyzing the data, I employed a form of discourse analysis developed from social psychology; that of narrative-discourse analysis (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). This approach employs elements from Foucauldian theory and conversation analysis and explores how identity is constructed through spoken language. In contrast to conversational analysis, but in keeping with discourse theory, this variant of discourse analysis requires the researcher to consider the social context of the participant. Cultural and social meanings are viewed as providing discursive resources for constructing identity through talk (Wiles, 2012:3).

The first stage of this method of discursive analysis involved searching for recurring words, phrases and ideas across the whole body of data. This included the text from the participant monthly diaries and interview transcripts. Given that this was a study conducted over the period of a year, and the evidence relating to transition was specific to the thesis, I carefully sectioned the data into cohorts. This took the shape of three sets of diary texts which were prior to the interview of that particular period of time (for example, diaries for September, October and November), along with transcripts from the interviews conducted late November and so on. This provided me with four cohorts of data

in all.

This first stage of analysis was fairly straightforward and was undertaken manually using highlighter pens. Once I had developed a range of themes, I took to cutting up sentences and quotes with a pair of scissors and organizing them into the appropriate subject. Deciding which patterns were important enough to warrant an analytical theme was a more complex theoretical task. Potter and Wetherell's 'interpretive repertoires' was useful in making decisions about themes. Interpretive repertoires are commonly used as ways of talking about familiar and shared contexts which do not require much explanation. They are defined by Potter and Wetherell as:

“...a lexicon or register of terms and metaphors drawn upon to characterize and evaluate actions or events...[they are] constituted through a limited range of terms used in particular stylistics and grammatical constructions. Often a repertoire will be organized around specific metaphors and figures of speech (tropes).” (Potter and Wetherell, 1987:139-149)

An illustration of this was when youth workers talked about 'youth work values' without feeling the need to define these further. This identification by me as an interpretive repertoire prompted me to give this area further attention. Additionally, as an insider-outsider researcher, I knew that the reference to youth work values was derived from a particularly secularized notion of youth work. If I had not been familiar with this aspect of youth work, and how secular ideas have influenced Christian youth work, it may not have been considered as interesting enough to pursue as a theme of discursive subject positioning by the participants. Subject positions refer to the ways that individual's position themselves within discourses every time they use a narrative or interpretive repertoire. It is within the context of interaction that these positions construct an identity, a self and a subjectivity (Scully, 2010:108-109).

“Once having taken up a particular position as one's own, a person inevitably sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, story lines, and concepts which are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned.” (Davies & Harré, 2001:262)

The second stage of the analysis was less focused on individual transcripts and more on commonalities and variations across the whole sample of data. This focused on the subject positions that the participants adopted, bearing in mind

the discursive positioning of the field. From this, I could identify how participants employed particular discursive resources in the constructive formation of their identity. This showed that Christian professional youth workers positioned themselves within the contested discourses of faith youth work and professional youth work, which will be presented in the Chapters that follow. In positioning the self within a discourse, individuals are also positioning others. Therefore, terms such as 'we', 'us', 'you', and 'they' were useful in analysis, as well as examining how participants orientated themselves towards certain positions. It was possible to identify whether these positions were accepted or contested. This was particularly apparent within the areas of performativity and resistance identity.

This thesis conflates discourse analysis with symbolic interaction. Symbolic interaction emphasizes the reflexive and situated nature of human experience. This is explored through the place of language and multiple meanings in interactional contexts. Potter (2004), cited in Silverman (2006), suggested that discourse analysis is anti-realist, meaning that it does not assume there to be any true or false descriptions of reality. Discourse analysis stresses 'the way versions of the world, of society, events and inner psychological worlds are produced in discourse' (Potter in Silverman, 2006). Here we see accents of symbolic interaction being given in this depiction of discourse analysis.

Discourse analysis was useful for this thesis in a number of ways. I wanted to find out the way in which new Christian youth workers were talking about their experiences of transition from student to employee, how they constructed their professional identity within the particular discursive positions of Christian youth work, and how they positioned themselves within these discursive debates. The identification of interpretive repertoires provided the evidence I needed to develop an understanding of the particular subject positions adopted by the graduates in their everyday lived experiences. The bringing together of symbolic interaction and discourse analysis provided an appropriate analytical tool for the construction of model of transition specifically for newly graduated Christian professional youth workers.

7 Reflecting on the research: ethical considerations and other thoughts

7.1 Insider-Outsider research and reflexivity

The first significant ethical consideration for this research was with regards to my position as researcher in conjunction with my membership of the community I was researching. I have already mentioned my identity status within the field of Christian professional youth work in the opening Chapter. Reflexivity has played a major role within the research, especially in relation to my researcher position. Here, I will recount my experiences of being an insider-outsider researcher, alongside an exploration of how such reflexivity posed opportunities and challenges.

The ethical implications of being a researcher of, and member within, the Christian professional youth work community, rest on the notion that the qualitative researcher plays a direct and intimate role in data collection and subsequent data analysis (Denscombe, 2007:69). As already noted, I was beginning the research already possessing a level of knowledge and experience of Christian and secular professional youth work. My identity was firmly positioned within the youth work domain and, as such, I considered myself to be an insider researcher. To understand why I considered myself in this way, it is useful to begin with the thinking of Robert Merton (1972).

Merton (1972:243) argued that the insider-outsider position is an epistemological principle centered on the issue of access. This access takes two forms. Monopolistic access is where the researcher possesses exclusive knowledge of the community being researched. Privileged access is that through which the researcher can claim to have a hidden knowledge of the community that an outsider could acquire, but at great risk and cost. Merton, drawing on the ideas of Simmel, argued that the outsider (or stranger) can acquire the role of 'objective inquirer' (Merton, 1972:259) more readily, as he holds less prejudice than those who consider themselves to be insiders. Merton organized the concept of access into an insider doctrine and outsider doctrine. Within this framework, the insider possesses ongoing and intimate knowledge of the community being researched. The assumption is that this intimate

knowledge offers insights that would be difficult or impossible for an outsider to access (Labaree, 2002:100).

Insider research, therefore, refers to those who conduct research within the communities that they themselves belong to, meaning that the researcher shares an identity, language and similar experiences to that of the participants (Asselin, 2003). The insider role usually provides researchers 'more rapid and more complete acceptance by their participants' (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009:58). Therefore, it is perceived that participants are more open with the researcher, enabling a greater depth to the data being generated. The downside of this is that insider researchers may consider themselves to have a heightened level of subjectivity that could be detrimental to data analysis as well as data collection. In other words, the insider researcher may assume they have a more in-depth understanding of their data due to their insider knowledge of the field being researched when, in fact, they themselves may be lacking.

At the outset of my research, I rather naïvely held the view that I was a fully-fledged insider. It had never crossed my mind, until during the first round of interviews, that this was not necessarily the case. This thought emerged from initial interactions with a number of participants who clearly viewed me as tutor, and not as someone who had been a youth worker on the same course or had experienced the transition from student to employee. There was no reason why they should consider me in this light, as I had graduated some ten years prior to the research. The research participants had never known me as a student. I found myself interjecting during these first interviews by talking to the graduates about my own experiences, and the impact of these on my own identity work. Reflecting on this afterwards, I recognized this re-positioning of myself as an insider was in reaction to the participants' positioning of me as only ever and always a tutor. This mirrors De Andrade (2002), who argued that conducting insider research demands a constant re-evaluation and re-making of the researcher's identity and relationship with the community they are researching. I was unwittingly re-constructing my identity in light of their identity in order to perhaps gain acceptance as 'one of them'. I became aware of the conflicting feelings I was experiencing for having left youth work practice in order to pursue a career in youth worker education. I had been 'one of them' some eleven years

previously as a youth work graduate from CYM. My position had changed entirely as Director of the institute from which they were now graduating. In this position, I became more of an outsider, even though I was a member of the same professional field. Therefore, I could never fully be an insider researcher. On the other hand, neither was I fully an outsider researcher. My previous experience as a CYM student and graduate ensured that, as did my continuing membership within the field. To imagine that I could stand outside and view the field from a totally objective viewpoint would have been to negate my epistemological position of constructionism and work in opposition to the symbolic interactionist approach, where the mutual construction of identity is pivotal to the research process. In not fully occupying either the insider or outsider space, I took on an in-between identity of insider-outsider.

So we come back to Merton's insider and outsider doctrines, which ignore the fact that researchers are simultaneously multiple insiders and outsiders (Deutsch, 1981). Deutsch argued that the view of insider and outsider as cause and effect, which focuses on what framework is more important, was inadequate in explaining the insider-outsider complexities. She argued that only in moving beyond this dichotomous debate can researchers begin to explore the more critical concern of how the positional status of the researcher as insider influences that which is being studied. This perspective allows for an understanding of the researcher as insider as 'a process of achievement' (Labaree, 2002:102) rather than a position that has been ascribed to the researcher. With regards to the methodological implications of a symbolic interactionist approach, this process of achievement was not something that I, as researcher, managed on my own. The participants had an integral role to play in this, which raised the question of how reflexivity was influential in data collection and data analysis.

As stated above, I regarded myself as researcher as the central figure within the research process. As Finlay (2002:212) argued, the researcher 'influences, if not actively constructs, the collection, selection and interpretation of data'. He elaborated further that a contemporary view of qualitative research recognizes that 'research is co-constituted, a joint product of the participants, researcher and their relationship'. It is now understood that meanings are negotiated within

a particular social context. A different researcher may well interpret a different story. The researcher's presence has become an opportunity as opposed to being regarded as a problem (Finlay, 2002:212). Finlay accepted that reflexivity is an integral aspect of qualitative research, arguing that the question is no longer about the need for reflexivity but the question is, 'how to do it?' (Finlay, 2002:212). This may well be the case. The swathes of literature available on the subject are certainly testament to that. However, the concept is more contested than Finlay's portrayal of it. Added to this are different approaches to reflexivity which will now be considered in light of this research.

Archer (2007:4) described reflexivity as '*the regular exercise of the mental ability, shared by all normal people, to consider themselves in relation to their (social) contexts and vice versa*', (italics author's own). This is the basic definition present within most sociological thought (Glassner & Herz, 2003; Shilling, 2005; Theodosius, 2008). But how one should consider oneself in relation to a qualitative research project has been the source of much contestation. Allum (1991) argued that qualitative researchers must come to terms with at least four interrelated and introspective negotiations regarding their insider positioning. The first concerns the problem of properly locating the researcher within the text and when, where and to what degree the insider enters that text. This can include a number of factors: the capacity of the researcher to access the deepest aspects of the community and identify the levels at which access may be denied despite the insider status; the ability of the researcher to nurture a trustworthy relationship; the admission of any advanced knowledge about that community in relation to its culture and normative beliefs, including its political and power structures; the acknowledgement of any problems that arise as a result of the insider position. Central to these points is the dilemma of whether or not the researcher should tell their own story within the research since the research is about someone else. Kanuha (2000:441) argued that the insider researcher adopts the dualistic position as both the object of the study and the subject of that same study. Archer also argued this perspective stating, 'reflexivity is *not* a vague self-awareness but a *questioning* exploration of subject in relation to object, including the subject as object, one which need not have any practical outcome or intent' (2007:72-73, italics author's own). This means that the insider is not

placed within both domains but at the intersection of the two. The challenge this introspective negotiation presented was that, in the placing of myself within the research, the thesis would not become one about my own personal revelations but that those revelations would act as a catalyst for further interpretations and insights. The use of a personal research journal could have been the site of too much introspection on my own personal reactions. Indeed, the journal did contain some elements of this at times, as will be reflected in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight through extracts presented from my research journal. These will reflect my own discursive identity work during the period of the research. However, having an awareness of the potential pitfalls of this kind of introspection enabled me to strike a balance between my own positioning within the study and that of the participants.

The second introspective negotiation for the insider, which includes aspects of the first negotiation, is the maintenance of objectivity and accuracy. This assumes that objectivity is possible. As I have stated previously, this thesis works with the understanding that meaning is constructed through interaction between object and subject. Therefore, outright objectivity is rejected. However, it was important to me that a level of accuracy in the portraying of the graduates was identified and reflected in the findings. I entered into the research process with a considerable amount of pre-constructed assumptions and knowledge about new graduates. This advanced knowledge, on many occasions, served as a source of understanding when trying to depict the graduates as accurately as possible. Deutsch (1981:190) warned against 'comfortable prerequisites', arguing that insider knowledge should not lead to a negation of the researcher's own insider questioning. Advanced knowledge should be viewed as guideposts and used to inform the data collection and analysis, alongside critical questioning. As Labaree (2002:108), drawing on the thinking of Miller (1997), suggested, insider researchers should employ the same rigor towards objectivity and accuracy that an outsider researcher would.

Related to the maintenance of objectivity and accuracy, and the third introspective negotiation, is the desire of the insider to reject the familiarity that accompanies the insider position. In this sense, I had assumed a familiarity with the experience of making a transition from student to employee. However, a

distancing had taken place that I had not properly accounted for. Through the process of the interviews, it became clear to me that I had forgotten or taken for granted certain aspects of the transition experience. This acknowledgement enabled me to have an accentuated awareness about the 'strange' or 'out-of-the-ordinary' experiences of the graduates. Recognizing my distance from their experience was a useful self-reflexive re-positioning when it came to data analysis because it enabled me to problematize the data. In the space of ten years, changes had occurred within the field. The economic downturn was having an impact on youth services and provision. The array and range of jobs available to new graduates had somewhat diminished. The pool of jobs was smaller and graduates had to face more competition in the application process. Some of the jobs available meant that graduates were overqualified for the positions. Fixed term contracts were common amongst the participants, which produced a degree of anxiety for them. This had not been the context I had experienced, and so to hear graduates talk of the pressures of such things helped me to be more attuned to listening to their stories. Familiarity with the community being researched has been considered to wrap the insider in a 'consciousness of comfort', which can mask the opportunity for the ordinary and the mundane to inform the study (Labaree, 2002:108). In retrospect, this aspect of the research never crossed my mind in any deliberate way until I began the analysis process. My thinking had been so focused on changes and developments of the identity of the graduates that the ordinary and mundane aspects for their daily working lives escaped my notice. Extracts from my research journal will reflect this in the Chapters that follow, as well as the data itself.

Allum's fourth introspective negotiation argued that the insider must come to terms with the construction and deconstruction of truth within the text. What the insider researcher regards as reality will, more than likely, be directed by the advanced, intimate knowledge of the research setting and so is constructed differently from an outsider researcher. Adopting the insider-outsider identity allowed me to hold membership within the youth work field without having to be exactly the same as the participants. Neither did I have to denote complete difference. This would have been impossible. All that being said, I did encounter certain dilemmas upon entering the research process. One such dilemma was

what Mullings (1999:340) referred to as 'positional spaces'; the situated knowledge of both researcher and participant that engenders a level of trust and co-operation. The insider position requires a deliberate distancing and movement to the outside, as mentioned earlier, in order to acquire a new understanding of the inside. This speaks of the possession and awareness of previous knowledge in the generation of new knowledge about the community being researched. This brings with it a weight of responsibility in terms of how that knowledge will be articulated to the wider field once the research is complete. Labaree (2002:109-110) commented that any false representations of the phenomenon being researched, either real or perceived, could lead to feelings of betrayal on the part of the participants. This dilemma felt particularly acute for me, especially as I was trying to re-position myself as researcher in relation to the participants and not as their tutor. It was important that I kept reminding the participants of my role within the research and what my research agenda was, which was to portray the experiences of newly graduated Christian professional youth workers as accurately as possible.

That being said, I did not want to confine myself to the single role of researcher. I wanted to take advantage of the insider position that I had. Allum (1991:5) argued that 'entry begins long before one physically arrives'. The relationships developed between the researcher and participants are in constant negotiation and re-negotiation. The researcher should not be typecast into one particular role but multiple roles or forms of acceptance. This must fit with the social settings and identity issues of each of the participants. There were eight participants within this study, which required a negotiation and re-negotiation of position with each. I knew some of the graduates reasonably well, and a few less so. I had been fieldwork supervisor for two of the participants throughout their time at CYM, which resulted in a more intimate knowledge of them as people. It was in this sense that I was both insider and outsider simultaneously in the re-negotiating of my tutor position and negotiating of my researcher position.

My status as tutor (or past tutor) brought with it a further ethical dilemma. Initially, I rather naïvely did not consider my status as their tutor at college as a potential problem. As it transpired, it soon became clear in the early stages that

this was how they still positioned me and would respond to certain questions as if they were still students and I was still their tutor. Comments such as 'you won't like what I'm going to say' or 'you've taken the evangelical out of me' were uttered by at least four of the graduates during the time of the research, although this was not evident in the final round of interviews. I was careful not to align myself to my tutor role, as it was clear that the graduates were, at times, positioning me as such. I was anxious that the graduates would be resistant to disclose anything about their practice and experiences that they felt I would sit in professional judgment over. This prompted me to raise my awareness of this and so remind the participants at the beginning of each session and throughout, if required, of my position as researcher.

As it transpired, I did not get the sense at any time that my identity as a tutor or a past youth worker was being challenged, although I did find myself engaging in discursive work around my identity as a youth work tutor regularly. My insider-outsider status was complex and not one that was easily resolved. Even in the ending of the research and the continuing analysis of the data and production of the thesis, the complications continued. Acker (2000) reflected that it may not be appropriate to bring the issues inherent within insider-outsider research to a close but to find a way to work creatively with the tensions. It would seem that a way to do this is to try to be both insider and outsider. I could not be positioned as either insider or outsider as depicted within the doctrines of Merton. However, an in-between position of both insider and outsider was adopted which enabled me to simultaneously take advantage of my insider status as well as distance myself in order to understand the experiences of the graduates with greater awareness. Reflexivity has many challenges but also brings rewards when used to enable a degree of transparency in the research, rather than claiming to know that objective viewpoint of the participants (Silverman, 2004:343). The use of reflexivity in this thesis has enabled me to interpret the data with a degree of critical awareness related to my own positioning within the study.

7.2 Other ethical considerations

An issue that was addressed during the ethical clearance process focused on the possible distress of participants due to the research process. In addressing

this, I felt that any disruption or intrusion into the lives of the participants would be minimal. It may have been that, in the busyness of a new youth worker's life, it would not always be convenient for them to be interviewed or have a journal entry to write. I ensured that the participant's information letter clarified what was expected of them, in that if they needed to cancel an interview, miss a diary entry, or if they wished to leave the research at any time, then that would have been perfectly acceptable. Participants did not have to provide a reason for any decision they made regarding any of the above if they did not wish to. No questions would be asked of them. The Research Ethics Committee had asked me if I had support in place for a participant if they became distressed or showed signs of distress during interviews. In addressing this, I nominated someone with relevant pastoral care and counseling experience who could be contacted by the participants if they felt they needed to speak to someone about deeper issues that the research may have raised. As far as I am aware, this service was never accessed by any of the participants.

I entered the research believing that the process would benefit the participants in a number of ways. They would have the opportunity to reflect on their learning, feelings and practice in an ongoing and structured way. This would be helpful as they would be articulating their thinking to someone who was impartial to their actual place of work. As the study was conducted over a period of a year, I hoped that participants would be able to recognize their own development in a significant way. The diary entries and the interviews taking place at set times would give participants insights into their growth and development. This in turn would provide them with opportunities to reflect more deeply as they reflected back and used their past experiences to develop further meaning and understanding which could be utilized in their present.

Each interview was recorded on a digital recorder. Permission to record the interviews was requested at each interview to ensure that the participants were in agreement for this to happen. All interviewees were happy for the recorder to be used. There were occasions when interviewees would make comments that they did not want me to transcribe. These issues sometimes related to confidential matters happening within the organizations they worked for. On one particular occasion, one of the participants talked about a conversation they had

had with another of the participants at a social event that had upset them. She wanted this part of the interview to remain confidential but what she told me was an excellent example of a tension that I had been trying to articulate within the study. This left me feeling frustrated that I could not use the conversation within the findings of the research, as it was such strong data. However, this experience sensitized me to adhering to the participant's wishes, which was fundamental to an ethically robust thesis as well as important in maintaining a good relationship with the youth workers once the project had ended.

8 Summary

By way of summation, my aims in approaching the research question were to develop a methodological approach that would allow for an exploration of the professional identity formation of newly graduated Christian professional youth workers. Located within a social constructionist epistemology and the theoretical approach of symbolic interaction, a year-long study was conducted with eight newly graduated Christian professional youth workers selected from graduates of Cambridge CYM. Monthly diaries and quarterly interviews were employed to collect the data. A variant of discourse analysis was used to analyze the data, which proved fruitful in identifying how new youth workers talked about themselves in relation to the discursive positioning within Christian youth work. Ethical considerations, particularly in relation to my status as an insider-outsider researcher, were considered as significant in interpretation of the data and subsequent findings. These findings will now be presented in the following three Chapters.

Chapter Six: Narratives of being a Christian professional youth worker

1 Introduction

In their first year of practice, newly graduated Christian professional youth workers experience a time of transition from student to employee. Turner's use of the term 'liminality' refers to one phase of the multistep transition process, which takes place when moving from one social status to another. 'Liminals', or 'liminal entities', are 'neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention and ceremonial' (Turner, 1969:95). Turner (1969:94) argued individuals or groups detach themselves from an earlier fixed point in the social structure, or set of cultural conditions, or both. In the case of my research participants, the fixed point was that of being a student of Christian professional youth work, reading an undergraduate degree with Cambridge CYM. The integration of theory and practice was an integral aspect of the course. Graduates achieved a secular JNC qualification as well as theological education. This enabled them to apply theological understandings to their practice. For this reason, they inhabited an inbetween space; usually between an evangelical faith position with regards to youth ministry and a secularized liberal position of professional youth work. The experience of liminality was compounded by the ambiguity of the profession that they were entering. A contested historical discourse around professionalism and voluntarism still prevails today, positioning Christian youth workers somewhere between the status of a volunteer and an ordained minister. As liminals, they were subject to the performative demands of professional youth work. They were also subject to the performative demands of the Christian faith. The expression of authentic faith and professional identity was constructed in the light of these performative constraints and liminal experience.

This Chapter explores how the participants began to construct their professional identity. Examining the ways in which they narrated their experiences helps build a picture of their everyday lived – and liminal – experience, with a particular emphasis on the construction of continuity. To maintain clarity, this Chapter does not provide a full biographical account of each participant. Following a narrative-discursive approach, 'the emergent biographical details

and the ways that these are mobilized and harnessed to support speakers' ongoing broader identity projects' are analyzed (S. Taylor & Littleton, 2006:29). The narrative extracts contained within this Chapter have been chosen because they best represent the story of the first year of transition into employment and a Christian professional occupation.

2 Early notions of professional identity (first three months)

What follows in this section is an overview of the narrative constructions that the graduates employed in talking about the experiences of being a new Christian professional youth worker. The analysis is made through the lenses of Goffman's masks (1959) and Turner's (1969) notion of liminality, both of which are used to illuminate the participants' accounts.

At three months in post, Beth's diary reflected the beginnings of felt experience; the betwixt and between position of a youth worker:

"I think I have recognized that I am able to do something that many people in the church can't do (i.e. relating and approaching young people). I have seen that many of my gifts and talents and passions fit this work better than they would anything else."
(D3/Beth)

This felt experience stemmed from Beth's narrative position of herself as providing something unique within the wider church community. She employed a ministry language to describe her professional skill:

"I have also realized that many people in the church do not have the same 'youth' focused mind set, and that my heart for ministry to young people set me apart sometimes from others. I can sometimes feel a bit misunderstood and can forget that I am in quite a unique position." (D3/Beth)

Beth seemed surprised that not everyone in the church was as concerned about young people as she was. Three months into post, she was beginning to realize the effects of being in a liminal space. Employed in the role of youth worker, it had taken a number of weeks for her to recognize that she was not the same as other members of the congregation. For most of her life, Beth had experienced church as a member alongside others. Her new employed status brought with it awareness that she was now separate. The dawning realization of her difference was a source of anxiety. So the discursive work involved in the identification process (Hall, 1996:16-17) began to be articulated, reflecting

Turner's observations noted above. The feelings of being misunderstood were a hallmark of this separation. Describing her position as 'unique' certainly portrays a stark realization that things were no longer the same:

"I have also found the not so easy parts of this - disagreeing with the church in some ways or sometimes feeling that young people are forgotten. The challenge is not to get discouraged or cynical but to recognize that I am an important part of church ministry."
(D3/Beth)

As a result of her conflicting feelings, Beth entered into a reflexive dialogue. She considered different subject positions by trying on the mask (Goffman, 1959) of the discouraged and disgruntled professional but felt she should wear the mask of the assured professional. Her repositioning from general membership to that of professional youth worker led Beth to take a different subject position regarding the church. Recognizing that she now formed part of the church's ministry, Beth began identifying with a ministerial role. This was exemplified through the language she employed; 'gifts', 'talents', 'passions', 'heart for ministry', and so forth. Her identification with a ministry discourse reflected attachment to the social structure and cultural conditions of the church (Van Genep, 1909). Recognizing her difference from other congregational members, matched with an unwillingness to abandon her initial identity as a Christian minister, marked the beginning of Beth's experience of a liminal state.

Likewise, Mel experienced the uncomfortable nature of 'difference' in the early stages of her new role. Her narrative of feeling too young and out of her depth when interviewing people from the church reflected the interplay between similarity and difference (Bradford, 2012b:55):

"This month, I was part of an interviewing panel, interviewing a part time project worker. This was uncomfortable because it was interviewing people from the church, I felt too young and a bit out of my depth, but with scripted questions I soon got confident and felt comfortable." (D3/Mel)

Mel identified with the social category of 'youth', which she articulated as being a problem for her. Weber's analysis of social stratification is useful here in helping to identify the nature of that problem. As discussed in Chapter Three, Weber formulated a hierarchical approach in which domination and subordination help to sustain and reproduce power. People are classified into groups based on a relational set of inequalities; class power, social power and political power. Mel had positioned herself in relation to her young people and,

in this instance, it was *social* power that caused her to differentiate herself in the interview setting. The subject position she adopted was produced by a combination of factors. The fact that she was young and in her first employed position created feelings of inadequacy. Also, like Beth, she had a sense of difference in relation to those she was interviewing. This marked the point where she sensed the reality of separation and entered the liminal place of the new youth worker identity.

