# Respect and Self-Respect in Everyday Life

# A Survey of Theoretical and Methodological Approaches
# with Special Reference to Illegal Drug Users
# as an Example of a Socially-Excluded Group

**Brigid Pike**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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# Introduction

In Ireland in 2002, on foot of the enactment of equality legislation and commitments made in successive national partnership agreements, the National Economic and Social Forum published *A Strategic Policy Framework for Equality Issues*. The Framework identified respect as one of the four 'foundational equality objectives for contemporary Ireland', along with redistribution, recognition and representation. The authors of the report commented:

> The evolution of social relations in Ireland today is undermining respect and recognition. The increased racial attacks … the ongoing religious/ethnic divisions in Northern Ireland, and the exclusion documented by those who are Travellers or lesbian or gay, make it clear that addressing status inequalities is a matter of urgent concern. Social relations of recognition and respect are essential for maintaining social unity and civility and for sustaining people's sense of their own worth. Institutionalising respect for difference also matters because unequal respect can exacerbate both economic and political injustice. (National Economic and Social Forum 2002: 51)

The concept of respect has figured in international policy documents in the human rights area for over 50 years. The United Nations Charter (United Nations 1945) and Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations 1948) both highlight the need for 'respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all'. Published two years later, the European Convention on Human Rights asserts that: 'Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence' (Council of Europe 1950: Art. 8.1).[1] Today, the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which forms Part 2 of the European Constitution Treaty (Conference of the Representatives 2003), makes frequent use of the term 'respect' – referring to the need for respect to be accorded to the individual's dignity, physical and mental integrity, private and family life, home and communications; and calling for respect to be shown for the elderly, those with a disability, and those in the work place, and to be accorded to the media, educational establishments, religious and cultural institutions, and for academic endeavours and linguistic diversity.

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[1] The European Convention on Human Rights specifically excludes 'drug addicts', together with persons who may spread infectious diseases, persons of unsound mind, alcoholics and vagrants, from the article pledging the individual's right to liberty and security of person (Council of Europe 1950: Art. 5.1). Members of these groups may be lawfully detained.

A wide variety of non-governmental groups and sectors in contemporary Western society use the term in asserting their rights. The Internet search engine Google yielded some 20 million links mentioning respect: these links reveal a plethora of organisations and projects dedicated to engendering respect for minority groups within society – children, the aged, ethnic minorities, the subjects of research. In the entertainment world Joan Armatrading and Ali G call for – respect.

Notwithstanding the ink expended on discussing the importance of respect, a number of commentators point to a continuing dearth of respect among socially-excluded and disadvantaged sectors of society in the post-industrial world. For example, in discussing the shift from the inclusive society of the modern era to the exclusive society of the late modern era, Jock Young (1999) describes the 'fate' of young male unskilled workers who have fallen into long-term unemployment and criminality as the manufacturing sector has downsized. They have become:

> … bereft of social position and destiny … Young men facing such a denial of recognition turn, everywhere in the world, in what must almost be a criminological law, to the creation of cultures of machismo, to the mobilization of one of their only resources, physical strength, to the formation of gangs and to the defence of their own 'turf'. Being denied the respect of others they create a subculture that revolves around masculine powers and 'respect'. (Young 1999: 12)

In 2003 the British government published a white paper, *Respect and Responsibility – Taking a Stand against Anti-Social Behaviour* (Home Department 2003). It counters the calls for respect *for* all with a call for respect *by* all:

> As a society, our rights as individuals are based on the sense of responsibility we have towards others and to our families and communities. This means respecting each other's property, respecting the streets and public places we share and respecting our neighbours' right to live free from harassment and distress. It is the basis of civic society.
>
> This White Paper is all about this sense of responsibility: an acceptance that anti-social behaviour, in whatever guise, is not acceptable and together we will take responsibility to stamp it out, whenever we come across it. …
>
> Our aim is a 'something for something' society where we treat one another with respect and where we all share responsibility for taking a stand against what is unacceptable. (Home Department 2003: 3)

The prevalence of the term 'respect' in discourses around social justice and equality over the past 60-odd years, the reported dearth of respect in the lived experience of members of socially-excluded and disadvantaged groups, and the evident differences in interpretations of just what respect entails, indicate that exploring the nature of this concept in a sociological context is of relevance.

It is the objective of this dissertation to explore how the concepts of respect and self-respect may be investigated in the context of everyday social life. It will pursue this objective by exploring the answers to three questions:

° What are respect and self-respect?

° How do they occur in everyday social life?

° What theoretical and methodological considerations should the social researcher take into account in approaching the study of respect and self-respect?

My initial task in undertaking this dissertation was to survey recent discussions of the nature of the concepts of respect and self-respect, seeking to ascertain both what the concepts mean and how they are seen to function in and influence social life, and also to discern the features relevant to the work of the social researcher. The results of this task are set out in Chapter 1. It should be noted that the survey is an uncritical account, intended to uncover the broad range of normative understandings that may apply in everyday life rather than to try to adopt a particular position or perspective on the epistemology of respect.

Equipped with this understanding of the concepts, I proceeded to read a selection of qualitative social research studies into the lives of illicit drug users. I focused exclusively on qualitative studies, on the assumption that they would yield complex and densely-nuanced evidence, indicating the presence or absence, and the nature of the functioning, of respect and self-respect. Quantitative research studies were avoided on the counter-assumption that terms and concepts would not be contextualised and consequently the possibilities for inferring the functioning of respect or self-respect would be restricted. A remarkable feature of the works that were consulted is the regularity with which the concepts of respect

and self-respect are used in explaining aspects of the lives and experiences of the research subjects. It should be noted that the studies consulted concentrate on the activities of drug users, with only incidental references to other actors in the world of illegal drugs, such as treatment professionals, law enforcement agents, the families and friends of drug users and their communities, and policy makers, although these other categories play key roles in relation to the functioning of respect in the lives of drug users. Furthermore, I am concerned entirely with the micro-level, with how the individual uses the concepts of respect and self-respect in their everyday life. The dynamics of respect between collectivities of people, and how this impacts on the lives of individual people and on society as a whole, in other words the politics of respect, is not considered.

I read these research studies critically, seeking to discover (1) what they revealed about the functioning of respect, self-respect, and respect and self-respect jointly, in social life, and (2) what methodological approaches would facilitate the elucidation of the functioning of the concepts in everyday social life. I supplemented this reading with excursions into theoretical areas suggested by the content of the research studies, including interaction order, social structure, rational choice theory, risk theory and discourse analysis. Chapters 2 – 4 contain the results of this reading. They integrate discussion of how to approach the study of the various concepts and the type of evidence that the suggested approaches may be expected to yield, based on the evidence found in the chosen research studies. I have isolated out respect and self-respect for special consideration, considering other sociological concepts with which it is intimately related, such as identity, power and culture, only insofar as they impinge directly on the functioning of respect and self-respect. I have also not considered how the particular drug being used, the attitudes of the drug users at the time of drug use or the physical and social setting within which drug use occurs (cf. Zinberg 1984) may influence the patterns of respect and self-respect that may be in evidence.

Finally, in the Conclusions, I draw on the findings of the preceding four chapters to suggest answers to the three questions posed in this introduction.

# CHAPTER 1: UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPTS OF 'RESPECT' AND 'SELF-RESPECT'

## 1.0      Introduction

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (1989) the word 'respect' is derived from the Latin respectus, past participle of respicere, to look (back) at, to regard, to consider. The etymology of respect has moved some way from the original Latin. The modern meaning of the verb 'to respect' is 'to treat or regard with deference, esteem, or honour; to feel or show respect for'. The substantive form (noun) is defined as 'dread or fear, including deferential regard or esteem felt or shown towards a person or thing, or the condition or state of being esteemed or honoured'.

In this chapter I briefly outline some contemporary debates in philosophy, ethics and political economy regarding the nature of respect and self-respect that are salient to sociological inquiry into the functioning of the concepts in everyday social life.[2] In particular, this outline will focus on respect as a relationship between two entities, a subject and an object, in which the subject both identifies the object as needing attention or consideration, and assumes an attitude of deference towards or esteem for the object. I will also survey the possible consequences of the functioning, or lack of functioning of, respect in everyday social life, as an additional approach to investigating the functioning of the concept in everyday social life.

## 1.1      Respect

Dillon (2003) characterises the responsive relation contained in respect as follows:

> Respect is, most generally, a relation between a subject and an object, in which the subject responds to the object from a certain perspective in some appropriate

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[2] This chapter owes its approach to the epistemology of respect and self-respect to Robin S. Dillon (1995, 2003). I do not discuss in this chapter different philosophical accounts of the origins of respect, for example the Kantian perspective which argues that all human beings should be treated with respect because they are an end, possessing innate dignity, rather than a means, vis-à-vis the utilitarian perspective which argues that sentience rather than capacity for rational autonomy forms the ground for respect (Landesmann 1982). This discussion would be more necessary if the dissertation were going to discuss the politics of respect, including issues such as whether respect for others is a moral choice or a right to which every human being is entitled.

way. Respect necessarily has an object: respect is always for, directed toward, paid, to, felt about, shown for some object. While a very wide variety of things can be appropriate objects of one kind of respect or another, the subject of respect is always a person, that is, a conscious rational being capable of recognizing things, being self-conscious, and intentionally responsive to them, and being and expressing values with regard to them' (Dillon 2003: Part 1.1).

Dillon (2002) identifies the common elements in the respecting relationshsip between a subject and an object as attention, deference, valuing and appropriate conduct, and summarises the nature of the activity of respect as follows:

> … respect, most generally, has cognitive dimensions (beliefs, acknowledgments, judgments, deliberations, commitments), affective dimensions (emotions, feelings, ways of experiencing things), and conative dimensions (motivations, dispositions to act and forbear from acting). Some forms of respect also have valuation dimensions. On this analysis, then, respect is, most centrally, an attitude, or more broadly (since additional attitudes might be involved in respecting something), respect is a complex 'way-of-being-towards-something. (Dillon 2003: Part 1.1)

Dillon goes on to outline different approaches to describing the respectful attitude that a person may adopt towards an object. It may be viewed from the perspective of either the subject or the object. Darwall (1977) gives an account of recognition-respect and appraisal-respect as experienced by the subject giving respect.

**Recognition-respect** is based on assessment of factors external to the subject, whereby the subject weighs up in his deliberations some feature of the object and acts accordingly. The subject may be said to *owe* respect to the object.

**Appraisal-respect** is exclusively an attitude of positive appraisal of a person's excellence either as a person or as engaged in some pursuit. It does not call for any action on the part of the subject, nor restrict the subject's range of possible actions. In short, in having appraisal-respect for a person, the subject judges the object to *be deserving of* or *meriting* respect because he manifests excellences of character which are deemed worthy of respect.

Demonstrations of respect by a subject are not always what they seem. One may display recognition-respect without having respect for the object: for example, one may not respect a judge (as a judge) but behave in an appropriately respectful manner in the judge's courtroom in order to avoid being charged with contempt. Similarly, one may have appraisal-respect for a person because the traits that one

respects in the person are useful to some purpose the subject has: such appraisal-respect is instrumental rather than categorical, and therefore not genuine appraisal respect.

Hudson (1980) distinguishes four kinds of respect arising in response to the object or some property possessed by the object – obstacle, directive, institutional or evaluative respect. The first three types have been associated with Darwall's recognition-respect, and evaluative-respect with his appraisal-respect. Although this nesting is philosophically problematic, it helps to clarify the variety of recognition-respects that may be seen to occur within social relationships.

**Obstacle-respect** applies to objects that are barriers or blockages in the path of the subject, obstacles in other words, which the subject must somehow overcome in order to achieve his goal or in order to avoid harm to himself irrespective of goals. You can *show* or *have a healthy* obstacle-respect for an object, in that its observance should help avoid some harmful consequences. You can also *pay* obstacle-respect in that you give careful consideration to the object rather than ignoring it, not owing to social conventions but owing to reason.

**Directive-respect** is given to an object capable of being taken as a guide to action, for example a law or regulation, a request, a command, a wish or piece of advice. As with obstacle-respect, the critical element is the action that the subject takes: this action, conforming or not conforming with the directive, indicates whether the subject has directive-respect for the object. Objects with properties eliciting directive-respect may *demand* respect.

**Institutional-respect** is given to social institutions, offices or positions, to persons or things representing such items, or to persons who fulfil roles defined by such items. It is shown by behaviour conforming to rules of conduct, respectful behaviour. You can *show* institutional-respect and you can *have* institutional-respect. To have institutional-respect is to believe that the object of respect is a good thing to respect, from the point of view of co-operative living. You may also *pay* institutional-respect to someone, because institutional-respect often requires deference.

**Evaluative-respect** is due to a person or to certain characteristics of a person. It involves a favourable attitude towards a person for particular reasons, which may be expressed or unexpressed (just as approval may or may not be expressed). The object of evaluative-respect may *command* respect, in that he attracts respect, or he may *deserve* or *merit* respect through his character or his actions or behaviours. You can *show* evaluative-respect, but it is of a different order from showing institutional-respect: for example, to show institutional-respect to a judge is to engage in the appropriate prescribed behaviours, but to show evaluative-respect you would not engage in respectful behaviour as such, but in actions such as praising the judge, taking his judgements seriously.

Debate concerning the functioning of respect in a social context occurs along a continuum between dignity and character, between seeing the concepts as associated with culture and morality at the one extreme and with emotion and personality at the other. Two Harvard professors have championed the polar opposites.[3] Drawing on the work of Kant and Rawls, Charles Fried (1970) proposes a moral framework within which human beings pursue rational actions and ends. He posits a 'general principle of morality', which is applicable to all rational actions and ends that impinge on other people. This abstract general principle underpins more specific principles, including justice and fairness, which in turn 'score', like a musical score, human beings' rational actions and rational ends. By this means, Fried sees order, coherence and consistency introduced to human beings' lives.

Respect is central to the action of Fried's 'general principle of morality'. He defines respect as 'the disposition to entertain rational principles in accordance with the principle of morality – that is, rational principles which treat other persons implicated in them as ends rather than means' (Fried 1970: 55). Through the working of the principle of morality, a person can recognise in his dealings with others the personality of the other person, can assume that his own rational ends and actions incorporate and are compatible with the rational ends and actions

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[3] Charles Fried, Professor of Law at Harvard, served in numerous roles in the Reagan administration including special assistant to the US attorney general from 1984 to 1985 and

of those with whom he interacts, and he can treat other persons as ends rather than means. Fried goes on to elaborate how this general principle of morality infuses a person's 'life plan' with its associated 'risk budget', and the way in which the individual, guided by the general principle of morality, and respect for others, will calculate the impact of his actions on society's common 'risk pool'.

At the other end of the continuum, Judith Shklar (1984) argues that in liberal democratic societies the pursuit of egalitarianism militates against the functioning of respect as an independent moral concept. She suggests that it is not reasonable to assume that the moral self exists, apart from all social definition, and is therefore deserving of social respect. Rather, the respect that is accorded to the individual self in society tends to be because of the need to regard others as if social standing were a matter of indifference: 'Not all of us are even convinced that all men are even entitled to a certain minimum of social respect. Only some of us think so. But most of us always act as if we really did believe it, and that is what counts' (Shklar 1984: 77). In other words, insofar as respect is socially rather than independently and morally determined, it is hypocritical, but no less useful for being false.

