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# **Youth, Governance and the City: Towards a Critical Urban Sociology of Youth Crime and Disorder Prevention**

**Matt Bowden**

## **Introduction**

The public debate in Ireland about anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) in the two years since the publication of the Criminal Justice Bill 2004 has raised to prominence the question of how young people are policed and governed.<sup>1</sup> Critical commentators saw the ASBOs as a retrograde step in the light of the welfarist-restorative principles underlying the provisions of the Children Act 2001 (O'Mahony 2005; Bacik, 2005).

The political rhetoric spun in the debate emphasised the need to protect the community from certain behaviour in public, mainly but not exclusively by young people.

Alongside this, there has also been a growing demand in Ireland for high technology surveillance in private and public spaces.<sup>2</sup>

A variety of legislative and policy changes are currently in gestation in Ireland which highlight the need for discussion and debate as to the 'politics of community safety', all the more so since such developments are likely to encourage a realignment of governance nationally and locally.<sup>3</sup> In addition, there is a consensus on utilising local authority structures on which to graft a national crime prevention strategy (National Crime Council, 2003). Some of these developments signal a reconfiguration between

the central state and ‘the local’ and as such a discussion of crime and disorder prevention, as it pertains to the city as a locale, is fitting at this point.

My intention in this article is to analyse the emergence of youth crime and disorder prevention from a perspective that draws on a critically informed urban political economy. The reason for this type of analysis is primarily that youth crime prevention strategies in Ireland have to a considerable degree been mobilised in response to social disorder in specific urban locales and have been represented in media as being associated with working class housing estates. Hence this article will focus specifically upon youth crime and disorder prevention as a set of combined actions by state and civil society actors in specific urban contexts. Youth crime and disorder prevention has largely been under-analysed in the Irish context apart from the occasional evaluation or descriptive account (Bowden 1998; Bowden and Higgins 2000; Quinn 2002; Seymour 2003). A critical perspective is offered in this article in an attempt to counterbalance the weight and influence of analyses based upon positivistic, risk factor modalities (see Kirton, 2005: 292). The dominance of the risk paradigm has given rise to ‘prevention experiments’ premised upon intervening to disrupt a ‘criminal career’ (see Farrington, 1982; 1994; 1996). Such approaches sit well with the politics of ‘zero tolerance’ and ‘fixing broken windows’ policies (see Kelling and Coles, 1996) and raise the spectre of actuarial social control whereby subsets of the population become ‘targets’ for surveillance and ‘profiling’ based upon abstract risk categories (see Castel, 1991). The article aims to build upon Wacquant’s (2001) critical account of youth disorder in the city and on Garland’s (2001) outline of the punitive discourses that take hold in late modern, developed societies. Thus this article might best be viewed as a process of the *naming* of issues as a prelude to further practice, research

and debate among practitioners and academics alike. The particular focus is on the historical and socio-spatial conditions that gave rise to the Garda Youth Diversion Projects (previously known as the Garda Special Projects). The article then critically examines the question as to whether we are now entering a new mode of urban governance in which the state has rallied a range of actors in pursuit of ‘retaking’ of spaces in the city. To help cast some light on this I have drawn from a **longitudinal** qualitative research project involving interviewing and participant observation over an eight year period.<sup>4</sup> In addition, I have brought together a diverse literature, both theoretical and empirical, from criminology, urban sociology and Irish urban studies, to conjoin a critical urban perspective with a criminological and sociological approach.

### **Governance and the City: Some Theoretical Considerations**

In this section, I sketch a conceptual framework for an understanding of crime control and urban governance; and briefly discuss urban political economy and how it might apply in this field.

#### *Governance: Partnerships, Restructuring and Welfare*

The last decade has seen a marked growth of both national and local crime prevention initiatives in Ireland (see Seymour, 2003). Some of these initiatives take the form of an array of local ‘partnerships’ that appear to represent a shift towards a model of network governance at local level. Commentators such as Crawford (1997) have suggested that this mode of governance rests upon appeals to a particular ideology of community that gives privileged access to decision-making to local elites and hence enables powerful interests to construct the content and form of crime prevention.<sup>5</sup> In this way, they ‘reinforce power differentials and associated processes of exclusion’ (Crawford, 1997:

224). Such partnerships have been referred to by Garland (2000; 2001) as being part of a process of *responsibilisation* and a dimension of a late modern ‘crime complex’.<sup>6</sup>

From this perspective, partnerships in the area of crime control are a means of extending the power of the state while it is simultaneously in the process of reducing its size and function (Garland, 1996). Garland’s (2001) overall point is that governments have restructured penal and crime control regimes in order to govern the poor and those marginal to labour markets **at a greater distance**.

Garland has been criticised on the grounds that his analysis has limited application outside of the Anglo-American world: Kilcommins et al. (2004) conclude that despite Ireland’s vulnerability to policy transfer from the UK and US, the ‘crime complex’ has only appeared in a ‘dilute and distinctive hybrid form’ (2004: 291). More recently however, the Fianna Fáil / Progressive Democrat (PD) coalition has embarked upon a series of criminal justice ‘reforms’, including the provision of ASBOs (or ‘Behaviour Orders’ as they are termed in the Criminal Justice Act 2006) that marks a shift towards a greater emphasis on discipline.<sup>7</sup> Despite the limited applicability of Garland’s ‘culture of control’ thesis, a *punitive turn* on the part of the state is nevertheless discernable.