Scott experienced the creation of new social power through the status that arose upon achieving a professional qualification and theology undergraduate degree:

“When I spoke to them [the Management Committee of the church], they found that I was very knowledgeable in my understanding of youth work and the principles and I think that made me feel that I was needed or valued...no matter how kind of shallow that is or insecure that is.” (1/Scott/p1)

Consistent with the Weberian model of power and status, Scott was drawing on his professional expertise, and the recognition that he was receiving, in order to construct a sense of his own worth as a professional youth worker within the church. His sense of difference was located within the normative constructs of his occupational status and authority. Interestingly, the point of internal conflict was that he did not want to be perceived as either shallow or insecure. His apologetic stance portrayed him as feeling like the underdog within his new occupational domain. Scott was the only professional youth worker that the church had employed. This brought with it a sense of pressure and the need to position himself professionally within the rest of the team. He went on to justify how he was feeling, clarifying his position within a Weberian frame of reference:

“Bear in mind I had come from a position of no one really valuing me, and I was having to constantly prove myself. Suddenly, because you say you have done a theology degree in youth work, suddenly people attach something on you. People are valuing me for my understanding of the bible or theology, which I didn’t really have at all but people have put me in a position of greater value.” (1/Scott/p1)

Scott recognized the difference that undergraduate qualification had wrought. Certainly, professional status was regarded as important. But theology, too, was seen as a valued aspect of his expertise. He identified with the discursive resources of secular youth *work* values and youth *ministry’s* theology. He

positioned himself firmly between the two discourses, adopting the liminal occupational status of Christian youth work. This inbetweenness led to Scott seeking a sense of worth through the social power exercised by those outside the boundaries of his occupational group.

At three months in post, the interaction between faith and work was raising tensions for Holly. Like Scott, she expressed feelings of insecurity. Imagining a life that holistically combined faith, work and church, Holly had made a deliberate decision to live and work in the same community:

“My faith and my work are all really tied up together. The way that I sort of decided to live is like my work and church and everything is sort of one package.” (1/Holly/p15)

Goffman’s notion of masks is useful when considering Holly’s situation. The one mask that represented the identity she wanted to adopt became three separate masks. In her narrative, she discussed these three areas as separate entities that created internal tension:

“When one bit of it is thrown into question, the whole of it is. And then I’ll say, “Ah, crap! What am I doing here?” I’m like “I don’t know.” It sort of makes me just feel generally quite insecure.” (1/Holly/p15)

This insecurity caused Holly to consider her professional self, rather than her ministerial self, in more detail. In so doing, she demonstrated a desire to discover her own personal philosophy of work and life. She was not content to accept traditional roles that had constructed professional boundaries around relationships and time. Holly’s philosophy was intricately connected with her developing identity across all spheres of her life. This is an example of the responsibility and agency that graduates employ in their new professional careers. Focusing on her professional identity, Holly commented:

“I didn’t suddenly feel like I was a professional and still lots of me doesn’t feel like I’m a professional. I feel like I’m still learning. I’m still really in early days and I feel like you can only really call yourself professional if you...it’s got to be through experience...I don’t think a piece of paper makes you professional. I think it happens through the process of going to meetings and representing the organization you work for and being amongst other professionals, I think that is a big part of it for me.” (1/Holly/p15)

Holly employed an interpretive repertoire in talking about herself as a professional. She did not exactly state what being a professional was, but

seemed to have a sense that it is not something that can be gained by way of qualification. This was in stark contrast to Scott's view that regarded professionalism in terms of social power and status. Holly adopted the position of a learner in relation to other professionals. This view was also taken by Pete, who talked about how much he was enjoying the work in relation to other practitioners: 'Youth worker post - very exciting and enjoying working with other agencies and more experienced people to learn about how this is done in practice' (D1/Pete). This demonstrated a discourse of professionalism akin to the thinking of Becker *et al* (1961) in which professional identity is produced and reproduced through occupational and professional socialization. Normative value systems (Evetts, 2003) are reproduced at the micro level in individual practitioners and the contexts in which they work. In the early days of her professional career, Holly was struck with the realization that she did not feel like a professional. But neither did she feel like a student, although she referenced that she was still learning. Here is another mark of the separation away from student status and movement into the liminal space that novice professionals adopt.

The narratives of the new youth workers in their first three months of employment clearly exhibit the realization of themselves as 'different' from other members of their employing churches. This was influential on their developing sense of professionalism. Scott and Holly adopted quite different positions to each other. Scott viewed his professional status through a Weberian notion of power and status. Holly considered her sense of professionalism on a micro-level within the framework of socialization. Thus, the notion of what it means to 'be a professional' was characterized differently amongst the graduates. There was not a single, collective (or normative) ideal of what it means to be a Christian professional youth worker at this early stage. Of course, context may have had an influence on this. Graduates may have been reacting to specific power relations at play in their various work contexts; an idea that will be explored in more detail in the following Chapter, in which the influence of performativity on transition is considered. For most of the research participants, the 'difference' narrative appeared to be the first point of contention when separating from the social status of 'student' and moving towards 'employee' status. The complexity of this was witnessed in how the graduates sought to

work out their positions in relation to church members, other ministerial staff/professionals. Recognition of their professional status matters, as does maintaining an optimistic view of the church, as Beth was keen to stress. This separation phase was a significant but anxious time for new graduates. It raised important questions about self in relation to those around them.

3 Continuing professional formation (months four to nine)

Analysis of the data produced during months four to nine continued to be located within the dual framework of Goffman's 'masks' and Turner's 'transition phases'. Specifically, I was looking for signs of movement amongst the research participants in three particular areas. The first was self-understanding as Christian professionals. The second was self-positioning in relation to others. The third was self-positioning in relation to the core youth work values; informal education, empowerment, equal opportunities and voluntary participation. This was consistent with the notion of liminality, the metaphor of space, and being able to travel across space. There appeared to be different kinds of spaces being inhabited by the graduates, as seen here, so the movement within these spaces was significant for their formation. I was also curious about their relationship to theology and other factors associated with a ministerial discourse; mission, education and pastoral care, amongst others.

3.1 Months four to six

In months four to six, the graduates' narratives focused more on their practice than their professional positioning. They commented mainly on the 'doing' of youth work and what they perceived 'proper' youth work to be. Interpretive repertoires were employed, with the graduates assuming (quite rightly) that I would know what they were talking about. In contradistinction to the previous data with regards to defining 'professionalism', the new data did evidence a collective understanding of what constitutes 'good youth work'.

Beth began to express a degree of frustration in relation to a youth club she was managing. As the only professionally qualified youth worker, she was in charge of a team of volunteers:

"I was talking to a volunteer a little while ago about where do we get to sit and do any sort of informal conversation any, enabling of any discussion, any opportunity for learning or anything. Someone

said well this is how it's always been. They come and cause chaos and that's what happens. And that's where I really struggle to bring anything in, in terms of youth work values." (2/Beth/p7)

Beth was locating her idea of 'good youth work' within the value of informal education. Her narrative reflected a sense of frustration that the volunteers did not share her specialized, professional knowledge:

"I don't know when the last time was when I had a really good conversation with a young person. And any attempt that's been made to meet with the volunteers to talk about youth work and why we do it and things really hasn't worked. And there is a slight sense that the volunteers are there just to control the behavior really... I think they think it's there to provide a place for them to come to rather than be on the streets." (2/Beth/p7)

It would seem that the volunteers were resistant to Beth's professional power (in the Weberian, authoritative sense). There are identifications with particular discourses in this narrative for Beth and the volunteers. The fact that volunteers seemed happy to provide a leisure facility for young people reflects a leisure discourse that views young people as consumers. Their resistance to Beth's professionalized ideas echoes the discourses related to voluntarism and professionalism. Later in the narrative, Beth described how the volunteers were worried that change of provision may result in young people ceasing attendance. The volunteers viewed the possible shift from leisure provision to educative provision as a threat initiated by the assertion of professional authority. Conversely, Beth strongly identified with a professional youth work discourse that regards 'good youth work' as informal education.

However, later in the interview, Beth seemed to contradict all that she has been saying about informal education and the club situation. In response to being asked if the youth work principles significantly influenced her work, Beth said:

"I think I would probably say I probably hold them quite lightly and that there is that sense of, well they can't fit every situation. And I think in Christian work, I'm being very stereotypical, but I think the approach is more open and forgiving and there are less boundaries when it comes to the work and I found it's been interesting to try and apply policy and stuff to everything that we do because that can be really complicated because a lot of it is so informal. A lot of it is just opening up the building and seeing what happens or bumping into a young person, having a random conversation." (2/Beth/p10)

This part of Beth's narrative seemed in contradiction to the frustrations expressed earlier. When identifying with a ministerial discourse, Beth celebrated

the informality of the work. When identifying with a professional discourse, she had lamented the lack of informal educative opportunities. Within a few months of employment, Beth was experiencing the paradox arising from the dual discourses. Feelings of frustration were accompanied by feelings of satisfaction. The fact that these were directed towards the same thing (professional values) denoted a point of development for Beth. This thinking about her practice was emblematic of the confusion that she was experiencing in her sense of self, both professionally and as a Christian. The shifts that she made in positioning herself within discourses may have been a result of anxiety and confusion, alongside feeling the need to identify sources of stability. Christian youth ministry was that source of stability. It was a safe place for Beth. Her narrative about Christian work and it being more open, forgiving and less about boundaries was not unlike the thinking of volunteer Christian youth workers. This vacillation between once-held ideals and newer professional ideals, like the swinging of a pendulum, highlighted the powerful and unsettling experience of inhabiting a liminal space. This resonates with Hall's (1996) notion of the discursive approach to identification being about process and movement. At this point in the first year of practice, the movement was somewhat erratic.

Mel's narrative expressed the frustration and anger that often accompanies transition. She was experiencing difficulties in what she perceived to be the church's expectation in relation to how she worshipped. Mel worked for a charismatic evangelical church and, like most church youth workers, was expected to join the worshipping community on Sunday mornings. The style of worship was different from her preferred style:

"You know, well...I feel like a total alien and I keep thinking, I've got to do this. I've got to fit in. I'm doing my life wrong, I'm doing church wrong. There is something wrong with me that I don't like this." (2/Mel/p3)

The effects of transition were similar for Mel as they were for Beth. The source of conflict seemed to be the idea of 'difference'. In recognizing the pressure to be 'similar', Mel believed that there was something inherently wrong with her. Since her current experience of church was far from positive, Mel projected this view onto her wider sense of self. She had been keen to keep her work separate from the rest of her life and was therefore struggling with the notion of integration. In relation to Goffman's theory, Mel was trying on a different mask

and found herself stuck with the need to feel like she belonged with the rest of the congregation. Wearing this mask was an uncomfortable experience. Liminality was not proving easy. Interestingly, Mel and Beth both contradicted Turner's view of liminar behaviour normally being passive or humble (1969:95). Beth decided to close the club she was running for a period of time in order to assess and refocus the work. Mel let her feelings be known quite clearly to her Line Manager (the vicar of the church), which caused a great deal of tension between them. Neither of these responses could be considered passive.

Six months into post, Scott began to talk more about his work/life balance. This was in the context of Scott and his wife adopting their first child:

“Work/life balance has suddenly hit me a lot more. And become more important as a priority. Because of what I've seen with a lot of people's lives, like vicars kids and church kids. Actually, what you think is an extra meeting won't be a problem is multiply that by ten extra meetings that you have throughout the year. Before you know it, there is that psychological effect of that child that actually they think they are not that important. I don't want my daughter to go through that. The resentment in actually, they're not that important, work is more important, church is more important. Therefore means that God is more important, I didn't want to give her that kind of psychological thought as in God is church.”
(2/Scott/p2-3)

Scott's narrative evidence a work/life balance policy discourse that seeks to make 'proper' prioritization between work and lifestyle and has its origins in historical notions of a work-leisure dichotomy (Burke, 1995). Scott was also articulating what Giddens recognized to be an aspect of the 'life course'. In talking about the trajectory of the self, Giddens understood transition in late modern contexts as involving the running of 'consciously entertained risks in order to grasp new opportunities which personal crises open up' (1991:79). Scott, who was already experiencing transition from student to employee, was about to enter transition in another sphere of life by becoming a father. He therefore perceived a risk; that of giving too much time to work which in turn would cause distress to his new daughter. The significance of this idea was located within his observations of other church workers and how they seemingly prioritised work life over family life. Scott wanted to grasp the opportunity of fatherhood and conduct it in a different way to that being modelled by others. He was rejecting the rhetoric associated with the ministerial ideal that work for the church involves the whole of life, as witnessed by the earlier example of

Holly. Scott's philosophy of life was borne out of what is normally perceived (within ministerial discourses) as being a secularized approach to work. This is boundaried in terms of time spent at work and time spent with family. Scott resisted what he viewed as a constraining and detrimental influence on his family time. The family can be considered as another liminal space in which Scott was experiencing a transformation. In this sense, liminality is comprised of a complex intersection of spaces and times, with Scott's narrative really emphasising space/time dynamics.

Maddy stood in stark contradiction to Scott. Like Holly, she had decided to live and work within the same community, seeking to integrate faith, work and life. She spoke about the practical implications of that decision:

"I can't seem to separate anything at the moment [faith, work, life]. It's definitely increased since coming here because I'm choosing to spend a lot of my spare time doing some of the things that I do in my work time. Yeah. So I'm much more likely to just...if they come around with the football and wanna go to the park, I'm much more likely now to do that because I want to rather than out of obligation or pressure or things like that, which is nice."
(2/Maddy/p11)

Maddy's approach contradicted her training with regard to maintaining professional boundaries. She was choosing to spend time with young people outside her assigned working hours. Her professional identity was not a single and fragmented aspect of her overall identity. It was becoming merged into other life spheres. As a result, she was finding it difficult to make distinctions between work and non-work. Stating that she would be content to play football with her young people outside of work time denoted a movement away from her identification with professionalism towards identification with ministerialism. This desire to identify more with ministerial practice provided her with a sense of stability. She explained how she found it 'nice' that she no longer felt obligated to spend her non-work time with young people. Here, Maddy, like Scott, was showing how liminal space consists of intersecting spaces. Liminality does not consist of one singular space but many spaces, enabling change to occur within spaces unmarked by constraining boundaries. Maddy was employing a degree of agency in making a conscious decision to use non-work time as a way of developing her relationship with young people.

Maddy spoke about a street party that had been organized by the church in partnership with a local community group. As Maddy lived and worked on the same street, she found it raised conflicting feelings regarding her position as both a church youth worker and a street resident:

“Anyway, I now got this thing where like I don’t want to do it [the street party] as the church youth worker and I don’t want to do it like an organized thing, you know, I want to do it as a resident, just as someone that lives here, that’s what I want to do. I think that’s been interesting. Like living here and working here.”
(2/Maddy/p12)

I asked her why she wanted to participate in the street party as a resident and not as a youth worker. In her reply, she expressed confusion related to her identity as a Christian and as a youth worker:

“It would be nice to do stuff that is not always with the same people. So if I can make more friends and do more stuff with my neighbors who aren’t part of the church, that would be nice for me. I don’t want to spend my life with the same people. And I think also, I’m still working out in my mind what church is and what it is to be a Christian and to like witness, I hate that word but that’s what I mean you know, to people around you. And like when you do it for an official organization then some people accept that. But if you’re just a person that just happens to live on the same street and happens to be a Christian and then you make friends with your neighbours, you are still witnessing to them. So I’m still trying to work out those two things and what that looks like. What does it mean to witness as part of your work and what does it mean to witness to the people you live alongside on a daily basis as on ordinary person.” (2/Maddy/p12)

Maddy continued to talk about the differences between being employed because one is a Christian with professional training and those who happen to be Christians but are employed as teachers or social workers. She seemed unable to separate her faith from her occupational status:

“On one hand youth work is a job in the same way a teacher is a job and that’s one thing and that’s when it is appropriate to do a job and you are a Christian at the same time. Whereas this feels very much now like the two get completely combined and it’s not the same. So if it depends how you see yourself, if you see your youth worker as a job like a career or if you see it as a ministry.”
(2/Maddy/p14-15)

In a journal article cited in Chapter Four, Bryan *et al* (2011) conducted research into professional identity formation of Christian teachers. They found that Christian teachers are prone to set aside their Christian beliefs in relation to the point and purposes of education. This is in stark contradiction to Maddy’s

narrative. Being employed in a Christian context as a Christian youth worker implied that faith was very much a contributing factor to her job. There was no room for the setting aside of belief if it was in contention with the work context, as it was such an integral aspect. This revealed how Maddy was moving towards a more integrated understanding of self in relation to her normative professional status and her status as a person of faith. This could have signaled a developing understanding of the liminal discursive positions between youth *work* and youth *ministry* towards a more incorporated notion of what it means to be professional and Christian (Turner, 1969). However, this appeared to be happening for Maddy despite the fact that Christian professional youth work, as an occupation, still inhabits a liminal status.

3.2 Months seven to nine

In the third round of interviews, graduates were still expressing concerns, tensions and movement towards a more incorporated sense of being a Christian professional youth worker. Nine months into post, Maddy was still comparing her professional identity to that of a teacher identity. The reason that teaching was so prominent in Maddy's thinking may have been due to the fact that some of her working hours were within a school. She would then consider her professional self in relation to other professional selves. Context, and the interactions with those who inhabit those contexts alongside Maddy, provided a reflexive resource on which she could continue her own identity development work. Such interaction had led Maddy to consider the rationale behind professional youth work in relation to a formal teaching rationale:

“We've got the same like goal but I think they just do teachers do. In the classroom, and say there's thirty young people, then their [the teachers] focus is on the education of the masses so if its to the detriment of one young person who has to leave the class because of their behaviour or something, then their focus is on the other twenty-nine. Whereas my focus would be on the one, because that's kind of my job, isn't it? To look at the social rather than just the academic.” (3/Maddy/p2)

Maddy was marking out the boundaries of both professions as she understood them. She inferred a teaching rationale that focused on 'the control of the masses', taking a Weberian view of teaching as a powerful professional group who 'seek to effect *closure*' in order to 'prevent others from encroaching on their position' (Bradford, 2012b:35, italics author's own). She was also effecting

closure for her own profession on the grounds of informal or social education. It is interesting that Maddy should adopt this secularized discourse of youth work since, only a few months earlier, she had vocalized a difficulty in separating faith and work. Maddy appeared to be constructing her professional identity at this point in the year within a secular-liberal discourse of what constitutes professional youth work. Ongoing identity formation for Christian youth workers seems to involve vacillation between faith and the secular discourses, as seen with Beth earlier. The liminal phase of moving from student to employee was still apparent.

Maddy expressed how she considered herself becoming more evangelical as her time in employment continued:

“I find I’m getting more and more evangelical the further in I get which is funny because I so wasn’t when I started and before that, when I was on the course. It’s an interesting one but – because I was so like passionate about kind of the social, economic and academic well-being side of things...” (3/Maddy/p4)

Her identity as a Christian was shifting into a discourse that represented evangelicalism in terms of sharing one’s faith with others. In this extract of her narrative, Maddy made a separation from the secular-liberalized discourse of youth work involving social, economic, education and well-being constructs. However, she continued to say:

“I’m not less passionate about the other stuff obviously because I want to engage with the school stuff and those things are still very much a big part of it but I think when you actually get to know the lives of the young people and not just young people but being such a big part of the church particularly the homeless guys. You get to the point where it’s been like they just need to know, you know. Both things become important then, which is a good thing I think.” (3/Maddy/p4)

Maddy was employing a secularized discourse as a resource that enabled her to do her work within the school. Then she introduced her faith resource to enable her to work in the community. This movement between the two discourses and, in effect, bringing the two discourses together as resources, again typifies Hall’s view of identification. Maddy was able to identify with both discursive positions. She skillfully discerned between the two and decided which aspects were useful in her changing contexts and which were not, so a kind of pragmatism was being employed. Maddy was showing signs of movement towards incorporation into a sense of her Christian professional self.

Goffman's metaphorical concept of 'masks' is useful here. As Maddy sought to become a Christian professional youth worker, she was trying on different masks. As in the extract from the earlier round of interviews, Maddy was not confused by her mask-wearing. But she was now certain of the kind of masks she wanted to wear and the kind of professional youth worker she needed to be in the various contexts in which she found herself. She was showing an awareness of the practice contexts she was in although, to some extent, she was governed by the context in relation to what mask she must put on. However, she respected this and still viewed her role as worthwhile. This relates to the area of context and performativity, which will be explored in more detail in the next Chapter.

Maddy was showing signs of incorporation into the notion of a Christian professional youth work identity. At this point, it seemed to be a suturing of the youth *work* and youth *ministry* discourses. Likewise, Beth was finding her sense of stability in voluntary work. She had decided to do additional voluntary work at her church since she was now working full-time for a schools work charity. Interestingly, Pete, who was also a schools worker, also decided to do voluntary church work. Beth considered her voluntary work as something that helped her 'feel more at ease':

"I think the other thing I've found is that doing the voluntary work, has helped me feel a little more at ease because although this is my job [schools work] and it's what I love doing, it's still a job that I do. So, to not have the pressure, being able to do stuff I really love which is just having a good chat and that...but I'm able to do that in a place that I'm not working and I can give my time to it and so that is my way of serving the church." (3/Beth/p5)

Beth was turning to the resources of her voluntary days as a Christian youth worker. She separated this out from her day job as a schools worker and viewed it as a way of serving the church. Although it is arguable that she was already serving the wider church through her job, the tensions between voluntarism and professionalism were evident in one and the same person. Again we see a vacillation, a going back to the past, to find some sense of security and stability. The mask of voluntarism acted as a salve for Beth; a mask that helped her regain a sense of authenticity as a youth worker. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight.

In the middle months of the first year of practice, the liminars tended to move away from talking about their positioning as professionals towards talking about their practice. This reflected a more internalized account of how they were forming their Christian professional identities. Perhaps they were hoping for a sense of stability in face-to-face interaction with young people. There seemed to be a working out of what constituted 'good youth work practice', which was still located within the secular-liberal discourse of secular youth work. The employment of a greater assertion of professional knowledge was seen, especially through the narrative of Beth. Frustration and anger were key emotions felt by the graduates. This drove a human agency that enabled them to address problems in their contexts. In the case of both Beth and Mel, this contradicted Turner's idea that a liminal phase denotes behaviour that is normally passive or humble. Work/life balance was given primacy by Scott, but this was accompanied by a transition of another kind for him, that of impending fatherhood. A vacillation between discourses related to voluntarism and professionalism, and between youth *work* and youth *ministry*, was clearly evident in how the graduates talked about their work. They used the discursive resources of each of these poles to position themselves in relation to their changing contexts of practice. So during this period, the liminar phase was still characterized by movement. In some cases, that movement was towards an incorporated sense of Christian professional identity, although this was, at times, somewhat erratic.

4 Christian professional identity at the end of the research period (months ten to twelve)

A neatly packaged transition in terms of a linear passage through the Turner (1969) phases of separation, liminality and incorporation would have provided a fairly straightforward and simple framework for the understanding of Christian professional youth worker identity. However, this thesis started from the position that, in the late modern era, identity is never fixed. Rather, it is in continuous flux, as reflected in the literature of Chapter Four. However, as with all lived experience, there are elements of stability. The data chosen in the following section represents not only continuing points of movement, but points of stability that were crucial for the ongoing formation of identity.

At the end of the first year of practice, graduates were still engaged in the positioning of their professional status in relation to the rest of the church community. Holly reflected on a problem she was having with a young person who attended the church youth group. The young person's parents were also members of the church. Holly held to high standards of confidentiality, which she regarded as a significant aspect of her professional practice. She was engaged in a mentoring programme with the young women and the parents had asked to meet with her to get feedback on how the mentoring was progressing. She commented:

"I'm just not happy to do that. But I haven't had that conversation with them yet and I'm going to need to. So I was thinking of suggesting, maybe we meet up with her as well, then include her in it and then, I mean, that's not what they're asking for. That's not going to achieve what they wanted to achieve but I'll have to say to them that that will completely break down the trust between us [Holly and the young woman] and completely undermine the mentoring relationship." (4/Holly/p20-21)

Holly was fiercely protective of her relationship with the young woman. She strongly identified with the values of professional youth work and found the intrusion of the parents uncomfortable. Holly had a sense at this stage of her role in relation to the young person and the parents, whom she worshipped alongside every Sunday morning. At the beginning of the year, Beth had found separating from the rest of the church membership difficult, as explored above. In Holly's case, we can see a movement in understanding the nature of the separate role and the tensions that it can raise. This is incorporation into some sense of professional identity. Although problems still arose that raised questions around the crossover between professionalism and ministry, there was a 'knowing' of what the role should entail. In this case, Holly's 'knowing' was located within a secularized notion of youth *work*. But this does not mean that a *ministry* discourse would be any different. Confidentiality is also a significant aspect of the clergy role. This scenario is not only about conducting professional values within church youth work. It concerns conducting professional values within the church community, whatever the particular profession happens to be. The work/ministry discourses are fairly similar when it comes to issues such as confidentiality.

As it was our final interview, I asked Holly what she most wanted for the lives of the young people with whom she worked. I wanted to discover if she would employ any particular discursive resources in answering this, perhaps from a youth *ministry* or youth *work* discourse. Her initial answer was interesting:

“I’d love to see them [young people] develop good decision making skills early on so that they can grow into adulthood, being able to make good decisions based on being able to reflect on actions and consequences. Yeah, be able to make good choices independently of what other people think. And maybe interdependently, I don’t know. But yeah, and also make good choices and become fulfilled.” (4/Holly/p23)

Holly was drawing on the discursive resources present within the practices of youth *work*; the philosophy of informal education which considers the learner as central to the democratic learning process (see Chapter Three). Her initial identification was with a secularized notion of youth work practice. I then asked her if it was important for God to feature in the lives of young people, to which she replied:

“Ah, yeah. That’s bad isn’t it?! And I’d love to see them all have – that’s interesting that I didn’t include him, sorry God.” (4/Holly/p24)

Holly was shocked that she had not included God in her initial answer. She felt an immediate sense of guilt about this, as seen in her apology to God. She quickly re-positioned herself to consider a response related to her faith:

“Yeah. I’d love to see them [young people] all have a relationship with God. Because, I mean, yeah fundamentally I do think the only way people are fully whole is if they are in relationship with God. So yeah, I would ultimately want that for them.” (4/Holly/p24)

I have no doubt that Holly wanted the young people to experience a relationship with God. But her first port of call was a response rooted in informal education philosophy. This demonstrated a professional identity that strongly identified with the set of practices that constitute youth *work*. Her dismay at forgetting about God demonstrated that integration of a ministry and professional discourse was still being moved towards but could not be counted as an incorporation at this stage.