In the chapters that follow examples of the different kinds of respect outlined in this section will be given. Insights into the nature of the social context in which respect functions, and whether and how it is contingent on culture and morality or on emotion and personality, will also be provided.

## 1.2    Self-Respect

Self-respect is of a very different order from respect insofar as the subject and object are one in the same person. Dillon (2002) describes self-respect as something to do with the very structure and attunement of one's life, having at its centre one's sense of one's own worth:

> Like a sense of humour, a sense of worth [self-respect] is a perceptual capacity, that is, a capacity to recognise and understand one's worth (and a lot more besides), and a sensitivity to whatever threatens one's worth and to what might enhance, protect, and sustain it. A sense of worth is also a valuing stance. To have a sense of worth is not simply to recognize that one has worth, but to regard

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solicitor general from October 1985 to January 1989. Judith Shklar, former Professor of Government at Harvard, is noted for her 'dystopic' or 'bare-bones' liberalism (Benhabib 1994).

that fact as mattering a great deal. This makes one's sense of worth motivational: it disposes one to protect one's worth when it is threatened, to confirm it when necessary, to enhance it where possible, and so on. A person's sense of worth is thus an engaged, concernful appreciation of her worth, a lived affirmation of it. It is at the same time not so much self-conscious and affectively present as it is a matter of assumption, construal, perspective, and disposition suffusing one's thinking, feeling, and living. Although in some contexts – as when one's rights are challenged, degradation threatens, or circumstances call for taking stock of oneself – one's worth and sense of worth (or lack thereof) may be at the center of one's thoughts and feelings, in calmer contexts the sense of worth may operate as unconsciously as one's sense of the solidness of the ground: completely taken for granted yet informing every move. (Dillon 1995: 20)

Philosophically, two kinds of self-respect have been elaborated on – one focusing on the dignity of the person and valuing oneself as a human being, and the other focusing on the character of the person and enjoying a favourable attitude towards oneself. Dillon (2003: Part 4.1) distinguishes three kinds of dignity-based recognition self-respect.

**Equality self-respect**, which refers to appreciation of oneself as a person among persons, a member of the moral community with a status and dignity equal to that of every other person in the community simply by virtue of being a person.

**Autonomy or responsibility self-respect**, which leads to an appreciation of oneself as an agent, a being with the ability, responsibility and sufficient control to act autonomously. Persons who respect themselves as agents act in accordance with a standard, which may comprise a purpose, a set of goals, a role that has to be fulfilled, or a combination of all three.

**Identity self-respect** refers to the person's appreciation of the importance of having and living by a conception of life that gives expression to values and commitments as expressed in the pursuits and projects that contribute to an individuals' identity. This kind of self-respect is not based on rights or merit, but on personal standards which may apply only to oneself, and which may be ideals or merely a minimum below which one does not go.

Turning to evaluative self-respect, based on a subjective assessment of one own character, John Rawls (1971) sees it as a 'primary good' in the context of an

egalitarian society, considering it rational for individuals to want no matter what their conception of the good might be. Rawls does not distinguish between self-respect and self-esteem. However, a number of commentators insist on the distinction, tending to see the former in moral and the latter in psychological terms. They suggest, moreover, that Rawls' account of self-respect is in fact an account of self-esteem. Thus, self-esteem is defined as having confidence in one's life plan, whereas self-respect is having a sense of one's own personal worth (Moody-Adams 1992–93: 275); self-esteem may be affected by a wide range of features such as appearance, temperament, wit, physical capacities, while self-respect relates to oneself as a person (Darwall 1977: 194). Originally, William James depicted self-esteem as determined by the ratio of one's successes to one's aspirations: it is regarded as neutral between ends, in that the successful pursuit of any end may enhance a person's sense of self-esteem, and thus a person may enjoy self-esteem and yet be morally reprehensible (Thomas 1983: 255). Arguably, a person worthy of esteem by others is esteemed or admired by those others, but not necessarily respected. Similarly, a loss of self-esteem may lead to a sense of embarrassment (Modigliani 1968), but not necessarily shame, which is associated with a loss of self-respect (Deigh 1983: 134).

**Evaluative self-respect**, as distinct from the Rawlsian self-esteem discussed above, has been described as following from recognition self-respect. A person sets and tries to live by certain standards of worth and then proceeds to assess her merit in terms of the extent to which she has achieved the standards set. Evaluative self-respect contains the judgement that one is or is becoming the worthy kind of person one seeks to be and, more significantly, that one is not in danger of becoming an unworthy kind of person. We earn or lose moral merit and thus deserve or don't deserve evaluative-self-respect: we may or may not 'come up to scratch' (Telfer 1968: 108). Evaluative self-respect matters intensely to the individual concerned and can powerfully affect their self-identity and the shape and structure of their lives. The possibility of losing this evaluative self-respect through some action can lead a person to state, 'I could never respect myself again if I were to …' (Telfer 1968: 108).

In a social context, self-respect seems to be a less contested concept than respect. However, its integrity is often in doubt owing to the pervasive influence of particular 'vices' in modern societies: although self-respect is a sense that we carry with us always, it is activated, generated and maintained, and lost, in social interactions and exchanges with other people, whose self-respect is similarly engaged at such moments. Examples of two vices that can affect the functioning of self-respect are envy and snobbery. Jon Elster (1989a, 1999b) discusses how envy is driven by the individual's need for self-respect:

> The first urge of envy is not 'I want what he has', but 'I want him not to have what he has, because it makes me feel that I am less'. … a weakly envious person does not want anyone to have what he cannot have. A strongly envious person is even willing to give up part of what he has if that is a condition for bringing others down to his level. In both cases, the concern with self-respect is primary, and redistributive concerns are secondary. (Elster 1989a: 253)

Elster outlines two social norms that serve to control this private vice – 'envy avoidance' and 'envy enjoyment'. The first imposes 'rigid uniformity', through means such promoting an egalitarian ethos on members of society, while the second creates the conditions for social co-operation through encouraging individuals to compete, specifically to provoke another's envy, and to thereby elicit a competitive response from them. The functioning of self-respect will be contingent on the efficacy of these social norms in assuaging the emotions aroused by the feeling of envy.

While not questioning the reality of self-respect, as she does the concept of respect, Judith Shklar (1984) suggests that the possibility of self-respect is diminished in modern democratic societies through the pervasive vice of 'snobbery'. She argues that individual achievement, a public attribute, has contributed to enhancing the status and prestige of some individuals over others, while a contrary drive towards pluralism has resulted in the proliferation of groups that include some and exclude others, create insiders and outsiders.  The result of both tendencies is snobbery, which Shklar suggests not only makes 'inequality hurt' but undermines our capacity for self-respect: 'The snob fawns on his superiors and rejects his inferiors. And while he annoys and insults those who have to live with him, he injures himself as well, because he has lost the very possibility of self-respect' (Shklar 1984: 87).

The continual accommodations of conflicting emotions and motivations will be a feature of the account of the functioning of self-respect provided in Chapter 3. As with respect, in the chapters that follow, examples of the different kinds of self-respect outlined in this section will be given.

## 1.3 Consequences of Respecting

The following list highlights positive and negative feelings and emotions regularly linked with respect, which may be regarded as the direct consequences of the functioning of respect. Taylor (1985: 175) suggests that there are more negative emotions connected with a person's integrity, and self-respect, than positive emotions, because the self may be thought of as being in a state of equilibrium and this is affected only by something going wrong: it can be upset but not improved.[4]

### Self-Respect

The most prominent positive consequence associated with the functioning of respect in a social situation – both for the subject and for the object – is self-respect. A person who respects himself, understands and values his moral status and rights as a person, is likely to recognise the same moral status and rights in others. As a result, giving recognition-respect to others is likely to reinforce the giver's own recognition self-respect. When a subject denies recognition-respect to another person, arguably it has the same consequence for the subject as when he gives recognition-respect. By excluding others from the category of those deserving recognition-respect, he is affirming his own moral status and worth. His sense of self-respect is enhanced. The person who receives recognition-respect of the institutional kind will also experience an enhancement of their sense of dignity and self-worth, their recognition self-respect. By the same token, if a person is denied recognition-respect, he will suffer a diminution of his self-respect.

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[4] In describing dominant themes of inmate culture in 'total institutions', Goffman (1961) notes how the inmate 'tends to develop a story, a line, a sad tale – a kind of lamentation and apologia – which he constantly tells to his fellows as a means of accounting for his present low estate' (p. 66), and goes on to observe, '… the more the person's past forces him out of apparent alignment with

**Pride**

Pride (Dillon 2003: Section 4.1) may be associated with recognition self-respect: it may be expressed either through staking a claim to or celebrating one's status as equal to others, or through declining to do something deemed unworthy because it is inconsistent with one's sense of dignity. Pride may also be associated with evaluation self-respect and/or self-esteem: for example, one may take satisfaction or pride in one's achievements, or one may display an excessively high opinion of one's qualities, accomplishments or status. Displays of pride in connection with evaluation self-respect may show one up in a negative light, as arrogant or contemptuous of others.

**Respectability**

There are two distinct categories of meaning of 'respectability' in modern Western society. On the one hand, it connotes deserving respect, or being of acceptable social standing. This category indicates that a person is respected on the basis of his conforming to the socially dominant norms, his possession of socially-approved attributes and behaviours. A person who is deemed respectable in this sense enjoys social acceptance and recognition, legitimacy, affiliations within the wider social group, and competitive advantage, be it in the social, cultural or economic arenas. Potentially, any group may bestow this stamp of respectability on its members – a professional (Macdonald 1989), racial (Gross 1997) or class-based (Waddington 1999) group, or indeed a group of illicit drug users (Faupel 1991: 25–26).

The second, pejorative definition of respectability sees it as relating to something that is primly conventional. A person who is respectable in this sense will tend to follow the prevailing social norms unquestioningly, be conformist and lack individuality.  Robert Louis Stevenson went further, accusing such respectable people of being devoid of moral fibre and craven: '… to do anything because others do it, and not because the thing is good, or kind, or honest in its own right, is to resign all moral control and captaincy upon yourself,… The respectable are not led so much by any desire for applause as by a positive need for countenance.

central moral values, the more often he seems to be  compelled to tell his sad tale …it is among convicts, "winos", and prostitutes that one seems to obtain sad tales the most readily' (p. 140).

The weaker and the tamer the man, the more will he require this support'
(Stevenson 1881).

Respectability in both senses has the properties of being *ad hominem* and
negotiable. It is also exclusionary in that people who do not conform with the
socially determined requirements are omitted from the ranks of the respectable
and, as a result, may suffer from a lack of access to resources, both tangible and
intangible (Waddington 1999).

**Shame**

The converse of pride is shame, which is closely associated with the loss of self-
respect. It is occasioned through failure to reach some standard or goal closely
associated with one's self-conception. It occurs through the agency of the person
who experiences it, rather than through the action of others, which is discussed
below under 'humiliation' and 'stigmatisation'. The precise nature of shame and
its relationship to self-respect is nevertheless contested.

John Rawls (1971) views the person as 'author' of his own worth, through acting
in ways that augment or diminish it. He sees *shame* as a reaction to the loss of
worth and the fear of this loss regulates a person's conduct. Rawls distinguishes
between *natural shame*, which is due to injury to self-esteem owing to failure to
exercise one's excellences. *Regret* may follow from natural shame. *Moral shame*
on the other hand is due to actions or traits that reveal the absence of the
excellences needed to achieve one's life plan. Moral shame arises from failure to
achieve self-command and its attendant excellences of strength, courage and self-
control. *Guilt* arises from realising you have acted wrongly, transgressed the
rights of others.

Other commentators see shame not as a response to loss of self-respect through
personal failure, but as a mechanism for ensuring that when one's sense of worth
is threatened, it remains undamaged and undiminished: shame is a self-protective
emotion. '… it may prevent the person concerned from putting himself into a
certain position, or make him aware he ought not to be in the position in which he
finds himself' (Taylor 1985: 161).Taylor argues that shame occurs when one's

sense of worth is diminished through frustration of one's expectations and the attendant values. She argues that if someone has self-respect, she will under certain circumstances also feel shame, but if she has no self-respect she will not regard any circumstances as shame-producing: 'Loss of self-respect and loss of the capacity for feeling shame go hand in hand' (Taylor 1985: 161).

Alternatively, Deigh (1983) suggests that a sense of self-worth is predicated not so much on what you do, as on what you are, on your identity, be it based on class, gender, race, culture or occupation. A betrayal of this identity, and the threat of demeaning treatment by others as a result, can lead to feelings of shame. The shame acts as a form of 'self-control that works to restrain one from giving the appearance of lesser worth and self-respect that works to cover up shameful things that, having come to light, give one such appearance' (Deigh 1983: 152). This kind of shame is often manifested in acts of concealment, for example covering one's face, hiding from others, or blushing.

## Humiliation

Unlike shame, humiliation is inflicted on a person by some other person or persons. It is a loss of dignity owing to the agency of some other. Goffman describes its effect in his account of the experience of a person (inmate) entering a 'total institution':

> The recruit comes into the establishment with a conception of himself made possible by certain stable social arrangements in his home world. Upon entrance, he is immediately stripped of the support provided by these arrangements. In the accurate language of some of our oldest total institutions, he begins a series of abasements, degradations, humiliations, and profanations of self. His self is systematically, if often unintentionally, mortified. (Goffman 1961a: 24)

It is argued that humiliation leads to loss of self-esteem rather than self-respect. When a person believes that she does not get the recognition she ought to have, that she deserves better than she gets, this does not lead to a loss of self-respect unless she thinks that she is worth less than she was on account of having been humiliated (Taylor 1995, p. 159, 174).

**Stigmatisation**

A person is stigmatised through being perceived, and behaving, as having a stigma, which is defined as 'any condition, attribution, trait, or behaviour that symbolically marks the bearer off as "culturally unacceptable" or "inferior" and has as its subjective referent the notion of shame or disgrace' (Williams 2000: 213–214). The stigma may be physical, behavioural or cultural, and it may be immediately obvious to others or it may not be immediately discernible.

Stigmatisation has been the subject of considerable deliberation (Goffman 1967; Page 1984), and the results of this activity indicate that a form of recognition-respect, which focuses on distinguishing between 'normal' and 'non-normal', is at play within the process of stigmatisation. A person who perceives and treats another as having a stigma may do so either intentionally or unintentionally. Unintentional stigmatisation occurs particularly with physical stigma, where the non-stigmatised may be over-sympathetic to the person with the perceived stigma or may ignore the person completely owing to embarrassment.

A person with a stigma may recognise the stigma directly or through observing the reactions of others. For example, over-compensation by others for a physical stigma, or adverse comments by others regarding one's cultural practices, may alert a person to being different. Reactions to finding themselves stigmatised vary from person to person: some become angry, others feel humiliated.