While some have suggested the existence of a new ‘dense institutional web’ of governance whereby areas left behind by global processes are re-institutionalised by partnership structures (Saris et al., 2002), the nature of the Irish state differs substantially from the one presented in Garland’s version of the ‘governmentality thesis’ (see Foucault, 1977). Hence it may be necessary to look at the nature of discipline in Irish society through a different lens. As such, an understanding of the

‘glocalisation’ of the Irish state is central to an appreciation of the context for youth crime prevention.

*Globalisation, Governance and the Irish State*

New forms of governance may reflect the drive to restructure society and economy in Ireland as a means of underpinning the country’s international competitiveness. Bob Jessop has pointed out that the emergence of a more ‘flexibilised’ and re-scaled national space followed the decline of the Fordist-Keynesian state<sup>8</sup> and the development of a post-Fordist production paradigm whereby the state has been ‘encouraged to focus on the supply–side problem of international competitiveness and to attempt to subordinate welfare policy to the demands of flexibility’ (Jessop, 1994: 262). This, according to Jessop, has required a ‘**hollowing out**’ of the state’ that has included the ceding of power to supranational bodies and devolving functions downwards to partnerships: in the spatial rescaling process there is thus a *de-centring of the state* (Rose and Miller, 1992) and a shift from *government to governance* (Jessop, 1994: 272). Thus the ‘spatial disorder’ that is created requires a new ‘institutional fix’ (Peck and Tickell, 1994). A drive towards competitiveness such as has happened in Ireland necessarily involves a degree of disciplining as economic and social restructuring entails a new realism regarding expectations: this serves then to reinforce an ideology that eschews the institutionalisation of the welfare state. In their consideration of the position of one peripheral housing area, Bartley and Saris (1999) point out that in the context of the need for international competitiveness, the Irish welfare state has been rolled back and welfare spending diverted towards economic restructuring. Consequently, ‘welfare recipients [were] identified as the source of their own unemployment and poverty problems, and as such, [were] becoming targets of criticism’ (1999: 82). Part of that

process of restructuring has involved labour market supply side measures which area-based partnerships have sought to provide (Bartley and Saris 1999; Geddes, 2000).

Ireland's 'institutional fix' has been quite an eclectic mix of neo-corporatism together with a key developmental role for the state and its agencies. O'Riain (2000) has referred to this as the 'flexible developmental state' (FDS); it differs from bureaucratic, authoritarian and politically repressive 'tiger' economies in Asia (see O'Hearn, 1999: 9) by virtue of embedded and autonomous developmental agencies such that the FDS constitutes a 'networked polity':

In transforming itself to operate within a locally and globally networked economy and polity, state governance itself is 'rescaled' as the prior privileged role of the national level gives way to a 'glocal' form of state (O'Riain, 2000: 166-167).

This networked, glocal polity is underpinned by a neoliberal ideology. This 'liberal creed' is manifested in the low tax, wage restraint and reduced social spending policy mix of the Fianna Fáil / Progressive Democrats coalition and a persistent illusion of the hegemony of the market (O'Riain, 2004: 28). This 'creed' may be the basis of Ireland's version of the 'exclusive society' (Young, 1999) as the protection of new wealth becomes a driver for mobilising new security technologies and a hardening attitude to those marginal to, or indeed outside of, production and consumption markets.

Urban Political Economy

Urban political economy has been concerned with analysing ways in which social space integrates with economic production and the ideologies supporting and underpinning that production. In analysing the layers of urban structure, Castells (1977; 1978) has suggested that the economic sub-structure revolves around relations to the labour market, the means of production, property and technology. The political-institutional apparatus organises space around two relations: (i) domination-regulation and (ii) integration-repression; in this regard, the institutional system segregates and officialises space while the ideological apparatus organises space by denoting it with a 'system of signs' (1977: 126). Hence the state and its control apparatuses need to be seen as permeating space as a means of organising and integrating it with capitalist production. The 'urban question' thus revolves, inter alia, around how residential space becomes integrated with the productive sphere, and so on. This question then revives itself for each productive generation, as argued by Brenner (2000), as a two-sided social and political problematic: first, the contradictions of capitalism are produced and fought out in the spatial arena; and second, the urban question involves interpretation and struggle in the life world of citizens (Brenner, 2000: 362).

An understanding of social and political phenomena such as youth crime prevention, and urban crime control more generally, can be enhanced by an appreciation of the dialectic between the physicality of the city and urban relationships, or between the urban as a *thing* (its physical form) and the urban as a *process* (delete) (Harvey, 1997). Hence youth crime and disorder prevention needs to be understood in terms of its embeddedness in a locale together with the conflicts and coalitions endured and formed as an urban process. My main point here is to establish the idea that the socio-historic juncture bringing about advanced levels of urban marginality led to urban



disorder (see Wacquant 1993a; 1993b; 1996; 1999) and modes of policing and prevention also arose in that context.

### **Historical Context I: Peripherality, Invisibility and Marginality in the Dublin ‘New Towns’**

In the 1980s and 1990s, population and settlement trends in the Dublin region, were influenced by a combination of market factors such as higher land prices in the city centre; policy factors such as the housing allocation policies and house building strategies; and tax and stamp duty incentives for private sector house purchasers (Drudy and MacLaran, 1994). This outward shift has also been explained as the result of the destructuring of the traditional industries and the containerisation of Dublin port (Drudy and Punch 2000; Drudy and Walker 1996). The running down of the inner city acted as a *push factor* that encouraged the out-movement of younger families leading to the skewing of the age profile of new suburbs (ibid., 11-12). A considerable level of population dispersal in Dublin resulted, leading to the Dublin region having an extended periphery and a relatively contracted core (CSO 2003; Drudy 1991; Drudy and MacLaran 1994; Drudy and Punch 2000; MacLaran 1993;). Over a twenty-one year period from 1981 to 2002 the new suburban areas continued to grow relative to the declining trend in the municipal area, together with the development of housing estates on agricultural land in the county area.<sup>9</sup>