Lee was the only participant who had deliberately chosen to work for a secular organization. When I asked him the same question, he paused to think for quite some time before answering:

“Uhm...that’s pretty tough [long pause]. Well I guess the young people I’m working with at work so I’m just...I’m just kind of

thinking about, trying to picture different young people and think what would I see as best and I guess because of where I'm working, I have separated off my Christian faith from work perhaps subconsciously because I know I can't talk to them [young people] about my faith so the young people I'm working with at work then I would say that I think the best I'd really want for them...I would want for them is that they are living their life...you know living the life that they've got to the best that they can." (4/Lee/p33)

Lee was aware of how his practice, and the organization he was working for, regulated how he performed his faith with young people. He clearly wrestled with this issue. When I asked him what would the best be, he immediately responded:

"Then I guess it would that they were a Christian, that they worship God." (4/Lee/p34)

Here we see a conflicting identity whereby Lee, as a Christian within a secular organization, knew that to initiate a conversation with young people about his faith was out of the question. This conflicting characterization, as seen with both Holly and Lee, can be interpreted as a response to a normative professionalism founded on secular ideals. It could also be interpreted as them embracing an approach to youth work that marginalized their faith. Butler (1990:24) argued that identities are 'performatively produced', meaning that an identity is only able to come into being through the process of a society where that identity is conceived. This implies a relationship between the individual youth worker and the external forces that regulate the behaviour of that individual, including the language they use. This is discussed further in Chapter Seven. But the narratives of Holly and Lee reveal that, a year into post, the dominant external pressures come from secularized-liberal ideas of youth work with faith regarded as important, but not the first port of call.

Holly and Maddy, like Scott, spoke about the importance of having other things in their lives apart from work. A year in, they felt the need to develop other areas of life that did not involve young people. They imagined that doing this would enrich their own lives and that would benefit the young people they worked with. As Holly said:

"Something I'm just working out now is making sure I'm doing stuff that is completely separate from youth work and that I really enjoy doing and just gives me energy. I've always thought its being a bit selfish, just doing things that I enjoy, is that helping?" (4/Holly/p27)

Holly was beginning to make separations in her different life spheres. She reflexively considered the sense of guilt that she had in the past about engaging in activities that were just for her enjoyment. There was a growing recognition at the end of her first year that there may be more to life than work or ministry. Giddens (1991:148), writing within the context of transition and life-spans, considered how the self establishes a trajectory which can only make sense through the reflexive use of the wider social environment. There is an impetus towards control and, in seeking to make changes to the prior self-identity, the reflexive individual 'thrusts the self into the outer world in ways which have no clear parallel in previous times' (1991:148). The prior supports on which self-identity were already based are removed, and much greater mastery over the social-relations and social-contexts is achieved than was previously possible. In reflexively considering the next steps of her life, Holly was making a movement towards the mastery of her social-relations and contexts; in this case the young people and community where she worked. Goffman is useful here when considering the kind of identity Holly was wishing to achieve; a more energised self that had something extra to offer the young people. As she commented:

"Like for instance, my music, I've not kept up with that. I don't really play anymore and that is something I did a lot of. Since finishing my music degree I haven't really done anything with it. But I think I'm beginning to see that actually if I'm not being inspired and alive, then I'm no use to the young people that I'm working with. And also, it opens up doors for them because if I'm pursuing different things and getting interested in different things then that will naturally come out to the young people as well. Otherwise, I'm sort of just living myself within the same opportunities they've got. The whole point is that I'm supposed to be opening opportunities for them. Do you know what I mean?" (4/Holly/p27-28)

Holly was seeking fulfillment, but from the view that a more fulfilled sense of self would influence her work for the better. The same trajectory can also be seen in Maddy's reflexive narrative, in which she was planning to have weekends away:

"I've planned in quite a few weekends now for the next term to get away. Because I think for the first year you're so like trying to find your place where and also I wanted to build friendships here but I think now that they are settled I'm looking forward to getting away a bit more just because - just it's the only way to really get away from it all, turn your phone off, no one can ring on the doorbell so... Yeah. And you also are able to invest more and once you're back and refreshed." (4/Maddy/p3-4)

At the end of their first year in practice, Holly and Maddy were actively involved in the construction of their ongoing identity. There was an interplay within their different life spheres, private life and professional life, and so there seemed to be a settling down for them; a seeking of stability through outside interests that would remain steady through ever-changing contexts and relationships.

After a year in post, there had been some significant movement with many of the graduates with regard to integrating faith and secular discourses in their youth work practice. In Scott's narrative, he spoke of working at the Local Authority youth club once a week. This was an example of partnership work, and Scott was there as the youth worker from the local church. The work had generated a level of trust and respect from the Local Authority as they now sent their non-faith workers to work with Scott on various projects at the church. He located this within discourses about faith and secularized youth work:

“Now, that's being Christ in the community and being in a profession because they see my professionalism. What they see is actually this guy is alright. He has a passion for young people. He knows a lot about the ins and outs of County Council youth work, schools work. He has that sort of knowledge, that language that they can connect with. So, the faith thing is not a barrier. And that's professional, Christian professionalism in the community. I think yeah straight away, that's the idea where I'd love to go, you know, you're doing Christian mission and community work, all that sort of stuff but still holding to your values and your morals and your ethics that they look at that, and they respect that.”
(4/Scott/p20-21)

Scott evidenced an interaction between secular-liberal youth work values and those of the Christian faith coming together to provide a sense of value, status and integrity. He was clearly energized by this, and so formed an imagined trajectory of where he would like to take this work in the future. Again, we can see Giddens' life-span trajectory being reflexively imagined within the context of Scott's current identity as a Christian professional youth worker.

Although Scott was showing a more integrated approach to faith and professionalism, and how they could work in practice, Beth had moved closer to an integration, but was still conflicted over certain aspects of ministry and professionalism:

“There's been this ongoing battle between like having all the boundaries in my head and all that stuff and I've often felt like the

professional stuff is like it's been like this steady line, and then my faith is coming like this thing bouncing underneath and I'm trying to like fit the two together." (4/Beth/p17)

There were two interesting metaphors at play here for Beth. First, she described the experience of conflict as a 'battle'. She was still holding to the notions of ministry and professionalism as competing discourses. One should win the battle over the other. Second, in viewing professionalism as the steady line, she considered professionalism to be the stability in her occupation. Her faith was the bouncing line underneath, which challenged this stability. This is an example of a dominant secular-liberal ideal as an external force that can cause even the most devout Christian to place their faith at a more marginal position. Beth considered faith to be the discourse that caused the most problems for her. This relates again to performative influences, regarded in this thesis as a considerable force in the formation of new youth workers. Beth was still caught within a liminal position, as her metaphors suggest.

In Mel's final interview, she spoke of the future, as the funding for her post had been cut. She was considering her employment options whilst thinking about the experience of her first year as a qualified youth worker. This generated reflections on working co-terminously as a Christian youth worker in a church and as a school's youth worker in a secular context:

"Faith makes a difference maybe because of its motivation. Maybe because God is involved and therefore there is more going on...I don't know. It doesn't feel quite so clear-cut because it's all murky rather than...I don't know. Because personally it's murky. I don't know...but the thing is the aims of my job principally have nothing to do with, overtly to do with the standard kind of Christian idea. I don't know...the idea that we should get kids into church but then that's not standard Christian, it's church, isn't it? The basic principle of God being love, that's what my job is about. Loving young people and I think I'd be as effective at that in the context of Christian work as I would be in the context of non-Christian work." (4/Mel/p26)

Mel's narrative, and her use of the phrase 'I don't know' throughout, denoted a confusion over faith youth work and secular youth work. After a year of working together in both contexts, Mel had yet to resolve this. However, she found stability on the 'basic principle', as she calls it; that God is love. This is what her identity as both a Christian and a youth worker rests on, regardless of what context she worked in.

It would appear from the narratives of Holly, Lee, Maddy, Scott, Beth and Mel that, at the end of the first year, the research participants still experienced the effects of liminal status. This was influenced by context and a secular-liberalized notion of professional youth work. Faith was important to them, but tended to be marginalized by a dominant secular discourse. There were signs of a more integrated identity, as seen with Scott. However, the interplay between the two positions continued and the phase of incorporation seemed to be untenable at this point. Security and stability came in the form of life trajectories that embraced a notion of developing other aspects of the self in the private sphere of life that were deemed to be influential in the working sphere.

5 Summary

The first quarter of the year saw the graduates making separations away from their student status to that of employed status. This was considered with reference to the separation phase of Van Gennep's (1909) *Rites of Passage*, which Turner (1969) then later developed. In making separations from their previous social status, it was apparent that they were not only separating from their status as students, but also from their status as 'normal' church members. As a result, they began to experience 'difference' in relation to those with whom they were once 'similar'. Normative Weberian approaches were employed in positioning themselves as professionals. However, other micro-level approaches were taken, as seen in the work of Becker *et al*, that frames professionalism within the concept of socialization. In essence, the first three months were a time when graduates were propelled into the liminal phase of transition.

The intervening months of the year (four to nine months) saw the graduates experience the ambiguous nature of liminality. Narratives moved from the need to position themselves as professionals within their contexts to focusing on their practice with young people. This may have been to gain some sense of stability at a moment of internal confusion. The importance of 'good youth work' was talked about; usually within the secular-liberalized framework of informal education. However, in contradiction to Turner's view that liminars display humble and passive behaviour, these liminars employed a degree of human agency when faced with conflict situations. Discursive resources from both

youth *work* and youth *ministry* discourses were employed during this phase, depending on context and situation. This showed some movement toward incorporation. But the graduates were still trying to negotiate ambiguity.

The last three months of the year saw the graduates still struggling to achieve an identity couched in ambiguity. This was influenced by external secularized-liberal notions of professional youth work, where faith appeared to be pushed to the margins for some. Security and stability were sought in the more private life spheres. The graduates appeared to be suspended within a prolonged liminal state in which performative pressures from external forces were influential in constraining a developing integrated ministerial and professional identity. Stability for the graduates resembled those places where they felt they could express themselves authentically in their work. As these contexts changed, so did their expressions of authenticity. The influence of performativity will be discussed in the next Chapter, and authenticity will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

Chapter Seven: Performativity and Relations of Power

1 Introduction

Accountability and performance indicators now form a significant element in current professionalism. Within contemporary service occupations, professionalism is often imposed from external forces. This is usually operationalized through employers and managers within employing organizations. These relations of power are a significant influence on new Christian professional youth workers. Normative values are imposed which require the occupational group and individuals to regulate their conduct and behaviour. Professionals who engage with these performative constraints do so in the hope of collective or individual reward, based around status and career opportunities. However, professionalism is also constructed from within, so long as it corresponds with ‘the delegation of professional powers’ (Evetts 2003:410) and is in the State’s best interests. This is an interesting concept for Christian professional youth work. As was discussed in Chapter Four, this particular field is considered an ambiguous occupation within the Church. Christian professional youth workers are betwixt and between an occupational status. They are often considered as standing somewhere between a full-time volunteer and an ordained minister. Performativity constrains as well as produces the newly-forming professional identity and therefore influences the transition of moving from student to employee.

This chapter considers the standards of professional youth work and how the dominant secularized discourse influences the identity of Christian professional youth workers through the core values of youth work. Accountability exercised through relations of power will be considered, identifying what these are with specific regard to Christian youth work. As indicated in Chapter Six, a key aspect emerging from the research data was the notion of performativity. This is the foundational frame of reference for all that follows in this Chapter. For the purposes of analysis, I will work with Ball’s definition of performativity:

“Performativity is a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgments, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change – based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic)” (Ball, 2003:216).

First however, I will consider the problems that a new Christian professional youth worker experiences when they are interpellated, or recognized, as being a professional youth worker. This will provide context for the Chapter in that it demonstrates, in part, the process of becoming a Christian professional youth worker. The narrative of Beth will be used, as it is a good example of the particular issues that interpellation brings.

2 Naming and owning professional status

During the first three months of employment, Beth's employing organization, a Christian schools work charity, celebrated her achievement of gaining a JNC qualification. Beth was the only qualified youth worker the organization had ever employed, even though it has been founded some fifteen years previously:

“The newsletter which came out in November had a front page photo and the bottom headline was ‘Beth Mowlam, professional youth worker’ and then the back page had a full photo of my graduation and they asked me to write an article about it and stuff and then we had our celebration and they announced it to everybody and made me get up on stage in front of everybody, which was really lovely, but it felt a bit pressurised.” (1/Beth/p26)

This level of recognition is interesting in the light of interpellation; a notion first used by Althusser but later adapted by Butler (1992). Its fundamental meaning is that a subject is hailed or positioned as ‘something’. When she or he recognizes the hail, the subject positions herself or himself ‘as subject’. Thus, the hailing is successful. However, Butler argued that interpellation is not always successful. Subjects may not recognize themselves when they are called. Alternatively, subjects can refuse to accept the intended position to which they are being hailed. In Beth's circumstance, she had been hailed by her organization as a professional youth worker. The expression itself is performative in that it positioned Beth on one side of the voluntarism/professionalism divide. However, Beth did not initially recognize herself as the professional who was being hailed:

It was all a bit surreal...really lovely that I was being recognised, but I didn't feel like that. There was this weird thing where I think, you know, suddenly I was given this responsibility so I was trying to work out what that looked like for me to have it and for me to be professional, but at the same time I think I got a little bit caught up in it. I think my ego got a little bit the better of me. And then suddenly I was like ‘I'm a professional youth worker!’ (1/Beth/p27)

Being hailed as professional youth worker brought about a change for Beth in how she had to position herself. This occurred in a very short time frame. However, Beth's narrative over the year evidenced a continual working out of what it actually meant to be a professional youth worker. Beth, in gradually recognizing the subject position to which she had been hailed, blamed her ego for getting the better of her. Such can be the hidden power of interpellation, that the subject did not realize that she has been named, called, hailed, and then subject-ed into position by the exercise of power from the wider charitable sector. This positioning as professional youth worker for Beth had occurred during her initial separation phase from student to employee. In responding positively to the hailing she was, at this stage, beginning to confer to the position. This was a symbolic act, signifying detachment from her earlier fixed social status of student/trainee. However, considering Butler's premise that 'recognition is not conferred on a subject, but forms that subject' (Butler, 1996:109), we shall see that Beth had not completely conferred to her new subject position.

After six months in post, Beth recalled tensions with volunteers from the church youth club she managed. This prompted her to question whether or not she was in the right job. The church had employed Beth because they wanted a professionally qualified youth worker to lead the work. However, she perceived her qualified status to be the very cause of tension with the volunteer team. The volunteers viewed professional work and voluntary work as polar opposites on the professional/ministry spectrum. She cited one volunteer as saying, 'Well, you're the professional worker here to tell us what we should do, but we are here to love and serve these kids' (2/Beth/p10). Beth recognized that part of her role was to direct the work and direct the volunteers: 'They [the volunteers] have a heart for the young people, which is a good thing, but I need to be directing them towards those principles and values which enable the youth work to be done well,' (2/Beth/p10).

Nine months in post, Beth reflected further on this issue. She questioned her calling and the impact of her training. Through this negative experience with the volunteers who had initially hailed her as a professional youth worker, Beth was feeling isolated in her work. This demonstrates Ball's view that performativity

individualizes and causes an ontological insecurity. The next extract of Beth's narrative evidences these factors at play:

“It was such a nightmare to go to work every Friday evening and think ‘what am I doing?’ That’s when it does really really feel like a job because you’re not looking forward to it. It was at that point when I started really questioning what I was doing in youth work. To be honest, working with a whole team of volunteers, a group of people who didn’t necessarily get where I was coming from, who I was meeting head on a different point of view and that makes you then start doubting because you start thinking, well, what I’ve learned has made me too much of a...like I’d become really uptight, I think I thought it is just a bunch of rules I’m following and they [volunteers] would be like ‘oh no, we need to be here to love the young people, we need to serve them’...and I think, ‘well, do I not love young people too?’” (3/Beth/p22)

Beth was not coping well in her role at this stage in the year. The constraining effects of performativity were taking their toll on the judgments she was required to make about the work. The obligation to perform was generating a flow of constant doubt for her. Relationships were strained and pressures increased. The high level of conflicting values was almost de-professionalizing Beth. The impact of this was to prolong the phase of liminality. Beth was being constrained by performativity, mobilized through relations of power from an unexpected source; namely, the volunteers.

Beth's experience suitably exemplifies the tension that can be encountered through being named a professional whilst yet not feeling like a professional. The significant bearing that relations of power have on this will be considered later in the Chapter. First, the core values of youth work, as performativity, will be outlined.

3 Youth work core values as performativity

When talking about the core values of youth work,¹⁰ the research participants employed particular discourses that demonstrated a secularized, normative position towards youth work. This emanated from the pre-qualifying phase of their professional identity construction. During their training, all the research participants had been subjected to constant measures, targets and controls against which they were monitored and judged. The performances they were to

¹⁰ Informal education, empowerment, equal opportunities and voluntary participation

enact were determined by National Occupational Standards (NOS); a policy document which sets out the knowledge, skills and understanding a student must demonstrate in order to achieve qualified status as a professional youth worker. In this way, performativity worked from the outside in, enacted through these measures, targets and controls.

NOS can be viewed as a disciplinary mechanism, which seeks to appropriate the conduct of autonomous subjects (Evetts, 2003:409). As student youth workers are socialized into a standards-determined context, so performative language becomes their language (Bryan *et al*, 2011:407). Therefore, within Christian youth work, community culture and discourse produces and reproduces value systems and power relations (Apple, 2000:179). The end result is that individuals within the profession willingly participate in the performative process. In this way, notions of professionalism are embedded in the standards and are thereby internalized as normative (Bryan *et al*, 2011:407). As has been discussed in Chapter Three, the core values of youth work are the secularized foundations on which professional youth work is built. These values have become internalized as normative for Christian youth workers. Theology, conversely, has not been embedded in the same way. There is no governing body that insists on a theological curriculum or standard that must be achieved. If at all, this comes from within the educational organization that develops the training course. When seeking professional validation, the National Youth Agency (NYA) is not concerned with the standard of theological content. On the contrary, concerns are raised when it seems to be the dominant curriculum priority. The NYA is only concerned that standards for Christian professional trainee youth workers are aligned with NOS in their secular, liberal form. It is no surprise that, within this research project, Christian professional youth workers' normative discourses related to the core values of youth work. They had been socialized into a way of thinking about Christian youth work that uses secular language and secular thought as normative.

Six months into post, the participants were referring to the core values as a gauge to judge the quality of their work. Steve's words are illustrative of this point: 'the values help keep us [his organization] focused on youth work' (2/Steve/p7). Steve was Director of a Christian based Alternative Education

Charity, reliant on external funding. That the demands of funders needed to be met caused tensions for him, in that he feared losing the ethos of the project through meeting their objectives. The values were therefore viewed as significant in enabling the project to maintain its youth work identity:

“The values are upheld within the programming and also to see how staff interact with young people because most aren’t trained youth workers, so, because its more pressure for accreditation and we’re basically becoming a college really, our funders would like that, it’s easy to loose sight of the real reason why we’re doing the job we do and the fact that we’re not a college, so the values help keep us focused on youth work and being there for the young person rather than around the qualification, which lately it seems that some tutors who aren’t trained in youth work are missing the point a little bit which is understandable because they are facing so many pressures and they’ve got so much on that they sort of end up with the mindset of, ‘I need to get this qualification done and I need to be aware of what the problems are in this room and this qualification is going to be helpful’, but you cant’ do a qualification without everything else.” (2/Steve/p7)

Although the organization had a Christian-based ethos, Steve’s narrative did not allude to this in any way. The external standards, mobilized through the core values, were being reinforced through his discourse. Steve resisted the pressure from funders to shift the culture of the organization and sought to utilize the core values of his profession to maintain its fundamental ethos. At this point in Steve’s first year of employment, he was experiencing the uncertainty associated with the liminal phase. His point of stability was to be found in the core values and through conforming to the normative attributes of his profession.

Steve discussed how his organization created opportunities to counteract the focus on academic achievement for the young people. Effective youth work, even though it was considered to be central to the focus of the organization, took place outside of the main academic programming. Breakfast, breaks, lunch and an afternoon of sport each week were viewed as significant times in which the staff could ‘build relationships and listen to the young people’ (2/Steve/p7). Steve verbalized this as a tension in his work: ‘It does feel like a tension between the academic stuff, which we have to do, and youth work values’ (2/Steve/p7). He continued to reflect on the young people that the project engaged with and what his ideal would be for the work:

“Most young people come to our project because they’ve got a wide range of difficulties or issues which have an impact so that they can’t really engage in education. So if we don’t have an awareness of those issues and try and respond and help in these areas, then we’ll be no better than an average educational institution and therefore the young people won’t get any benefits. In an ideal world, it would be nice just to not have the pressure of qualifications and just be a place for young people to go that they can have some positive relationships and a positive environment to meet other young people.” (2/Steve/p9)

Such was Steve’s commitment to youth work core values that he developed marginalized ways of ensuring good practice could continue and flourish. His normative view of youth work was conducted outside the academic programming, which was funding his organization. This is a clear example of how performativity demands from one institution can influence the practice of another institution.

The participants involved in schools work experienced particular tensions regarding the exercising of their professional youth work values within that setting. Beth exemplified this sense of frustration in an interview nine months into post. She spoke of the anxiety experienced in not being able to do relational youth work whilst delivering a self-esteem program for young women:

“It felt like I was ticking boxes for the school...you will come up with a plan because you’re there for what you feel you can offer the school...with the self-esteem stuff, which really I did want to be relational...doing the first pilot really highlighted where I felt I wasn’t doing relational youth work because the project was meant to be about making sure the young women felt loved and feel ok and suddenly it was about female role models and all this curriculum stuff and that was so frustrating.” (3/Beth/p14)

Beth was subject to the performative requirements of the State with regards to curriculum, which was channelled to her within the school. This second hand form of control was exercised through other professionals, in this case, teachers. The tension arose between the normative professional value of teaching (curriculum) and the normative professional value of youth work (informal education). The clash of values resulted in Beth struggling to find a sense of authenticity in working for the school. At this point of the transitory year, Beth was trying to work out her identity within a range of different contexts. This negative experience within the school setting compounded the sense of uncertainty that she was already feeling. She strongly identified with secularized

notions of professional youth work. But she also recognized that relational youth work (as discussed in Chapter Three) is also a Christian youth work value. This suggested identification with both discursive positions. Similarly, Pete understood youth work values to be the bedrock of good practice. Therefore, anything that was not aligned to these values caused conflict and a desire to create further opportunities to engage with young people in a more informal manner. He talked about lunchtime activities, which he considered to be 'real youth work' (2/Pete/p6). These activities were conducted in a more informal setting. The young people could decide for themselves whether to attend or not. Fundamentally, the tensions experienced by both Beth and Pete resulted from the conflicting demands of meeting school curriculum outcomes whilst also retaining the integrity of what they perceived to be the heart of effective youth work; namely, relationality.

Nevertheless, six months into post, the participants' narratives generally reflected an embedding of the values within their practice. Scott was a most willing partner in the performative process. For him, it was singularly uncomplicated:

"I think they [youth work principles] are really good to keep you in check...every institution has some principles that they have to abide by or else you're not really signing into the whole principles thing of that organization or institution, so I think if I was to lose the youth work principles, then where would I be? Because I have been taught youth work principles, which I do believe, they're good principles, they're just hard to adhere to, but if I chuck the baby out with the bath water, I don't have any other principles."
(2/Scott/p24)

Scott was complicit in the performative nature of the core values as standards of professional youth work. In fact, all the research participants, at one point or another throughout the year, demonstrated their unreserved commitment to the values. Intriguingly, this commitment even included a move beyond the boundaries of professional identity. Maddy explained how she thought youth work values had become her own values:

"I have done youth work training now and its become part of my own values in terms of how I want to work with young people...it's happened in a subconscious way as well as the conscious way. So when I'm planning and designing projects and programmes, I'll consciously consider them, but I think they inform my work on a daily basis without really thinking about it as well...they are completely embedded in what I do and I really believe in them, I

think, I am continually working out how they are best reflected in the work I do and how I practice them, and I think they are part of me now, I live my life by them, I can see them in how I think about other stuff not connected to work.” (2/Maddy/p7-8)

Maddy exemplified the fact that a professional identity conferred by the State can influence an individual’s identity in other life spheres. This relates to Butler’s notion of performative process. In the formation of identity, a willing subject acknowledges the identity that they want to assume. Maddy was willing to embrace the core values of youth work as a code for living. Interestingly, there was no mention of God in her narrative. This provides another example of the pervasiveness of secularized notions on the identity formation of Christian professional youth workers. So it is that professional identity constructed through performative constraints may spill over into the non-work life sphere. There is added interest here in that again we see research participants identifying with the youth work values in a way that could be understood as a searching for stability within the ambiguity of liminality.

4 Performativity and relations of power

During his first three months in practice, Scott spoke of the ‘pressures to perform’ that came from various members of the church community:

“There’s pressure to perform and it’s difficult coming from college and suddenly into work there’s pressure to perform, the pressure to please people is immense and it’s not necessarily the leadership you are pleasing but the congregation or individuals or parents within that congregation who want to see their child like this...they think you should be doing this.” (1/Scott/p6)

In fundamental conformity with Scott’s position, all of the research participants mentioned a range of relations of power that held positions of influence in relation to them. Particular focus was given in this regard to the influence of employers, peer pressure, volunteers, and parents.

4.1 Employers

Mel voiced a concern during her first three months in post about her Line Manager, a Vicar, wanting theology presented in a way that conflicted with her own beliefs. ‘I think he would want me to present Christian Theology in a certain way’ (1/Mel/p14). This is representative of what Butler (1996:108) termed ‘authoritative speech’. Butler argued that performatives are statements that, in the speaking of them, also perform a certain action and exercise a controlling

power. At this early stage in the year, Mel was not able to locate this anxiety in anything more tangible than a feeling she had. However, by the second interview, Mel gave an example from her practice. She felt that using informal education techniques with twelve year-olds was inappropriate because of the nature of the conservative evangelical theology she was being asked to teach. Mel felt that she would be being irresponsible if she were to tell them what she really thought. I asked her about the tension between youth work values and what the church were expecting her to do. Her answer reflected the innate inner conflict she was experiencing:

“Because I’m working for church I’ve got to realize that I’m responsible and accountable to young people who are in an evangelical church, that’s how they’ve grown up and that’s what they’re doing and I’m not selling out I don’t think. I’m not giving away all of how I feel about this stuff, that’s a really difficult balance. I’ll struggle tonight (at the youth group). I’ll struggle with them being told that the bible says categorically no sex outside marriage, because I think the bible says its an ideal context but its not the end of the world if you don’t.” (2/Mel/p28)

Lee also experienced the effects of performative constraints within the church. By the fourth round of interviews, he faced uncertainty in his role since it was unclear whether or not his organization would be able to secure adequate funding for the future. As well as being disappointed, he also had to live with the anxiety of not knowing whether he would be getting paid on time each month. With a wife and child to support, this added to his anxiety and caused Lee to reassess his place in youth work (4/Lee/p21). He had always been adamant that he did not want to work for a Christian agency. However, the developments in his role had led him to reevaluate this decision. Lee spoke of his uncertainty at applying for a job in such an agency, thinking that he was not a good enough Christian:

“It’s the fact that it’s Christian work that makes me slightly anxious and actually asking myself, am I a good enough Christian? I mean, I don’t feel a good enough Christian to be in a role leading lots and lots of other Christian youth workers...maybe I’ve been tricked by how holy and good everybody else is...I just look at other people and think you don’t worry about the same things I do and don’t question the same things I do and everything else.” (4/Lee/p29)

This comment was made at the end of Lee’s first year in employment. Within the interpretative framework of transition, he was still experiencing the status of

liminality. The uncertain nature of this appeared to have a bearing on Lee's thinking about his future work and context.