People's actions subsequent to acknowledging themselves as stigmatised also vary. Some may accept the possession of the stigma and undertake to make changes in order to return to a state of 'normalcy'; others may reject the stigmatisation but fail to do anything to alter the situation; yet others may either individually or collectively challenge the stigmatisation, and reject the prevailing social norms by establishing their own alternative norm.

## 1.4    Concluding Remarks

Respect refers to a process by means of which a person attaches a social value to another person. Two particular features of respect affect how the sociologist may

investigate its functioning in everyday social life. Firstly, it is a function of social relations and interactions. It requires both a subject, to give or withdraw respect, and an object, to receive or lose respect. Secondly, respect is a public and accessible process. The subject's activities of attending, deferring, valuing and pursuing a particular course of conduct, and the object's responses, such as pride or shame, may be observed by the social researcher.

Self-respect is a person's sense of self-worth. Although a rational process like respecting, the activity of respecting oneself occurs in a very different manner from the activity of respecting. The activities that go into forming a person's sense of self-respect are private functions. Self-respect may, however, be inferred from public demonstrations. Although usually unspoken, it may be actualised in 'moments of truth', such as when a person makes a decision consistent with her values and beliefs, takes steps to gain control of her life, wins status, prestige and recognition from others, commits to some pursuit whose accomplishment gives a sense of pride, or performs some act indicating respect for another.

Studying the functioning of respect and self-respect in social contexts may be complicated by several contingencies. For example, respect may be intentionally false, being displayed in order to achieve some ulterior purpose, be it to avoid some eventuality or to achieve a particular outcome. Self-respect may not logically be subject to deliberate falsification, but it may fall prey to being compromised, as when a person diminishes their self-respect through disrespecting another person (being a snob), or when a person inadvertently has a false sense of self-respect owing to self-delusion. Furthermore, negative respect, for example absences or failures of respect in social life, has been found to be more easily observable than evidence of the positive functioning of the concepts, although this phenomenon may be the result of observer bias or failure to look for evidence pertaining to positive respect and self-respect.

# CHAPTER 2: RESPECT –
# VALUING PEOPLE OR JOINING THE 'IN' CROWD

## 2.0    Introduction

At the conclusion of Chapter 1, respect was defined, for the purposes of sociological investigation, as the means by which a person attaches a social value to another person. It was also noted that aspects of this process can be observed occurring in public, in interactions between people, in the conduct of people towards other people, as evidenced for example in stigmatisation, and in behaviours conveying feelings of pride or shame. In this chapter research approaches that serve to reveal the functioning of respect in social interactions, and the ways in which social structures and constraints affect the functioning of respect in everyday social life, are explored.

## 2.1    Rules of Conduct

The work of Erving Goffman on the interaction order provides a way into the question of how respect occurs in social interactions. His essay 'The Nature of Deference and Demeanour' (1967), which provides a road map of the ceremonial 'rules of conduct' that bind individuals together and into the wider society, may be read as an account specifically of how respect functions in face-to-face interactions.

Goffman's 'rules of conduct' provide a guide for 'suitable and just actions'. They generate a set of obligations and expectations for each actor, which are based on a particular image of self. Acts that are subject to these rules are termed communications, confirmations and expressions of the image of the self. The self that is so expressed is not the total person but 'a special capacity, a status'.

Bypassing 'substantive' rules of conduct, embodied in laws, morality and ethics, which he sees as having significance in their own right, Goffman focuses on 'ceremonial' rules of conduct. These rules are a conventionalised means of communication by which an individual expresses his character or conveys his

appreciation of other participants in a face-to-face interaction. Described with Goffman's customary Proust-like eye for detail, the enactment of these rules amounts to an elaborate and intricate *pas de deux*, the results of which confirm each dancer's status in society and bind them into the wider social network. The two principal routines are deference and demeanour, in which both actors engage.

Deference is defined as 'that component of activity which functions as a symbolic means by which appreciation is regularly conveyed *to* a recipient *of* this recipient, or of something of which this recipient is taken as a symbol, extension or agent' (p. 56), in other words recognition-respect. Although a person may desire, earn or deserve deference, Goffman notes that he may not give it to himself: he must seek it from others. The giving of deference is based on two considerations. Firstly, the giver must have regard for the recipient, and this regard may derive from 'respectful awe', or from capacity-esteem, or feelings of trust or affection and belongingness. Regard may be feigned. A person may simply give it to someone because he is 'an instance of a category, or a representative of something, and that they are giving him his due not because of what they think of him "personally" but in spite of it. … By easily showing a regard he does not have, the actor can feel that he is preserving a kind of inner autonomy, holding off the ceremonial order by the very act of upholding it' (p. 58). A corollary of this is that people should accept signs of deference without making a direct appeal to the honorific definitions of a situation. Secondly, the person who defers is making a type of promise, expressing his pledge to treat the recipient in a certain way in the future that is consistent with the image of self that the recipient has built through his application of the ceremonial rules of conduct.

Goffman details two kinds of contradictory deference rituals – avoidance and presentational. Avoidance rituals may include keeping an appropriate social distance from the recipient, avoiding certain topics of conversation. Presentational rituals include choosing the appropriate form of greeting or performing small services that attest to how he regards the recipient.

The second routine, demeanour, is defined as 'that element of the individual's ceremonial behaviour typically conveyed through deportment, dress and bearing,

which serves to express to those in his immediate presence that he is a person of certain desirable or undesirable qualities' (p. 77). Notwithstanding the individual's choice of dress and bearing, other people determine a person's demeanour by interpreting the way a person handles himself in social intercourse. A person cannot simply announce or behave as if he possesses a particular kind of demeanour, although such attempts may lead others to impute such attributes to him. A person who fails to adopt a demeanour may be accused of having no self-respect or holding himself too cheaply in his own eyes.

The two following passages, taken from a newsletter published for drug users in Dublin, indicate how importantly two heroin users consider the interaction rituals that they experience when attending drug treatment clinics, and in particular the manner in which deference is shown to them, and the implications of these presentational and avoidance rituals for establishing whether respect is present in the interactions:

> Cork Street [a drug treatment centre] is absolutely fabulous. They have the utmost respect for people down there. When I was in Castle Street a few of the Porters (now called General Assistants) were a bit cheeky but down in Cork Street, when you go in the morning time, they offer you tea and everything. You notice a complete difference. Each Christmas they have parties and buy presents for the kids. The Doctors are very good; they really helped me out a lot and I feel that everything I say is confidential. … Overall, Cork Street are very good with people and treat them with a lot of respect. (*Brass Munkie* 2000: 4)

> No thought goes into why the person has slipped [used benzodiazepines, cocaine or opiates], no excuses are entertained and no help is offered. Just punishment and dire warnings. Even if you are doing well, and have been 'clean' for 6 or 9 months, there is no encouragement. But as soon as you slip it's 'oh, and you were doing so well!' Why isn't there encouragement for those 'doing so well'? Admittedly, you can earn 'takeaways' (methadone for self-administration] for 'being good', but slip once and you are back to square one. (*Brass Munkie* 2000: 3)

In describing the analytical relation between deference and demeanour, Goffman emphasises that they are separate activities, both performed by each individual in a complementary but interdependent relationship. Thus, in displaying a demeanour, person A adopts behaviours that point to the qualities associated with the social position he holds and that facilitate person B in adopting a deferential response appropriate to A's social position. In adopting a deferential manner towards A, B displays attitudes and behaviours that reflect his own social position

vis-à-vis the social position that she perceives A to hold. As Goffman puts it, '
…the image of himself the individual owes it to others to maintain through his
conduct [his 'demeanour image'] is a kind of justification and compensation for
the image of him that others are obliged to express through their deference to him
[their 'deference image']. Each of the two images in fact may act as a guarantee
and check upon the other' (p. 83). In this 'joint ceremonial labour' that produces
deference and demeanour, no person can be the sole author of their own 'respect-
standing'.[5] Each person can only paint certain parts of the picture (their
demeanour image), while allowing others to complete the picture through the
deference that they are enabled to show in response to the person's demeanour
image (their deference image).

In the mid-1960s symbolic interaction theorist Herbert Blumer (1967) led a
research study into drug use among young, disadvantaged people in Oakland,
California. Involving over 200 young people in all, the research was based on
extensive personal interviews, delving into the interviewees' life history
experiences, with each of the 40-odd central figures in the study, some psycho-
drama and participant observation.[6] The objective was to develop a realistic
picture of youthful drug use and ascertain how such use was incorporated in the
general round of life of those who used drugs.

Describing four distinct categories of youthful drug users, Blumer describes what
amount to demeanour and deference routines, which also serve to indicate the way
in which respect functions in this world of youthful drug users. For example, the
adolescent 'rowdy dudes' are recognisable by their distinctive 'demeanour image'
– 'impulsive and unrestrained expressions of violence, often in public,

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[5] Wolff (1998) defines 'respect-standing' as 'the degree of respect other people have for me. If I
am treated with contempt this will lead me to believe that I have low respect-standing; if treated
decently I will believe that my respect-standing is high. It is *insulting* to be treated as if one is of
lower respect-standing than is due, and *demeaning* to do, or be required to do, anything that might
reasonably be expected to lower your respect-standing' (Wolff 1998: 107; italics in original).
[6] The research project gathered information on matters such as how youngsters got into drug use; conditions
and situations under which they use drugs; variations in drug use between different types of groups; lines of
progression in the use of drugs; different types of drug users and different types of drug involvement; how
drug use was viewed; self-conceptions; experiences of using drugs; their views of non-drug-users;
experiences with family members, school officials and police officials regarding drug use; obtaining and
distributing drugs; the extent of their drug use; place of drugs in the general routine of their life; their views
on the illegal status of drugs and the risks to which that exposes them (Blumer 1967: 9).

aggressiveness, drinking, and use of drugs' (p. 17). Others adopt a 'deference image' characterised by Blumer as 'shunning the rowdy dudes' – 'Outside their own ranks they tend to be excluded from parties, dances, social gatherings and intimate association. Even youngsters fairly close to them will shy away from engaging in their escapades through fear of getting into trouble or being arrested' (p. 22). The rowdy dudes are also a marked target for punitive action by the authorities and as a result are largely excluded from getting access to the drug market, for fear of drawing others to the attention of the police. These demeanour/deference routines are indicative of the functioning of recognition obstacle-respect.

Among the various types that Blumer identifies within the 'cool' population, the 'pot head' displays perhaps the coolest 'demeanour image', which may be expected to command considerable recognition institutional-respect from his peers, expressed through appropriate 'deference demeanours':

> The average weed head among Oakland youth is respected by other adolescents from different social class backgrounds. In his daily life contacts he projects an image of a calm, sensible, solitary figure, soft-spoken and personable. He takes great pride in his appearance, … Many girls admire him, although he may have many steady girlfriends. Interwoven with his speech pattern is a colorful vocabulary of drug argot, combined with slight hand gestures and facial expressions which make him appear loose, good-natured, and self-confident. When strolling down the street, his eyes continually dart about. His sensitivity to police is remarkable. Above all he believes himself to be colorful, intelligent, daring, profoundly aware of the street scene, in complete self-control, and most important, a unique person worthy of respect. Although lodged in areas where violence may readily occur, he will resort to violence only if 'pushed' or 'sounded on' to the point where he must defend his self-respect. (p. 32)

Two recently-published resource documents recommending protocols for providing methadone substitution treatment for heroin users, prepared for treatment providers, indicate how the steps of this ceremonial dance of deference and demeanour may be conducted between members of different socio-economic groups – heroin addicts and medical professionals. *Best Practices: Methadone Maintenance Treatment* (Jamieson, Beals, Lalonde and Associates Inc 2002), published in Canada, outlines the 'rules of conduct' for interactions between a range of different treatment professionals and the drug user, who may be either a patient or a client. Treatment professionals are recommended to adopt a 'client/patient centred approach' that would include:

- recognizing and accepting that each person who is dependent on opioids who enters treatment does so with widely varying experiences, expectations and needs;
- recognizing the impact of marginalisation and emphasizing empowerment;
- respecting clients'/patients' dignity;
- respecting clients'/patients' choices, particularly concerning their treatment goals;
- encouraging and facilitating client/patient involvement in decision-making at the individual and program levels;
- fostering a collaborative, relationship-building approach between clients/patients and program team members. (Jamieson et al. 2002: 22)

This 'client/patient centred approach' indicates the potential for a symmetrical or balanced relationship between treatment provider and client/patient in terms of showing recognition-respect for one another, as the treatment provider is recommended to develop a 'deference image' that emphasises recognition and respect for the other's status as client/patient, and in response the client/patient may be expected to adopt a 'deference image' that will see them participating in decision-making and collaborating in their own treatment.

The clinical guidelines produced by the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP), on the other hand, indicate that, in Goffman's terms, an asymmetrical relationship between treatment provider and drug user has the potential develop if the guidelines are implemented to the letter. Intended for use by GPs managing patients in the primary care setting, the aim of the guidelines is to facilitate GPs in providing 'safe and effective care for drug dependent patients'. The guidelines comment, 'Drug users respond best to care and concern on the one hand and firm and consistent boundaries on the other. In order to provide such boundaries, practices may benefit from an agreed written policy about working with drug users' (ICGP 2003: 8). An appendix to the guidelines includes a sample written policy to be signed by the patient and doctor. In relation to conduct, it addresses the drug user as follows:

> You are now receiving a regular prescription for addictive medication and we ask you to accept the following conditions and behave respectfully towards practice staff.
> 1. I agree to attend appointments promptly and quietly.
> 2. I agree to attend my appointment unaccompanied whenever possible.
> 3. I agree not to upset the Receptionist or other patients in the waiting room.
> Behaviour outside these limits may result in the Receptionist or the Doctor asking you to leave the Surgery premises. …
> I have read the above conditions, I understand what they mean and I agree to abide by them. If I do not abide by these rules then I understand that certain sanctions may be imposed. I understand that these sanctions are at the discretion of the Doctor … (ICGP 2003: 44)

This sample agreement recommends an initial 'deference image' towards the drug user based on the assumption that the drug user's initial 'demeanour image' will be disrespectful and disruptive. Applying Goffman's analysis, it is possible to speculate how such an asymmetrical starting point will lead to a spiralling mutual display of disrespect, as the drug user adjusts his 'demeanour image' in response to the 'deference' shown to him.

## 2.2 Seeking Recognition and Acceptance

While the focus in this section remains on the individual person, attention shifts from face-to-face interaction to interactions with others as social groupings. It looks at the efforts of both drug users and also social researchers to gain social acceptance and recognition, i.e. recognition-respect, for drug users as human beings.

In a classic study of 'outsiders', Becker (1963) reports on interviews with 50 marijuana users, in which he focuses on the respondents' 'career' in marijuana use,[7] changes in their attitude toward marijuana and their actual use of it, and the reasons for these changes. To explain this career progression, he uses a sequential, three-stage model whereby a person becomes 'labelled' a deviant as a result of processes involving responses from other people. Becker's account incidentally describes how the concept of respect plays a part throughout this labelling process, as the person seeks respect from various sources.