The two specific peripheral areas of North Clondalkin and West Tallaght were on the receiving end of this population dispersal: in the former the process had already begun by the late 1970s and growth in the latter began to surge during the 1980s. By the

turn of the century, population growth had appeared to level off in North Clondalkin, leaving it with an increase of 65% over the twenty year period. Starting later, the population of West Tallaght continued to grow during the 1990s and grew by 200% in twenty years as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** *Population Change in selected urban peripheral locations 1981-2002<sup>10</sup>*

Peripheral Area	Population 1981 n	Change 1981-1991 n (%)	Change 1981-2002 n (%)
West Tallaght <sup>11</sup>	6,926	16,786 (142.4)	21,333 (205.1)
North Clondalkin <sup>12</sup>	12,419	20,915 (68)	20,487 (65)

*Source:* CSO Census of Population, Vol.1, 1981, 1986, 1991, 2002.

As a more general indication of population growth at the periphery, the ‘New Town’ of Tallaght had a population of 8,707 persons in 1971. This had increased by 432% to 46,366 by 1979, and to over 56,000 by 1981: growth over the decade of roughly 500% (CSO, 1981, 1986). This rapid outward expansion amounted to a complete reordering of Dublin city during this period, as planning attempted to accommodate economic expansion based on the recommendations of the Myles Wright (1967) plan. However, the ‘New Town’ planning experiment was a failure. First, the New Towns created social environments that were worse than the ones they purported to replace as they ‘accentuated social segregation’ (Bartley, 1999: 233); and second, the creation of transport corridors around the new towns and the screening of local authority housing estates from passing view, contributed to a sense of their ‘invisibility’ (ibid).

According to two urban and regional analysts, such failures went beyond errors of planning practice, but were ingrained in the 1937 Constitution's underpinning of the structural position of the Irish propertied class. Thus the appreciation in land values could not be used for social gain which was

...eventually to be paid for by the working class through hugely inflated land prices. This became reflected in higher than necessary housing plot prices and resulted in a reduced capacity of the local authority to fund adequate community facilities (MacLaran and Punch, 2004: 36).

Local authority social housing policy in Ireland adds a set of complicating factors to the mix. First, such housing provision has been residual in character, part of the welfare safety net (O'Connell and Fahey, 1999: 37).<sup>13</sup> Second, social order problems contributed to the poor reputation of so-called 'problem estates' (ibid.: 34). A third complicating factor resulted from a political misadventure by the Irish state in the form of the Surrender Grant Scheme which provided incentives to the most economically advantaged tenants to shift to the private sector. In the process this undermined the economic stability of the estates and rendered a damaging blow to the sector generally (O'Connell and Fahey, 1999: 40).

### *The New Towns After Fordism-Keynesianism*

The capacity of the state to rescue the urban periphery from these various complications was seriously undermined by the end of the Keynesian economic welfare model and the Fordist production paradigm that supported it. In this context welfare spending would have to be kept within strict limits. The structural position of the urban peripheral housing estates was compounded by the failure of the Irish state at the time to resolve a glaring contradiction resulting from the post-1958 industrialisation policy, namely that the Dublin working class was further undermined by the type of jobs lost after the dismantling of protectionism and the type of jobs created after industrialisation. These required higher levels of skill and were dispersed over a wider geographical scale (Whelan, Breen and Whelan, 1992: 118-9). The peripheral estates and the new towns became the physical manifestation of a contradiction between a planning model that sought to cater for expanding pools of labour power and an industrial development policy that favoured dispersal. Hence, as Brenner (2000) has pointed out, the urban question was being played out as this contradiction manifested itself in everyday conflicts over order. The high unemployment that existed at this time together with the undermining and greater residualisation of the peripheral housing estates created the conditions for clashes between the police and young people and led to a greater sense of state insecurity. It is to these events I now turn.

### **Historic Context II: The Events at Ronanstown and the Interdepartmental Group on Urban Crime and Disorder**

A stolen car driven down Neilstown Road on Tuesday November 19<sup>th</sup> 1991 travelled to a piece of open ground and the young drivers alighted. The police officers who pursued the vehicle were pelted with stones and when a fire engine arrived on the scene it too was subjected to stone-throwing by a large group of young people. Six fire fighters received injuries from the stone-throwing as they attempted to deal with the fires at Neilstown Drive.<sup>14</sup> These events were carried as a main item of news the following morning on the radio and they made headlines in the various print media in the following days.

Within a week the Minister for Justice addressed an adjournment debate in Dáil Éireann on ‘Violence and Vandalism in Dublin’s Suburbs’ during which he announced that he had set up the Interdepartmental Group on Urban Crime and Disorder (IGUCD).<sup>15</sup> While the establishment of the Group had been drawn out over a protracted period, it was this one key event at Ronanstown that catalysed matters.<sup>16</sup>

The Group examined the Neilstown/Ronanstown area and its analysis then provided a framework to be applied to all urban areas in Ireland with policing problems.<sup>17</sup> While the Group appeared to rely upon ‘commonsense’, its report did point out that the disorder was associated with the history of the peripheral areas in question. The characteristics of such areas they listed as being ‘single class’, having no amenities and lacking in access to services (Government of Ireland, 1993: 15). The ‘problem’, as stressed throughout the report, was to do with the dynamic between displacement and settlement in this newly created urban context in which a young population was decanted from the inner city to ‘the middle of nowhere’ (1993: 51).