Maddy reflected on a point of conflict with her leadership team that arose from being asked to collate a document about the youth work in her context. Her paper was to examine the aims of the project, based on four categories; nurture, evangelism, worship and service. She commented:

"I said there is no way I can fit what I do into these four categories. I said, like our purpose is not to separate them into those things. It's going to be really hard for me to do and I tried to write up a different way of doing it while still fitting into those."
(4/Maddy/p22)

Here was Maddy, a year into post, displaying the not-so-passive aspects of being a liminar in Christian youth work:

"Anyway, when I presented it, the leadership team were like you know you need to stay in line with what we're telling you to do, like you can't just do it this way. You need to communicate better, and how are we supposed to know what's going on if you don't do it? It was all very bizarre." (4/Maddy/p22)

In this instance, performativity was mobilized through the church to the Christian professional youth worker. Ball wrote of performativity as a 'mode of regulation that employs judgements' (Ball, 2003:216). This idea is demonstrated in Maddy's narrative by evidencing a faith organization that has not been left untouched by the late modern managerialist culture. Maddy's response was interesting in that this feisty young woman bowed to the control of the managers:

"I think that came out of them wanting me to communicate more as to what I was doing and stuff. Just kind of learning to put more time in to that kind of thing. I don't know if maybe they thought I was like running off with the project and doing what I wanted which completely I wasn't...it's just I needed to really communicate well with them as to what was going on, especially because they don't really understand youth work." (4/Maddy/p22)

Maddy submitted to the authority of the managers. Foucault referred to managers as 'technicians of behaviour', with their task being to 'produce bodies that are docile and capable' (Foucault, 1979:294). Maddy was by no means a shrinking violet, so her response surprised me. She recognized that this requirement was coming from the top down. The tension occurred because, like Scott, she wanted to educate the management about youth work, thus

constructing the profession from within. But, in so doing, she was thrown into confusion and a sense of separation from the rest of the church crept in. The effects of a performative culture were clearly taking their toll on Maddy's sense of professional autonomy. The rest of Maddy's narrative did not inspire confidence in the formation of Christian professional identity:

“So like now I've been thinking probably a huge percent of my time should go into just communication to get them behind what's going on...the youth work sometimes feels quite separate from the church and I can't tell if that's because I work full time or because it's not all discipleship stuff and there's a focus on community stuff. I can't tell if it's because actually that the leadership team aren't around very much, maybe that's it. And so like when I'm here everyday and they're just here Sunday mornings they don't see anything. And then partly I do think that everyone's wrapped up in their own little department so no one takes much interest in each other's department, so I think that could partly be it, but as far as where I'm responsible I can't expect them to care if they don't know what I'm doing, so its just a case of like making sure there are lots of photographs and news up and around.” (4/Maddy/p22-23)

Maddy had sought to appease the managers by ensuring that she fulfilled their wishes. This was motivated by the notion that, if she did as she was asked, the management would care about the work. Throughout this conflict, Maddy had positioned herself as the person who should take the blame for them not knowing what was happening in the youth work. This implies an emotional consequence for Maddy. Here is guilt, uncertainty, and a sense of instability. The constraining effects of performativity on a forming identity continued to be significant for this Christian professional youth worker.

Beth cited her professionalism as a tension with other co-workers who were not professionally qualified in her field (2/p15). This reflects a consequence of the professionalization of youth work from a Weberian point of view. Categories and boundaries are put into effect that 'prevent others from encroaching on their position' (Bradford, 2012b:35). This was played out on a micro-level for Beth through the power relation between her and her Line Manager, who had twenty years of youth work experience, albeit unqualified. Beth feared that she was perceived as being arrogant in her responses to certain situations where she knew her knowledge could have a positive impact. The Line Manager accused Beth of being bossy and proud. Yet three months on, that same Line Manager

was keen for Beth to keep her professional knowledge current. Whilst this appears to be a step forward in the relationship of youth worker to employer, it actually caused anxiety for Beth. She did not sense any firm, or helpful, direction from her employer:

“The one thing my manager said was ‘Beth, you need to keep on the ball. You need to make sure that you are reading the right things. You need to make sure you are keying in with the right people.’...that was really challenging because I suddenly realised, where am I keeping keyed in? How am I making sure I’m still with it?” (3/Beth/p7)

Somewhat perversely, Scott experienced the constraining effects of performativity and power being exercised through an *imagined* response by his Line Manager. Scott narrated a story about two young people who wanted to leave his youth group and go to another young group in the town. This caused him a degree of anxiety and undermined his confidence and sense of security in his practice at a time in the transitional phase (six months in) when graduates were looking to their practice, rather than their professional position, to find a sense of stability. This feeling intensified so much that, similar to Beth, he questioned if he was doing his job properly, as seen in the following extract:

“I think the church tries to deal with the young people as adults who are making adult decisions and saying, ‘look, let them make their decisions’, but they are not really valuing my feelings within that. But if the young people suddenly go, ‘I want to go somewhere else’, then my boss will say, ‘well that’s not good, you’re not doing a good job’. It’s been an interesting few weeks of trying to work out why the church is like this, and why the group is like this and all that kind of tension and conflict and all that sort of stuff and then thinking am I really doing the right thing in what I’m teaching and what I’m delivering?” (2/Scott/p6)

The interplay here between Scott, his Line Manager, and the young people is interesting in the sense that two forms of relations of power impacted on his sense of ontological security. Scott’s imagined response from his Line Manager demonstrated what Bernstein (2000:1942) referred to as ‘mechanisms of *projection*’, whereby an identity is a reflection of ‘external contingencies’ (Bernstein, 2000:1942, italics author’s own). Scott’s developing identity was being influenced by the imagined expectations of what constitutes ‘doing a good job’. In this case, ‘doing a good job’ was founded on being able to keep the young people at the youth group. This example of performative power reduced

Scott's capacity to move towards an incorporated sense of Christian professionalism and so prolonged and intensified the liminal phase.

A year into his role, Scott spoke of getting to the point whereby he felt secure enough to see young people making their own decisions – even if that meant they would go to another youth group. His reflection evidenced an enforced liminal status, constrained by performativity, that was producing an identity searching for a sense of security:

“That's the security you need to get to in youth work, because you have all these anxieties like, you're not doing enough, or you're not being Christian enough, or you're not doing non-Christian stuff enough. If you're not experienced and trained in that you will jump from one thing to the other because you're fearful of failure or letting people down. Or, you're not doing a good enough job when a parent says their son isn't being looked after, you've got to be really secure in where you want to go with your vision even if you don't know what the outcome will be fully.” (4/Scott/p9-10)

Scott was imagining himself into a preferred identity. He was forming his notion of this preferred identity on secularized, normative ideas of what a professional youth worker should be; someone trained in the ability to make professional judgments. Scott was seeking to find his identity in his profession as a community of knowledge and practice. However, performativity continued to not only limit but incite new discourses.

Tensions around the issue of performativity being exercised through employers (relation of power) did not lessen throughout the period of the research. It seemed that the employing churches did not understand the nature of professional work. The youth workers employed by churches were striving to enhance that understanding whilst also fulfilling the expectations of the leadership:

“I think sometimes there have been tensions occasionally in regards of people who don't perhaps perceive youth work as professional still, within the Christian environment, and that I'm here just to entertain the young people...it's not so much now, but that has been a real journey and part of my agenda to educate the senior leadership and the people around the outer circles of the leadership and the church itself. Its always going to be a long term journey with establishing what is a priority in my youth work professionally and what isn't, and balancing that with having something for the young people but also taking them deeper and further with their relationship with God and that sometimes does

bring up tensions and conflict with how I do that and whether I am doing it the right way.” (4/Scott/p16)

Scott was adhering to the professional norms of a secular notion of youth work. Exhibiting an interesting form of anti-professionalism, Scott used a leisure discourse with regards to youth in describing how the church viewed the work. He perceived his role as educating the various stakeholders in the church about the intrinsic benefits of professional youth work. In this way, he produced and then re-produced the profession within his own context for the good of the community (Evetts, 2003:410). Within the transition framework, the liminal status was still very much apparent. Scott was keen to reduce the ambiguity in order to relieve the tensions and conflicts he was experiencing.

From these examples, it is clear that it is not only the State that sets performative controls on the professions. The church as employer also sets performative controls on professionals. The employing of professionals within a church context is an attractive prospect as the church can hold them accountable within a managerial structure. This confounds the liminal occupational status of Christian youth work in that a professional youth worker's identity is formed by professional youth work values. Yet, at the same time, they have to negotiate performative demands from their employing institution. As such, they are caught between both performative discourses.

4.2 Peer pressure

Graduates employed by churches felt that they had to work harder in order to gain respect from other professionals. Speaking the language of other professionals was important for them and they were keen to represent the church well. This is a reflection of Butler's (1996:109) argument: 'recognition is not conferred on a subject, but forms the subject'. Language is significant here. How other professionals, and the graduates themselves, used it, helped to reinforce a closed sense of professionalism that excluded other, non-professionals from moving into their space. Graduates were seeking an affiliation with these other professionals that would somehow add value to their position as contemporaries and peers. Mel, whose church-based ministry involved schools-work, spoke of how she perceived people to think about her as a professional when it came to her telling people that she worked for a church:

“I don’t tell people I work for a church because I don’t want them to make assumptions about me and I also don’t like what goes along with that, like, when I’m at school I feel that I’m recognised in my profession but in other contexts you say you work for a church and people look at you as though you’re play acting...when I first met school nurses I would say I work for the church and as soon as you say church something in their expression changes. Now that might be something that I pick up or it might be something that is not actually there, like I invent it but I always want them to see me as a professional, so in meetings, that’s where I come into my own and well I’m most professional in that context...So yeah, I think perceptions are that you’re a bit Mickey Mouse.” (3/Mel/p2)

Mel assumed that, because she worked for a church, she was considered to be less professional than her colleagues. Mel did not articulate what this actually meant for her. However, she intimated that it had something to do with ‘pretending’ to be professional. Meetings provided a stage for Mel to act out how she wanted to be viewed by her peers. Goffman (1959) is useful here when considering how identity is formed through the acting of roles and the masks we wear. There is a secularized, professional power at play in this narrative. Mel used all her secularized, professional discursive resources within meetings to convince others that she was a professional in her own right. She was demonstrating the strategy that Ball (2003:216) identified when a professional performs as a display of quality. This form of performativity, in its ability to direct the behaviour of professionals, portrays the professional using a form of calculation in order to deem themselves worthy of the title. Nine months into post, Mel was still seeking validation from others that would affirm her as the professional she aspired to become. This is yet another example of liminal status and the insecurity that often accompanies such a state.

4.3 Volunteers

Most of the graduates interviewed were the only qualified youth workers in their organization. This is a common feature of Christian youth work agencies, of course, which rely primarily on volunteers. During the first six months in post, tensions arose between the graduates and volunteers. Some experienced both antagonism and resentment. Graduates felt volunteers were intimidated by their knowledge and qualifications. They often felt undermined and isolated. This resulted in graduates contemplating changes to their practice as a result of the

performative demands from volunteers. They felt that an inability, or unwillingness, to respond would be deemed as failure.

4.4 Parents

Graduates spoke of how their work was impacted by parental concern for the moral development of their children. Parents' (often unspoken) expectation was that the church youth worker would ensure that their children would make correct moral choices. During his first three months, Scott spoke about his experience of this:

“I could come up with all these projects and all these things but at the end of the day half of the time people don't really care, they just want to see that individually their son or daughter is being looked after in a certain way, in their way, and if it's not being done their way they will have a chat...we're doing these great things and we're changing lives but its 'I don't care, my son or daughter is now smoking and I want to know what you are going to do about it?'” (1/Scott/p6)

After six months in post, Scott was still experiencing pressure from parents. He viewed the reason primarily as a result of differing approaches to – and understandings of – education. From his interactions with parents, Scott imagined or assumed that parents were expecting a traditional mode of theological education for their children that would include didactic, moral and instructive elements. He interpreted his assigned identity as some kind of moral guardian. His approach, however, resisted this identity in favour of a secular-liberal identity located within informal education:

“Because of the whole thing of some of the parents wanting me to teach and I'm wanting to be informal, and I'm like, how does that come together? It doesn't. I have been in many conversations and saying, 'well that's not my responsibility', but they're saying, 'well, that is your responsibility'...I tend to do a lot more reflecting and a lot more opportunities for them to learn on their own without me teaching and bring them together and say, well, 'what do we think about this?', rather than actually say this is what is the right way of thinking is...I tend to come from that angle and use that as a more informal way of teaching, even though it is still teaching so to speak, but its less from the pulpit perspective and it allows them to come to their own judgment.” (2/Scott/p28)

Lee was also acutely aware of the (possibly negative) power relations with parents. He was determined to minimise this influence on his work as much as

possible. In our second interview, he spoke of how he deliberately decided to work for a secular agency when he graduated:

“I didn’t want to stay in church work because of a lot of things, but one reason was that I wanted the young people to be able to participate in the work voluntarily. I couldn’t see how this was possible when I was being employed by the parents.” (2/Lee/p6)

Lee, like Scott, based his decision on his imagined or assumed interpretation of what parents wanted for the children from church youth provision. Lee drew on his three-year placement experience of being a church youth worker in making this decision. At the point of completing his study, he deliberately chose to work for a secular organization. In so doing, he made a very clear statement about where his allegiances lay with regards to discursive positions. As a relation of power, parents were perceived as a threat to his secular notions of what youth work should be and how this could be effectively practiced.

5 Emotional responses to performativity

The experience of performativity through accountability and control led to an implosion of self-confidence for some of the participants. In round three of the interviews, Beth expressed anxiety about her worth to the organization she worked for:

“I think I have had to let go of a lot of panic...I would be like, ‘oh my job, am I doing my job?’ And especially as its full time, I think that for me was a real challenge, so I would say, ‘oh my word, am I worth it?’ and like that’s one of the questions, ‘Am I worth the money? Like am I worth full time pay?’ there’s a lot of money for the organization to be investing in me.” (3/Beth/p20)

Likewise, Steve spoke of hitting a low point during the year. He felt he was not contributing to his organization because of the managerial position he was in:

“I almost felt guilty about being there and taking the salary, and I felt like I wasn’t really contributing...I went through a week or two of not really knowing what I was doing...I felt I didn’t really have much direction.” (3/Steve/p1)

The effects of regulatory power had raised doubts for the participants. The graduates were clearly vacillating between discourses of voluntarism and professionalism (see Chapter Six), which may have been influenced by the forms of accountability they were encountering. They exhibited anxiety about the level and quality of their own performance, especially in comparison to their peers. The sense of unworthiness they felt was associated with feelings of guilt for receiving a salary. This only exacerbated their feelings of doubt at being

considered professional youth workers. These examples concur with the assessment of Ball that, with the flow of changing demands, professionals often feel 'ontologically insecure' (Ball, 2003:220).

As has been discussed in Chapter Six, the intervening months of the year (four to nine) saw the participants' narratives moving away from the confusion of trying to work out what it means to be a professional youth worker towards talking about their youth work practice. The following extract from Beth evidences the interplay between pressures brought on by performativity and the helpfulness of identifying with the knowledge and practices of the youth work profession:

"There's so much pressure when you're doing activities and things, because you have to be new and creative all the time and I think I don't actually know if I can do this, but then when young people respond so positively to what you are doing...it was just really encouraging to know that I haven't lost it amidst all the programmes and things, I can still have a really good chat with a teenage girl about the pressure to look good all the time."
(3/Beth/p2)

Unlike Scott, who was yet to find his practice a stabilising influence, Beth was experiencing it as just that. This stability was founded on seeing positive outcomes in the work with young people. However, this is not always possible. It is a truism to state that youth workers cannot always rely on these 'external contingencies' (Bernstein, 2000:1942) to provide a stabilising influence. A seemingly fixed identity that is presented to the world is rendered unstable because of the relationship between the external contingencies and the internal subject. Butler was correct to note the 'instability and incompleteness of subject-formation' (Butler, 1996:109).

6 Summary

This Chapter has explored the concerns that are raised for Christian professional youth workers through interpellation. Beth's narrative was used as an example of the particular tensions that can arise from being recognized as a professional youth worker. The liminal experience was extended due to the performative aspects that arose from being named a professional youth worker. The core values of youth work have been considered as a performative constraint, as well as a point of stability for youth workers. Performativity as

exercised through relations of power on the micro-level has been considered. For Christian youth workers these come from surprising sources, such as employers, peer pressure, volunteers and parents. It can be concluded that Christian youth workers are socialized during their pre-qualifying training into the secular language and thought of youth work Standards as dictated by National Occupational Standards. Performativity clearly prolongs the liminal status of Christian youth workers, reducing the potential for incorporation and taking its toll on the emotional balance of the youth worker. The next Chapter will consider how authenticity is expressed within a liminal identity and performative constraints.

Chapter Eight: Authenticity

1 Introduction

In the previous Chapter, the constraining effects of performativity on a Christian professional youth worker identity were considered within the transitional state of liminality. This Chapter reflects on how authenticity was constructed and expressed by the research participants. Three areas will be explored in relation to authenticity. First, consideration will be given to how a new employment context and liminal status interacted in the construction and expression of authenticity. Second, I explore how authenticity was constructed and expressed through the participants' dominant discourse of relational/incarnational youth work. Third, I reflect on how authenticity was constructed and expressed through a resistance identity. The range of employment contexts in which the research participants found themselves working was varied. Some of the participants were employed by churches. Others were employed by Christian charities. One participant was employed by a secular charity. I will consider the impact of these employment contexts on their professional identity formation with particular reference to Turner's (1969) transitional framework of separation, liminality and reincorporation. However, as has been established in previous Chapters, liminal status is prolonged for new graduates. Therefore, a significant amount of this Chapter will refer to liminality.

By way of introduction, we note that authenticity has been discussed previously in Chapter Four, in which I took a Goffmanian approach. According to Goffman, we become persons, and achieve authenticity, through the masks we wear. There are no persons behind masks. Our authentic self is the mask(s) we wear. Crucially, the masks we wear, or the performances we present, are the people we aspire to be. As a social actor, the individual participates in constituting a self that can play at multiple roles. The self produces and reproduces the social every day through social interaction. Therefore, the notion of authenticity is constructed socially through reflexive interaction, demonstrating that the self is more than a social product.

2 Authenticity, employment context and liminal status

Maddy's first post was within a church with evangelical roots and a social justice bias. One of her roles was to facilitate a discipleship group once a week for approximately ten churched young people. This was a new experience for Maddy as her placement had been within a secular context. She found it difficult to adjust to this new expectation, remarking that she had nothing to say to young people about God. Maddy reflected on her training and identified a difference between 'questioning conversations' with young people in her placement and now feeling that she should be able to provide answers around issues of faith:

"I've completely forgotten how to answer people. I've suddenly got nothing to say to anyone anymore. When they want me to preach and stuff, I find myself going – I've got nothing to say, I've forgotten how to answer." (1/Maddy/p16)

The change of context exposed an aspect of her practice that she felt ill equipped for at this early stage of her postgraduate year. For Maddy, the ability to lead a Bible study was linked to being 'an evangelical Christian'. She jokingly said, 'It's like I just don't know how to teach anymore. It's quite sad isn't it? You've knocked all the evangelical out of me.' (1/Maddy/p18). Maddy was experiencing contextual incongruity. She had entered her new post with a secular practice experience and was now being faced with a faith practice experience, which she articulated as being vastly different. This was particularly the case with regard to her pedagogical approach. She now had to embrace a teaching style after a long period of utilizing an enquiry method. This resulted in her inhabiting a betwixt and between position with regard to youth *ministry* and youth *work*. Since this occurred at the very beginning of Maddy's employment, we can see just how quickly the liminal experience began.

Interestingly, Maddy held to a particular discourse regarding Christian youth *ministry* that was not essentially a fair representation. Leading young people in a 'providing them with answers' approach is not a method of discipleship that would be prevalent amongst those who practice such work. Maddy was faced with a sense of her own inadequacy, which gave rise to feelings of uncertainty and instability in her practice. The discursive position of self-proclaimed non-evangelical with which Maddy entered her first post now appeared to be redundant in the context in which she found herself. She projected blame

outwards onto her college training, although directly towards me during the interview. Maddy's sadness encapsulated a sense of loss for an evangelical identity she perceived she had before beginning her training. Here we see a separation. Her new context exposed a shifting identity, evoking a sense of inauthenticity that she found unsettling.

However, after nine months in post, Maddy recognized a change in her churchmanship in that she thought she was becoming more evangelical again: 'I find I'm getting more and more evangelical the further in I get which is funny because I so wasn't when I started' (3/Maddy/p4). Maddy was discovering that a liminal space is full of opportunities to 'try on' different identities. This is very much in accordance with the opinions of Goffman (1950) and Butler (1996), both of whom understood that the notion of 'becoming persons' is achieved through that which we repeatedly, and are required to, perform. Maddy is the perfect embodiment of this. She was working in the context of an evangelical inner-city church, living and working in the community and encountering social problems daily. Gradually, her identity as an evangelical, so cherished prior to youth work training, was once more coming to the fore. She had 'tried on' a different identity while she was at college. But on graduating, she entered a new liminal space within which new meanings were introduced (Turner, 1981:161). Maddy could imagine and enact identities contradictory to that which she thought she had become. New experiences in this liminal space enabled her to experiment with an identity she assumed would never return. Through her repeated interactions within her new context, Maddy could 'try on' the evangelical identity again. Thus she embarked on a transformative process, facilitated by a liminal space. Instead of being a space associated with confusion and self-doubt, it became a space full of new possibilities that she could not have imagined when she graduated.

Youth workers employed by churches often have unusual contractual demands placed upon them in the sense that the spiritual and contractual aspects of the role have points of convergence within the remit of the job. For example, one such requirement is that churches usually require the youth worker to attend worship on a Sunday morning, or evening, or both. The youth worker's professional practice and personal/corporate expressions of worship are forced

to coincide. This may cause confusion concerning boundaries within the worshipping community as well as anxiety pertaining to one of the most fundamental aspects of their faith, that of worship.¹¹ The contractual/worship contradiction for the church youth worker and their sense of authenticity is challenged if the style of worship is different from their norm. Mel's experience of being a church youth worker was particularly poignant as an example of how performative expectations served to create anxiety and ontological insecurity for the youth worker. During Mel's first three months working for a church, tensions began to arise around working within a context that did not reflect her theological approach. This was particularly the case with regards to her understanding of worship. Mel was expected to attend church every Sunday, worshipping alongside the community of people who employed her. The style of the worship did not relate to that which she had experienced whilst growing up in a church, or within her placement while she was training. Mel stated:

"It's hard being new in. I'm feeling so alien you know, I don't worship the way they worship. I don't like it. It makes me quite uncomfortable. It's just the way that I grew up and stuff. I don't know where I'm supposed to fit. I think being a bit different can be really useful, but at the same time, it's really hard, but I'm confident about what I do and I love what I do and the relationship with young people, who are amazing." (1/Mel/p22)

Mel's startling metaphor of feeling 'alien' evoked a heightened sense of personal inauthenticity. She was forced into a position of 'other', which served to be costly in terms of feeling accepted for who she was within her employing organization. Significantly, there was a paradox at play for Mel. However inauthentic and different she was feeling within a worship context, Mel expressed a confidence and enthusiasm for the role she had as youth worker. It was in her role that she found her sense of self and was motivated to continue in the job. Again, the focus of stability was the work with young people, as witnessed in the previous two data analysis chapters.

Further insight into Mel's alienation can be seen in the positioning of herself, upon graduation, as a 'revolutionary'. 'I left CYM wanting to be a revolutionary' (1/Mel/p27). She found that her discursive resources, located within the sphere

¹¹ In this context, 'worship' refers to personal participation in corporate ceremonies, prayers and other ritual acts in order to show devotion to God.

of social justice, were only being reflected within the employing church to a lesser extent:

“They [church] pay the youth workers to do social justice, the school is in special measures and its incredibly needy and we work with really hard to reach young people and that’s the point, but then on a Sunday morning, it just goes out the window.” (1/Mel/p27)

The result of this was that her value-driven sense of self, enacted within her work in the school, was then challenged by the worship on Sunday morning. For Mel, the gathered community of worshippers should have been continuously reflecting a social justice agenda in order to be an authentic community. When this did not happen, the result for Mel was left with a feeling of inauthentic practice and relationships. However, Mel did recognize the challenge to reflect on the differences with the church: ‘Something I’ve been challenged about a lot is that actually they’re not wrong, they’re just not me and it’s not the same and they’re just different and that’s fine’ (1/Mel/p29). Mel was working out the similarities and differences in relation to the wider social network in church. These micro-level similarities and differences were enabling Mel to develop a greater awareness of her authentic identity. However, this authentic identity had been constructed through the socialization of past experience and her pre-qualifying professional youth work education, which was geared toward a social justice curriculum.