1. A person commits a 'non-conforming act', that is, an act which breaks some rule of society, such as consuming marijuana. The person may only commit the act once, or she may continue to commit it over a long period of time. In the latter case, she develops 'deviant motives and interests' (p. 30) through a process of learning from others, insiders, the pleasures and rewards of the activity. Becker notes that, in this initial stage, the marijuana user tries to conceal her drug use from those in the outsider group whose respect and acceptance she requires both practically and emotionally (pp. 66–67).

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[7] See Chapter 3.1 for a discussion of the application of the career framework to the lives of drug users.

2. When the person is publicly exposed, or caught, engaging in the non-conforming act, she is labelled a deviant. Being branded deviant has important consequences for the person's future social participation: 'Committing the improper act and being publicly caught at it place him in a new status. He has been revealed as a different kind of person from the kind he was supposed to be. He is labeled a "fairy", "dope fiend", "nut" or "lunatic", and treated accordingly' (p. 32). Becker reports on research,[8] which found '…that drug addicts frequently attempt to cure themselves and that the motivation underlying their attempts is an effort to show non-addicts whose opinions they respect that they are really not as bad as they are thought to be. On breaking their habit successfully, they find, to their dismay, that people still treat them as though they were addicts (on the premise, apparently, of "once a junkie, always a junkie")' (p. 37).

3. Continuing with her non-conforming act, the person moves into an organised, deviant community of like-minded people. She transfers her moral allegiances to the insider drug-using group, which has rejected as inaccurate society's stereotype of the drug user as a 'dope fiend', one who is a slave to a drug and weak-willed, and cannot manage her own welfare or control her behaviour rationally. Furthermore, the deviant group rationalises its position, both justifying its own activities and repudiating conventional moral rules and institutions. Reporting on a study of the culture of a deviant group, jazz musicians in Chicago, and their occupational careers, Becker (1963: Ch. 5–6) makes regular reference to the importance of maintaining respect for their calling as a motivation underpinning their behaviours towards themselves and towards outsiders.

In a paper, 'Labelling Theory Reconsidered', first presented in 1971 and printed in subsequent editions of *Outsiders*, Becker rejects the claim that 'labelling' constitutes a 'theory' (cf. Williams 1976). Becker argues that the labelling approach does not seek to explain deviant behaviours such as illicit drug use so much as 'enlarge the area taken into consideration in the study of deviant phenomena by including in it activities of others than the allegedly deviant actor'

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[8] Marsh Ray. 1961. 'The Cycle of Abstinence and Relapse among Heroin Addicts'. *Social Problems* 9 (Fall): 132–140.

(Becker 1963: 179). Becker renames the approach 'an interactionist theory of deviance' (p. 181), in which he emphasises the value of regarding deviance as 'collective action'.

In exploring the potential of exploring deviance as collective action, Becker highlights an important feature relevant to the investigation of the functioning of respect: 'When we see deviance as collective action, we immediately see that people act with an eye to the responses of others involved in that action. They take into account the way their fellows will evaluate what they do, and how that evaluation will affect their prestige and rank' (p. 183). He cites as an example the way in which delinquents may deliberately get into trouble 'because they wanted to maintain the positions of esteem they held in their gangs'. Elsewhere he discusses how members of mainstream occupations and professions (e.g. janitors, musicians, lawyers, physicians) all feel the need to justify their work and win the respect of others. He discusses the double bind of the law enforcement agent or rule enforcer, the person who apprehends people engaged in illegal activities such as drug dealing or drug use. On the one hand, the rule enforcer must demonstrate to others that the 'problem' she is employed to deal with still exists and therefore her services are still required; on the other hand, she must show that her efforts are paying dividends, that the problem is approaching solution through her agency. She will seek to gain recognition institutional-respect for her position through promoting these messages, and also through giving off a pessimistic view of the state of the world and scepticism regarding the prospects of attempts to reform rule-breakers. In presenting to the rule breakers themselves, she will seek to 'demand' their recognition (obstacle- or directive-) respect:

> … a rule enforcer is likely to believe that it is necessary for the people he deals with to respect him. If they do not, it will be very difficult to do his job; his feeling of security in his work will be lost. Therefore, a good deal of enforcement activity is devoted not to the actual enforcement of rules, but to coercing respect from the people the enforcer deals with. This means that one may be labeled as deviant not because he has actually broken a rule, but because he has shown disrespect to the enforcer of the rule' (p. 158).

Members of the symbolic interactionist tradition in sociology have been vocal in proclaiming the need for a respectful relationship between researcher and researched. Blumer (1967:9) emphasises the need to win the respect of his

youthful drug-using research subjects. In order to get 'frank and honest accounts' about their experiences, he needed to overcome the suspicion and distrust of the youths and reduce the temptation for them to 'con' outsiders by deliberately fooling them or by compliantly supplying the kinds of answers they thought the investigators wanted. Proponents of the career framework approach to studying drug users, an approach also associated with the symbolic interactionist perspective (see Chapter 3.1), also proclaim the need to respect drug users: 'Little progress will be made as long as policy makers and helping professionals continue to define drug users as inherently deficient people – sick, inept, unambitious, or incorrigible. Drug initiates must be seen for what they are, normal people from all strata of American society who find more rewards in using drugs than in refraining from them' (Coombs 1981: 385). The more usual association of 'career' with 'respectable' occupations, particularly the professions, is not lost on these researchers (Coombs 1981; Klingemann 1999).

The authors of these studies of drug use as a career, target medical, psycho-social and criminal justice models of explanation of drug misuse and misusers. Focusing on the individual pathology of drug users, the authors of these latter types of study are criticised for tending to adjudge drug addicts as ill, socially maladjusted, hostile, immature, dependent, manipulative, or narcissistic (Rubington 1967; Feldman 1968; Coombs 1981: 369). The authors of such studies, moreover, are ridiculed for failing to move out of their own environments into that of the drug user in order to gather data within the context of the drug users' wider socio-economic environment (Feldman 1968; Coombs 1981). Sociological studies that take individual agency as their starting point, depicting the drug user as 'retreatist' or 'weak-willed' are likewise condemned (Preble and Casey 1967: 2), as is failure to acknowledge the relationship between social structural constraints and individual failure (Feldman 1968: 131; Bourgois 2002: 15).

These criticisms serve to expand the discussion on respect between persons to consider how the social status, cultural norms and values, and resources available to different social actors, both professional researchers and members of a socially-excluded group such as drug users, influence the way respect functions in their lives, and by extension in the research process. Becker (1967), for example,

suggests that by studying a situation such as illegal drug use from the perspective of the drug users, the law breakers, 'we provoke the charge of bias, in ourselves and others, by refusing to give credence and deference to an established status order, in which knowledge of truth and the right to be heard are not equally distributed. … By refusing to accept the hierarchy of credibility, we express disrespect for the entire established order' (pp. 241–242).

## 2.3    Social Structures and Structural Constraints

In his essay on deference and demeanour, Goffman (1967: 91) observes: 'The environment must ensure that the individual will not pay too high a price for acting with good demeanour and that deference will be accorded him. Deference and demeanour practices must be institutionalised so that the individual will be able to project a viable, sacred self and stay in the game on a proper ritual basis'. In this section attention shifts from investigating the role of the individual in seeking and giving respect to focusing on the investigation of the influence of social structures and structural constraints on the functioning of respect in social interactions.

### Social Structures

In the early 1980s, a Heroin Life Study (HLS) of untreated, inner-city Black male heroin users was conducted in ghettos in Chicago, New York, Washington DC and Philadelphia. A total of 124 men took part in open-ended, in-depth interviews conducted by former heroin addicts trained in interviewing (Hanson, Beschner, Walters and Bovelle 1985). The purpose was to gain a better understanding of these respondents through questions such as, How did they typically spend their days? How did they perceive their own world and the social world around them? How and with whom did they socialise? From whom did they obtain money and win peer respect? Why did they start using heroin and how much did they use on a regular basis? How did shooting heroin and being 'high' actually make them feel? Why did they continue to use? How did they remain treatment free? Different authors wrote different chapters of the report, analysing the interview transcripts from their own expert perspective.

In the following paragraphs I provide a summary of the findings of the HLS, highlighting the areas where the authors refer to the functioning of respect in the lives of the research subjects. I set this summary in the context of the work of Robert K. Merton on social structures, focusing on the concepts of status and role-set, anomie and deviance, and conflict, which point to the kinds of social mechanisms that may facilitate the functioning of respect, and disrespect, in social life.

Merton (1957) proposes two interdependent social mechanisms – 'status-sets' and 'role-sets' – as a means of understanding how an individual occupying a particular status can satisfy his expectations within the social structure while avoiding conflict that could frustrate the achievement of his expectations or ends. Status is understood as the position in a social system that a person occupies, and as a determinant of the recognition-respect that a person may expect. A 'status-set' consists of all the statuses that a person may occupy, for example physician, husband, father, professor, and Conservative party member. In relation to each status that a person occupies, he plays a series of roles, a 'role-set', for example the medical student will act out the role of student vis-à-vis teachers, other students, physicians, nurses, social workers, medical technicians and so on. The challenge for the occupier of a status and its accompanying role-set is to reduce the potential for disturbance in his role-set, to manage the expectations of the others, who may have differing expectations. The expectations of these others will be influenced by their own expectations as occupants of other statuses, which may be located in different and competing positions in the social structure.

Merton identifies six mechanisms that articulate the functioning of role-sets, some of which involve the functioning of respect.[9] It is the sixth mechanism, 'abridging

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[9] The six mechanisms outlined by Merton (1938) include: (1) *Relative importance of various statuses* occurs when different members of the role-set place different priority on the performance of the status occupant, thus mitigating the extent of interference in the achievement of ends. These people may be said to respect the status of the status occupant. (2) *Differences of power of those in the role-set* occurs when some members of the role-set may have more power than others, and coalitions may form that reduce the distorting effect of the most powerful member. (3) *Insulation of role-activities from observability by members of the role-set* occurs when members trust, and respect, the status occupant sufficiently to allow him autonomy in carrying out his role. (4) *Observability of conflicting demands between members of a role-set* is loosely connected with the first mechanism. Merton suggests that when such conflict surfaces, it is incumbent on the members of the role-set, rather than the status occupant, to resolve the differences. (5) *Mutual support*

the role-set', whereby the status occupant breaks off ties with members of his role-set, that appears to have been chosen by the research subjects interviewed as part of the Heroin Life Study (HLS). Merton suggests that this response is generally unusual, only possible under special and limited conditions, such as when the status-occupant can carry on his roles without the support of those in the role-set. The research subjects in the HLS appear to have chose this option as a means of reducing exposure to disrespect from members of their role-set

Shifting his attention from the individual in the social structure to the influence of cultural values and norms, Merton (1938) analyses how individuals' responses to and implementation of two elements of cultural structure – (1) goals, purposes and interests, and (2) norms such as regulations, rooted in social mores or institutions, of allowable procedures for moving towards the culturally-defined objectives – determine how individuals become located within the social structure. These two variables function independently of one another but jointly influence the way in which society functions, and determine the extent to which a society may be anomic, or normless. The outcome has consequences for the functioning of respect in these social structures. Merton outlines three main possibilities:

1. Strong cultural goals may be associated with clear, institutionally-prescribed norms for achieving them. This results in social equilibrium, and integrated, and relatively stable, though changing, societies, in which satisfactions accrue to all actors through the realisation of goals reached through institutionally-determined means of attaining them. Mutual respect may be expected to flourish in these conditions of social equilibrium: 'The distribution of statuses through competition must be so organized that positive incentives for adherence status obligations are provided *for every position* within the distributive order' (p. 134; italics in original).

2. Institutionally prescribed norms and conduct may become an end in themselves, without reference to any cultural goals. As a result, ritual prevails,

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*among status occupants* refers to the formation of associations among members of the same social status in order to cope with the conflicting demands of those in the role-set of the status. By this means, isolated individuals may curb the pressures exerted on them, by reference to the normative support of their peers. Becker's account (see Chapter 2.2) of how marijuana users become aligned with other marijuana users shows how these 'insiders' maintain respect among themselves. (6) *Abridging the role-set* occurs when the status occupant breaks off ties with the members of his role-set, thereby avoiding adverse experience such as shame or humiliation.

conformity, and intolerance, become central values and the scope for flexibility shrinks. The grounds for respect between persons in such an environment may be expected to become correspondingly narrow and rigid, resulting in a premium being placed on 'respectability' and a corresponding tendency to condemn those who break the rules as being unworthy of respect

3. Strong cultural goals may not be accompanied by serious concern over the means for achieving them. This may lead individuals to centre their emotional convictions on the complex of culturally-acclaimed ends, with far less emotional support for prescribed methods of reaching those ends. In such social circumstances, it may be expected that individuals will seek respect by reference to achievement of the cultural goals, and where they fail, they will seek respect by reference to smaller groupings of other individuals who have similarly failed.

Merton identifies contemporary (late 1930s) American culture as approximating to the third type. He identifies money as an important symbol of success in American culture, suggesting that, 'The anonymity of an urban society, in conjunction with these peculiarities of money, permits wealth, the sources of which may be unknown to the community in which the plutocrat lives, or, if known, to become purified in the course of time, to serve as a symbol of high status. … Prestigeful representatives of the society reinforce the cultural emphasis' (p. 136). Focusing on this third possibility, Merton explores how individuals living in this cultural context respond. His analysis of five possible adaptations – conformism, innovation, ritualism, retreatism, or rebellion – is useful in understanding the lives of inner-city Black male heroin users living in ghettos in Chicago, New York, Washington DC and Philadelphia in the early 1980s, and in particular, how they maintain respect.

In the Heroin Life Study (HLS), the concept of respect figures in the research subjects' accounts of their drug-using careers – taking care of business (the routine of the heroin user), hustling (supporting a heroin habit), and the experience of living with heroin. One author sums it up: 'In an impoverished

world with little to look forward to, these men have heroin to organize their mundane lives and reward them for another day survived. Lives measured not by stages or five-year plans. Lives where men find some small measure of justly felt pride and self-respect in their stamina and skills to make one-day plans, to arrange one-day lives' (Hanson et al. 1985: 48).

The HLS interview schedule contained open-ended questions designed to elicit how the respondents felt about themselves, their lives, and the straight (non-heroin-using) world around them.[10] Analysis of the responses revealed that while the men express regrets about their dependency, and admit a desire to stop or reduce it, they also maintain 'a sense of self-respect', which the author characterises as follows, 'Many have great expectations for themselves. Although they feel frustrated at their lack of success in meeting these expectations, they still feel they have control over their lives. Some achieve a sense of mastery over their lives, …' (p. 135) The men are perceived to occupy, by preference, a space between the straight world and the world of the street: '… the HLS men's involvement with heroin is not a simple choice of whether or not to use a drug. It's a choice between lifestyles, that of the street or that of the straight world. Both worlds seem to offer attractive rewards, as well as threats and complications … [which] are about equal in both worlds. Hence, these men seem partially committed to and partially repelled by their involvement in each of the two worlds' (p. 150). In pursuit of their chosen life, these men are depicted as both having goals and exercising control. They have two 'normative goals', one to survive flirting with the dangers and experiencing the thrill of heroin use and/or life on the street, and one to realise dreams such as home, family, education and employment (p. 150). Control of their lives is maintained through managing their habit rather than letting it rule them; taking care of their personal appearance so that they do not appear down-and-out junkies; and avoiding treatment, where they would feel they had lost their freedom of action, sense of personal responsibility and self-esteem (Hanson et al. 1985: 178–9).