The Group's analysis of the incidents at Ronanstown on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November 1991 had less to do with crime per se and more to do with the broader concern for social order, as the report argued that the problem was attributable to young people's congregations and 'stone throwing' resulting in the intimidation of the 'law abiding majority' (1993: 26). Moreover:

Underlying this concern is the perception that *authority itself appears to be under attack and a fear that, unless the trend is "nipped in the bud", all of the conventions on which ordered society is based will be put in jeopardy with extremely serious consequences for society as a whole* (1993: 26) [emphasis added].

Thus the measures that flowed from this and other similar statements in the IGUCD report have to be seen as an attempt to achieve social integration by seeking to reconstruct the 'conventions' that would restore or reproduce social order. According to the report, the situation at Ronanstown, were it to be repeated elsewhere, would have resulted in the breakdown of order in urban society as a whole. Hence the volatility of the situation at Ronanstown represented a threat to the social order but because it was seen as symptomatic of what was happening in other urban peripheries around Ireland, a wider threat was posed to economic recovery generally.

In stating its definition of the situation the Group pointed out in a number of paragraphs that it was a criminally-inclined minority that manipulated a law-abiding majority. In this regard, they proffered the theory that the problem was the result of the

manipulation by deviant Others. No evidence was offered for this apart from the police view, which the Group accepted:

The Gardaí advised us that a tendency toward the emergence from time to time of general disorder problems involving groups of youngsters can be attributed to a significant extent to the presence of a small hard core of criminals who incline towards the view that (a) authority in all forms (Gardaí, fire services, etc.) should be ‘taken on’ and (b) that the local community should be made to understand that it is this hard core rather than the authorities who hold *the upper hand* (1993: 23) [emphasis added].

It followed then that a *strategy of persuasion* was necessary to wrest power from the ‘hard core’. It needed to convince the community that disorder was located with the hard core group and by a logical extension, order would be restored by the state in that it would or should reassert the ‘upper hand’. Two strategies were implied by this. The first of these was to minimise the power of criminally-inclined young people through a process of *selective incapacitation* (see Garland, 1993). The second was that of some form of *pedagogic action* was required on the part of the state in order to mobilise community sentiment in its favour.<sup>18</sup> Hence while at a surface level the state responded with hard and soft policy options, it simultaneously entered into a form of *symbolic struggle* over its own legitimacy. The form of public policing thus became ‘symbolic policing’ (Loader, 1997) or a process of reinstating the symbols of the state where these were absent (for a discussion of this mobilisation in the case of French cities, see Body-Gendrot 2000; Crawford 2002).

The Group recommended the extension of a number of situational crime preventive measures like roundabouts on roads to ‘design out’ joyriding from the physical landscape. Alongside these, they extended the persuasive strategies deployed by the GRAFT project in Ronanstown.<sup>19</sup> Hence the Garda Youth Diversion Projects (GYDPs) were conceived in the context of an emerging urban crisis. State and civil society actors may indeed have been mobilised in response to these events at Ronanstown in order to pre-empt any deepening of such a crisis. Moreover, the remit of the GYDPs was framed in the context of the need for reclaiming the city from the young people who occupied the open spaces. In the housing estates, the open spaces were the only option young people had for a public sphere at that time. But more importantly, the young people involved in the clashes with the police represented a wider urban contradiction and so this may have added to the urgency with which the state responded.

The emphasis upon achieving state *upper-handedness* in the IGUCD report was a call for the mobilisation of both state and civil society actors as a (re)establishment of sovereign power over newly-urbanised space. Significantly, in this instance the Department of Justice stepped in as a last resort to co-ordinate a global response to the problem of order. The economic and social conditions in Ireland at that time precipitated such a response: the provision of welfare-based solutions appeared to be out and an extension of justice-based solutions appeared to be in.<sup>20</sup>



## **Case Study: Youth Crime and Disorder Prevention after the IDGUCD Report**

In this section I present a case study based on interviews carried out with practitioners, police and other state personnel in 1999 focused upon one Garda Youth Diversion Project in the peripheral area of Ballynew (area and interviewee names are fictional). The area has a population of about 20,000 persons in four main housing estates. The GYDP was hosted by a youth service run by a regional youth organisation. In Ballynew, the GYDP worked very closely with the Gardaí. The senior youth worker Willie and his colleague John, the paid co-ordinator of the GYDP, met with the police every two weeks or so. In addition, John said that he had reason to contact the local station almost every day. Both police officers and the youth workers co-operated jointly to respond to actual or potential public order issues and often contacted each other to decide who would be the most appropriate party to respond. Local people were often advised by the police to approach the GYDP co-ordinator if they experienced public order issues associated with congregations of young people. After that, the GYDP co-ordinator was despatched to persuade young people to move elsewhere as Willie explained:

John would probably go over [and] probably try and identify who is in the group and then go and have a word. And the word would probably be from the point of view of ‘listen lads, okay you want to have a bit of crack or a bit of fun but do you realise that obviously you are rubbing some people up the wrong way and would you not consider doing your drinking a hundred yards further down the road where you’ll get no hassle from the community, ‘cause if you sit

here and there are complaints being booked like, the Guards are going to get ‘round eventually and one or two of you is going to get hurt’. So that’d be the starting point. (Willie, senior youth worker, Ballynew)

In this context the youth service brought to the policing function a pedagogic form in that it sought to actively persuade young people to congregate elsewhere or not congregate at all. It also sent out general house-to-house communications with a view to responsabilising parents. John explained how the youth service dealt with a particular situation:

Now we got rid of that simply by we done a leaflet up here ourselves and we asked a couple of questions, you know, we sent it round to all the doors. ‘Do you know where your child is? Do you know that there is a huge increase in blah blah blah’ and now by really sending that leaflet around in [the two housing estates] the problem virtually disappeared. (John, Ballynew GYDP Co-ordinator)

Here a ‘cultural arbitrary’ was imparted (Bourdieu, 1977) whereby young people and children *should be under the gaze of their parents*. In addition, the Ballynew GYDP took on a panoptic function whereby if young people were not under the gaze of their parents it would act in that capacity itself. The Ballynew GYDP then worked with the police to ensure that the effect of young people appearing in public was dissipated by reattaching them to family, school or work and in the absence of these institutions to incorporate them in some form of activity. In this regard, youth work extended into the domain of crime and disorder prevention, and in this instance acted as a surrogate

institution. The welfare of young people and their engagement in the public sphere was secondary to the impact of their behaviour and the disorderly potential of their play and spontaneous gatherings. In essence the youth service here extended a gaze over the area, and by logical extension, it spread the panoptic gaze of the network of agencies to which it was loosely attached. Hence rather than being an end delivery agency for a programme of welfare, the host youth service became the front end of a system of network governance whereby a criminal justice gaze could be cast over a wider area and over those who had no prior status in the justice system.

### **The Contemporary Context for Youth Crime and Disorder Prevention**

What follows is a more contemporary analysis of the city as the conceptual backdrop to the emergence of a more recent tendency towards surveillance.

#### *The Information Age, the City and the Taming of Nature*

Dublin city centre has become a major site of consumption and there has been an attempt to redefine a *centre* through urban restoration most clearly expressed in the redevelopment of O'Connell Street (Corcoran, 2004). Since the 1990s, greater use has been made of public order legislation to remove poor and marginal people from the streets (see O'Donnell and O'Sullivan, 2001). This mirrors efforts by cities across Europe to revitalise and re-brand the city as a destination for tourism and capital investment (see Coleman 2003). In addition, the residential transformation of Dublin city centre has seen the invasion of a new and youthful urban middle class (Kelly and MacLaren, 2004) which has ushered in a pattern of development that Smith (1994) has referred to as 'urban revanchism'.<sup>21</sup> Property supplement writers have encouraged the

pioneers of this 'new frontier' (Smith, 1994) to retake residential areas where they will find the 'best bargains' or if they 'want to show real gains, (to) look on the margins' (O'Connor, 2003). So despite any redesignation of the city as distinct cultural zones or 'moral regions' (Park, 1925) a new entrepreneurship has grown up around the revalorisation of city spaces based upon their actual and potential market value. Elsewhere, such an urban process has been linked with the 'hardening of the surface' of the city towards the poor and marginal who are both priced and designed out of residential property and the new 'castles of consumption' (Davis, 1990).

The peripheral housing estates have remained largely in the same condition as before: they have both literally and metaphorically been 'by-passed' by the 'Celtic Tiger'. West Tallaght for instance still suffers the poverty of 'crumbling walls' and 'damp bedrooms' (Holland, 2005: 11). A recent-community based study in West Tallaght reported that this peripheral area had retained higher than average concentrations of unemployment, that one third of households were headed by lone parents and the risk of poverty posed to households remained high despite economic growth in the country generally (Axford et al., 2004). Moreover the *invisibility* of peripheral housing estates (Bartley, 1999) has been radically worsened given that they have become bound within the new corridors of flow comprising the network of transportation routes surrounding the outer city.

In more recent years, the city has become divided into zones that are policed with distinct styles. Thus policing of the urban periphery has remained 'confrontative', in contrast to a more benign style in the city centre (Institute of Criminology, 2003). For as Bannon (1999) suggested, Dublin city has been developing both outwards in terms of

housing and industry, and at the same time concentrating commercial, office and residential development at the centre. This reorganisation of the division of labour between the core and periphery has come to be reflected in spatial variation in policing.

Thus the conversion of space into product (Lefebvre, 1991) has resulted in a new context for young people's autonomous participation in public space. As the city centre becomes more of a consumption space it is to be enjoyed through market relations, e.g. shopping and the 'night time economy' involving drinking and clubbing (see Lovatt and O'Connor, 1995; Hobbs et al., 2000). Indeed, in the Dublin periphery, young people continue to be defined out of 'community' and find themselves debarred from generic community facilities that results in them creating cultural lives involving the use of the streets, the alleyways and the open areas (Lynch et al, 2005).

Since the IGUCD there has been considerable economic and cultural transformation in Ireland. Persistent unemployment, which had dogged the urban periphery for two decades, and was the cause of much of its failure as an experiment (Punch and MacLaran, 2004) has now been reduced. In this connection, youth crime prevention programmes have become part of the state's ensemble of measures geared towards those most marginal to labour markets.<sup>22</sup>

### *Informational Capitalism and the Exclusive Society*

The information age has replaced the industrial age as the predominant mode of development (Castells, 1989). It has become the major structuring and organising dynamic of our time such that cities have become to be ordered around the needs of the advanced service sector elites (Castells, 1996; 2000).<sup>23</sup>Fundamentally, cities are based

upon the primacy of flows: this includes the flow of information both as raw materials and end product, together with the flow of people through transport corridors. The primacy of flows has divided cities in *spaces of place* (neighbourhoods) and *spaces of flows* (protected elite locales often expressed as gated communities and advanced service centres packaged for the new urban professional middle class). Hence the informational city has emerged as set of segregated spaces reflecting greater social polarisation in the occupational structure.