After six months in post, Mel was becoming increasingly frustrated with the church and its theological approach, specifically concerning conversion. She used the loaded term of ‘indoctrination’ to describe what she felt the church is doing to children and young people. Mel gave an example of one particular evening when the Vicar spoke to the young people at the junior youth club (ages 9 to 13):

“He said to the children, ‘Jesus is inviting you to be his friend. When someone asks you a question you have to answer, what are you going to say? Are you going to say yes or are you going to say no?’ I followed the thought process through and thought, you’re asking them to either choose God or say no to God and you don’t say no to God at the club because that’s the culture. It was horrible, really horrible, I felt sick after that.” (2/Mel/p26)

Mel’s extreme use of language and physical/emotional response to the incident pointed to the realization that this was not ‘who she is’. Mel’s approach to

conversion typified the youth worker's belief in process, whereas the church focused on 'an immediate response to God' (2/Mel/p26). Mel recognized that, 'for some people conversion can be a real turning point' (2/Mel/p26). However, she dissociated herself from the church's approach, clearly positioning herself within a secular youth *work* discourse: 'You shouldn't put pressure on children to make a choice like that, you should allow a natural process to happen, its just not necessary' (2/Mel/p26). Mel was using the term 'natural process' in relation to the liberal, informal education process that, as we have seen, youth workers claim to be the cornerstone of their practice. But this is actually anything but a natural process. Informal education requires planning, identification and management of learning environments and continual reflection on the part of the learner and the educator. Mel was implying that there is only one way to work with young people and that other ways are deemed to be oppressive. The relation she had to this position was problematic in that Mel's sense of authenticity within her practice was measured against one particular constructed approach to education. Foucault's work on moral codes (1986) is helpful here. According to Foucault, moral codes are 'a set of values and rules of actions that are recommended to individuals through the intermediary of various prescriptive agencies' (1986:25). Prescriptive agencies can be the family, educational institutions or churches, amongst many others. Rules and values can be transmitted as both reasoned doctrine and explicit teaching. Conversely, they can be communicated in a more diffuse way. This can create a complexity in how the values and rules are understood, 'thus providing for compromises or loopholes' (1986:25). For Foucault, moral codes were used as an enhancement and maintenance for the exercise of power within the social body. Mel was positioning herself to one particular prescriptive agency; that of the educational institution of her training, CYM. The particular doctrine of youth work taught there was a secularized liberal notion, as provided by NOS. Mel found herself working within another prescriptive agency, the church, that was explicit in its teaching regarding conversion. The liminal space Mel inhabited was uncomfortable and rife with tension. As a result, she decided to identify herself with the dominant discourse of secular youth work, thus intensifying the anxiety.

Mel vocalized a further point of tension when she spoke of how difficult it was to adhere to her church's doctrinal teaching of 'no sex before marriage'. She was conflicted by this, as she recognized the importance of following church policy. However, the conflict occurred in that she did not believe 'no sex before marriage' was what the Bible actually said. Therefore, her personal belief was at odds with that of her employing institution. The church was keen to see young people decide not to have sex until they were married. She did not want the young people to make a decision about their sexuality that either they were not ready for or would be unrealistic for them (2/Mel/p29).

As Mel continued in post, the burgeoning divide between her faith and her sense of authenticity became increasingly apparent. Nine months on, the working relationship between herself and her employer was becoming more difficult. Mel had taken time off with stress. She had begun thinking about her future in the light of the negative experiences she had at church. When Mel was told that future funding would not be available for her post, she fully accepted this. Her view was that her 'faith can only get better and become fuller when I leave the church as an employee' (3/Mel/p12). For Mel, it was important that she looked for work with a Christian organization, or one that held to a Christian ideal. This meant that the organization should have at least a Christian ethos and not make what she thought to be unrealistic demands of their workers. The performative demands of a church position forced Mel to consider her identity as a Christian, prompting reflections on who she was. She was motivated to find a match in her professional life that would reflect her idea of authentic selfhood (3/Mel/p12).

During Holly's first three months in post, the characteristics associated with liminal space were evident. Anxiety was prevalent for her. She spoke of having felt safe to ask difficult questions at college, whilst recognising that 'everything got thrown up in the air' (1/Holly/p12). She spoke of the support that she received from tutors and peers. Upon leaving university and moving into a full-time employed position, Holly still had questions in relation to faith but she did not feel secure about asking them. She expressed her reservations thus:

"Now I feel like I'm still asking those questions and I don't necessarily feel secure about it. I feel, yea, I believe in God, that's about the only thing I can say very confidently." (1/Holly/p12)

Holly was experiencing a dislocation between her past and present sense of self. Her faith commitment and her belief in God were intact and appeared to be the constant during this unsettling time. However, further reflection from Holly confirmed that her new occupational context challenged her sense of authenticity:

“I think my church is also a part of the issue. I react against the theology that is presented from the front, it’s not where I’m at although I’m not 100% sure where I’m at.” (1/Holly/p13)

Sharing Mel’s unease about the conservative evangelical theological positioning of the employing church, Holly was displaying the effects of incongruity between different theologies: that of her own and that of her employing institution. Holly had a specific value commitment relating to her theological beliefs. This was her first postgraduate experience of value commitment being forced into a social context that did not accommodate her discursive position. The result of this was that Holly experienced a state of confusion.

After nine months in post, Holly was signalling a growing sense of authenticity in relation to her role. With hindsight, she stated that she did not believe her placement practice was of much worth, since the values of the placement did not reflect her own. She commented, ‘I feel like I’ve got integrity now because I guess I’m working to values that are important to me’ (3/Holly/p2). This was certainly in contrast to her first interview (outlined above) where she commented on the safety she had experienced in her placement context. Holly reflected:

“It’s all about process and not the end result, that’s one of the main things. I know that the organization have certain values and we stick to them and we don’t compromise them for what it might look like to other people to get a result that might be impressive, we won’t compromise on those values. Rather than being committed to numbers or targets we are committed to individual young people and sort of really walking with young people long term over short term.” (3/Holly/p2)

Holly was expressing her value commitment, located within a discourse of relational youth work that existed in stark contrast to the target-driven performative discourse of youth work at the time of interview. This may have been a naïve commitment, since the funding her organization received was not based on ‘commitment to individual young people’. Holly’s developing sense of integrity could have been a movement into reincorporation. Alternatively, she may have been refusing to interact with a deeper issue concerning self-

deception in order to enjoy some respite from the harsh realities of performative expectations.

When the research participants began working in a new context, they were separating away from their former social status of student and adopting the status of employee. The early days were marked with confusion, anxiety and uncertainty. On occasion, they were all faced with new and different challenges that were not congruent with a sense of 'who they are'. As a result, they were faced with challenges that had to be negotiated. This unsettling time is characteristic of liminal status. It has been detailed elsewhere in this thesis that Christian youth workers are suspended in a prolonged period of liminality. However, this does not infer that liminars are destined to remain in a state of anxiety in their professional careers, as shall be explored in the following section.

3 Authenticity through relational discourse

We have already noted that, during the four- to nine-month period of their first year in employment, the research participants moved away from talk about positioning themselves as professionals within their new employment contexts towards talk about their youth work practice. It was in relation to this that I interpreted their narratives as a search for a sense of stability and certainty. Clearly, they all required this as a counterbalance to the uncertainty and changes they were experiencing. As a result, the narratives often focused on relational (or incarnational) youth work as the dominant discourse. As discussed earlier in this thesis, relational youth work considers relationships with young people to be valuable in and of themselves. Relationships are not a means to an end. Christian youth *ministry* draws on theology for its rationale, whereas Christian youth *work* draws on secular notions of informal education as its foundational principle for this approach. The point of interest here is that, in the participants' narratives, relational youth work was present in the discourses of both youth *ministry* and youth *work*. This implied a convergence of discourses when considering movement between the discursive boundaries or 'borderlands' (a concept that will be explored further below). The research participants considered their work to be authentic if they felt the relational imperative was being honoured. This included such activities as initiating and sustaining

meaningful conversations, remaining a consistent presence in the lives of the young people, and being an effective source of pastoral care. This was, of course, useful in bolstering a sense of authenticity when they were engaged in relational youth work. However, it became problematic when other methods of working with young people were considered to be of less value. The research participants often saw themselves as inauthentic when engaged in non-relational practices. For example, research participants involved in classroom activities within schools or vocational accredited programs considered these to be perfectly legitimate and worthwhile, yet far removed from the relational ideal.

After nine months in a schools work post, Beth was concerned about her organization's claim that they took a relational approach to youth work. From Beth's perspective, the reality was that they delivered programs. She commented that this caused a slight tension regarding integrity within the project. Beth made the point by asking a stark and simple question: 'are we really doing what we are saying?' (3/Beth/p4). This was such a source of anxiety for Beth in her practice that she decided to volunteer for the youth group at her local church. She spoke of her work with the young people at church in distinctly relational discursive terms:

"I have been able to talk to young people without me having an agenda. It's still there having that intent of being the youth worker and seeing you in that role, this is about coming alongside and not forcing young people into a position." (3/Beth/p17-18)

The discursive resources employed by Beth, derived from her belief that she was doing good youth work, were superfluous in her schools work post. This prompted her to redeploy her resources elsewhere, fueled by the added conviction that she was serving her local church. A performative, program-driven agenda resulted in feelings of inauthentic practice and inauthentic relationships with young people. The thirst for authenticity was quenched in voluntary work. Bradford suggested that, in these days of 'post-recessionary *Coalition professionalism*', the developing professional identity may find meaning in voluntarism (2012a:13, italics author's own). Interestingly, Pete, who was the other schools worker within the research cohort, had also turned to volunteering as a way of maintaining regular face-to-face contact with young people who could voluntarily attend youth provision, thus compounding Bradford's argument.

After one year in post, Beth still held to the importance of relational youth work:

“I think I do this job because I think young people are worth hanging around with and are worth giving my time to. I think that for me is really important.” (4/Beth/ p27)

This was a view echoed by both Scott and Pete:

“Meaningful youth work means...in my personal opinion...meaningful youth work is not necessarily having an agenda with young people but allowing them to build deep relationships with each other, as a group of people and with me as a youth worker.” (1/Scott/p9)

“A lot of the work we do is lessons and therefore arguably, you can say, is not youth work, so have started volunteering at church to build those informal relationships that are important for me.” (3/Pete/p9-10)

All three of these research participants were deeply committed to what they regarded as ‘meaningful relationships’. Although the subjectivity of the participants was being profoundly changed, due to the demands of a performative culture, the human agency involved in the developing and maintaining of relationships with young people was to be admired.

Conversely, Maddy interacted with the idea of relational youth work in a more reflexive way. She drew on her interactions with young people in the community where she lived and worked, as well as reflecting on her own experience as a young person. Maddy talked about how, at college, she had been taught that the young person is the focus of any conversation. She had interpreted this as meaning that she should not talk about herself or her own life experiences. However, as the year-long research period unfolded, Maddy began to change her thinking about this. In this extract, she tells the story of how and why her thinking changed:

“I’m actually in young people lives and they’re actually here and this job is about my whole life as a person and not just my work hours as a youth worker. I’ve allowed myself to share my own thoughts and my own stories and not in a indoctrination way. It’s not just a job. The work is very much as a community church so I think it really wouldn’t work for me to leave myself out of conversations so it’s happened naturally but I think that’s been a really good thing like I really value now. Also looking back as a young person and some of the things that most impacted me was hearing people’s stories and their opinions. But then I think yeah, go back to the old school way where it’s just life and you are just sharing and it’s a mixture of questions but also telling your own story, yeah.” (3/Maddy/p4)

Maddy was demonstrating how interaction within the multiple spaces she inhabited (the liminal space of transition, employment context, interaction with young people, interaction with the wider community and her past experiences) impacted her practice and shaped her identity. Maddy was able to engage in reflexive work that moved outside the boundaries of a professional youth work identity, crossing into the other identity domains of her life. All this was happening while transition was being experienced. For Maddy, the liminal experience provided opportunities to explore a more authentic sense of self.

As has already been noted, relational youth work is a place where discourses of youth *work* and youth *ministry* intersect. It was with regard to this space that the research participants expressed their deepest sense of authenticity as Christian youth workers. It was also the space in which they most keenly experienced ongoing formation in becoming the persons they wished to become. For the liminars, the opportunities inherent within this space were mainly welcoming, creative and inspiring. Therefore a liminal identity is full of possibilities in terms of the forming of professional identity which then has the ability to influence other life domains.

4 Authenticity through resistance identity

A common narrative amongst practicing Christians is that being in a right relationship with God correlates with a healthy sense of equilibrium. The practices associated with this discourse are known as spiritual disciplines. These include worship, meditation, fasting, financial giving, silence, Bible study and prayer. Within this study, the research participants focused on just two of these disciplines as key influences on their practice; that of prayer and Bible study. What emerged from these practices both resisted and informed their identity as professional Christian youth workers.

Previously, we have noted the thinking of Rose (1996) and Raby (2005) in exploring resistance identity. Rose, in considering the notion of authenticity, suggested that an individual is subjected to a level of internal conflict the powerful effects of the social are experienced. Raby also took this view, and considered resistance to be a rebellion or deviance on the part of those making such a judgment. Resistance identity, then, expresses the refusal to be

consumed by essentialized identities constructed within, and by, discourse. Such theories of resistance should be committed to human agency, address political inequality, and social change. Resistance should be acknowledged as being grounded in the material environment. With a high degree of human agency, the research participants constructed new meanings within contextual employment settings even though they were constrained by performativity. Resistance to being consumed by a dominant secular-liberal discourse of professionalism was exercised in order to engender a sense of authenticity as *Christian* professional youth workers. As we shall see, this is not necessarily a negative force. Rather, it can be personally enriching and a liberating, lived experience.

The research participants depicted a clear relationship between identity and resistance practices. In their growing frustration with the dominant discursive performative aspects of their secularized notions of professionalism (monitoring and measurement), 'antiprofessionalism' was exercised. They began to explore practices alternative to those seen in secular professional youth work in order to construct an expression of credible and authentic identity. They wanted to resist the notion that their work was an empty and sterile idea of how their practice should be. In order to achieve this resistance and thereby achieve their desired authentic identity, they turned to the values and practices of their faith.

However, it must be noted that, for the Christian, prayer and Bible study are not alternative practices. Instead, they are considered to be fundamental to a vibrant and animated faith. The research participants therefore appeared to inhabit two different identity domains; that of the professional and that of the Christian. This does not mean that they were importing their youth work identity into a Christian identity or *vice versa*. Both domains have their own history, moral codes and ethical practices (Foucault 1986). Indeed, this is true for Christianity and professional youth work. du Gay (2007) explained that, because identity domains are different, it does not mean that one is right or that one is wrong. Rather, they do different jobs in their own particular contexts. Therefore, movement between the domains shed light on the different authenticities that the participants brought with them.

After six months in post, Holly reflected on a difficult residential that she and her colleagues had recently been on with a group of young men.¹² When Holly took her group away, she felt that she had been ‘banging her head against the wall’ (2/Holly/p13). She did not think her work was making much difference to the lives of young people. For Holly, her ideal of wanting to make a difference was not being realized. Regarding the work to be meaningless induced a sense of hopelessness in her practice. But three months later, Holly reached a turning point. She was ‘not in that place anymore’ (3/Holly/p14). When asked if she could identify the reasons for this change, she said:

“I’m in a better place with God and I think that’s made a massive difference. As far as I believe He is the only thing that gives me hope really and if I’m not connected to Him and I’m not reading His promises and His word then I might as well be banging my head against the wall. I just lost sight of where the hope is coming from, do you know what I mean? I’ve been trying to take time over and not just reading the bible but reading it with my notebook open and trying to do a bit reflectively and really trying to hear from God at the same time.” (3/Holly/p14-15)

The fact that Holly turned to her faith could be considered an obvious practice for most Christians. However, there was such an impassioned change in Holly’s sense of authenticity within her work that a more complex analysis is warranted. Holly was having difficulty thinking of herself as a youth worker who measured up to the expectations of others; in this case the young people. Consequently, Holly invoked her identity as a Christian, drawing on the resources of her faith, as a resistance to the performative professionalism she was experiencing three months prior. In order to authenticate her sense of self in the work, Holly turned to reading the Bible. This self-imposed regulation was, in a sense, a kind of antiprofessionalism. It was undertaken to achieve a better balance between her Christian and professional identity. Holly’s resistance to the performative culture was needed in order to regain a sense of control in her professional practice. Holly did not present an outright rejection of herself as a professional. Her resistance to the current performative expectations was deemed to be a personally enriching practice. As Holly pointed out:

¹² A residential is when youth workers take young people out of their everyday social context to a different environment for a few days. Usually young people would be taken as a group away from parents or caregivers to stay in a residential centre, usually a few hours from where they live. Residential will usually have a specific theme depending on the nature of the group. But all will normally focus on the building and maintaining of relationships between the group members and the youth work staff.

“I think in the process of reading the bible a bit more and thinking about Jesus and how He couldn’t make people follow Him...maybe I’m setting the wrong expectation on my work and on what we do and that really helped me to understand and to just look at it in a different way and stop trying to measure what I do by how popular I am with the young people or measuring it by their responses to things and its just making me reassess how we measure the value of what we’re doing.” (3/Holly/p14-15)

There is interplay here between professionalism and antiprofessionalism, or between secular and faith practices. Holly continued to align herself with the discursive demands of monitoring and measurement. However, a shift occurred in her understanding of what monitoring and measurement meant for her practice. In this way, Holly was both resisting and accepting the established performative practices.

When Pete was six months in post, he spoke of how he had let Bible reading slip from his personal devotional time:

“I’ve had a bit of a wakeup call. I had let my bible reading slip. I haven’t read it consistently for a while. I was just reading it for preparing for work and I thought actually, I need to read it if I’m telling people how important this is, then you know, I should be reading it. So I set myself a challenge to read the whole Bible in eighty days.” (2/Pete/p17-18)

It is clear that Pete’s ‘wakeup call’ was linked to a growing sense of inauthenticity in his role. He did not want his job to consume him to a point that his spiritual practices were only meaningful in relation to tasks he needed to fulfil. As a result, Pete fully embraced a resistance practice in setting himself a challenge of reading the Bible in eighty days. Pete differed from Holly in his motivation for Bible reading. For Holly, her resistance practice informed her professional identity, enriched her sense of self, and strengthened a sense of worth in her work. Conversely, Pete used the resistance practice of Bible reading to resist a professional identity that was devoid of any personal devotional practice. The only time he was reading the Bible was in order to prepare for a session at work. Pete’s devotional Bible reading was a self-imposed challenge through which he desired to prove to himself that he still had faith. He made no comment about reflecting on passages of scripture or keeping a journal, as Holly had done. Pete’s resistance practice was used

solely to regain his faith identity and, hence, his authenticity. Conversely, Holly's resistance practice was used as a way to inform and refocus her work:

“And praying but I'm not brilliant at sitting down and praying but I'm better at praying with people, so my line manager and I will say a prayer every now and again before sessions and stuff just trying to refocus us, but I think its mainly the bible reading that's made quite a big difference to me.” (3/Holly/p16)

Maddy spoke about the importance of her own spiritual discipline:

“The biggest thing to have happened recently is me just sitting down with a list of all 60 young people and praying for them all by name and that actually really helps because then when I see that person it makes me so much more in the moment with that young person because you've thought about them since you last saw them but you've prayed and reflected and hopefully heard God on that situation.” (3/Maddy/p6-7)

She conducted the resistance practice of prayer, resulting in an integrated sense of authenticity. She made the connection between the principles of youth work as the best way of caring for a young person and the quantitative time spent with God in prayer:

“When I'm more in tune with God, then I'm loving the young people better because of that. I find the principles of youth work come naturally as part of the best way of caring for a young person. So if I have genuine unselfish love and care for a young person, the principles will naturally come in without me having to try and the more time I spend with God the more love I feel for the young person.” (3/Maddy/p8)

It is here that resistance practice, a relational discourse of youth work, and a relational notion of faith/Christianity intersect. The three are not distinct entities and so the research participants located themselves very comfortably within this discursive convergence. Analysis of the relationship between authenticity and the resistance practices of the participants suggests that there is interplay between professional and antiprofessional identity. Antiprofessional practice was deemed to be of utmost importance in the construction of a Christian professional identity. The self-imposed practices of prayer and Bible study were a result of sustained reflection on the self within the work. An impassioned sense of authenticity was achieved when the balance between faith and professionalism was in alignment. The research participants thereby regained a sense of control over their work. As well as taking a critical stance against

performative expectations, resistance identity proved to be a personally enriching and releasing aspect of their practice.

5 Summary

In this Chapter, I have considered the three areas of employment context, relational youth work and resistance identity in relation to liminar status and how authenticity is constructed and expressed. The first few months in post raised tensions and anxieties for the liminars. They had separated from student status and found themselves within the confusing landscape of employment. Faced with new experiences, the liminars responded to tension and conflict by questioning their own sense of authenticity. The initial outlook appeared dispiriting. However, after moving through the early months of employment, the liminars looked to youth work practice in search of a sense of self that correlated with their imagined image of themselves as professional youth workers. Relational youth work was the place where they found solace. It was here that discourses relating to youth *work* and youth *ministry* converged. This provided a space, within liminality, where new and old identities could be experimented with. In so doing, the liminars constructed and expressed their authenticity in a range of creative and inspiring ways. When the liminars were six months or more in post, there was an interesting development, in that they turned to the practices of their faith to regain a sense of being a 'Christian' professional youth worker. This has been identified as 'resistance identity'. The liminars resisted being consumed by a secularized notion of professional identity, and so turned to Bible reading and prayer as practices that would help them regain some sense of authenticity in their work. This proved to be an enriching time for them. As a result, they spoke of feeling more balanced and energized in their work.

A sense of authenticity required the liminars to move between identity domains. Through relational youth work and resistance identities, they imagined aspects of life that they did not think were possible when they first started work. Liminal space provided them with multiple opportunities to explore their identities and experiment with new ones, but always safe in the knowledge that authenticity could be achieved in any given moment or situation.

Summary of Part Two

Part Two, and specifically Chapter Five, considered the methodological design of the research located within a social constructionist epistemology and analyzed through a symbolic interactionist lens. Ethical issues in relation to my position as insider/outsider researcher were explored. Chapters Six, Seven and Eight provided an analysis of the data. Turner's (1967) phases of transition – separation, liminality and reincorporation – were used to provide a framework in Chapter Six to analyze the narratives of the graduates' experiences of 'being' a Christian professional youth worker. The data suggested that graduates (or liminars) were suspended in a liminal state consisting of multiple liminal spaces. Chapter Seven explored how performativity and relations of power influenced professional identity formation. Relations of power came from surprising sources, and performativity constrained as well as enabled identity formation in both ministerial and professional aspects of a Christian youth workers identity. Chapter Eight considered how employment context, relational youth work and resistance identity influence a laminar identity and how authenticity as a Christian professional youth worker is expressed by the liminars. Liminars were able to move between different liminal spaces. These multiple spaces provided the liminars with opportunities to explore their identities and experiment with new ones, with authenticity being achieved in any given moment.

Part Three

Discussions and Conclusions

Introduction

Part Three comprises of the discussions and conclusions to the research. Chapter Nine offers a model of liminality for new Christian youth workers. Chapter Ten presents the conclusions. Major findings are reviewed, limitations of the study are identified, and wider implications for the field are discussed. My specific contribution to knowledge is also presented.

Chapter Nine: The Formation of Christian Professional Youth Worker Identity

1 Introduction

The previous three Chapters considered the data collected from the research participants over the period of their first year in employment. The data was divided around three main themes: transition, performativity, and authenticity. This enabled an understanding of the process of transition for the participants as they moved from the social status of student to a new social status of employee. We saw how performativity constrained identity formation as well as producing other kinds of identifications for new Christian professional youth workers. They were able to construct, and express, a sense of authenticity within their practice. This chapter will discuss the data in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapters Two, Three and Four. A model of transition, based on Turner's work (1969), and how this thesis progresses Turner's work, will be presented that is particular to new Christian professional youth workers. As a result we will be able to witness the process of the formation of Christian professional youth worker identity in overview. To better situate this, we will first undertake a brief summary of the research context.

The roots of youth work, both secular and Christian, are firmly planted within the Christian philanthropist era of the 19th-century. Social justice and Christian witness were key motivating factors. A voluntaristic ethos underpinned effective practice, not least within evangelical youth work projects. This expression of *work/ministry* focused primarily on the middle- to upper classes in reaction to early philanthropic work, which had primarily focused on the poor. The onset of both World Wars changed the landscape of work amongst young people. A sense of moral panic mobilized successive Governments to form policies aimed at influencing young men especially. They looked to voluntary organizations for knowledge and skills, and provided funding to develop the work. In this manner, the relationship between voluntary organizations and the State developed until the Albermarle Report (1960). The Report provided a blueprint for the State funded Youth Service. As a result, professional training for youth workers was put into motion. One by-product of that was the impact on youth work provision

within the Christian sector, which became a more discrete, volunteer-led, practice.

A shift in the voluntaristic mindset occurred in the years leading up to the late-1990s. During that time, churches began to employ full-time youth workers. Unlike their State-salaried counterparts, they were mostly unqualified young people who possessed a charismatic personality alongside a willingness to work 60 to 80 hours per week 'for the sake of the Kingdom of God'. As such, these workers rarely lasted more than two years in post. Coupled with the decreasing numbers of young people attending church, this led to something of a crisis for Church leaders. It was recognized by those involved in Christian youth work education that a higher level of qualification was needed for faith-based practitioners. Professional status for Christian youth workers was advocated. However, a professional qualification alone was considered unacceptable. This would not address the features that marked Christian youth work as distinctive from secular youth work. Those in authority within the Church believed that a higher level of qualification for Christian youth workers should equip the practitioners for both mission as well as education. As a result, the first undergraduate degree for Christian youth workers offered theology as an accompanying discipline alongside the JNC professional qualification.

Fifteen years on, a professionally qualified Christian youth work force is deployed throughout the UK in both Christian and secular organizations. Nevertheless, the discourse about the need for an adequate qualification is still ongoing. In particular, there has been a shift within the evangelical Christian constituency in this regard. Undergraduate Christian youth work degree courses have been developed in recent years that do not include any professional qualification at all. This, in itself, is a resistance practice; a result of the growing fear and mistrust of what is regarded as an essentially secularized professional approach to Christian work. The irony of this, which has been noted in Chapter One, lies in the fact that the term emerged from Christian sources through Franciscan monks who regarded their service to some of the poorest members of society as a 'profession' of their faith and therefore understood their ministry as 'professional'.

The Christian constituency would do well to reflect on the themes inherent within this aspect of its history. There are lessons to be learnt, which will be commented upon in the next Chapter. The ongoing tensions arising from the debate concerning professional qualifications demand the development of a nuanced understanding of a professional identity for Christian youth workers. This is for a number of reasons, all of which have been explored in the preceding Chapters. At the heart of this issue is the liminal space in which Christian youth workers find themselves. This becomes actualized when they make the transition from student to employee. It becomes their everyday reality as they find themselves located at the interstices of ministerial and professional discourses; they are positioned in a betwixt and between space, neither one thing (Christian youth *minister*) nor the other (Christian youth *worker*). It shapes their apprehension of the future as they consider the possibility (or not) of a career trajectory within an ambiguous occupation that is thought to be somewhere between a volunteer and ordained minister. Youth workers are therefore suspended in this liminal space – a state of professional adolescence – until they ‘grow up and get a real job’. It is surely inevitable that internal tensions and anxieties should arise. These often manifest as contradictions and dilemmas as the youth worker attempts to realize a sense of authenticity, both in their faith and in their professional practice. Given this reality, we do well to use Turner’s model of transition as a framework to enable a nuanced understanding of the graduate’s transition period from university to work. However, Turner’s work has limitations in the understanding of a graduates’ transition. These will be discussed later in this chapter.