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[10] Questions included: What degree of control do you think you have over the events in your life? What changes, if any, in your feelings about yourself have occurred since you began using heroin?

Steering a course between the straight world and life on the street, the men live a life characterised by conflict and ambiguity. As well as seeking to maintain self-respect, the study describes the men's need to preserve their self-esteem and self-identity in this unstable environment.[11] They take up heroin use out of curiosity, to enhance their status among their peer group, to escape the pressures of their world, and to achieve 'normalcy' through an increased sense of well-being and competency; through heroin use they acquire companionship, self-strength and relief from personal distress – 'experiences which might be considered very basic to self-esteem' (Hanson et al. 1985: 142). The men use a distinctive argot, or specialised in-group language, with its own terms, phrases, metaphors, constructions and speech patterns: the author sees this not so much as an act of exclusion of, and hostility towards, outsiders (although this may be an ancillary function) as an opportunity to label shared experiences, to provide information and establish status within the community, and to promote a sense of identity in a community stigmatised by society: 'it is a bonding, self-defensive and protective device' (Hanson et al. 1985: 132).

To return to Merton, the HLS account of how the research respondents have located themselves in the urban American social structure, suggests a location straddling two of Merton's categories – retreatism and innovation. On the one hand, they have assimilated the cultural goals and institutional practices of society but, recognising that they will not achieve wealth-based social status in the straight world, they have retreated into a world of their own making, half-way between the straight world and the street world. The abridgement of their role-set, avoiding professional help for their drug addiction, in order to avoid stigmatisation, also suggests retreat. However, they have also displayed ingenuity, and innovation, in rejecting the straight world's normative expectation that they should cease heroin use in order to succeed in life. Merton points out that the retreatist option entails loss of respect by the wider society, while the innovator option carries the possibility of sneaking respect, and this appears to reflect the

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How would you say straight society in general views heroin addicts? Think about straight people you actually know – even your own family. How do they regard you and your use of heroin?
[11] The authors also make reference to the concept of 'self-esteem'. I assume that they make a similar distinction between self-respect and self-esteem as that outlined in Chapter 1.2.

position the research subjects find themselves in, certainly vis-à-vis the researchers:

> In public and ceremonial society, this type of deviant behaviour [retreatism] is most heartily condemned by conventional representatives of the society. … in contrast to the innovator who is at least 'smart' and actively striving, he sees no value in the success-goal which the culture prizes so highly. (Merton 1938: 149)

Merton's analysis of anomie and social structure may be applied to several of the research studies discussed elsewhere in this dissertation. For example, the 'outsiders' analysed by Becker (1963) and the crack dealers of East Harlem in New York City (Bourgois 2003), both discussed in this chapter, may be viewed as 'retreatist'. Thye find respect among their own kind. Terry Williams' (1991) 'cocaine kids', who are heavily involved in drug dealing but who see it as a stepping-stone to getting ahead in the straight world (see Chapter 4.), may be viewed as innovators, who are planning to become conformists.

In concluding, the authors of the HLS use the research subjects' experience of undergoing treatment to cease heroin use to highlight the importance of respect in the lives of the men:

> HLS men gain a sense of self by participating in the heroin lifestyle, and enjoy a certain kind of respect in the ghetto community; they lose this when they abandon heroin for the treatment setting: … In short, heroin provides users with an organizing principle for everyday life and offers the rewards of feeling normal. … How can the treatment system compete with the perceived benefits of the heroin lifestyle? Can it offer these men a heroin-free lifestyle with dignity, feelings of self-worth, a sense of purpose? What kind of intervention will – as the heroin lifestyle often does – provide structure for daily activities, a reason to get up in the morning, goals to pursue, an opportunity for status and peer respect? (Hanson et al. 1985: 164, 169–70).

This final plea for the drug users to be allowed some respect may be taken at face value, as a call for the research subjects to be treated with dignity based on recognising them as rational actors. The authors note that the research subjects are, from their own perspective, 'adapting quite rationally to their reality' (Hanson et al. 1985: 170). The statement, however, also raises questions about the conduct of the treatment providers. What do they do that results in the heroin users losing their sense of self-respect? How do they humiliate or stigmatise them, and is it intentional? As mentioned in the introduction to this dissertation, the exploration

of the functioning of respect between social collectivities, such as drug users and treatment providers, is beyond the scope of this inquiry. However, this passage indicates the importance of pursuing this line of inquiry in order to gain a full and rounded understanding of the functioning of respect in everyday social life.[12]

## Structural Constraints

Sennett (2003: Part 2) identifies three ways in which institutions in modern welfare societies shape character so that people earn, or fail to arouse, respect. Firstly, society applauds self-development, whereby a person develops their own abilities and skills, because society places a premium on efficient use of resources. Secondly, society values the independent, self-sufficient person, who can take care of himself, without drawing on the resources of the wider community. Thirdly, society appreciates the person who gives something back to the community. Sennett argues that in promoting these qualities as being worthy of respect, modern Western societies have created a means of morally justifying unequal treatment for those who cannot contribute to the conserving of public resources: in Goffman's terms, such people are not able to 'stay in the game'. Moody Adams (1992–93: 276) comments how the excluded individuals may collude in their own exclusion from the game: 'Some who are affected by such a scheme may also fail to discover alternative constructive means to affirm their

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[12] Lewis Coser (1956) provides a framework for the systematic analysis of the functions of conflict in societies, which might provide a useful starting place for an inquiry into the functioning of respect at the level of social collectivities. He argues that not only is conflict inevitable in societies, as individuals compete for scare resources, prestige or power positions, but that it is also desirable as it may contribute to the maintenance, adjustment or adaptation of social relationships and social structures.

He identifies the conditions under which conflicts occur within societies, and those which may be expected to result in positive outcomes and in negative outcomes, and the conditions under which societies suppress conflicts, and the way in which these societies use a variety of mechanisms to vent their hostilities. His account suggests how respect may flourish in conditions of healthy conflict within a society, where different groups have the opportunity to express their differences and find an acceptable solution, but how it may also be a casualty of the process of conflict suppression, where mechanisms such as scape-goating may be used to deflect debate, for example using illegal drug-users as scape-goats to avoid confronting the legal and moral issues surrounding the very illegality of the drugs.

In discussing the nature of conflicts between societies and 'out-groups', Coser highlights the mechanisms of war and the search for 'enemies', the discovery of whom can help to strengthen social cohesion, particularly in societies where opportunities for conflict and debate are inhibited. In light of President Nixon's declaration of the 'war on drugs' in the 1970s (this 'war' still continues), it would be interesting to apply Coser's model and again to see how respect may become a casualty in the course of such processes.

worth, and they may not recognize the destructive cultural fictions as fictions. For such people, social exclusion is almost certain to weaken self-respect.'

An ethnographic study of the lives of members of a marginalised group in New York City, who deal in and are dependent on crack cocaine, highlights how structural inequalities result in these research subjects feeling a lack of respect and how they manage to maintain their self-respect by reducing their exposure to this social environment.

Between 1985 and 1990 anthropologist Philippe Bourgois lived in the predominantly Puerto Rican-inhabited East Harlem (El Barrio) in New York City. He had an interest in the political economy of inner-city street culture, and initially intended to write a book based on participant observation of the experience of poverty and ethnic segregation, but within a year of his arrival most of his friends, neighbours and acquaintances had been swept into 'the multibillion-dollar crack cyclone' (p. 1). Notwithstanding, his book is not about crack, or drugs, *per se*: ' … the two dozen street dealers and their families that I befriended were not interested in talking primarily about drugs. On the contrary, they wanted me to learn all about their daily struggles for subsistence and dignity at the poverty line' (p. 2). The resulting book, first published in 1996, is entitled *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio* (2003).

The ethnography elaborates on what Bourgois calls 'inner-city street culture: a complex and conflictual web of beliefs, symbols, modes of interaction, values, and ideologies that have emerged in opposition to mainstream society. Street culture offers an alternative forum for autonomous personal dignity' (Bourgois 2002: 8). Bourgois suggests that, in the US, street culture has arisen as a means of resistance to racism and economic marginalisation, and has taken the form not so much of political opposition as an 'oppositional style'. In a discussion on the relationship between structure and agency, one respondent, Primo, emphasises his own personal responsibility: 'You have to do good for yourself in order to achieve, and you have to achieve in life in order to get somewhere. If you lay back, it's 'cause you want to lay back, and then you want to cry out for help later.

The struggle's harder for the poor, but not impossible; just harder. When you're poor, you gotta have faith and respect in your own self' (Bourgois 2002: 54).

The respondents' experiences and perceptions of work exemplify the complex and conflictual nature of the inner-city environment in which they live and the means of finding and maintaining respect within it. Benzie, a one-time crack dealer, who limits his bingeing on alcohol and cocaine-cum-heroin to the weekends and who is working in a low-paid job, emphasises that the best way to survive is to make money legally: 'But now I am finally getting mine – my *capacidad* [self-worth] – I've finally got to that stage that I won't do something. [pointing again to the cocaine] … I don't want someone to respect me. I want to respect myself. I respect myself, man. [jabbing both forefingers into his chest] I changed. I'm a different person. I love myself. … I'm proud of myself' (Bourgois 2002: 96–97; square brackets in original).

However, owing to structural inequalities and their lack of the appropriate cultural capital, the Puerto Rican subjects in Bourgois' study find it difficult to secure occupations in the legal economy. Ray, owner of the crack house in which Bourgois spends a lot of his time, tries and fails to establish viable, legal business ventures. 'He mobilized violence, coercion, and friendship in a delicate balance that earned him consistent profits and guaranteed him a badge of respect on the street. In contrast, in his forays into the legal economy, Ray's same street skills made him appear to be an incompetent, gruff, illiterate, urban jibaro' (Bourgois 2002: 135).

Other respondents can only obtain low-paid menial jobs that are incompatible with their cultural mores and expectation; they are ineligible for higher-paid jobs. As a consequence, 'they find themselves propelled headlong into an explosive confrontation between their sense of cultural dignity versus the humiliating interpersonal subordination of service work' (Bourgois 2002: 141). The result generally is to return to crack-dealing. Some, such as Caesar, celebrate the street-defined dignity of refusing to work honestly for low wages, wearing crack-dealing and unemployment as a 'badge of pride': 'We is real vermin lunatics that sell drugs. We don't wanna be part of society. … What do we wanna be working for?

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We came here to this country, and we abused the freedom, because Puerto Ricans don't like to work. … Okay, maybe not all of us, 'cause there's still a lot of strict folks from the old school that still be working. But the new generation, no way! We have no regard for nothing. The new generation has no regard for the public bullshit. We wanna make easy money, and that's it' (Bourgois 2002: 131).

Approaching the issue of structural inequalities from a black feminist perspective, Zerai and Banks (2002) conducted research into how, between 1985 and 2001, the media, researchers and policy makers constructed the 'problem' of Black-American crack-addicted young mothers. While acknowledging that every individual must take some responsibility for initiating their own drug use, the authors argue that the prevailing discourses around these women and the structural limitations on their capacity to seek treatment and appropriate prenatal care, have contributed significantly to creating the problem. They call for a solution based on principles of social justice:

> Wider principles of human dignity must be applied to women in struggling with the disease of addiction. We argue that current anti-drug laws and policies strip women of dignity. The best avenue to change is not demonizing women addicted to cocaine. We seek policies that restore self-respect and preserves women's ability to advance the health of their unborn children. (p. 12)

Among the authors' recommendations to encourage 'a better way of thinking about maternal drug use (p. 143)' are a call for researchers to avoid relying upon the prevailing racist, sexist and classist discourse, which can only guide 'skewed research', and negative sanctions for health practitioners who deter women from seeking prenatal care by their 'judgemental, attitudes, stigmatising comments, and demeaning behaviour'.

The authors discussed in this sub-section describe structural constraints from the point of view of either those in positions of power, those who impose the constraints, or those in positions of powerlessness, who may evade, resist or be complicit in perpetuating the constraints. They all make reference to the role of respect as an indicator of individuals' access to power and control in their lives, and Zerai and Banks (2002) provide a useful analysis of the way in which the dominant discourse, constructed by those in authority, can affect the way respect is either bestowed or denied. While providing valuable insights, none of these

studies, however, provides an account that fully reveals how respect functions in such social situations: lacking is an account of the interactions that would serve to reveal how the subject and object involved either give or with-hold respect from each other.

Van Dijk (1993), in outlining the principles of 'critical discourse analysis',[13] suggests how such an account may be accessed by means of investigating 'social cognition'. He argues that dominant discourses are 'jointly produced' by those in authority and those who do not possess power or control, and that there is a need to bridge the gap between 'macro-notions such as group or institutional power and dominance', and 'micro-notions such as text, talk or communicative interaction':

> … in order to relate discourse and society, and hence discourse and the reproduction of dominance and inequality, we need to examine in detail the role of social representations in the minds of social actors. More specifically, we hope to show that social cognition is the necessary theoretical (and empirical) 'interface', if not the 'missing link', between discourse and dominance. (Van Dijk 1993: 301)

Arguably, this approach to critical discourse analysis, by examining properties of the context (e.g. access, setting and participants) and of the text (e.g. topics, meanings, style and rhetoric), will reveal, *inter alia*, how each actor in an interaction perceives and understand the functioning of respect, in relation both to himself and to the wider social environment.

## 2.4    Concluding Remarks

The research subjects described in this chapter, drug users, all reveal evidence of seeking respect. One author quoted in the Dublin magazine *Brass Munkie* (2000) describes the value he assigns to being shown respect by treatment service providers. A large proportion of the research subjects, however, describe the experience of being denied respect and the steps they took to gain acceptance by

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[13] Critical discourse analysis focuses on 'the *role of discourse in the (re)production and challenge of dominance*. Dominance is defined here as the exercise of social power by elites, institutions or groups, that results in social inequality, including political, cultural, class, ethnic, racial and gender inequality. This reproduction process may involve such different 'modes' of discourse – power relations as the more or less direct or overt support, enactment, representation, legitimation, denial, mitigation or concealment of dominance, among others' (Van Dijk 1993: 300; italics in original). Critical discourse analysis should not be confused with the 'discourse analysis' discussed in Chapter 4.1.

other means. Becker (1963), Blumer (1967) and Bourgois (2003) all give examples of research subjects seeking and gaining respect among their peers in the drug world. Hanson *et al*. (1985) describe the tactics adopted by their research subjects to avoid exposure to stigmatisation.