In this context, the growth of surveillance technologies has accompanied the growth in property ownership and the need to protect both goods themselves and the enjoyment and consumption of these goods. Jock Young (1999) has pointed out that the greater the risk posed to property the more those in possession begin to construct a city that is based on the systematic exclusion of others and more particularly that a growing capitalised private security industry blooms whose very economic output is the exclusion of those without labour or consumer market currency. The city, he suggested, has become a system of filters that upholds a regime of ‘sanitising and moralising geographies’ or a ‘cordon sanitaire’ (Young, 1999: 18-20). But the cordon sanitaire might also operate *within* working class communities to (re)stratify the pro-social and the anti-social and reconfigure governance in such a way as to bolster local elite groups who have access to some level of governing power.

### **A Contemporary Case Study of Youth Crime and Disorder Prevention: Contested Governance in Leevale-Campanile Hill<sup>24</sup>**

The Pinevale GYDP operates as part of a youth service [the Leevale-Campanile Hill Youth Project (LCHYP)] which is a local branch of a large youth organisation. The Pinevale Project covers two local authority housing estates of Leevale and Campanile Hill (LCH) that have a combined population of 7,000 persons. On my first ever contact as a researcher with the Pinevale Project in 1999, they had established a strict set of boundaries between themselves and the police: the youth workers were not involved in Garda affairs including community policing or responding to public order issues; police officers referred specific young people to the youth service from among those cautioned under the Youth Diversion Programme.<sup>25</sup>

I returned to the area in 2004 and worked mainly alongside Rick, the GYDP co-ordinator, for 12 weeks. By then, all of the original personnel had moved on; there was a tense and potentially violent environment surrounding the emerging cocaine trade; this pushed staff to work more in an outreach mode; and there was greater pressure put upon the staff at LCHYP by the police to revert to a form of high visibility, pro-police activity programme. By contrast, the Pinevale Project had developed a practice that centred upon creating dialogue with young people and used this as a platform to develop relationships. Morag, a senior colleague of Rick had sought to promote the idea of generating ‘youth voice’ as a means of improving young people’s participation in the public sphere so that their perspectives would be taken seriously by development agencies and institutions. However, the youth work staff worked in an environment that was increasingly hostile towards young people to the point that a coalition had emerged consisting of Council officials, local residents organisations, senior police officers and the local parish committee who ‘lord[ed]over the area’.<sup>26</sup> Morag indicated in an impromptu interview that this powerful governing network had developed an

impenetrable discourse that stratified young people into ‘the good’ and ‘the scumbags’ which made it difficult to develop a pro-youth agenda. According to Morag, the ‘lords’ had been the major driving force for the erection of CCTV around the housing estates. During my time at LCH, the area had become dotted with these CCTV cameras.

While the youth workers at LCHYP understood and appreciated why local people wanted to feel safe, they remained unhappy that the CCTV cameras were erected. They continued with their dialogue with young people on the streets. This dialogue was therefore working against the consensual tide that was emerging in favour of digitised, technological solutions to young people’s use of public open space. While the CCTV scheme appeared to work from an in-built mistrust of young people, the Pinevale Project on the other hand had a tradition of promoting a ‘youth on the streets’ agenda: this was achieved through celebrating young people’s creativity and energy and giving voice to their concerns through drama, pageantry and the festive, especially around Halloween and other public occasions. In this local context, youth workers working within GYDPs were under continuing pressure to morph into crime preventionists which they actively contested and resisted.



## **Conclusion: The Future of Youth Crime and Disorder Prevention?**

Bouts of public disorder in the urban periphery, which was acutely devoid of social infrastructure, drove youth provision away from youth welfare in the direction of youth governance – i.e. concerned with the regulation of behaviour.<sup>27</sup> It has been argued here that this has been influenced to a significant degree by the process of ‘glocalisation’. As time has advanced, the economic and cultural logics of globalisation have influenced the public sector institutions charged with managing Dublin City to the extent that the local authority has recently embraced an entrepreneurial ethic that has made it ‘pro-developer’ in the gentrification of the City (Kelly and MacLaran, 2004: 51-52) This is in line with the idea that the city is being developed around a ‘growth machine’ in which key decisions are sought by elites so as that ‘urban fortunes’ can be made and unmade (Logan and Molotch, 1987).<sup>28</sup>

The more that governing elites adopt a ‘liberal creed’ (O’Riain, 2004) the greater the need to reclaim space it seems. Coleman has suggested, based upon his study of Liverpool, that this dynamic is part of the roll-back of the welfare state and the roll-out of the neoliberal state where there is a struggle for ‘a hegemony of aesthetics regarding who and what should and should not be seen’ (Coleman, 2003: 32). Indeed, Kelly (2003: 177) has suggested that a re-imagining of youth as a dangerous Other reflects ‘an institutionalised mistrust of young people’ and as such risk management and disorder prevention strategies ‘emerge at the intersection of institutionalised imaginings of danger, risk and economy’. The ASBO and the Good Behaviour Contract have been offered as examples by British criminologists of ‘the progressive

criminalisation of marginalised youth' based upon an 'ever-expanding government machinery of "mistrust"' (Stephen and Squires, 2004: 368). Together these 'situational' devices for reducing the supply of criminal opportunities are bound together with the emergence of digital surveillance that supports a neoliberal economic agenda (Graham and Wood, 2003: 243). The ASBO debate in Ireland during 2005 perhaps gave us an insight into the future as there appeared to be a political re-imagining of some as the dangerous Other (especially working class and marginal young people). The future may hold a greater degree of human and digital surveillance for these young people. This being the case, there is a greater onus on those working with young people in the housing estates to resist such tendencies and indeed there is a challenge to the young people themselves to claim their 'right to the city' (Lefebvre, 1996).