In Chapter Four, Turner’s (1969) thinking on liminality was considered in reference to the betwixt and between space that Christian professional youth workers inhabit. Drawing on the thinking of Van Gennep (1909), Turner (1969) argued that all ‘rites of passage’, or ‘transitions’, consist of three phases: separation, liminality and reincorporation. The ‘separation’ phase comprises of symbolic behaviour on the part of the ‘liminar’. This signifies a detachment from an earlier fixed point or set of cultural conditions, or both (Turner, 1969:94). Turner used the concept of ‘liminality’ in relation to the simultaneous features implicit within the transitional phase of a rite of passage. Liminality is the place in which that transition occurs. The distinction between ‘space’ and ‘place’ is

important here. Liminality offers spaces of different kinds, for example, physical, symbolic, cognitive and emotional. Space can be constructed in terms of social difference such as gendered space and classed space. This notion of 'space', and the idea of a liminal space within which graduating Christian youth workers exist, is significant for this thesis, specifically in relation to performativity which can be related to the concept of 'place'. This is due to the enacted and embodied experience that accompanies performativity. Brueggemann considered 'place to be a very different matter from 'space':

'Place' is space that has historical meanings, where some things have happened that are now remembered and that provide continuity and identity across generations. Place is space in which important words have been spoken that have established identity, defined vocation, and envisioned destiny. Place is space in which vows have been exchanged, promises have been made, and demands have been issued. Place is indeed a protest against the unpromising pursuit of space. It is a declaration that our humanness cannot be found in escape, detachment, absence of commitment, and undefined freedom.' (Brueggemann, 2002:4).

The contrast between 'space' and 'place' that Brueggemann draws portrays the former as non-place where performances can take place. The physical place is unimportant. However, 'spaces' become 'places' when they are imbued with meaning, significance and history. So, for the new Christian professional youth worker the interplay between 'space' and 'place' is a fundamental component in the formation of a professional identity. Liminal space allows for experimentation and creativity without boundaries, or what Turner referred to as 'communitas'. However, a developing sense of 'place' is needed in order to develop an authentic sense of self. It is in this context that Turner and Goffman together are useful in considering the identity formation of new professional Christian youth workers. Turner provides a context for Goffman's thinking on becoming persons. Liminality is the 'space' whereby the profane professional self can become the sacred professional self.

In Brueggemann's view constraints, as well as formation, can occur through 'place'. This is also seen in Foucault's thinking on power as constraining and producing. The employment context of the new youth work is therefore the place where performativity (as both constraining and producing) influences identity. It is in 'place' that new youth workers search for, and find, stability within the blurred or non-existent boundaries of liminal space. 'Space' and

'place' are needed in the formation of professional identity as it is in the interaction of one with the other that an authentic sense of self can be achieved. It is almost as if one is enfolded into the other.

As noted earlier, liminal space is open to experimentation and creativity. It is a space without boundaries in which the liminal can 'play' with different identities. However, the liminal space, according to Turner, sees the liminal rendered subservient to those in a more senior position in order to support the transformative process from one state to the next. Here, the ambiguity of liminal space is evident. But this ambiguity is needed in the process of 'becoming'. Essentially, liminality is a 'becoming'. The individual in this state is neither what she was nor what she will become. 'Reincorporation' signifies the return to a relatively stable state. The individual is expected to behave in accordance with the norms and standards of the social position they possess (Turner, 1969:95). However, Turner's notion of reincorporation has limitations for the understanding of transition for new Christian professional youth workers, as will be discussed more fully later in this chapter.

This thesis has argued that professional Christian youth workers are suspended within a prolonged liminal state of being. This liminal state has been evidenced through the research participants' responses to the new work contexts in which they found themselves. In addition, the resistance practices that they adopted later in their first year of employment highlighted resistance to a normative state of being that was being experienced as a result of a developing secularized professional identity. In order to explore this process in more detail, Turner's three transition phases will be considered in order: separation, liminality and reincorporation. These three will be developed further in this thesis.

2 Separation

At the beginning of the research process, the core values of professional youth work provided an anchor point for the participants. It was the values that provided certainty. Using Turner's framework, we could say that the values of professional youth work were their fixed point to a cultural condition (Turner, 1969:94). Uncertainty relating to their faith, and what they believed about Christian orthodoxy, was unsettling for most of the research participants. At this

early stage, the experience of being a liminal entity was beginning to form. They had just graduated from the relative comfort of university, which had given them the space to discuss theology and practice with tutors and fellow students. However, student status was potentially liminal in another way. For Turner, an aspect of liminal space was that it provides liminars with the opportunity to 'contemplate for a while the mysteries that confront all men' (1974:242). This would include societal and personal difficulties. Learning from their 'wisest predecessors' (1974:242) was significant during the liminal experience. University is a space where such learning takes place as students learn the craft of their profession from those who are more experienced in the field. During their youth work training, although occupying the social status of student, student youth workers also have work responsibilities within three-year placements. They are not students only, but neither are they fully professional youth workers. During training, they can be considered as being on the threshold of becoming a professional youth worker and therefore they occupy another kind of liminal space prior to employment. Considering youth work training as a liminal space creates further complexity in the separation from this particular liminal space into the next. This challenges the work of Turner in that there can be more than one liminality to be negotiated and a separation to be achieved between liminal spaces. However, they may also merge from time to time. Turner's model therefore has limitations in the understanding of transition in late modern western societies in that a fixed point in a social structure, from which an individual or group is to be separated, is not easily definable. However, for new graduates separating from this particular liminal space, they had attached themselves to aspects of that particular liminal space. Without the ongoing stimulation and sense of security through teaching, discussion, relationships with peers and colleagues that this environment provided, they were left with ongoing existential dilemmas. As a result, they felt ill equipped to address these. Crucially, the liminal experience was proving to be a solitary one. This notion of separation between liminal spaces has much to say about training for many occupations that put would-be professionals through an intense period of education prior to employment. Through the liminal experience of training and then moving into a new liminal experience of employment, new professionals are suspended within a prolonged ambiguity. However, this can be considered to compromise different liminal spaces as they experience the

liminality of studentship and move into the liminal category of work. This suggests something about human life being in a perpetual state of becoming; a kind of ambiguity that is more or less resolved in different ways at different times.

Given the confusion arising out of their new social status, it is not surprising that the research participants should use a mix of spiritual and professional language. During the initial round of interviews, Pete had used the language of 'calling' when talking about why he had wanted to become a youth worker. But he then complemented that by speaking of his desire to gain a professional qualification in order to have the necessary skills for future employability. Likewise, Beth had talked about professional competence in her practice, but viewed her new found role of preaching as a 'gift'. It became clear, as the research period unfolded, that the participants' use of language was increasingly evocative of their inhabiting the dual discursive domains of ministry and professionalism. This vacillation between the two was an overarching paradigm of the research participants' liminal experience over the course of the year.

The findings of this study showed that separation from a liminal student status was not a comfortable experience for the research participants. This was especially the case during the first three months of employment. All of the participants experienced difficulties with regard to developing a self-awareness, or identity, as 'professional'. The narrative of Beth was given as an example of how interpellation raised questions in this regard. Certainly, the graduates understood that they had been hailed. But, most especially during the early months of employment, they were confused about what they had been hailed to.

This is inextricably linked to the fact that, unlike other caring professions in the UK, Christian professional youth workers are not legally protected by a job title. As a result, anyone can be denoted as a youth worker. This situation is exacerbated by the voluntaristic ethos underpinning Christian youth work. The diverse nature of the youth work field, and the rich history of voluntarism, means that the term 'youth worker' can be equally applied to either a salaried individual or a volunteer. Being hailed a 'youth worker' was a significant moment for each

of the research participants following their graduation. However, that title, in and of itself, did not help them separate from their previous social status and own a new, professional status. All the participants had previously volunteered as 'youth workers'. Now they would be paid as 'youth workers'. A professional status had been inferred at the point of interpellation but the significance of that was not symbolized in the bestowing of a new title.

This did little to help enact the point of separation. Beth's experience of being 'named' a professional and 'feeling' like a professional created a dissonance for her in that she did not recognize herself as a professional. Turner (1969:167) discussed one form of liminality that characterizes 'rituals of status elevation'. This is where the novice is being conveyed irreversibly from a lower to a higher status within an institutionalized system of positions. Through 'rites of status elevation', individuals ascend within the social structure. This hierarchical notion of status in relation to the professions is Weberian in nature. During the early months in post, some graduates adopted this approach when positioning themselves as professional within their employing organizations. For a youth worker to be elevated to a higher status requires a successful hailing or positioning in the occupational domain. However, this is dependent on who is doing the hailing. It is also dependent on whether the youth worker will recognize the hail or, indeed, accept the position to which he is being hailed.

For Beth, the positioning conferred on her was from her employing organization. She was the first professional youth worker they had employed, so it was a significant moment for all concerned. However, the months that followed were hallmarked by tensions and conflict between Beth, her Line Manager, and the volunteers with whom she worked. The performative constraints, exercised through relations of power, were directed at Beth's 'professionalism'. For Beth, this was the first realization that she was, in fact, a professional; she had completed three years of intensive training and gained a JNC qualification. However, she did not 'feel' like a professional. Indeed, the problems were exacerbated by her 'professionalism' in this strongly voluntaristic environment. Quite simply, the volunteers seemed to resent her professional status, which impacted on their relationships with her. From this, it can be deduced that the hailing as 'professional youth worker' presents this status as a fixed identity to

the world. Stronach *et al* (2002) held to the notion of the professional as being cast somewhat as a poetic, philosophical or political figure. The professional is constructed emblematically and is reduced to a singular meaning whilst 'simultaneously inflated to improbable symbolic importance' (Stronach *et al*, 2002:111). This emblematic construction causes much anxiety for new professional youth workers, as seen through the experience of Beth. However, this emblematic and fixed identity cannot be stable due to the unsettling forces at play within the transitional phase of separation from one liminal state to another. Graduating youth workers are propelled into a new liminal status and, through interpellation and demands of performativity in the early period of employment, can become isolated from their peers and therefore develop an ontological insecurity (Ball, 2003:220).

The research for this thesis suggested that the early months as a Christian professional youth worker are marked with coming to terms with both being named as a professional and trying to feel like a professional. The workers are hailed into position by the wider social network of employing organizations. What follows is unsettling and isolating. This results in youth workers trying to position themselves as a different subject.

3 Positioning the professional self

The issue of professional status was significant for the research participants when separating from one liminal state to another. In moving from student status to employed professional status, the graduates were working at positioning themselves, as professionals, in relation to the new situations they were encountering through their employment. It must be noted that the research participants did not have one, collective, normative concept of what being a professional meant. However, they all agreed that, apart from having a qualification, it requires ongoing learning.

The concept of 'difference' played a significant role in this positioning. In the interviews carried out during the research period, expressions relating to 'feeling different' were often used. All of the research participants found it the source of much tension. For the church workers, positioning themselves as professionals was more complex than for those who worked in Christian charities. This

complexity arose from the need to separate themselves from the worshipping community. Previously, they had a self-understanding as 'one of them'. They were now forced to reposition themselves as 'different from them', both as an employee in a role of responsibility and also as a professional youth worker.

In the act of positioning themselves within their employing organizations, I identified that the participants employed two different approaches to their understanding of what it meant to be a professional. One approach could be considered as the Weberian notion of occupations gaining power and status by preventing others from impinging on their territory and so maximizing social closure. This was demonstrated by the recognition received through gaining a professional qualification, signifying a specialist knowledge and skill. The other approach drawing from symbolic interactionism, was favoured by Becker *et al* (1967). The professional adopts the position of a learner in relation to other professionals. There was recognition that professional status is not achieved through qualification alone but requires ongoing experience and interaction with other professionals and young people. Professionalism is produced and reproduced through the processes of socialization. This search for a fixed professional identity is characteristic of the separation phase drawing to a close. Graduates have left their old status and, in the acceptance of a new status, need to develop a fixed, professional identity. This is not to say that the experience of liminality is drawing to a close. On the contrary, the graduate must seek to position themselves as a professional whilst still a liminar. This is not easy to achieve, of course. Nevertheless, the experience of liminality spurs the process forward. Liminars find themselves in an ambiguous position (Turner, 1969:95), which is difficult for some to accept. So a Weberian notion of professionalism is attractive as they pursue a more fixed identity.

Of course, it is possible that there is no tension between the professional positioning and the inner life. But as we have discovered from the data, the pursuit of professional positioning can be problematic for youth workers. The impact of liminality made it hard for these newly graduated youth workers to position themselves as professionals. As we have noted, liminars are neither one thing nor the other, so instability, uncertainty and ambiguity are the signatures of this period. New and different experiences, through a newly

positioned professional role, highlighted this liminal state in stark and unsettling ways. The graduates' sense of authenticity was disrupted. This raised the ontological questions that Ball (2003:220) referred to when professionals are stripped of their authenticity through performativity.

The new professional youth workers encountered issues in their practice that they felt ill equipped to deal with. This was predominantly due to uncertainties about whether their theology was correct. In that experience of self-doubt, they were reluctant to pass knowledge on to young people. They also experienced tensions regarding value-commitments where the employers' values were incongruent with the graduates' values. Again, almost all of the tensions experienced during this time were related to theology in one way or another. This exposed a secular-liberalized dominant discourse of professional youth work with which graduates had exited their training, even though they had been simultaneously trained in theology too. The reasons for this have been discussed elsewhere. But it is important to reiterate that the dominating secular agenda and a Christian value base were not compatible bedfellows in the early days of their employment. This made professional positioning very difficult and therefore, during this period, tensions between the discourses of youth *ministry* and youth *work* were particularly salient.

The emerging conflict for the research participants was evident through their practice in these early months of work. As already mentioned, the liminars were reluctant to share their theological views with young people as they were uncertain about what to say or what answers to give. Thus, their place of safety was found in the professional values of youth work. Returning to the orthodoxy of a secular, liberal notion of informal education, and almost bound by its tethers, the graduates relied on informal education as the place whereby questions could be raised but answers could be avoided. This approach hid the feelings of theological inadequacy and doubt that pervaded their minds. The search for certainty, so prevalent within young people, was also apparent in the youth workers. However, they drew on their professional capital when faith capital was lacking. Writers such as Collins-Mayo *et al* (2010) view the use of informal education within professional Christian youth work as limiting the effectiveness of mission amongst young people. This may be a reality. However,

this problem illuminates a deeper condition of the professional Christian youth worker and raises a challenge for training institutions, educators and training supervisors. Youth workers appear to find it easier to draw on their professional capital than they do their theological capital. This would suggest that, in the early days after graduation, there is a degree of certainty to be had in a professional identity, whereas certainty in faith aspects is elusive. The temptation for the newly graduated youth worker may be to avoid all pursuit of theological certainty and, instead, find shelter under the wing of professionalism. This course of action has considerable impact on the self-positioning of a newly graduated Christian youth worker, particularly with regards to their role as a practical theologian; a positioning that, in the early months of employment, they may deny to themselves. To clarify, due to theological uncertainties, a newly graduated youth worker may feel confident to professionally position themselves within the discourse of youth *work* but less confident to locate themselves within the discourse of youth *ministry*.

The professional positioning of the newly graduated Christian youth worker as practical theologian, particularly in a church context, is very interesting. The data has suggested that the graduates felt inadequate to position themselves thus. However, that was exactly the role demanded of them by the stakeholders. This disparity of understanding was the cause of considerable tension. The research participants expressed feeling pressure, particularly from parents of young people within the church and employers, to ensure that young people made the right moral choices, regardless of any educative work that was taking place; spiritual or otherwise. Stronach *et al* (2002:111) commented on how performance for professionals is often evaluated in terms of styles of working. These were brought into question with Scott, who assumed pedagogical differences to be the cause of tensions between himself and the parents of the young people with whom he was working. He spoke of the parents wanting their children to be educated in a more formal sense, with didactic teaching methods about moral education and Christian instruction. However, Scott's approach mirrored liberalized, informal education orthodoxy, learnt during his training. As a result, tensions arose. Parents within the faith community felt they were not having their expectations met, and that Scott should have been providing Christian learning that would keep their children safe from the perils of the

outside (secular) world. The moral guardian caricature was apparent within Mel's practice too. Her theological position differed greatly from that of the evangelical employing church. She was expected to take a particular line in terms of theological teaching relating to sex. Mel was unhappy with this and sought to draw on her professional resources. She considered an informal educative approach, whereby the young people could question and explore issues relating to sex but without her offering right or a wrong answers. Rather, she would provide her opinion as one amongst a range. Her anxiety increased when she decided that this was an inappropriate approach to take with twelve year olds. By pursuing the corporate line of the employing institution, Mel reasoned that she was not selling out her beliefs in not being fully honest with the group. But she admitted the anxiety and conflict this raised in having to take a particular line that did not accord with her authentic self.

There are complex concerns at play in these examples from the work of Scott and Mel. In each case, the professional youth worker was viewed as a moral guardian, employed to ensure that young people would be protected from the temptations of 'the outside world'. The stakeholders wanted their youth worker to be a practical theologian, professionally positioned within the youth *ministry* discourse. Ward (1996) noted that this is a historic feature of Christian youth work in the modern era. Brierley (2003) perceived this as a threat to the informal educative, and voluntary participative, secularized values now associated with Christian professional youth work. As evident in the examples of Scott and Mel, this particular conception of the moral guardian appears to be a threat to a youth worker's sense of professional integrity, which identifies so strongly with the youth work core value orthodoxy. They were both inflated to emblematic status as moral guardian whilst simultaneously being reduced to one main purpose of being. Both Scott and Mel were uncomfortable with this constructed form of professional identity as moral guardian. They were not comfortable, at this stage, to sit within the youth *ministry* discourse due to their lack of theological certainty. They were, however, content to locate themselves within the youth *work* discourse since that was where their stability and self-confidence resided. As a result, in both the instances outlined above, they wanted to find justification for a preferred course of resistance within the values of their profession. In Mel's case, this was far from easy to achieve. Her sense

of authenticity as a Christian was challenged by a theology that she did not fully embrace. She was in-between her faith and her professionalism. Upon seeking recourse from the values of her profession, she found them inappropriate. What ensued left her with a sense of disappointment about having to perform a role that she was not entirely happy about.

The 'performance' involved in professional positioning should be noted here. Goffman (1959) considered how identity is socially produced and how this identity is performed, resembling a performance on a stage to an audience. According to Goffman, the performer is asking the audience to take seriously the impression that is being transmitted to them. Longhurst (2007) elaborated on this, stating that performance involves both intention and action of the part of the performer. Christian youth workers are transitioning from student to employee. They have gained professional knowledge and skills during the three years of their degree. They have been formed by a particular youth work approach within CYM which, although Christian, is dominated by a secular-liberal educational agenda. The effects of this intense socialization period are particularly acute upon graduation. Suddenly, youth workers are no longer accountable only for the learning and faith development of young people. They are also expected to satisfy the stakeholders. Although the graduates in this study would have been exposed to this to some degree as student youth workers, they did not previously have the level of responsibility for the work. Additionally, they now had to learn how to negotiate relationships, as professionals, with those stakeholders. In relation to the notion of performance, this does not mean that a youth worker must always seek to please his or her audience. As seen with Scott and Mel, performance also entails resistance. Scott blatantly refused to tow the line set by the parents, resisting them by maintaining an informal educative approach within the work. Whilst Mel did not resist in actual practice, she did resist in her interview with me, therefore performing her role as she would want me to see her. I am aware that all this is CYM specific and I am cautious about making generalizations to other settings. However, there are useful lessons to be gleaned from this thesis for other graduating Christian youth workers, or for other people of faith (any faith) who are embarking on a new professional career.

The youth worker's sense of professional autonomy, and their desire to have some control in the positioning of themselves as professionals, is brought into stark contention with the power being exercised by key stakeholders within the work. The youth worker grasps their professional knowledge in a bid to justify their purpose and existence. But they face an auditing within the Christian domain that has its own language, often couched in spiritual terms. This is integrally linked to the idea of performativity. As has been discussed, performativity as a mechanism of regulation by the various stakeholders within the church community and charitable organizations was evidenced within the data. This could be assumed as 'informal' performative power, as there were no 'official' bodies dictating standards. This is perhaps an even more insidious exercise of power as it is 'veiled' behind this edifice of 'informality'. This informal regulation was particularly palpable within the first three months of practice. The new set of relationships and situations that were to be managed and negotiated by the liminars raised tensions that otherwise had not been anticipated until then. As liminars made the transition from student to employee, they encountered a range of stakeholders in relation to their work. These consisted of parents, employers, funders, volunteers and young people. These relationships have been considered, in the Foucauldian sense, as relations of power. Foucault argued that power is not possessed but exercised. This notion of power being exercised in order to regulate the behaviour of the new professional youth workers often came from unlikely sources, such as volunteers. Learning to navigate a way through the relations of power was crucial for all the research participants as they sought to position themselves as professionals. The difficulties of this navigation were inevitably exacerbated by the inescapable reality of their situatedness as liminars.

4 Liminality

As has already been noted, the research participants experienced liminal status in three, simultaneous, ways: first, in making the transition from student to employee; second, by being located between ministerial and professional discourses; and third, by being part of an ambiguous occupation. The intervening months of the first year in employment (months four to nine) saw the liminal experience intensify for the research participants. A significant point of focus occurred six months into post when the liminars turned their attention to

their youth work practice. This was a collective shift, which could be considered as a searching for a point of stability during what was an unsettling period. The shock associated with the first three months was now turning to anger and frustration, which in turn motivated an exercise in human agency. This contradicts Turner's notion that liminars are passive and humble individuals. Other identity domains were now beginning to be considered within the wider landscape of the liminars lives, with the intention of maintaining strict boundaries with regards to time spent working and time spent with family. In terms of discursive positioning regarding youth *work* and youth *ministry*, liminars vacillated between the two, depending on the varied range of working contexts they found themselves in.

As mentioned above, the liminars turned to their youth work practice as a source of stability. The measure of what constituted 'good youth work' was leveled against secular core youth work values. National Occupational Standards is a policy document that sets the knowledge, skills and understanding that professionally qualified youth workers have to attain in order to gain professional status as youth workers. During their training, the liminars were subject to constant measures, targets and controls against which they were monitored and judged and considered worthy of a professional qualification. The socialization of the liminars into these standards was clearly evident. Again, a collective identity was evident with regards to the core youth work values. This pointed to a normative, internalization of youth work's specialized knowledge. The same was not evident with their theological learning, of course. There is no governing body that determines theological curriculum for student youth workers in the same way that NOS operates.

The liminars referred to the values as 'keeping them on track'. Any work that was not founded squarely on these core values, such as schools work, was not considered by the research participants to be 'real youth work'. Generally, the core values were unquestioned amongst the liminars. Certainly, there were occasions when they talked of them being difficult to use as a framework within certain settings, usually within church related activities. Fundamentally, however, the core values were accepted and respected as being foundational for their work. In the face of liminal uncertainty, the research participants would return to

the core values as a point of stability and certainty in the midst of an ambiguous experience. The fact that this was unerringly the case highlighted again the strong identification that the new graduates had with a secularized, liberal educational agenda. It also suggests that the practices, skills and attitudes communicated through occupational standards, JNC competences and ministerial codes of conduct are not only words. On the contrary, there is reification in that they become the framework and nature of Christian youth work.

The liminal experience was hallmarked by discovering stability and certainty within the youth *work* discourse rather than the youth *ministry* discourse. However, that is not to suggest an abandonment of the latter. Interestingly, a convergence of discourses occurred during this liminal phase with regard to relational youth work, which is a foundational value of both the discursive domains of youth *work* and youth *ministry*. Youth *ministry* draws on theology for its rationale, whereas youth *work* draws on education, and liberal education at that, as its foundational principle. The liminars regarded their work to be authentic if they adhered to the relational youth work imperative, as seen with the core values. It was within this particular liminal space that youth workers felt a degree of human agency and viewed it as space to experiment; 'try on' new or old identities. Again identity domains were in movement, intersecting and converging and liminal space was providing opportunities for development.

Throughout the research period, the liminars continued to strongly identify with a dominant secularized discourse of youth *work*. However, the point of convergence between discourses (relational youth work) became the place where they found ultimate security and authenticity as professionals. Christian youth work identity was being constructed within a relational discourse.

5 Reincorporation

Reincorporation is the time when a stable sense of self is achieved once more. Individuals or groups are expected to behave in accordance with the norms and standards of the social system they inhabit. This was an interesting concept to consider in relation to the graduates since they were experiencing a threefold liminal state simultaneously. However, the notion of reincorporation was limited in this study. Whilst the liminars were not able to achieve complete

reincorporation during the research period, for reasons that will be discussed below, they did nevertheless make some progress in this regard, through the development of resistance identities.

As noted in previous Chapters, resistance identity is the refusal to be consumed by essentialized notions of identity constructed within, and by, discourses. The research participants, as liminars, had been so consumed by a secular-liberalized agenda that they began to look to their Christian faith again in order to express, produce and reproduce a sense of authenticity. In so doing, the liminars adopted the spiritual practices of their faith, mainly prayer and Bible study. They dedicated themselves to Bible reading and prayer became a daily activity. Many of the research participants approached the spiritual disciplines, as resistance activity, with much enthusiasm. Through their growing frustration with a dominant secular youth work identity, the liminars rejected any notion that professional youth *work* was empty and sterile. Rather, they sought to infuse their youth *work* with a passion derived from spiritual discipline. It was in this adoption of resistance practice that the discourses of youth *ministry* and youth *work* diverged and converged. Through youth *ministry* spiritual practices, which were viewed as a kind of 'antiprofessionalism', the liminars experienced a renewed sense of purpose for their role as Christian professional youth *workers*. An interplay occurred between the two discursive domains, in which one was strengthened by the other.

The discursive constructions of a professional identity as secular influenced the graduates to adopt allegiances in relation to the two domains of youth *work* and youth *ministry*. Christian youth workers, by being forced to remain in the betwixt and between place, began to find their sense of authenticity. Without the challenges of a secular professionalism, the research participants may not have felt the need to embody the spiritual disciplines associated with their faith. The masks they wore in terms of faith and professionalism at times morphed together. At other times, they remained totally separate. But the graduates needed both, because it was within this liminal space that authenticity was found. To be sure, the research participants remained betwixt and between the discursive domains of youth *work* and youth *ministry*. However, they began to

discover a greater sense of equilibrium through the resistance practice of engaging in the spiritual disciplines of their faith.