The studies do not generally yield insights into how the research subjects themselves give respect to others – to whom, why or how. This may be a function of the design of the research studies, which focus mainly on exploring the research subjects' experiences of disadvantage and exclusion. Blumer (1967) describes the process whereby his research team successfully sought the trust and respect of the research subjects. In other studies, focusing on the 'careers' of drug-users (see Chapter 3.1), it appears to follow from drug users' assertions that they enjoy being respected by their peers in the drug world, that drug users are capable of giving, and do give, respect to others.

Although the research studies do not generally take establishment figures, such as medical personnel, social researchers, the media or agents of the law, as their research subjects, they do reveal something of the ways in which such figures give or deny respect, and seek it for themselves. Hanson *et al*. (1985) and Bourgois (2002) describe the responses of drug users to displays of disrespect by members of the establishment, and Becker (1963) discusses how rule enforcers seek respect both from the wider society and also from rule breakers.  A number of researchers have been cited who allude to the ways in which researchers' approaches to the topic of illegal drug use show a lack recognition and respect for the research subjects.

Regarding analysis of the functioning of respect in everyday social life, Goffman's model of face-to-face interaction, in particular his account of deference and demeanour rituals, serves well to reveal how different actors give or deny, and obtain, respect. His model provides a potential template for ensuring a balanced investigation, in which the respecting activities, or lack of respecting activities, of all players may be considered equally, and for highlighting symmetries or asymmetries. The notion of 'social equilibrium', mentioned in discussing the work of Merton, highlights the need for a broader analytical

framework not accessible through observing interactions. 'Social mechanisms', which serve to explain how people secure their positions, or status, in society and their relations with one another, help to understand the nature of interactions involving respect. Van Dijk's (1993) critical discourse analysis offers an alternative approach to understanding the influence of social structures, or 'power and dominance', on the functioning of respect and self-respect, through analysing the structures, strategies and other properties of text, talk, verbal interaction and communicative events and the ways they contribute to the reproduction of social dominance.

The phenomenon of 'false' or 'hypocritical' respect was mentioned in Chapter 1, and in Chapter 2.1 it was noted that Goffman also mentions the possibility of its occurrence. In considering the sociological significance of whether a display of respect is genuine or false, the primary issue for the social researcher is the question of its functionality. What purpose does a display of respect serve for the person who gives and for the person who receives it? Who benefits from such a display, and how do they benefit?  Who is disadvantaged and how? Who is aware of the falseness of a display and what effect does this have on them? Who is not aware and what effect does this have on their subsequent experiences? Arguably, only after these types of questions have been addressed, should the significance of the genuineness or otherwise of a show of respect be considered.

Throughout this chapter, a number of claims regarding negative respecting behaviours, including perceived failures to show respect, perceived lack of respect, stigmatisation and humiliation, have been made, especially concerning members of the establishment, for example law enforcement agents, medical professionals and social researchers working in the area of illegal drugs. In considering such assertions, the researcher should make sure to ask, how do the perceptions and cognitive processes of the subject giving respect, and the object receiving the display of respect, influence their interpretation of the event? For example, in Chapter 1.1 the epistemological distinction between recognition-respect (based on respect for the person's dignity, either as a human-being or a holder of some office or position in society) and appraisal-respect (based on respect for a person's character) was noted.  In considering the genuineness of an

instance of respect or an alleged display of negative respect, especially when its integrity is challenged by one of the social actors, the researcher needs to ask whether the different interpretations may be attributable to different epistemological positions regarding the grounds for respect, e.g. when a social actor shows recognition-respect for another person, that other person may be seeking appraisal-respect and may not only be disappointed by its absence but also believe that the other person has displayed a negative form of respect.

# Chapter 3: Self-Respect –
# Getting a Life and Making Choices

## 3.0    Introduction

Self-respect is a person's sense of self-worth. It is a much more private process
than respect, not often articulated, particularly when a person's feeling of self-
respect is assured. It may, however, be inferred from public demonstrations, such
as when a person makes a decision consistent with his values and beliefs, takes
steps to gain control of his life, wins status, prestige and recognition from others,
commits to some pursuit whose accomplishment gives a sense of pride, or
performs some act indicating respect for another.

Social research into drug users, which reveals evidence of the functioning of self-
respect, is considered in this chapter. Studies of drug-users' careers, and then the
rational processes that people use to make choices and to avoid risk, are explored
for evidence of the functioning of self-respect and as possible means of accessing
the ways in which people manage their self-respect.

## 3.1    Career Framework

An early proponent of the application of the concept of 'career' to the lives of
'deviant' people defines it as 'the sequence of movements from one position to
another in an occupational system made by any individual who works in that
system' (Becker 1963: 24). Rubington (1967) describes the drug user's career
thus:

> To become and be a drug addict, a person quite literally has to work at it. This
> work is not at all easy and in time entails decreasing rewards in proportion to
> decreased efforts. Nevertheless, an addict must make adjustments to institutions,
> formal organizations, informal relations, and must follow a sequence of roles in
> confirming and sustaining his identity as drug addict. Insofar as he does all that,
> he follows a career, albeit a deviant one rather than a legitimate one. (p. 4)

Many studies of drug users, using the career framework, have been made. Studies
of heroin users have revealed a series of career stages, starting with initiation, or
experimental stage, and progressing through occasional, sporadic use, to regular,
intermittent use, and finally, to regular, daily use (Crawford, Washington and

Senay 1983: 703). The stages observed by the researcher may vary according to the contingencies that the researcher isolates for closer inspection, which influence the individual's choices and the resulting career path, for example the nature of initiation into heroin use, availability of and access to heroin, or reasons for limiting and/or ceasing to use (Becker 1963: Ch. 4; Crawford et al. 1983: 703; Faupel 1991: Ch. 2). Studies reveal that some will try heroin once and stop; some will use occasionally (chip) and then give up; some will go through periods of intense use in their teens and twenties and then grow out of the behaviour and the lifestyle; and some will have complex careers in heroin use, alternating between use and abstention, over a period as long as twenty or thirty years (Hunt 1997: 284). Benefits attributed to using the career framework in studying users of illegal drugs are its neutral, judgement-free approach, and the opportunity it provides to study the relation between structure and agency (Goffman 1961: 119; Rubington 1967: 3–4; Rosenbaum 1981: 128).

These research studies did not set out to research the functioning of respect *per se*, but to study drug use careers in the context of broader social and cultural processes, such as gender, class, ethnicity, work and identity, economic status, and environmental factors. Moreover, people's choices to commence or not commence, and to continue or discontinue, to use illegal drugs arise out of a highly complex mix of pharmacological, psychological and social causes (Becker 1963: Ch. 3; Sussman and Ames 2000: Part 2). Nevertheless, the studies reveal, among other contingencies influencing the dug user's decisions, the presence of a desire for respect from others and indicate how this translates into a sense of enhanced self-respect. The following subsections outline aspects of the drug users' career that contribute to the enhancement of self-respect in their lives.

**Control**

Control of one's life, the capacity to decide for oneself what one does, contributes to others having the opportunity to have appraisal-respect for one and to enhancing one's own sense of self-respect. In a study of the careers of heroin users, based on in-depth qualitative interviews with 71 clients of substitution treatment programmes in the Dublin area in 1998, Dillon (2001) reports firstly how respondents describe how they tried heroin in order to escape from reality

and personal problems, to a space where nothing could get at them and other people's attitudes didn't affect them (Dillon 2001: 81–85). These reasons may be described as 'retreatist' (see Chapter 2.3 for a discussion of social structure and anomie, including retreatism), but alternatively they may be interpreted as indicating how the person has increased self-control and recognition self-respect through reducing the opportunities for others to diminish her and her sense of self-worth.

Several respondents in Dillon's study engaged in their initial drug use after leaving school early and finding themselves unemployed. Growing up in an environment characterised by economic deprivation, these young people sought out 'something to fill in their time and alleviate the boredom – in these cases drug use' (Dillon 2001: 61). The significance of drug use in filling time, in providing 'meaningful structures' and 'normative clarity', is mentioned by other authors (Pearson 1987: 87–89; Faupel 1991: 44). A 'street junkie' interviewed by Faupel (1991) describes how important it is to have some occupation to fill the time: 'Usually the person that gets involved in drugs is not totally involved in anything else. I was on the street at the time [I started using more]. I just got laid off. … This made me susceptible to the street. … A man would become involved in anything – negative or positive – as long as he's involved. You must have some activity. Drugs is a commitment' (Faupel 1991: 119). This form of control, over how one spends one's time, may be understood to contribute to a sense of recognition (autonomy) self-respect.

The ability to control one's drug use – how one administers drugs, what drugs one uses, the extent of one's dependency – is an important source of self-respect. The transition from smoking to injecting heroin is perceived negatively, with injecting confirming one's status as a stereotypical junkie. Two of Dillon's respondents, both of whom injected, describe their feelings about the transition. The first expresses shame: 'It was kind of like em, well I was disgusted, now really I was, you know. I never thought I would do it' (Dillon 2001: 108). The second reveals a lack of evaluative self-respect: 'Like I started off smoking, you know, but like when I thought about drugs I thought about syringes and all that. … So, especially when I kept on all I just wanted was a syringe to use drugs, that's the way I

thought, that's the way I really thought about it. I mean all and all I have been abusing me body you know I don't bleeding care, really I couldn't care whether I died tomorrow or anything, that's the way I feel, and I still feel that way, I couldn't give a shit what happens to me' (Dillon 2001: 109).

Evaluative self-respect also derives from avoiding use of heroin altogether, or at least controlling one's use so that one is not forced into unethical behaviours such as robbing from one's family or friends. 'I just thought it [heroin] was a real knacker's drug, you know what I mean? Scumbags, you know. I didn't, I wasn't into it at all, E's [ecstasy] were kind of socially acceptable, you know, but heroin was just a different kind of thing' (Dillon 2001: 106); 'So I'm a junkie now. But I'm not one of those scrub junkies, where I got to steal from my family. …I'm dealing. And I'm paying for my habit thataway' (Faupel 1991: 107).

**Status and Prestige**

Status refers to a person's position in a social structure, and prestige to material or reputational evidence reflecting a person's status. They provide a basis for demanding recognition (institutional-)respect from others and contribute to a sense of recognition self-respect. In seeking to explain 'drug epidemics' among young males in slum environments in North American cities, Feldman (1968) argues that the young drug user 'must be able to define drug use as consistent with his understanding of how status and prestige are earned within his social network' (p. 132). The status and prestige are typically conferred on action-seeking youths who become 'stand-up cats' through exciting, daring, tough and dangerous behaviour. Feldman describes how the 'stand-up cats' wrest institutional recognition-respect from others:

> Interest in drug use arises partly from a prospective stand-up cat's disillusionment with his former heroes, who in the past seemed invincible. Now, after a period of drug use, they have declined in the young stand-up cat's own status system. Instead of the hero going out and taking money like he used to, he may implore or ask in such a way that the younger boy begins to feel his mastery over someone whom he had previously respected and feared. The youth may even chance his strength against the addict by showing open disrespect or by actually fighting him with the result that the drug user gets stripped of his toughness. (p. 135)

Young men may also take on heroin itself in an effort to win the respect of others: 'For the youth to become truly a stand-up cat he must fight more worthy opponents, championship material, whoever they may be. And since he has seen previous stand-up cats buckle to the strength of heroin, the lure it holds as a route to prestige and status among action-seeking peers is enhanced' (p. 135). In short, using heroin is 'one route to becoming "somebody" in the eyes of the important people who comprise the slum social network' (p. 138).

Within drug-using communities there is a clear hierarchy of actors, with attendant statuses that demand recognition (institutional-)respect. In detailing the different levels in a heroin distribution network in New York City, based on research into the lives and activities of lower-class heroin users in their street environment, Preble and Casey (1967) describe how the 'dealer in weight' stands midway between the top and bottom of the distribution chain and is the first one in the line to run the risk of being apprehended by law enforcement officers, as his identity is known to people in the street: 'He is commonly referred to as one who is into something, and is respected as a big dealer who has put himself into jeopardy, … if he gets caught, he can expect a long jail sentence' (Preble and Casey 1967: 10). In contrast, the 'taste face', the user who supports his habit by renting out his 'works' (paraphernalia for injecting heroin), stands low in the hierarchy and is held in contempt by other users (Preble and Casey 1967: 14).

Rosenbaum (1981), who conducted depth interviews using the life-history method with 100 women heroin addicts – 95 in San Francisco and 5 in New York City – argues that women follow a career path distinct from that of men and one characterised by a narrowing of options and greater stigmatisation.  In relation to status and prestige, she finds that while men relish taking on risky activities, including drug dealing, women tend to disdain the riskiness and not to participate in the business end of the heroin world. As a consequence, they tend to forgo the enhanced status and material wealth available to male heroin users and dealers.

**Skills and Expertise**
The acquisition of skills in a drug-using career is frequently referred to – skills in acquiring the wherewithal to buy drugs (usually criminal activities such as

shoplifting, pick-pocketing, burglary), buying drugs, and consuming drugs. Faupel (1991) describes the career phase in which drug use is 'stable' – regular but intermittent – as the most productive time in an addict's career, the phase most analogous to the productive, established period in conventional careers, and one in which the user enjoys considerable status and prestige, recognition-respect, among his peers. With his criminal skills finely honed, the stable addict enjoys a level of prestige not shared by 'the more flat-footed hustlers, who are viewed as unskilled opportunists', an income capable of supporting a conspicuous level of consumption, and a highly developed routine which served to structure his daily activities. This 'stable addict' also has the capacity to act ethically in relation to his peers and colleagues, to 'maintain ethical respectability in the subculture' (Faupel 1991: 94–95).

The very possession of skills is also a source of pride and evaluative self-respect. Dillon (2001: 145–148) cites a series of respondents who describe maintaining their drug habit as a seven-days a week, 365-days a year, occupation.  This finding mirrors that of Preble and Casey (1967), who observe: 'For them [the research subjects], the quest for heroin is the quest for a meaningful life, not an escape from life. And the meaning does not lie, primarily, in the effects of the drug on their minds and bodies; it lies in the gratification of accomplishing a series of challenging, exciting tasks, every day of the week' (p. 3). The saying, A good craftswoman takes pride in her work, also resonates in the world of the heroin user. Dillon (2001) cites a heroin user's appreciation of the ritual, the specialist knowledge and skills, needed to inject: 'In me own opinion there was a ritual to it, using a needle. … I used to get me money worth of it like the whole ritual the whole thing like' (p. 110). Conversely, another respondent prefers the procedures associated with smoking rather than injecting: 'It's kind of a ritual to me, and I love actually doing that. That's the mental thing I love actually doing that. You'd get a good hour enjoyment out of actually taking it rather than someone who just puts it in their arm and just gets a few minutes' (p. 107).

Rosenbaum (1981: 95–100) finds that the women in her study are expected to carry out their maternal responsibilities alongside their heroin-related activities. If they are to succeed, the women need to exercise extraordinary discipline and

control, which in turn lead to a sense of personal pride, self-worth and the respect of others within the heroin-using community.