The case studies of Ballynew GYDP and the Pinevale Project at Leevale-Campanile Hill presented in this essay suggest that practice in this domain is confronted with a choice between (i) the active engagement in constructing youth discipline through the participation in panoptic network governance; or (ii) the conscious and active contestation and resistance to the greater disciplining and surveillance of young people. In the latter form, youth work may survive intact as a distinct practice whilst in the former it has already hybridised and adapted to the emergence of a more punitive social order. Only a practice that recognises young people's right to participate in the public sphere has transformative potential: by enabling young people's voices to be heard above the vested interests, such a practice may become a means of radicalising and ultimately transforming social institutions.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> The British Crime and Disorder Act 1998 provided for ‘anti-social behaviour orders’ and the acronym ASBO quickly entered common use. It was the term used throughout the debate about the new criminal justice legislation in Ireland, including by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Minister. In the Criminal Justice Act 2006 as passed, however, the amendments to the Children Act 2001 provide for what are called ‘Behaviour Orders’.

<sup>2</sup> One such programme is the Community Based CCTV Scheme inaugurated by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in 2005 (DJELR, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> Some of these changes include new legislation restructuring policing; extending local authority structures to include some form of police accountability in the form of Joint Policing Committees under the Garda Síochána Act 2005; and the establishment of a Youth Justice Service in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (see Government of Ireland, 2006). See Hughes (2002) for a discussion of ‘community safety politics’ in Britain.

<sup>4</sup> This article is based upon a wider research project exploring the relationships between state and civil society actors engaged in local level youth crime and disorder prevention programmes in urban Ireland. The data were gathered at three distinct time periods in 1998, 1999 and 2004-5. The research involved in-depth interviewing with policy makers, practitioners, senior police personnel and practitioners. Interviews were archived for subsequent analysis. The earlier data were part of a study carried out at the Children’s Research Centre, Trinity College Dublin. The 2004-2005 module of the research was carried out at the Department of Sociology, Trinity College Dublin. The research has been partly supported by the Third Sector Research Programme, Royal Irish Academy.

<sup>5</sup> As pointed out earlier, there appears to be a consensus for this mode of governance in Ireland, reflected not least in the recommendations of the National Crime Council’s (2003) proposed national strategy on crime prevention.

<sup>6</sup> In late modern society, according to this thesis, citizens are encouraged to become more self-provident as part of a cultural shift towards prudentialism and self-protection. Moreover, crime is considered to exist as a normal social fact or another late modern risk against which individuals and households can purchase protection from private security providers in the market. This is bound up with a heightened political consciousness about crime such that the state is forced into a series of adaptations. New forms of ‘government at a distance’ have emerged in this context by virtue of the constriction of the penal-welfare state and rolling out of a more punitive orientation. Partnerships between state, private and civil society actors in this context ironically serve to extend the reach of state power to areas of social life far beyond government offices (see Garland, 1996; 2000; 2001).

<sup>7</sup> Similarly, there has been a climb-down from implementing the provisions of the Act in relation to the age of criminal responsibility in that while it was to increase from seven to twelve years, it will now only be increased to ten years.

<sup>8</sup> Fordism in the classic sense involves a ‘virtuous circle’ of production and consumption in which wage indexation is linked to productivity and so on. This is usually underpinned by a ‘social democratic welfare state’ (Peck and Tickell, 1994: 286). The Keynesian welfare state underpins the Fordist production paradigm by regulating the wage relation and directing demand in the economy together with supporting infrastructure and linking ‘the interests of organized capital and labour in a programme of full employment and social welfare’ (Jessop, 1994: 255).

<sup>9</sup> Despite recent increases in the city centre, the overall population trend in the Dublin County Borough (Dublin City) is downward. Taking 1971 as a base year, the Dublin City population declined by 4% between 1971 and 1981; and by 15.7% and 12.8% respectively for the decades 1981-1991 and 1991-2002 (CSO, various years; see also Drudy 1991; Drudy and Punch 2000). The population of Fingal increased by 33% between 1981 and 1991 and continued to grow, increasing by a further 28% between 1991 and 2002 (CSO Census of Population; Drudy, 1991; Drudy and MacLaran 1994; Drudy and Punch 2000; MacLaran 1993).

<sup>10</sup> There are two caveats accompanying this data. Firstly, these areas are not officially enumerated using these categories of West Tallaght and North Clondalkin. Both of these derive from popular and commonplace usage. Secondly, District Electoral Division (DED) boundaries came into use only after the 1981 Census. By then, North Clondalkin had a sizeable population relative to West Tallaght. Thus it was not possible to capture any surge in population for the former.

<sup>11</sup> Tallaght West comprises the Tallaght DEDs of Jobstown, Killinarden and Fettercairn (see Punch 2002: 64). These DEDs are those identified in West Tallaght Rapid Areas (see [www.pobal.ie/rapid](http://www.pobal.ie/rapid)) and generally referred to in research reports (see for instance Axford et al., 2004: 8).

<sup>12</sup> North Clondalkin comprises the Clondalkin DEDs of Cappaghmore, Moorfield, Rowlagh and Palmerstown West (North Clondalkin Community Development Project, 2001).

<sup>13</sup> It has also been in decline since the 1980s (ibid).