A final note of caution must be sounded about the possibility of fully achieving reincorporation. Evetts has defined professions as the 'structural, occupational and institutional arrangements for dealing with work associated with the uncertainties of modern lives in risk societies' (Evetts, 2003:397). Since 'youth' is usually understood as transition from childhood to adulthood, young people can therefore be considered as being in a liminal state. Young people are no longer children but neither are they fully adult. This leads to an ambiguous social identity (Bradford, 2012b:60). Youth work as a profession, as has been argued earlier, is considered an ambiguous occupation. It is not only positioned historically between other practices and institutions, 'perhaps between schooling and social work' (Bradford, 2012a:2), but it works with those who are considered to be associated with societal risk and uncertainty. This has implications for an individual youth worker, of course, since the 'doing' of professionalism takes place within the context of an institutionalized system associated with uncertainty and risk. The very act of interpellation, through which youth workers are hailed as 'professional', is therefore itself a source of confusion and insecurity. Interpellation, as an act, gives rise to the youth worker's ambiguous professional identity. Austin's notion of performativity considered the relationship between performative utterances and modes of being (Austin, 1975). In examining the uses of language, Austin noted that when a person is speaking, he or she is doing something too. The language being spoken is a performance that brings about a new status. Any society will have 'established customs, practices and ultimately meanings which are given expression by the uses of language' (Bryan *et al*, 2011:404). These performative utterances are embedded within social practices and norms and are a contributing factor in the formation of all social relations and interactions. As such, a performative utterance is more than a speech act. It is a physical performance. Goffman (1959) also took this view when considering the area of performance. Goffman's view of performance rested on the understanding that it is through repetition that we become the persons we are. To that extent, Butler's view concurred. However, she progressed this thinking with the idea of understanding the performatives as conferring a 'binding power on the action

performed' (1996:108). Identities, in Butler's view, are maintained through repetition; they are reinforced through social norms, practices and external expectations. The performative process is maintained and defined by power. Butler and Goffman both point to an understanding of professionalism being something that only exists if, in the naming of it, it is then constantly and repeatedly done. This raises interesting scenarios for Christian professional youth work. Due to its ambiguous status, and therefore the youth worker's ambiguous role, the performing of an ambiguous identity is produced and reproduced. This leads to ambiguity as the normative professional identity for Christian youth workers. Thus, reincorporated identity can never be fully achieved if, by reincorporation, we mean an individual or group achieving a relatively stable state once more, as was Turner's view. Turner's notion of reincorporation, then, has limitations when considering the notion of transition into Christian professional youth work. Reincorporation is not a state that is achieved easily, if indeed it can be achieved at all. It would seem that Christian youth workers are in a potentially permanent liminal state.

Reincorporation cannot fully be experienced during the first year of employment and indeed will never be experienced as long as professional youth work remains within institutionalized arrangements of professional organization. Liminals begin to embrace a notion of developing or reinvigorating other non-work life spheres. This is done with the mind that getting away from their work for a little while will energize them and so will inspire the young people they work with. In a way, it is a little like going on a retreat. This prolonged or, indeed, permanent state of liminality offered graduates a space whereby they could experiment with old and new identities. The lack of reincorporation, using Turner's view, meant that graduates could move between identity domains accompanied by a developing sense of authenticity. In this way, the self is something that is 'done', as Butler and Goffman would agree. This refers us back to Butler's view that we improvise 'within a scene of constraint' (Butler, 2004:1). The improvised explorations of the graduates within identity domains understands liminality as both constraining and producing a Christian professional identity. With regard to producing, Goffman's concept of the masks we wear as a representation of our truer self (rather than concealing our truer selves) construes liminal space as a key component in the formation of identity.

Turner and Goffman together provide a useful way of thinking about identity formation for new professionals. In Turner's thinking, the rest of life was suspended as individuals entered a liminal space. However, in the contemporary world, and certainly for new professionals, life is in continual movement. Liminals move in and out of other life spheres and are not limited to one sphere. Liminal space provides the conditions for transformation whilst, at the same time, liminals move between and within their other life spheres. Goffman is therefore useful in considering how liminals are transformed through interactions within the myriad of social spaces they occupy. This thesis progresses the thinking of Turner and Goffman by synthesizing their thinking in order to inform a more contemporary understanding of professional identity formation.

6 Summary

During each phase of transition, the liminals were subject to the controls imposed by performativity. Performativity brings with it constraints and expectations, which raise tensions with regard to a sense of self and authenticity. Whilst acknowledging the truth of that, I do not want this thesis to become an exercise of 'professional redemption'; a phrase coined by Stronach *et al* (2002:111) with reference to much of the literature written about performativity within the field of education. Narratives of harassed and stressed professionals are all too familiar, whereby the notion of the substantive self is preserved 'via ethical codes and professional regulation' (Stronach *et al*, 2002:111). I am not suggesting that professional Christian youth workers should be rescued from the iron cages of the churches or organizations they are working for. Neither do I want to sketch them as autonomous practitioners who are somehow free to exercise their perceived level of professional power. This would not be a realistic representation. Rather, I want to show how performativity constrains professional identity formation as well as produces it, as in the view of Foucault. The view that power is only ever a constraint is incomplete. In order to understand the effects of performativity on new Christian youth worker's identity, a more nuanced approach to the understanding of power is needed. Foucault's conception of power as positive is useful here. He recognized that is not just negative, coercive or repressive. Rather, it can be

productive. This could be seen in how the graduates were able to move across discursive boundaries, making the most of their liminal status and then developing a sense of place by imbuing that place with meaning.

As has become clearly evident, the influence of relations of power was a general performative trend within the data. Most graduates spoke of the pressures to perform. By this, they perceived there to be a standard of practice that was to be achieved. The influence of this on the graduates' performances was tangible. Scott cited the transition from student to employee as causing the greatest concern in terms of the pressure he placed upon himself to please people. This anxiety was experienced by a majority of the research participants as they sought to negotiate their position within their various contexts. As liminal entities making the transition from student to employee, the graduates were separating from relationships established during their three-year placements. These relationships were with young people and their parents, employers, volunteers, peers in their university cohort and tutors. Now a new set of relationships was being formed.

As liminars, the research participants were positioned between discourses of a secularized notion of professionalism and Christian ministry. According to Turner, liminars have the unique opportunity, during this time of confusion, to contemplate the mysteries and personal difficulties that life is affording them. It is during this time that liminars can try on different identities, in real or unreal ways. Accordingly, a graduate's sense of authenticity through a resistance identity is particularly salient for the movement towards a sense of authenticity. The research participants turned to spiritual disciplines to aid that process. In response to a growing frustration with the dominant discursive, performative aspects of their occupation – monitoring and measurement – anti-professionalism was exercised. As a result, the graduates began to identify with the faith aspect of their identity in a more deliberate, and *deliberative*, way. They started to navigate between the differing borders of faith and a secular professionalism in more pronounced, strategic terms. It appears that anti-professionalism was needed in order to regain a sense of control in their professional practice. Interestingly, the graduates understood this interplay between professionalism and faith as measuring – but in a different way from

the secularized notion that was causing them so much frustration. Thus, the graduates were still aligning themselves with discursive demands of monitoring and measurement, albeit, within a faith discourse.

Here, the liminal position of a new youth workers identity is brought starkly to the fore. As youth workers begin to try on, or experiment, with different identities in their work, they are demonstrating Goffman's notion of wearing masks. In a search for an authentic identity, the graduates tried on the mask of their faith in order to regain some kind of equilibrium and to escape from the intensity that a liminal space engenders. It is certainly true that the graduates found the liminal space uncomfortable. But the trying on of masks was not merely an attempt to escape the discomfort they felt. Something far more complex was occurring. They sensed that they were being consumed by a secularized professional identity; the work was increasingly becoming about monitoring, measuring and outcomes. They resisted a one, discursive, unitary notion of professional youth work and chose to align themselves with the ministerial aspects of their identity. However, they did not choose to fully align themselves to their faith. Instead, they simultaneously resisted and accepted performative practices. Crucially, they chose to stay within the liminal space and not seek reincorporation to one particular aspect of their identity.

Chapter Ten: Conclusions

1 Introduction

This Chapter presents the conclusions to the thesis. I will review the major findings and how they contribute to the sociological study of professional and faith identity. I will also show how I have responded to the research question, demonstrating that I have explored the fundamental aspects of transition and identity for new Christian professional youth workers. Wider implications for the field will be discussed, demonstrating how this thesis contributes to knowledge, both academically and practically. Finally, this Chapter suggests areas for further research.

This thesis sought to answer the question of how the professional identity of newly graduated Christian professional youth workers is formed during their first year of employment after graduation. In seeking to answer this question, I recruited eight research participants who had graduated from CYM and were embarking on their first year in employment as professional Christian youth workers. I followed their progress through their first year in practice, collecting monthly practice diaries and conducting a round of four interviews across the year at three monthly intervals. During the year, graduates moved from one liminal social status, that of student, to another liminal social status, that of employee. In particular, I suggested that new Christian professional youth workers are in a 'betwixt-and-between' state (Turner, 1969), which denotes a liminal identity. The major consideration of this thesis related to this multi-dimensional, liminal space. With regard to new Christian professional youth workers, this consists of three diverging and converging elements as they make the transition from student to employee, are located at the interstices of ministerial and professional discourses, and enter the ambiguous occupation of Christian professional youth work. The narratives that the research participants provided during the research period highlighted the intensity experienced in becoming Christian professional youth workers.

A major achievement of this thesis has been to highlight the various contestations that exist between the discourses of youth *work* and youth

ministry. Also, it opened up discussion in relation to the interplay that occurs between faith and secular domains in the late modern era, which enables understanding of the particular tensions that exist for professionally qualified youth workers employed within faith contexts.

2 Review

In exploring the transition experience, I focused on three subject areas that emerged from the review of the literature and the initial analysis of the data generated by the graduates: narratives of being a Christian professional youth worker; the constraining effects of performativity on the forming of identity; and authentic faith and authentic practice. From these three intersecting areas, I provided an understanding of the process of professional identity formation for newly qualified Christian youth workers. From here I presented a model of liminality, which provides creative possibilities for future notions of professionalism within Christian youth work.

To recap briefly, the thesis was divided into three parts. Part One provided the context for the study through a review of the extant literature. Chapter Two considered the historical context for the understanding of how Christian youth work came to be professionalized, with moments of critical development being discussed. This demonstrated how youth work, in its broadest sense, grew out of the philanthropic era, which focused on social justice and Christian witness. The Chapter considered more recent historical developments where discourses of voluntarism and professionalism illuminated the tensions throughout history, which are still prevalent today. Chapter Three presented a review of the literature relating to Christian youth work. The discursive positions of Christian youth *work* and Christian youth *ministry* were introduced, providing the context in which Christian youth workers are located. Chapter Four introduced the concept of identity generally and professional identity specifically. This was viewed through the lens of social constructionism. Key themes, related to a constructed identity, were explored; performance, performativity, authenticity, transition and professional identity.

Part Two focused on the methodological approach and data analysis. Chapter Five justified both the epistemological approach of social constructionism and

the analytical lens of symbolic interaction. The research design and data collection methods were outlined, alongside a discussion of how these methods were utilized. A rationale for the use of discourse analysis was provided, as was a discussion on the ethical implications of my position as insider/outsider researcher. Chapter Six was the first of three data analysis chapters. This chapter explored the narratives of new professionally qualified Christian youth workers, focusing on their experiences of being both a professional and a Christian. It also considered Turner's transition model in light of these narratives. Chapter Seven provided an overview of the performative constraints that Christian youth workers experienced as they negotiated particular relations of power and accountability structures in their work. Chapter Eight elaborated on the themes in the previous two chapters by considering the search for authenticity and how this was produced and reproduced through their work experiences.

Part Three comprised the discussions and conclusions to the research. Chapter Nine drew together a number of themes related to the data analysis chapters. It offered a model of liminality for new Christian youth workers, considering how the transition from student to employee is a multi-faceted liminal experience. Not only were graduates in a liminal state of changing social status, they were also entering an ambiguous occupation, influenced by both Christian and professional youth work discourses. This produced complex, dual allegiances. Christian youth workers were also considered to be occupationally located between volunteer and ordained minister. This was considered as being an adolescent occupation status.

3 Main Findings

As discussed in Chapter One, it is too much of a generalization to suggest one, singular notion of a Christian professional youth worker identity. This is hardly surprising, given the intensely personalized experience of transition. However, identity formation is not only an individualized experience. It has also been shaped by the particular educational and faith approaches of CYM. If comparisons were to be made to liminars emerging from other training or educational institutions, identity formation may look slightly different. The exact characteristics of liminal identity cannot be replicated from one liminar to

another. Nevertheless, the experience of liminality itself does appear to be universal, hallmarked by uncertainty, instability and ambiguity. It is for that reason that Turner's understanding of transition through separation, liminality, and reincorporation has proven such a useful but incomplete framework.

3.1 Separation

The research found that, in the separation from one liminal status of student to a different liminal status, that of a Christian professional youth worker, naming and owning professional status proves to be a point of contention. Subsequently, there is confusion regarding how Christian professional youth workers should position their professional selves. New employment contexts posit incongruences that new youth workers need to negotiate.

The findings suggest that, during the first three months as liminal entities, new Christian professional youth workers are struggling with feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and instability. They seek to position themselves as 'professionals' within their new employment contexts. Interpellation plays a significant role in how they construct meaning in relation to a professional position. However, this only adds to the confusion they are experiencing. A repositioning of themselves takes place in light of the differences they recognize between themselves and their social network. A collective, normative view of what it means to be a Christian professional youth worker is absent during this phase. This is not surprising since they now belong to an ambiguous profession. New Christian professional youth workers tend to identify strongly with a secularized-liberal educational discourse, which raises concerns at this point of their transition concerning the 'Christian' aspect of Christian youth work. However, this is not necessarily limiting to their identity formation. This identification is important in that it forms the basis for a kind of dialectic in which new syntheses are reached. Christian youth workers, although they find some stability within the discourse, also challenge it whilst negotiating the tensions brought about through conflicting ideas.

3.2 Liminality

The findings suggested that the intervening months of the first year in employment (months four to nine) sees the liminal experience intensify for new

professional Christian youth workers. During the year, a significant shift occurs when youth workers turn their attention to youth work practice. This is a collective shift, which could be considered as a searching for a point of stability during what is an unsettling period. The anxiety associated with the first three months turn to anger and frustration, which in turn motivates an exercise in human agency. Other identity domains are now beginning to be considered within the wider landscape of youth worker lives, with the intention of maintaining strict boundaries with regards to time spent working and time spent with family. In terms of discursive positioning regarding youth *work* and youth *ministry*, youth workers vacillate between the two, depending on the varied range of working contexts they find themselves in.

The findings showed that new professional Christian youth workers strongly identify with a dominant, secularized discourse of youth *work*. However, a point of convergence between discourses is evident. Youth workers find their security and authenticity in that point of convergence. The Christian youth work identity is being constructed within a relational discourse of youth work, which traverses across both discursive boundaries. As security increases and authenticity strengthens, antiprofessionalism begins to emerge.

3.3 Reincorporation

The findings showed that, whilst new Christian professional youth workers are constantly moving towards reincorporation, it remains elusive. Because new Christian youth workers are suspended within a three-fold, simultaneous liminal state, they can never fully achieve what Turner considered to be reincorporation. Indeed, the very nature of the occupational status of the wider occupational group, as well as the discursive positions present within Christian youth work, mitigates against reincorporation as a possibility. The study showed that resistance identity is developed through the spiritual practices associated with a Christian youth worker's faith. It is through these disciplines that a sense of equilibrium and authenticity can be experienced. The kind of antiprofessionalism that is demonstrated here enriches and energizes new youth workers, enabling interplay between discourses. That interplay between professional values and Christian spiritual disciplines is the space in which authenticity is most profoundly formed, acknowledged and lived.

3.4 The impossibility of occupational reincorporation

As an ambiguous occupation, professional Christian youth work will never attain reincorporation. However, this is not necessarily a bad thing for Christian youth workers or the occupation as a whole. If reincorporation means a relatively stable state which then provides rights and obligations within the wider occupational structure, then that may appear to provide benefits to the professionals within the occupational group. However, it is those in clearly defined structural roles who afford these rights. The reincorporated group or individual would be expected to 'behave in accordance with certain customary norms and ethical standards binding on incumbents of social position in a system of such positions' (Turner, 1969:95). These are the performative constraints placed on the liminal entity, be that individual Christian professional youth worker or the occupation of youth work in its totality. However, perhaps liminal status is the better option. Performative constraints limit the progression of identity formation. A move towards reincorporation would see further performative controls put in place, which would arrest the attainment of integrity and authenticity.

4 Implications

The liminality of new professional youth worker transition is a space where they can move across boundaries. The liminal space appears to include every possibility and opportunity for developing potential. It is a creative space. It is an experimental space. Without it, youth workers would be locked into customary norms and standards that would bind them. This would, of course, limit potential development and formation in both discursive domains. Christian professional youth work needs liminality. According to Turner, liminality provides a society that is unstructured or partially structured and 'relatively undifferentiated'. It is a 'communitas' (Turner, 1969). Since young people themselves are held within the status of liminality (Bradford, 2012:60), it seems only appropriate that youth workers should be held within a liminal status too.

A liminal professional identity means that youth workers can occupy uncertain and ambiguous spaces. Not all youth workers may find a liminal identity comfortable. As was seen through the graduates' experience, a liminal identity can raise many problems. The employment context, and influences of relations

of power within that context, may have a determining impact on the youth worker's ability to employ a degree of human agency. However, as the findings showed, a liminal status does not imply an identity that is continually in a state of confusion or despair. In the case of Christian youth workers, they found their sense of stability within the spiritual practices of their faith, as well as with family or in the development of outside interests.

This thesis contributes to knowledge generally for the sociology of the professions and specifically in relation to training and subsequent employment of those within professional occupations. By 'professional occupations', I mean those that involve a particular knowledge, service to others and an extended period of education, which usually involves work experience with an experienced practitioner. Theoretically, this thesis has developed Turner's thinking in relation to the three phases of separation, liminality and reincorporation and how they apply to the understanding of transition from training to employment. Turner's phrases appear to be incomplete for the understanding of the particular issues that individuals face in the forming of identity in late modern contexts. Those who are exiting from professional education are not separating from some fixed social status but are in fact separating from one liminal status and moving into another liminal status. Turner's thoughts on separation and liminality took on a more nuanced meaning in that the statuses are not as clearly defined as might be initially thought. Similarly, we have seen for professional youth workers specifically, reincorporation is elusive since they have been suspended within a permanent state of liminality. Although Turner has been highly valuable in thinking about what transition actually looks like for new professional youth workers, his thinking is limited due to its focus on 'space'. As was seen in the previous chapter and within the thinking of Brueggemann, 'place' is needed in order to bring a sense of meaning to 'space'. Goffman offered a distinction that enabled an understanding of how liminal space offers opportunities to achieve an authentic sense of the professional self within liminal space. 'Place' provides the settings within which the construction of professional identity is made possible. Both 'space' and 'place' are important in the construction of a professional identity. It is within both that professional identity, when considered as profane, can become sacred.

This thesis raises questions about the secular and faith. For too long, the historical Christian roots of professionalism have been forgotten. The pervasive nature of a secularized idea of professionalism has constructed a notion amongst professionals and the wider society that professionalism is only about policy technologies and performance. But as the graduates have shown us, professionalism can be redeemed from a stale, secular liberal ideal and spirituality can once again flourish. A Christian professional can, and often does, express an authentic sense of self within different discursive domains. The crossing of discursive boundaries allows for creativity and experimentation that enriches faith and professionalism and the two influence each other in productive ways. Professionalism, as the profane, becomes the sacred through the experiences of Christian professionals. Of course, professionalism becoming sacred is not only the domain of the Christian. This can be pertinent for a person of any faith belonging to a professional occupation and seeking to express that faith through their work.

In order to apply the implications of this study to the wider field of Christian youth work, three particular groups will be considered: Christian youth workers, youth worker educators and employers of professional youth workers.

4.1 Christian professional youth workers

This study focused solely on the professional identity formation of *new* professional Christian youth workers. However, the findings suggest that a liminal identity may apply to many other Christian youth workers who, although they may not be experiencing the transition from one social category to another, are still located within the discursive domains of youth *work* and youth *ministry*. As Christian professional youth workers, they will also belong to the ambiguous profession as a whole. Recognizing the reality of their liminal identity would alert youth workers to the possibilities that are afforded them within this space. It may encourage professional youth workers to be content within the uncertainty; recognizing that this is the way things are, yet at the same, employing a degree of human agency that will enable them to locate a sense of stability within the ambiguous space.

For Christian youth workers in training, being aware that their professional identity will be significantly constructed by a secularized-liberal view of youth *work*, and that they will be maneuvering between discursive positions when they are in employment, may help them prepare themselves for the tensions that arise, most especially in the early days. The notion of ‘identification’ for both trainee and qualified youth workers is one that could be integral to their developing identities. As the faith aspect appeared to be initially lacking in the discursive resources employed by the graduates, developing an early sense of themselves as ‘Christian’ youth workers could be beneficial. Identifying as Practical Theologian as well as professional youth worker could have a significant impact on Christian youth work as youth workers grapple with what it means to be both a ‘Christian’ and a youth *worker*. Although, as I mentioned earlier, there is some merit in the notion of identification with a secularized-liberal discourse as a dialectic in which new syntheses can be reached. I am keen to point out here that students on CYM courses are encouraged to do exactly that. But my surprise has been the extent to which a secularized discourse is used so readily and, at times, over and instead of a faith discourse. This has implications for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) within Christian youth work. CPD opportunities tend to focus on job tasks or on issues that affect young people. There is clearly a need for further theological education for employed Christian youth workers. Stakeholders within employing agencies require confidence in the theological ability of the youth worker. But crucially, youth workers must have confidence in themselves as practical theologians to be both effective in work and stable in their own sense of authenticity.

4.2 Youth work educators

As a result of this thesis, youth work educators are encouraged to reconsider curriculum and ethos within their training programs. Identification with the youth *work* discourse pointed to a socialization into the occupation that was youth *work* dominant. Due to the pervasive secularized educational ideology adopted by most educational institutions, even Christian colleges, it is vitally important that Christian professional youth workers are trained to be able to identify equally with both Christian youth *work* and Christian youth *ministry*. This is the in-between domain they must inhabit. Training processes must ensure that

students see themselves as 'Christian' 'professional' youth workers. This may not reduce the anxiety of the early months in employment. But it would increase self-awareness, enabling positive reflexive work to be undertaken. Moreover, new professional Christian youth workers need to see themselves as a valuable part of a wider youth work occupational community. As has been shown in this study, they can tend to think of themselves as the 'underdogs' when working with other professionals from different occupational groups. Equipping new professional Christian youth workers to interact between faith and the secular is a key area that must be addressed.

Such reconsideration by youth work educators would include a review of how the 'professional' aspect of Christian courses is taught. At the present time, there is a top-heavy approach to the professional side of the curriculum, based on National Occupational Standards. As a result, matters of faith essentially become marginalized. This is ironic, since a faith commitment is the very thing that brings students to our courses. Developing a theological language that works alongside the professional aspects of the practice curriculum would be a movement towards integrating both discursive positions. Graduates leave courses with a dualistic understanding of faith and professionalism that is produced and reproduced when they are in employment. If this understanding is ever to shift, the training environment must be the primary place where this is addressed, challenged and reoriented.

In the past, it was largely the case that universities developed students to become professionals whose identities would remain static, except for the normative shifts that come with age or through significant life changes. In the late modern era, as has been considered in this thesis, identity is not static but is in a state of continual flux. This includes professional identity. Educators of Christian youth workers need to design a curriculum that enables graduates to navigate this reality. Educators need to help students understand that they are constantly becoming professionals and their identity is never fixed.

4.3 Employers

As we have seen, most employers of professional youth workers do not fully understand the issues that youth workers encounter as a result of their

positioning within liminal space. Developing an understanding of liminal identity will enable employers to consider appropriate management strategies that may include some space for spiritual retreat. Understanding that professional youth workers need significant face-to-face contact with young people to retain a sense of authenticity may alert employers to the need for a reduction in administrative tasks. This would ensure that youth workers are employed in the job for which they have been trained. Appropriate mechanisms could be established in relation to how key stakeholders communicate with the youth worker, rather than being 'collared' on a Sunday morning before or after church. Understanding the particular needs of youth workers would enable employers to construct appropriate CPD programs in conjunction with their employee. Employers must understand their role in a relation of power and the potentially significant impact, as we have seen, on the identity formation of youth workers.

5 Reflexivity

As had been mentioned in Chapter Five, reflexivity played a significant aspect in the production of this thesis. It was noted by Denscombe (2007:69) that the qualitative researcher plays a direct and intimate role in data collection and subsequent data analysis. I mentioned earlier that I was surprised at the extent to which Christian professional youth workers employed a secular liberal education discourse when talking about their work and practice. This surprise has led me to consider the curriculum of the current CYM courses and the socialization of the students into the occupation, as noted above. Through the process of this thesis, I have reflected on my own practice in the light of the socialization of students. I have become more aware of the language I use in the classroom. In showing how the graduates' use of language portrayed their identification with a particular secular discourse, it highlighted to me my identification with that particular discourse through the educative practices I use in my work with students. I had been educated in these discursive positions as a student of CYM and, consistent with Foucault, was producing and reproducing these discourses with the students. I had a significant role to play in the formation of their particular graduate identity. This felt uncomfortable, and continues to feel uncomfortable, and so the basis for my own type of dialectical work has emerged as I too have begun to seek and experiment with new syntheses in my practice with students. I now deliberately use ministerial

language more within the classroom, being aware of striking a balance between secular and faith languages. I still believe that both are required. Christian graduates need to operate in a secular world and so preparing them for this seems all the more important.

My own identity as a Christian and as a professional has been strengthened through the process of this thesis. I had tried to avoid the conflict between faith and professionalism for a very long time, probably since I had started working for a local authority upon graduation. I had tried to keep the two things separate as far as possible, with my faith becoming something I could put to the side quite easily when it did not appear to be compatible with my work. This thesis has challenged this practice in me and has deepened my awareness of a long held, albeit subconscious, attitude. I am more relaxed in sitting with the ambiguity between faith and the secular. This is the world people of faith inhabit. Instead of avoiding the tensions that faith and secular engage in, I now deliberately engage in discussions about these tensions, enabling students to begin to identify the particularities of their chosen occupation.

6 A plea for future research

Any academic thesis is necessarily limited in scope. I hope that future research will build on my thesis. Similar research has been conducted within the teaching, nursing and social work professions. The field of Christian professional youth ministry has been woefully neglected until now. This must be remedied if the field is to be strengthened over coming years. This thesis has focused primarily on Christian youth workers trained on a specifically Christian course, with the mind of starting a career within the Christian sector. However, a small percentage of Christian professionally trained youth workers deliberately choose to work in secular organizations. I suggest that there is a particular need for research amongst that cohort of youth workers. The field needs to understand their motivation for this choice, the tensions they face, and the strengths that their privatized faith may bring to their work. Through the course of this research the particular identity issues for 'mature' students was highlighted. Sadly, there was not the scope to pursue this particular line of enquiry. However, future research could usefully look at how 'mature' students separate from 'previous' identities, perhaps within the labour market. I suggest

focus could be given to how they 'become' students after having worked in other employment or occupational settings. This would be particularly interesting research for the training of clergy, the majority of whom are mature students.