**Legal Paid Work**

Rosenbaum (1981) finds that work is an important determinant of the women's identity and level of recognition self-respect. While they are in legal work, they do not consider themselves junkies. When they are no longer in regular employment and enter an illegal occupation, such as hustling or prostitution, they see themselves as first and foremost a junkie who has had to become an outlaw in order to support their heroin habit. One woman wonders how non-addicted prostitutes can maintain their self-respect: 'I don't think I could dig being looked at like that. So, if I do sell my body, I want to be respected for it. I'm not out there doing it because I get off doing it but because I need the money' (Rosenbaum 1981: 82). In relation to changing her lifestyle and shedding her self-image of being a junkie, one woman describes the importance of getting legal work: 'And the main thing is the feeling you have about yourself. If you start feeling a little proud about yourself, you have self-worth' (Rosenbaum 1981: 85).

**Limitations of Career Framework**

While analysis of drug-users' career paths reveals the presence of, and means of achieving, a sense of self-respect, it does not reveal the actual process whereby the decision to acquire, maintain or risk losing a sense of self-respect is made. For example, why would someone choose to gain control of their life by consuming a substance associated with serious health and socio-economic risks? If a person desires prestige and status, would it not be more rational to adopt a course of action that will lead to accessing more stable and secure sources of same? In Chapter 3.2 below the application of analytical methods focusing on choice-making and risk-assessment are considered as a means of getting closer to the rational processes underpinning the functioning of self-respect.

Within the corpus of studies into drug-using careers from a symbolic interactionist perspective, Biernacki (1986) did investigate the way in which his research subjects made choices about whether and how to give up drug use. His objective was to obtain 'a substantive understanding of the natural course of addiction as it

might unfold to its termination' (p. xii). His findings will be discussed below in Chapter 3.2. Noteworthy at this point, however, is his criticism of other users of the career framework as usually failing to acknowledge the variability of the experiences and career paths of individual drug users. He suggests that rather than following inevitable and uniform stages of deepening involvement with the addictive drug, different heroin users enjoy 'different kinds of involvements with the world of addiction' (p. 182). He outlines four variants of the drug-using career: (1) the stereotypical addict, who progresses through the stages outlined in this section; (2) others who appear to have been 'passing through' the world of addiction; (3) yet others who maintained an active involvement in the ordinary world, keeping their addiction under control so that it did not affect the rest of their life; and finally (4) those who had only a peripheral involvement in the world of addiction, through a relationship with someone more firmly anchored in it. Biernacki's critique confirms the need for a more nuanced study of people's choices and decisions.

## 3.2     Making Choices and Accepting Risks

Between 1984 and 1986, 150 clients at three London drug-treatment agencies were interviewed and asked, *inter alia*, to pick from a list of 54 items on a self-completion questionnaire the important reasons for their seeking help. 'Life out of control' and 'Realized has no self-respect' were the two items most heavily endorsed by respondents as having occurred and as being important reasons for seeking help (Oppenheimer, Sheehan and Taylor 1988: 638).

In theory, it is possible to explain this result by means of rational choice theory as applied to complex social phenomena. Based on 'methodological individualism', which sees the elementary unit of social life as the individual human action, rational choice theory argues that 'the same general principles [as in economic rational choice theory] can be used to understand interactions in which such resources as time, information, approval and prestige are involved' (Scott 2000: 2). Thus, the research subjects who ticked the boxes 'Life out of control' and 'realized has no self-respect', may be understood to have a preference for gaining control of their life and building their self-respect. They have information

indicating that their drug addiction is militating against this preferred state and they believe that getting treatment for their addiction is likely to lead to the achievement of this end. There are alternative means, such as going cold-turkey, bringing their drug use under control so that they can hold down a job, or obtaining sufficient funds to support their drug habit, for example by taking up drug dealing or trafficking, and thereby winning status, prestige and self-respect within the drug world. However, they perceive these alternatives as offering less possibility of achieving the preferred outcome, self-control and self-respect, and choose the alternative that they believe will maximise their utility.

While plausible, this explanation depends on the assumptions that desiring control of one's life and gaining self-respect are rational and that these states are not attainable while dependent on drugs. The latter assumption depends, in turn, on acceptance of a social norm, a norm widely shared in Western society and supported by legal sanctions, that drug addiction is bad for one, that it leads to, *inter alia*, loss of willpower, self-control and self-respect. There is considerable debate, however, as to whether preferences based on social norms are rational, as to whether they serve the individual's self-interest. Rational choice theorists have countered this objection by arguing that norms are simply arbitrary preferences into which rational actors are socialised and that they act rationally in relation to these norms. Alternatively, co-operation with others in society, through adherence to shared social norms, is a desirable end result, is in the best interest of each individual and is therefore rational for each individual to want (Scott 2000: 6–7). However, entering drug treatment in order to co-operate with the wider society and abide by its shared norms about the negative aspects of drug use is not necessarily rational or in the best interest of the individual drug user. As shown in Chapter 3.1, drug users already enjoy a sense of self-respect within the drug world through having control of their lives, possessing skills and discipline to maintain their lifestyle and enjoying status and prestige among their peers. Faupel (1991: 63), moreover, describes how some of his respondents enter treatment simply in

order to stabilise their drug use and regain the status of 'stable addict' as opposed to 'street junkie', with the ultimate aim of resuming drug use.[14]

Jon Elster (1989a, 1989b) offers a solution to the difficulty concerning the relation between rationality and social norms that suggests a means of approaching the question of how individuals may make choices that include consideration of their sense of self-worth. Elster argues that individuals may choose a particular course of action based on rational choice or by reference to social norms, or by a combination of both approaches. Although rationality and social norms may be analysed within the one framework, Elster sees them as logically separate and distinct. Rationality is characterised by a concern with outcomes and the future, and unconnected with past experience, while social norms are not concerned with outcomes, focus on the present without regard to the future, and take past experience into account. Social norms may help to co-ordinate people's expectations and may contribute to rational outcomes for society, contributing to the self-interest of everyone, but these outcomes are incidental: social norms have a motivating power that is independent of their use in optimisation. Having rejected a functionalist explanation of social norms, as leading to optimal outcomes for society, Elster proposes that the force of social norms arises from their peculiar link to the emotions:

> Social norms have a *grip on the mind* that is due to the strong emotions their violations can trigger. I believe that the emotive aspect of norms is a more fundamental feature than the more frequently cited cognitive aspects. If norms can coordinate expectations, it is only because the violation of norms is known to trigger strong negative emotions, in the violator himself and in other people. (Elster 1989a: 100; italics in original)

A few pages further on, retaining the methodological individualism of rational choice theory, Elster suggests how social norms operate at the level of the individual: 'A norm … is *the propensity to feel shame and to anticipate sanctions by others at the thought of behaving in a certain forbidden way.* … this propensity becomes a *social* norm when and to the extent that it is shared with other people' (p. 105; italics in original).

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[14] Oppenheimer et al. (1988) do not indicate whether the respondents in their survey viewed their drug-treatment as leading to permanent abstinence or whether it was a short-term measure to

In categorising the emotions, Elster (1999: 21–22) distinguishes the 'social emotions' which 'involve a positive or negative evaluation of one's own or someone else's behaviour or character'. Based on these three dichotomies (evaluation, character and behaviour), he identifies a total of eight social emotions, of which the four relating to character coincide with and expand the list of emotions noted in Chapter 1.3 as arising as a consequence of the functioning of respect:[15]

- *Shame:* a negative emotion triggered by a belief about one's own character
- *Pridefulness:* a positive emotion triggered by a belief about one's own character.
- *Contempt and hatred:* negative emotions triggered by beliefs about another's character. (Contempt is induced by the thought that another is inferior; hatred by the thought that she is evil.)
- *Liking:* a positive emotion triggered by a belief about another's character.

Without delving further into the functioning of the emotions in relation either to the social norms or among themselves, it seems possible to suggest an explanation of the results in the survey described at the beginning of this section. Rather than reflecting a rational choice on the part of the respondents regarding entering drug treatment, the results reflect the shame felt by the respondents when presenting for treatment and having to publicly acknowledge that they have failed to conform to the social norm of having a sense of self-respect, through having become dependent on an illegal drug. The response does not necessarily reflect the respondents' motivation for entering treatment so much as their feelings on being asked for reasons by the researchers.[16]

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stabilise their drug use in a time of particular difficulty.

[15] The positive and negative emotions connected with behaviour, as opposed to character, are guilt or pride triggered by beliefs about one's own actions, and anger or admiration triggered by beliefs about another's actions.

[16] The results of a factor analysis of the responses to the questionnaire (Oppenheimer et al. 1988: 639) would seem to bear out this interpretation, as the salience of 'Realized has not respect' dropped significantly. A cluster of factors associated with becoming dependent on drugs (need drugs every day, using opiates (heroin), chronic drug use) came first, followed by a cluster associated with difficulties in accessing drugs, and then a cluster associated with decreased ability to cope with emotional crises. 'Realized has no self-respect' was associated with the fourth-ranked cluster that had to do with threats to the respondents' abilities to hold down a paid job. This analysis suggests that the respondents' motivation for entering treatment was based on rational and instrumental grounds; loss of control and self-respect were reasons identified in order to display shame and imply a desire to adhere to the social norms in the future.

In a series of essays on risk and blame in modern industrial societies, Mary Douglas (1992) rejects the 'methodological individualism' of rational choice theory, in preference for a 'cultural/symbolic' approach,[17] which provides an alternative approach to understanding how individuals make choices affecting their sense of self-respect. Douglas argues that risk perception is a political phenomenon whereby social institutions determine both what constitutes a risk and how to respond to risks, thereby legitimising their own existence. Individuals' rationality is bounded, Douglas suggests, not by individuals' own cognitive processes but by social institutions, 'which blinker and focus the individual rational agent' (Douglas 1992: 56).

To elaborate, a society's institutions create a 'forensic vocabulary' around risk, which leads to the construction of a moral community and legitimises the institutions. A system for assigning accountability and responsibility when disaster strikes, in other words 'blaming', serves to reinforce the community ideal: 'Blaming is a way of manning the gates through which all information has to pass. Blaming is a way of manning the gates and at the same time of arming the guard. News that is going to be accepted as true information has to be wearing a badge of loyalty to the particular political regime which the person supports; the rest is suspect, deliberately censored or unconsciously ignored' (Douglas 1992: 19). Those who are blamed are imputed with moral failure and rejected by the social system. In competitive, individualist societies, moreover, Douglas argues there is an inevitable tendency for those who are already disadvantaged to carry a greater share of blame, to be deemed contaminated and stigmatised, and written off as human derelicts.

In this risk framework, respect may be understood to act as a 'hygiene' factor, i.e. enabling society to function, to approve/accept some people and disapprove/reject

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[17] Lupton (1999: 1–11) identifies three major approaches to understanding risk in modern industrialised societies: the 'cultural/symbolic', as elaborated principally by Mary Douglas, focusing on risk as a means of maintaining cultural boundaries; the 'risk society' associated with the work of Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens, which focuses on how macro-structural factors have led to an intensification of concern with risk in late modern societies; and the 'governmentality' perspective of Michel Foucault, which emphasises the role of experts in constructing and mediating discourses on risk.

others. The possession of self-respect and receiving the respect of others legitimises a person's membership of the moral community; those lacking self-respect and the respect of others are perceived as a threat to the community ideal, and tend to be blamed, stigmatised and excluded. Respect also helps mediate the relationships between different cultural groups within the community. In addition, recognition- and appraisal-respect are arguably manifestations of what Douglas terms 'fetish power', the personal resources such as charisma, talent and success, which individuals in competitive, individualist societies draw on to become or remain leaders of society.

The research project described at the beginning of this section was undertaken by members of the Addiction Research Unit of the Institute of Psychiatry in the United Kingdom. It seems reasonable to suggest that the respondents, approximately three quarters of whom were unemployed and regular opioid users, when presented with the list of possible reasons for attending treatment, chose 'Life out of control' and 'Realized has no self-respect' in an attempt to redeem themselves in the eyes of these professional researchers. Aware of their stigmatisation and exclusion from mainstream society, the respondents may have seen such a response as indicating to these 'respected' members of the 'establishment' that they did not pose a threat to society.

At the end of Chapter 3.1 above, Biernacki's (1986) in-depth study of heroin users, who exited heroin addiction without going through any form of treatment or other assistance, was mentioned as offering an analysis of the choices that his research subjects made at various stages in their drug-using careers. Biernacki conducted in-depth interviews with 101 former heroin addicts, inviting them to tell their stories of overcoming their addiction; he was seeking information on what brought about their decision to stop using drugs.[18] He identified three groups of decision-makers – those who just quit; those who made a rational decision to quit; and those who hit rock bottom or had an existential crisis.

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[18] General areas covered in the interview guide included: Life involvements, problems, extent of drug use, and self-conceptions prior to recovery; conditions that brought about idea to stop; actions taken to enact idea to stop; role that others played in giving rise to idea of stopping and the help they provided to realise the idea; various problems confronted and the ways they were handled;

Those who quit 'without making any firm decision' (Biernacki 1986: 44–49), just drifted away and became involved in other things. Self-respect would appear to have not been an issue for this group: their sense of self-worth seems to have been in tact. Among those who made 'explicit, rational decisions to stop' (pp. 49–56), some considered that there was more to be gained for themselves and for their futures by breaking the addiction than by continuing. Others believed the experience of 'burn-out', loss of excitement and enthusiasm for the demanding life of surviving as a drug user, was 'not worth the candle'. External pressures and obstacles placed by society in the way of people pursuing an outlawed and despised occupation, including 'general stigmatisation', were also factors. It may be surmised that members of this group already enjoyed a sense of self-respect and that their decisions to cease drug use were partly to maintain their self-respect.

Biernacki describes the decision-making processes of the third group, those who had 'hit rock bottom' or encountered an 'existential crisis', as follows:

> *Rock bottom* is defined here as a subjective state; it is the point at which people reach the nadir of their lives and decide, with some emotion, that they must change. For example, they may experience deep humiliation as a result of being robbed or jailed, or they may feel socially rejected when they learn that significant others are now aware of their addiction. Drug use and the addict lifestyle may become intolerable, and a decision to change is made.
> *Existential crisis* can be distinguished from the rock-bottom phenomenon by the fact that an existential crisis is a more profound emotional and psychological state. Addicts in the midst of an existential crisis come to question their whole life pattern and, within that pattern, their core identities as drug addicts. Most commonly, the experience is felt in terms of profound mortification, as a symbolic death of the self. … Because some addicts engage in contemptible behavior when trying to support their habit, they may feel scorned by others, they feel guilty and degraded. Recognizing the reasons for feeling as they do, they may try to salvage some vestige of their sense of self-worth by considering various social options to their quandary, but because of what they have done and what they believe others think about them, they may conclude that they have nowhere to turn. Unable to reclaim some positive sense of self-worth, they may turn to thoughts of suicide, or actual suicide attempts, as the only way to relive their suffering. (p. 57; italics added).