<sup>14</sup> Sunday Tribune, 24th November 1991

<sup>15</sup> Historical Parliamentary Debates, Volume 413, 27 November 1991, Adjournment Debate, Dublin Juvenile Vandalism.

<sup>16</sup> This observation is based upon interviews conducted with senior officials in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform carried out in 1999. A fuller analysis of this data will be presented in subsequent publications by the author.

<sup>17</sup> The report itself was written by an official who subsequently became the Director-General of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. As such the text represents a governmental discourse and provides a telling insight into the interpretations and meanings that the Group attributed to the causes and outcomes of urban disorder. The Group were not given specific terms of reference and were asked to propose measures that would address ‘difficulties’. The Group reflects and represents the State in action: it was comprised of officials at a high level and there were no lay members or external expertise. There was no independent research commissioned. Hence, this was a purely state-driven exercise where the knowledge and understandings of state actors determined the eventual outcome.

<sup>18</sup> I use the term pedagogic action as developed by Bourdieu in his foundation of the theory of symbolic violence. Pedagogic action is ‘the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power’. Moreover: ‘the symbolic strength of a pedagogic agency is defined by its weight in the structure of the power relations and symbolic relations (the latter always expressing the former) between the agencies exerting an action of symbolic violence. This structure in turn expresses the power relations between the groups or classes making up the social formation’ (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977: 7).

<sup>19</sup> Give Ronanstown a Future Today (GRAFT) was set up jointly by the Ronanstown Youth Service, An Garda Síochána and the Probation and Welfare Service in 1991. It and a similar project in Killinarden, Tallaght evolved into Garda Special Projects by 1996 and such projects have been extended to at least 60 locations around the country since 2000. For a more analytical account, see Bowden and Higgins 2000. After the publication of operational and practice guidelines, this scheme of projects became known as the Garda Youth Diversion Projects (GYDPs) (see Centre for Social and Educational Research, 2003).

<sup>20</sup> This is connected to the new flexibilities and disciplines that are required in a post-Fordist order. John Lea (1997: 52) points out that in this connection: ‘Crime control thus becomes “actuarial”, concerned with risk assessment, incapacitation and the management of delinquency. This takes a juridical – as opposed to a welfare – form, as it did in the early nineteenth century. But the object is less that of preparing the new working class, through the experience of penal discipline, for the “responsibility” required by labour for capital – factory discipline – and more that of introducing new flexibility, dismantling social rights and keeping the “underclass” under control. The relationship between the workfare state and actuarial criminal justice continues to be that of reciprocity; the criminal justice system picks up those who are unwilling to bend to the new flexibilities of the workfare state’.

<sup>21</sup> This refers to a process whereby spaces once occupied by the dispersed working class have been gentrified and commodified for a new, globally connected middle class of city dwellers.

<sup>22</sup> This was best exemplified by the incorporation of the GYDPs as a social inclusion labour market measure in the National Development Plan 2000-2006 (Government of Ireland, 1999).

<sup>23</sup> The new informational capitalism according to Castells (1996) sets off occupational polarisation. According to Breathnach (2002) despite the conceptual idiosyncrasies of the concept of polarisation, there has been a 'more definite tendency towards occupational, earnings and household income polarisation in the 1990s' (Breathnach, 2002: 3). Indeed an updated analysis by Breathnach (2004) suggests that polarisation has been occurring in the occupational structure given the rise in professional jobs, the reduction in intermediate and skilled jobs and the rise of unskilled and undeclared occupations.

<sup>24</sup> This second case study is based upon a participant observation study carried out at the latter end of 2004 in Leevale-Campanile Hill (LCH), a similar area socio-economically to Ballynew except closer to the city.

<sup>25</sup> The Youth Diversion Programme was introduced in An Garda Síochána in first as the Juvenile Liaison Officer Scheme in 1963. First introduced in the Dublin area, it was extended nationwide during the 1990s. It has since been placed on a statutory footing by the provisions of the Children Act 2001.

<sup>26</sup> There are parallels here between Morag's term 'lords' and John Flint's (2002) term 'governors'.

<sup>27</sup> That youth crime and disorder modalities began in the then 'new towns' was also a significant factor: firstly, because this was where most youth disorder occurred; and secondly, that there was no civic or municipal infrastructure to cope with the stresses of urban restructuring. These sites were also remote from the traditional working class organisations; and, grassroots activism was slow to emerge (see Punch, 2002).

<sup>28</sup> In this vein, land rezoning has come under parliamentary and judicial scrutiny in the last decade to the extent that the commingling of the political and economic elites over land deals has been of considerable public interest. Indeed, a former Minister for Justice, Mr. Ray Burke, has been judged to have received a 'corrupt payment' from private property developers in 1989 for the purposes of supporting and 'influencing' the planning status of lands in North Dublin (Flood J., 2002: 139-140). Moreover, redeveloping space no longer utilised for Fordist based production requires both 'rescaling' and 'reconversion' (Swyngedouw, 1996). This involves the 'reconversion' of space evident in, for instance, the closing or rationalisation of industrial zones (such as Dublin port) and its 'reconversion' (ibid.) to a financial district; this process required a degree of institutional innovation on the part of the state (setting up of the Dublin Docklands Development Authority) together with the flexibilisation of the tax laws to facilitate the economic elite at senior levels in such developments (see 'Bid to Flush Out Tax Avoidance', *Irish Times*, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2006). Internationally, such high visibility projects have been facilitated through processes that themselves occur 'through the formation of new elite coalitions on the one hand and the systematic exclusion or further disempowerment of politically and / or economically already weaker social groups on the other' (Swyngedouw, 1996: 1449).