In conclusion, I argue that youth work, as a profession, must be strengthened by research that will impact both training curriculum and employment contexts. I trust that my thesis has made a contribution to that.

Appendices

Bibliography and Sources

Appendix One: Consent Form

Graduating Youth Workers and Professional Identity Formation PhD Research Project by Joanne Griffiths CONSENT FORM

Please complete the following sheet, ensuring that you answer each question. Upon completion please post to me in the self addressed envelope provided by 15 September 2009.

Many thanks for your time.

Have you read the Research Participant Information Sheet? YES NO

Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study with the researcher? YES NO

Have you received satisfactory answers to all your questions? YES NO

Who have you spoken to?
.....

Do you understand that you will not be referred to by name in any report concerning the study? YES NO

Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study:
• at any time? YES NO

• without having to give a reason for withdrawing? YES NO

Do you agree to interviews being recorded? YES NO

Do you agree to the use of non-attributable direct quotes when the study is written up or published? YES NO

Do you agree to take part in this study? YES NO

Signature of Research Participant:

Date:

Name in capitals:

Appendix Two: Research Participants' Information Sheet



Research Participants Information Sheet

School of Sport and Education
 Brunel University
 Researcher: **Joanne Griffiths, PhD student**
 Work address: **Centre for Youth Ministry, Ridley Hall Theological College, Ridley Hall Rd, Cambridge, CB3 9HG**
 Email: jfg33@cam.ac.uk
 Tel: **01223 741064** Mob: **0773 2041998**

Supervisor: **Dr Simon Bradford**
 Brunel University
 Email: simon.bradford@brunel.ac.uk
 Tel: 01895 267143

Research Title: The Professional Identity Formation of Newly Graduated Professional Christian Youth Workers

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. You have been identified as a potential participant in this research, as you are experiencing the process that I am investigating.

This research is being conducted for a PhD thesis with Brunel University. The research focuses on how new professional Christian youth workers make the transition into a first full time post upon graduating from a full time undergraduate degree course. The aim of the study is to establish a model of transition in relation to the professional identity formation of Christian youth workers in the first twelve months of a new post. This research will be useful for youth work graduates, the future employers of professional youth workers as well as the educators and trainers of youth workers

The data will be collected by diary entries using a Facebook group and interviews. The duration of the research will be twelve months. You will be required to enter at least one diary reflection per month starting in October 2009 for twelve months. You can submit more thoughts or reflections if you wish to but it is not a requirement. In order for your anonymity to remain intact, what's known as a 'secret' group will be established on Facebook. A secret group cannot be found in searches or be viewed by non-members. The name of the group will not display on the profiles of members. Membership is by invitation only. Non-members will not receive stories about secret groups. As the group creator, I will be known as the administrator. This means that I would have sole control of the group's membership and content. I can send messages to the whole group as needed. I can also remove members from the group if they do not want to continue with the study at any time. Participants may not want to share all or any diary entries with the other group members. If this is the case then you can send your diary entries to me via the Facebook messaging service.

In order to facilitate the diary reflections I will provide you with a diary format sheet. This will be based on the everyday responsibilities/duties of a professional youth worker and should prompt you in your thinking and enable you to talk easily about your experiences, thoughts and feelings. It is not essential that you use the format sheet but it may help guide your thinking, especially early in the study. I want to capture 'a particular moment in time' and your reflections will enable me to do this. The data gathered from the Facebook group will be used to form the basis of semi-structured interviews that I will conduct with you on an individual basis once every three months. A brief schedule of the research process has been attached.

Interviews will be conducted near to where you live upon arrangement with you. Interviews will be digitally recorded then transcribed. Each interview should last no more than one hour.

I will be the sole researcher, therefore I will be the only person with access to data collected from interviews and Facebook. Hard copies of transcriptions and diary reflections will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my office at Ridley Hall Theological College. I have sole access to this cabinet. All hard copies will be coded with any identifiable and personal information either deleted or assigned a pseudonym. In order to protect data on my computer I have a safe system, that is firewall and password protected. Data will only be seen by me. Any information that will be held on a memory stick will be coded versions that have had identifiable information deleted or changed. When writing up the findings anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained. To retain anonymity any findings that could identify individuals will either be deleted or assigned a pseudonym. To retain confidentiality the storage of the data as described above will be complied with. All research data will be kept for five years after the completion of the thesis in 2012. This is in compliance with Brunel University's regulations. Data will be stored as above which complies with Data Protection Act (1998). No individual will be identifiable from the completed and/or published thesis.

Your participation and commitment to the study is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time without giving your reasons.

It is unlikely that you would be required to travel for any of the research. However, if this does occur then your travel expenses will be paid for in full.

I will be following the British Sociological Associations Code of Ethics during the course of the research.

My hope is that the research process will provide an opportunity for you to reflect deeply on your ongoing professional formation during your first twelve months as a novice professional. Also, it will provide a valuable contribution to the wider professional youth work field in offering an understanding of the transition from Higher Education to full time work.

If you have read and understand the requirements of the research and you are willing to participate, then please read and complete the consent form included.

Yours sincerely,

Jo Griffiths

**Appendix Three:
Ethics Committee Application Form**



UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

*APPLICATION FORM
FOR
RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL*

SECTION A: GENERAL

1. Title of the Study:	The Professional Identity Formation of Newly Graduated Professional Christian Youth Workers		
Project Start Date:	September 2009	Project End Date:	May 2012

2. Full name of applicant: Joanne Frances Griffiths			
Position Held:			
School:	School of Sport and Education	Course Title (if student):	
Email:	Jfg33@cam.ac.uk	Telephone:	07732041998
Fax:			
Please provide details of any and all other researcher(s) who will work on the research project:			
Name(s):			
Position Held:			
Location:			
Contact details (e-mail/telephone/fax):			
Name(s):			
Position Held:			
Location:			
Contact details (e-mail/telephone/fax):			
Name(s):			
Position Held:			
Location:			
Contact details (e-mail/telephone/fax):			

3. Is this a student proposal?	Yes	x	No	
If yes, please complete the remainder of this section.				
Supervisor Name:	Dr Simon Bradford	Position held:	Reader	
Location:	School of Sport and Education			

Contact details (email/telephone/fax):	simon.bradford@brunel.ac.uk 01895 267143
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4. Declaration to be signed by the Applicant or the supervisor in the case of a student:

- I confirm that the research will be undertaken in accordance with the Brunel University Ethical Framework, Good Research Practice Policy, and Code of Research Ethics.
- I will undertake to report formally to the relevant University Research Ethics Committee for continuing review approval.
- I shall ensure that any changes in approved research protocols are reported promptly for approval by the relevant University Ethics committee.
- I shall ensure that the research study complies with the law and Brunel University policies on the use of human material (if applicable) and health and safety.
- I am satisfied that the research study is compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998, and that necessary arrangements have been, or will be, made with regard to the storage and processing of participants' personal information and generally, to ensure confidentiality of such data supplied and generated in the course of the research.

(Note: Where relevant, further advice is available from the Information Access Officer, e-mail data-protection@brunel.ac.uk).

- I will ensure that all adverse or unforeseen problems arising from the research project are reported in a timely fashion to the Chair of the relevant University Research Ethics Committee.
- I will undertake to provide notification when the study is complete and if it fails to start or is abandoned.
- I have met and advised the student on the ethical aspects of the study design and am satisfied that it complies with the current professional (*where relevant*), School and University guidelines.

Signature of Applicant: ...Jo Griffiths (by email).....

Date: ...7th August 2009.....

Signature of Supervisor:.....

Date.....

SECTION B: FUNDING

5. If the research is externally funded, what is the source of the funding?				
NA				
• 5.1. Are there any conditions attached to the funding?				
YES			NO	
If yes, please specify.				

SECTION C: THE RESEARCH

<p>6. In lay terms, please provide an outline of the proposed research, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • background • objectives • research methodology • contribution of research • justification of benefit <p><i>(max 1000 words).</i></p>
<p>Background</p> <p>The research I wish to undertake is focused on the post-graduation phase of a youth workers career. I want to explore what is essentially a period of transition for the youth worker. The aim is to examine the sociological issues that impact on graduating youth workers as they make the transition from student to professional employee. The study will ultimately be about how Christian youth workers construct meaning and self-understanding from the working environment in which they find themselves once graduated. The research arises from my belief that professional formation for graduating Christian youth workers takes on new meaning once they take up full-time employment.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine the transition that novice professional Christian youth workers make in their first year of full time employment • To examine the transition from a symbolic interactionist perspective • To develop a model of transition that will be relevant to new youth workers as well as other new professionals from other disciplines, especially within the caring professions <p>Methodology</p> <p>Data will be generated by participant diaries/reflections and in-depth interviews. The first twelve months of the participants practice after graduating from a youth work undergraduate degree will be the focus of the study.</p> <p><i>Diaries:</i> Participants will be asked to make a diary entry at least once a month during the twelve months of the study. This will take the form of an online 'Facebook' group. (see question 40 for confidentiality issues). Facebook is already familiar to the participants and is used regularly by them. Although I will be asking participants for a</p>

monthly account of their experiences they can reflect more if they so wish but I do not want to over burden them too much as they will be settling into new posts and be experiencing demands from their employer. In order to facilitate this I will provide the participants with a diary format sheet (Theodosius: 2008). This will be based on the everyday responsibilities/duties of a professional youth worker and should prompt the participants in their thinking and enable them to talk easily about their experiences, thoughts and feelings. I want to capture 'a particular moment in time' (Plummer: 2001 cited in Theodosius: 2008) for the youth workers. Diary/Facebook entries will enable this to happen. The information gained from the Facebook group will then form the basis of the interviews that will be conducted at 3 monthly intervals.

Interviews: 3 monthly intervals will give the participants adequate time to gain new experiences and ongoing practice that will provide valuable data for me to track their ongoing formation. Interviews will provide narrative accounts of each individual involved in the study. Interviews will enable me to maintain a trusting relationship with the participants as face to face interaction between us will be crucial to participants feeling valued and useful within the study. I will be able to probe deeply about the transition that participants are making, thus gaining insights into the participants experiences that I may not gain through the use of questionnaires. Interviews will take place near the home of the participants. Feedback regarding analysis from the ongoing data will be relayed to the participants when I meet them for interviews.

Researcher Bias

Having been a youth work practitioner for many years and now being an educator of youth workers, reflexivity will be an important aspect of the study. My knowledge of the profession and the issues that youth workers face will provide insights into the data collected that someone with a non-youth work background may not see. However, I do recognise that due to my close identification to with the profession that I may 'take for granted' some issues that the participants face and not analyse them appropriately. In order to ensure that I honour the integrity of the participants within the research I will discuss my interpretation with my PhD networking group at the University. This group will help me see other interpretations that may not have occurred to me.

Broad timetable of the research;

Aug/Sept 09 - Research preparation. 1) Gain informed consent from participants, meeting with each one to ensure they are familiar with the research. 2) Prepare diary format sheet. 3) Create Facebook group. 4) Arrange first interview dates with participants.

Sept/Oct/Nov 09 - Participants begin to use Facebook group and write their first diary entry about their first few weeks in their new role. I will collate entries as they are made. This continues into November.

Dec 09 - After analysing the entries made on Facebook I will devise a semi-structured interview to be used with each participant. The first interviews will take place during mid-December.

Dec/Jan/Feb 10 - Data continues to be collected through Facebook group. Analysis of data forms basis of questions for next set of interviews.

March 10 - Second set of interviews with all participants.

March/April/May 10 - Data continues to be collected through Facebook and then

analysed.

June 10 – Third set of interviews with all participants.

June/July/August 10 – Data collected through Facebook entries and analysed.

Sept 10 – Fourth and final set of interviews.

Contribution to the field

The research will bring a contemporary addition to sociological theory about professions and professional formation. There has been research conducted around the training of professionals and the processes that take place when students are on a course. However, the study of newly qualified professionals, especially youth workers, has been very limited. I would hope to develop a contemporary model of professional formation that would arise from the specific issues that youth workers encounter, thus providing a fresh understanding of professional formation that youth workers and their employers can draw upon. Research around transition into new posts has been undertaken mostly in the teaching, medical and social work professions, however, there is no evidence to date that research of this kind has taken place in regard to youth workers.

Justification of benefit to participants

The study will benefit participants in a number of ways. They will have the opportunity to reflect on their progress, feelings and practice in an ongoing and structured way. This is helpful for them as they will be able to articulate their thinking to someone who is impartial to their actual place of work. As the study will be conducted over a period of a year, participants will be able to recognise their development in a significant way. The diary entries (via Facebook) and the interviews taking place at set times will give participants insights into their growth and development, this in turn will give them opportunities to reflect more deeply as they look back and use their past experiences to develop further meaning and understanding to their present.

Attach any questionnaires, psychological tests, etc.

7. Who originated the study? Joanne Griffiths

8. Location of study

8.1 Where will the study take place? East Anglia region. Participants are located where their jobs are.

Locations are; Rushden, Bedford, Colchester, St Albans and London.

8.2 If the study is to be carried out overseas, what steps have been taken to secure research and ethical permission in the country of study? (Please attach evidence of approval if available.)

9. Multi-centre and off-campus studies			
If this is a multi-centre or off-campus study, please answer the appropriate questions below; otherwise, go to Question 10.			
9.1 Does this project involve a consortium (other research partner organisations)?			
YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please complete the details below in Question 9.2.			
9.2 Who has overall responsibility for the study?			
Please provide details of the contractual agreement between Brunel University and the other organisation(s).			
9.3 Is this an off-campus study?			
YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please provide signed, written permission from an appropriate level of management within the relevant organisation(s).			
10. Has approval been sought from other Ethics Committees and LRECs?			
YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please enclose copies of approval letters, where applicable.			
11. If appropriate, has the protocol been reviewed by a statistician? NA			
YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, give the name of the statistician:			
Position held:			
11.1 Define (<i>where necessary</i>) the statistical power of the study.			
12. Who will have overall control of the data generated?			
I will as the sole researcher			
13. How do you propose to disseminate the results of your research?			
Completed PhD thesis, written feedback to participants, articles in peer reviewed journals and presentations at conferences.			

14. PROCEDURES			
Please state whether the project includes procedures which: (<i>please tick the appropriate box</i>)			
	YES		NO
a. are physically invasive;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. involve the use of human tissue or taking of bodily samples;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. involve the use of biological, radiological, chemical or hazardous substances;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

d. are psychologically/socially intrusive.			x
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If you have answered YES to any of the questions in 14 above, please complete questions 15 and 16; otherwise proceed to question 17. You must also consult the Head of Risk and Radiation to ensure compliance with Health and Safety regulations.

15. Specific procedures involved: NA			
<p><i>Include details, as applicable, of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the dosage and route of administration of the drug(s) used in and under research, other substances and/or appliances to be administered/used, and the method of administration or use, -measurements and samples to be taken; -tests to be performed; -the use of visual aids or the administration of psychological tests. 			
15.1 Might the procedure(s) cause pain, distress, disruption or intrusion to a participant?			
YES		NO	
If yes, please explain.			
<p>Although I have answered 'yes' to this question, any disruption or intrusion would be minimal to the participants. It may be that in the business of a new youth workers life that it isn't always convenient for me to interview or have a journal entry to read. The participant's information letter makes it clear what will be expected of them, in that if they need to cancel an interview or miss journal entries, or if they wish to leave the research at any time, then this is perfectly acceptable. They will not have to give a reason if they don't wish to and no questions will be asked of them in this regard.</p> <p>For the diary entries on the Facebook group, participants will see each other's comments. This may cause a number of issues; 1) Maintaining confidentiality. 2) Participants not willing to share 'real' feelings. 3) Participants sharing issues around organisations they are working for that could reflect negatively on organisation. 4)</p> <p>It could be possible that a participant could become distressed due to changing circumstances that they are facing in a new role and then further reflecting on these issues. If a participant does show signs of distress due to keeping diaries or being interviewed, they will be made aware of two people who they would be able to talk to about this. They are Robin Barden and Phil Greig from the Centre for Youth Ministry in Cambridge.</p>			
15.2. Are there any particular requirements or abstentions which will be imposed upon the participant (e.g., multiple visits, abstention from alcohol, tobacco, etc.)?			
YES		NO	
If yes, please explain.			

16. If tissue and/or samples are to be taken, please state the nature, amount and frequency.			
16.1 What arrangements will be made for the storage of the tissue and/or samples and for disposal at the end of the study?			
17. Products and devices			
17.1 Does the research involve the testing of a product or device?			
YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please describe it.			
17.2 If this research involves a drug, is it being used in accordance with its licensed uses?			
YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
If no, please explain why:			

SECTION D: THE PARTICIPANTS

For the purposes of this section, "participants" include human subjects, their data, their organs and/or tissues. For participants to be recruited to the research, please state:			
18. the number of participants:	9		
19. if data are to be collected on different sites, please state the number of participants at each site:			
Site 1:		Number of participants:	
Site 2:		Number of participants:	
(insert additional sites if necessary)			
20. How have you arrived at this number? Please state proposed inclusion/exclusion criteria.			
Who is targeted?			
The participants will all have graduated in summer 09 from a Christian Youth and Community Work undergraduate degree course, where they have also gained the professional youth workers qualification, JNC. They will all have begun their first full time youth work posts in August and September 09.			
Why			
The participants will all be experiencing the transition period that I wish to examine. They are also practising Christians, working from a faith-based perspective.			
Sampling approach			
I will be using a purposive sampling approach as the participants I will be studying are all experiencing the process that I wish to study. Participants included in the study will all be newly graduated from the degree course above. All participants will have studied at the Cambridge Centre for Youth Ministry. All participants will be practising Christians and approach their youth work from this ethos. All participants will have			

started a full time post in a new organisation that they have never worked or practised for before. This is important to the criteria of the study because some students who graduate stay on in their placement organisation (where students practice 15 hours per week during the 3 years of the course). If participants in the study were doing this, I do not think that they would have as many new experiences on which to reflect.

As a qualitative study I want to gather in-depth data from a small number of participants, rather than 'surface' data gathered from many participants. Between diary entries and interview transcripts, I endeavour to collect a significant amount of data over the twelve month period. Nine participants will generate a manageable amount of data for analysis, whilst enabling me to recognise themes and patterns that will emerge.

21. Age group or range (e.g., under 60s):		Between 20 and 40			
22. Sex:	Male	5		Female	4
23. Do participants belong to any of the following vulnerable groups?					
Children:	YES			NO	x
Participants unable to give informed consent in their own right (e.g., people with learning difficulty):					
	YES			NO	x
Other vulnerable groups (e.g., mental illness, dementia, students, refugees, unemployed, prisoners):					
	YES			NO	x

The above list is indicative, not definitive. Care will need to be taken to formulate inclusion/exclusion criteria that clearly justify why certain individuals are to be excluded, to avoid giving the impression of unnecessary discrimination. On the other hand, the need to conduct research in "special" or "vulnerable" groups should be justified and it needs generally to be shown that the data required could not be obtained from any other class of participant.

If the answer to any of the above is yes, please complete Questions 24 to 28; otherwise proceed to Question 29.

<p>24. Please explain why it is necessary to conduct the research in such vulnerable participants and whether required data could be obtained by any other means.</p>				
<p>25. Please state what special or additional arrangements have been made to deal with issues of consent and the procedures to safeguard the interests of such participants.</p>				
<p>26. Please describe the procedures used to ensure children (i.e., persons under 18 years) are able to provide consent/assent to participation.</p>				
<p>27. If appropriate, please state whether and how parental consent, or the consent of the legal guardian and/or order/declaration of the court, will be sought in relation to the participation of children in the research.</p>				
<p>28. If the participant is unable to consent in their own right, will you seek the prior approval of an informed independent adult and any other person or body to the inclusion of the participant in the research?</p>				
	YES		NO	
<p>State precisely what arrangements will be put in place.</p>				

Recruitment and Selection	
<i>The Research Ethics Committee will need to be satisfied with the effectiveness and propriety of recruitment and selection procedures given the participant involved, e.g., that the participant will not feel in any way obliged to take part, that advertisements do not appear to offer inducements. The Committee will be particularly interested in cases where a participant's relationship with the investigator could raise issues about the voluntary status or motive of the participant's involvement in the research (e.g., students).</i>	
29. How will the participants in the study be selected, approached and recruited (please indicate the inclusion and exclusion criteria)?	
<p>Selection Participants will be selected according to the criteria set out in the answer to question 20.</p> <p>Approach (who and when) The participants in the study are already known to me through my role as tutor on the BA Hons degree in Youth and Community Work with Applied Theology. I will approach the participants verbally first and explain in person what the research is about and what would be expected from them in terms of their time and commitment. If potential participants are willing to participate through this initial introduction I will then provide them with a research participant information sheet explaining the process in writing. I plan to do end of August and gain written informed consent by mid September to start collecting data end of September.</p> <p>Recruitment Graduates will be recruited through the agreement and signing of a participant information letter (attached).</p> <p><i>If you are proposing to advertise, please attach a copy of the advert to be used.</i></p>	
30. Where are you recruiting the participants?	
From Cambridge Centre for Youth Ministry undergraduate degree course.	
31. Relationship of participant to investigator:	I was the participants tutor whilst they were doing their BA. I am aware that this could cause some tension for the participants when deciding whether or not to take part in the study. Participants may feel 'obliged' to say yes due to our previous relationship. I would therefore make it clear that they would be under no obligation to participate and no expectations would be placed on them to agree to the study. I am also aware that participants may not want to discuss their past training experience in a negative light due to my role on the course. I would reassure participants throughout the research process that they can be honest with

		me without fear of upsetting me. I see my prior and ongoing professional relationship to the participants as a positive asset to the research and integral to gathering rich and in depth data.	
32. Will the participants take part on a fully voluntary basis?			
	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO
33. Will Brunel University students be involved as participants in the research project?			
	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please provide full details.			
34. Will payments or other inducements be made to participants?			
	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, give amounts, type and purpose.			
Information to Participants and Consent			
35. Will participants be informed of the purpose of the research?			
	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO
			<input type="checkbox"/>
If no, please explain why.			
36. Will the participants be given a written information sheet?			
	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO
			<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, attach a copy.			
If no, please explain why.			

37. Will written consent be obtained?					
	YES	x		NO	
If yes, attach a copy of consent form.					
If no, please explain why.					
38. Where potential participants will/may suffer from any difficulties of communication, state the methods to be employed both to present information to the participants and achieve consent. If written, please attach a copy.					
39. Please state how you will bring to the attention of the participants their right to withdraw from the study without penalty.					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written information is provided in the participation information sheet • When verbally communicating about the study I will explain the participants right to withdraw at any time • During consent procedures the right to withdraw at any time will be stated clearly on the written consent paper. • If I sense that a participant is unhappy or distressed during the study I will remind them of their right to withdraw without penalty 					
Where relevant:					
39.1 Will information be given to the participants' GP (if deemed necessary)?					
	YES			NO	
39.2 Have the participants consented to having their GP informed?					
	YES			NO	
40. Please state what measures will be taken to protect the confidentiality of the participant's data (i.e., arising out of the research and contained in personal data).					
<p>There are no plans to share data with others, as I am the sole researcher. All hard copies of transcriptions from interviews and facebook entries will be assigned a code to protect the identity of the participants. All information within the transcripts that could identify someone will be deleted or given a pseudonym. Hard copies will be filed in a locked filing cabinet in my office to which I have sole access to.</p> <p><i>Facebook:</i> In order to protect data on my computer I have a safe system, that is firewall and password protected. Data will only be seen by me. Any information that will be held on a memory stick will be the coded versions that have had identifiable information deleted or changed.</p> <p><i>Group:</i> In order for the anonymity of participants to remain intact, what's known as a 'secret' group will be established on Facebook. Facebook (2009) states that, "these groups cannot be found in searches or be viewed by non-members. The name of the group will not display on the profiles of members. Membership is by invitation only. Non-members will not receive stories about secret groups". As the group creator, I would be known as the administrator. This means that I would have sole control of the group's membership and content. I can send messages to the whole group as needed. I can also remove members from the group if they do not want to continue with the study at any time. Participants may not want to share all or any diary entries with the other group members. If this is the case then participants can send their diary entries to me via the Facebook messaging service.</p> <p>When writing up the findings anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained. To</p>					

retain anonymity any findings that could identify individuals will either be deleted or assigned a pseudonym. To retain confidentiality the storage of the data as described above will be complied with.

41. How long will the data be retained following completion of the study?

The data will be retained for a period of five years after the study in compliance with Brunel University's procedures.

42. How will participants be informed of the results of the study if they so wish?

Participants will be informed of the results before they are produced in the final PhD thesis.

SECTION E: RISKS AND HAZARDS

43. Risk to research participants				
43.1 Do you think there are any ethical problems or special considerations with the proposed study?				
	YES		NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please give details:				
43.2 Are there any potential hazards or risks to participants?				
	YES		NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please specify them and state what precautions have been taken to minimise and deal with them:				
<i>44. Risk to researchers</i>				
44.1 Are there any potential hazards or risks for the researchers and others associated with participation in the research (as distinct from the research participants)?				
	YES		NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, specify them and state what precautions have been taken to minimise and deal with them.				
45. Has a Health & Safety risk assessment been carried out?				
<i>YES</i>			<i>NO</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SECTION F: COMPENSATION FOR DEATH OR PERSONAL INJURY

<i>46. Is Brunel University providing indemnity for compensation in the event of personal injury or death arising out of participation in the research?</i>					
	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO		
<i>47. If the insurance cover is not being provided by Brunel University, please provide written confirmation that you have insurance cover for negligent and non-negligent harm.</i>					
48. Has a manufacturer provided commercial equipment and/or mechanical devices?					
	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, please state what arrangements have been made to compensate or provide indemnity in the event of personal injury or death arising from the use of the equipment or mechanical devices.					

SECTION G: CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

<i>49. Are there any potential conflicts of interest arising from the project, deriving from relationships with collaborators/sponsors/participants/interest groups?</i>					
	YES		NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<i>Please disclose all relevant personal and commercial interests.</i>					
50. Does the project require access to intellectual property rights (IPR) belonging to third parties?					
	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
50.1 If yes, has use of such IPR been cleared with the relevant owners?					
	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>	
51 Are arrangements in place to ensure the proper attribution and acknowledgement of inventive contributions to the project by all participants/collaborators?					
	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, please provide evidence of this.					

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Appendix: Newspaper Articles and Historic Journal Articles

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