It seems clear that the people in this group had lost most of, and some all, their self-respect, and had taken steps to regain some sense of self-worth. It is

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and changes undergone in self-conception, lifestyle, and ideas about the future (Biernacki 1986:

interesting to note that the decision-making of this third group may be explained using Elster's model of decision-making, based on a desire, driven by emotions, to adhere to social norms, while the rational decision-making of the second group may be explained by reference to Douglas' model of risk avoidance and their desire to achieve membership of the preferred moral community.

Later in his report, Biernacki (1986: 73–76) discusses research subjects' reasons for not going into treatment. The possibility of being exposed to a lack of respect by the treatment services would appear to have been a factor in the choice made by a significant proportion. While 54 per cent stated that they had no need or did not believe treatment would help, 14 per cent stated that they 'feared stigmatization (i.e., thought they would be officially recorded as addicts or as mentally ill) and 4 per cent 'did not wish to be humiliated or degraded'. This response is similar to that found in the Heroin Life Study (Hanson et al. 1985), discussed in Chapter 2.3, where it was suggested that in refusing to enter treatment, the heroin users were 'abridging their role-set' as a means of avoiding stigmatisation and loss of self-respect. However, this explanation does not entirely account for the research subjects' response: they chose to avoid stigmatisation and humiliation in order to avoid the unpleasant emotions experienced by entering into the treatment setting.

In describing how some research subjects 'stayed abstinent', Biernacki (1986: 129–137) describes a dual approach of 'negative contexting' of drug use and 'supplanting thoughts' of drug use with alternative, preferable thoughts, in other words, the research subjects maintained their own sense of self-worth by denigrating their former occupation, and people who still engaged in it, as unhealthy, morally wrong or socially unacceptable. While Biernacki is not specifically concerned with the functioning of respect and self-respect among his research subjects, these mechanisms indicate how the giving or with-holding of respect can be employed to bolster one's own self-respect.

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Appendix B).

In the 1990s Paula Mayock (2001) undertook a qualitative study of 15–19-year-olds in inner-city Dublin who were considered to be 'high risk' for problem drug use. Interviewing 57 young people on a one-to-one basis and holding focus groups with 24, to investigate their subjective experience of drug use and the social environment of drug use,[19] and subjecting the resulting interview data to a grounded theory analysis, Mayock was interested in exploring 'the role of choice and decision-making in drug use'. Although Mayock did not research self-respect or respect specifically, her reported findings suggest insights into the functioning of self-respect in the lives of individual respondents.

Mayock reports that 'young people asserted their personal role in the decision to use drugs and invariably claimed ownership of their drug use' (p. xvi).[20] One research subject tells Mayock: 'If I wanted to get drugs now I'd be able to go over and get them. Like, it's that easy to get. It's your decision like. If ya want ta take drugs, ya take drugs. If ya don't want ta, ya don't' (p. 55). Blumer (1967), whose research on youthful drug users was discussed in Chapter 2.1, reports that his research subjects 'were well anchored in their drug use and well fortified in their beliefs against all the dangers of drug use' (p. ii). Their positions are based on their own experiences and observations and a set of collective beliefs that justified their drug use. 'In sum, we learned that youthful drug users are just not interested in abstaining from drug use' (p. ii). These findings indicate that these research populations of young drug users enjoy a sense of autonomy self-respect insofar as they make their own decisions.

'Socialisation' is identified by Mayock as a critical factor in influencing both abstainers' and users' choices. The rationality of young people's drug-related decisions was 'strongly mediated' by their experiences and their social

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[19] The interview schedule contained approximately 135 different items. Topics covered included the types of drugs used, the locations and individuals associated with drug use, respondents' daily routines, their experience of school and leisure, and their interaction with adults and peers, their views regarding their own and others' behaviours.

[20] This sense may have partly been a function of the interview situation: Mayock describes how in preparing for the interviews, 'a great deal of time was invested by the researcher in establishing a trusting relationship with prospective research participants' (Mayock 2001: 17). The title of the research report – '*Choosers or Losers?*' – indicates the interviewer's attitude to decision-making around drugs and this may also have influenced respondents to adopt an assertive disposition in responding to questions.

interactions, but the findings indicate a well-developed sense of self-respect, based on a sense of personal control:

> It is clear from the evidence presented throughout this report that drug-taking has a perceived value and that the act of drug-taking is rarely pursued in the absence of tangible rewards. Individual drug users offered a range of explanations for drug use, ranging from curiosity to the alleviation of boredom and negative self-thought. The benefits of drug use were closely linked to the social context of use: friends made the drug experience worthwhile, thus playing an important role in encouraging subsequent use. The research evidence suggests, however, that the pursuit of drug-related pleasure was highly unlikely to occur without the individual's personal endorsement of the activity and his/her belief in its benefits. Although individual levels of drug involvement corresponded roughly to that of the peer group, there was ample evidence to indicate that users made personal decisions about the use and non-use of substances. While emphasising the shared nature of the experience, young people indicated their own personal limits, irrespective of the behaviour of their friends. (Mayock 2001: 81)

Interviewing only young people from one inner-city area of Dublin, Mayock (2001: 20–21) noted the isolation of the research subjects from wider Irish society and its norms. She reported that while they were critical of the level of drugs, violence and crime in their community, they were equally conscious of their own marginality in wider society, which, in their view, was exacerbated by negative and offensive outside representation of their community. They also rarely mentioned the legal risks associated with drug use: they 'did not appear to worry about the legal consequences of being found in possession of controlled drugs' (p. 96). Although not pursued by Mayock, it is apparent that such social positioning will have implications for individuals' reference points in seeking and maintaining respect and self-respect. In his study of youthful drug users in California (already discussed in Chapter 2.1), Blumer (1967) examines the patterns of drug use among adolescents from different social strata, observing different preferences and areas of overlap. For example, the 'rowdy types' and those involved in drug-dealing, the 'players', tended to come from lower social strata, while 'cool dudes' and 'mellow types' were found across various strata.

Finally, Mayock (2001: xvi) notes that the respondents' drug choices do not remain static but are subject to revision and modification over time, partly in response to changes in social context. Blumer (1967) similarly finds that drug choices are evolving: '…induction into drug use is a developing experience that depends on the basic factors of access to drugs, acceptance by drug-using

associates, kinds of images youngsters have of drugs, and the runs of experience that affect their interpretation of drugs' (p. 59). It may be assumed that as the grounds for decisions alter, so does the basis for the individual's sense of self-respect. Self-respect is a continually shifting and evolving phenomenon.

## 3.3    Concluding Remarks

Studies of drug users' careers have revealed two principal ways in which self-respect functions in the life and experience of the individual in everyday social life. Firstly, one's sense of self-worth may be established by reference to socially-determined criteria, expressed externally through the status and prestige that one enjoys vis-à-vis others, i.e. recognition self-respect. This status and prestige may be enhanced, for example through challenging another with perceived higher status, or acquiring material evidence indicative of one's abilities and status. Recognition may be sought within the world of one's peers, or by reference to the wider society.  Secondly, one may enhance one's sense of self-worth in a more subjective manner, through taking action to gain control of one's own life, spending time and effort in acquiring skills and expertise in some pursuit, which deliver personal satisfaction, or making decisions that will avoid exposing you to shame or allow you to join a preferred moral community, i.e. evaluative self-respect.

It is apparent that the most revealing source of information on the functioning of self-respect is open-ended in-depth interviewing. Data obtained by this means is amenable to decision-making analysis and how rational, emotional and cultural factors may figure, either singly or collectively, in the decisions that individuals make affecting their sense of self-respect. Caution is needed, however, in interpreting this data. In particular, the researcher needs to consider the time that has elapsed between the moment when a decision was made and the re-telling of how and why the decision was made. In the interval, the research subject's circumstances may have changed, he may have undergone experiences, which have altered his view of his self-respect, and his perception and construction of past events may have also altered accordingly.  In the next chapter, in looking at

the application of discourse analysis methods, the range of factors that the researcher needs to consider are discussed.

# CHAPTER 4: RESPECT AND SELF-RESPECT –
## GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

## 4.0    Introduction

In Chapter 1.3 it was proposed that showing or denying respect for others reinforces one's own sense of self-respect, and conversely being shown or being denied respect by others has the potential to affect one's sense of self-respect.  In Chapter 2 the research studies that were described illustrated how drug users who felt they were being denied respect took various steps to counter this denial and provide alternative nourishment for their sense of self-respect – through allying with like-minded peers who would accord them respect; through withdrawing from contact, as far as possible, with people who did not show them respect or disrespected them; or through rejecting the norms and values of those who 'dissed' them. Chapter 3 reported evidence from other research studies showing how drug users recognise the need to take steps to enhance their own self-respect in order to ensure that others will respect them. The success of this strategy may be gauged from the reaction of researchers, particularly those in the symbolic interactionist tradition, who have observed their research subjects' control, decisiveness and ability to organise and 'do the business', and have expressed respect for them as a result.

These observed linkages beg the question, what is the nature of the connection between respect and self-respect? In this chapter I will explore this question by focusing on more microscopic elements of human social interaction – talk and reflexive processes – to see what light they may shed on the nature of interactions involving respect.

## 4.1    Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis focuses on the mediating function of language in determining the structure of individuals' thoughts and their responses in social interactions, establishing their 'voice' and shaping their 'social intelligibility' or their 'social accountability'. The methods to be discussed in this section have all been

associated with the social constructionist perspective on social life, which sees language and discourse as constituting social life  (Burr 1995: 8–9).  Some approaches to social constructionism problematise the very notions of 'personhood' and 'human agency', presenting the 'individual' as simply a grammatical construct. However, it is possible to use the analytical methods in a more restricted sense, without subscribing to the epistemological assumptions. For example, Potter and Wetherell (1987) propose approaching discourse as a topic in itself, independent of events, beliefs and cognitive processes, where the analytically prior question of how the discourse is manufactured is the focus of study. This kind of discourse analysis has developed predominantly within the field of discursive psychology, where it has been particularly useful in understanding 'mind, selves and sense-making' (Wetherell, Taylor and Yates 2001: Part Three).  With their emphasis on 'talk as social action', the methods are appropriate for investigating the functioning of concepts such as respect and self-respect, which mediate between individuals and their environment, and which are articulated through the use of discourse.

Just four analytical methods, associated with some of the principal proponents of this approach, are discussed here – interpretive repertoires, warranting voice, positioning and self-narratives.  To test the relevance of interpretive repertoires, warranting voice and positioning in investigating the functioning of respect and self-respect in research subjects' lives, a recent report on a study of heroin users (Downes 2003), which includes transcripts of interviews with 27 respondents and commentaries by some of the interviewers, is used. In an attempt to understand different aspects of living as heroin addicts, Paul Downes (2003) conducted a series of standardised open-ended interviews with Russian-speaking heroin users in Estonia. The interviews were conducted by university students. Although the use of the interviews for discourse analysis is limited owing to the interviews' being translated from the original language, and owing to a lack of full information on the interview situations, and despite the fact that the research was not specifically focusing on the concept of respect in the lives of the respondents, the interview transcripts do provide material for exploring the potential of the analytical methods in investigating moral dimensions of the respondents' lives, including the functioning of respect. To explore the relevance of self-narratives,

stories written by prisoners in Mountjoy Prison in Dublin (Hunt 1999), concerning their lives outside as heroin users, provide material with which to test the method's potential.

## Interpretive Repertoire

Potter and Wetherell (1987) propose this concept as a means of organising the study of what are generally termed 'attitudes'. They suggest (1987: 54–55) that when a person is perceived to be expressing an attitude this may be broken down into the evaluative expressions that they use in discourse. Analysis of these expressions reveals three critical features: the *context*, which serves to organise the evaluative account; *variability* in the use of language to express the evaluation, according to the context; and the *construction* of the 'attitudinal object' out of this context and variation. Following from this, they argue that language is a performative, action-oriented function, constructed to achieve particular social goals rather than to represent and express inter-psychic events. They propose the concept of the 'interpretive repertoire' to account for the use of similar evaluative expressions by a group of individuals in depicting their actions and beliefs. While displaying considerable variability and inconsistency, these individuals draw on the same terms and constructions for characterising and evaluating actions, events and other phenomena. A repertoire is defined as being 'constituted through a limited range of terms used in particular stylistic and grammatical constructions. Often a repertoire will be organized around specific metaphors and figures of speech (tropes)' (Potter and Wetherell 1987: 149).

Downes' (2003) interview schedule includes questions exploring the respondents' views on drugs, drug prevention methods, education, the differences between men and women, friendship, love, self-understanding and self-awareness, trust, happiness, depression, the future, and the possibility of change in the world at large. The interview schedule does not include questions pertaining specifically to respect.[21] However, it seems reasonable to suggest that if such questions had been

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[21] Questions might include enquiring about the individual's perceptions of their achievements and disappointments, occasions when they felt proud and when they felt ashamed, when they had been humiliated or stigmatised by others, when they had enjoyed the recognition or respect of others, their experiences with institutional authority, and inviting them to identify whom they respect or do not respect.

asked, it would be possible to compile interpretive repertoires based on respondents' answers, indicating the nature and level of their self-respect and how respect influences their relations with others.

**Warranting Voice**

This analytical method may be viewed as an individualistic version of Potter and Wetherell's 'interpretive repertoire' (Burr 1995: 120–121). Gergen (1989), propounder of the approach, suggests that while the existence of the 'self' cannot be established by inductive means, such as referring to qualities of mental states, it may be observed through studying linguistic discourses as part of a social process. He argues that the mental world becomes elaborated as various interest groups within a culture seek to warrant or justify their accounts of the world. By establishing a 'hegemony in world construction', people may find self-fulfilment, love, freedom, position or respect.

Gergen defines 'conventions of warrant' as a means whereby people 'furnish rationales as to why a certain voice (typically their own) is to be granted superiority by offering rationales or justifications' (Gergen 1989: 74). They establish their warrant by referring to mental events such as 'I know', 'I saw it with my own eyes'; by challenging others' warranting activity by means such as 'You only think that, you don't know', 'Don't get hysterical', or 'My position is based on reason; I am logical while you are irrational'; by offering refinements such as distinguishing between true observation and biased observation, pointing to circular arguments, or lack of moral fibre; or by referring to higher mental capacity through education, extensive reading or experience of the world. It is by mastering such techniques of discourse that the individual obtains a warrant:

> … it is not the person who professes a flagging self-esteem, a low level of morale or a guilty conscience who has an 'inadequate' conception of self: each of these forms of self-accounting can be vitally effective, and often enable one to achieve a certain form of power in social life. Rather, it is the inarticulate or linguistically undifferentiated individual who requires attention. Such an individual is simply bereft of the symbolic resources necessary for full social functioning. (Gergen 1989: 76)

In his interview responses, ethnic Estonian Erkki, a 22-year-old active heroin user who is not in treatment (Downes 2003: 71–76), establishes a strong warranting

voice for himself. It is possible to read this warranting voice as an assertion of his own sense of self-worth, partly achieved through expressing a lack of concern or respect for the rest of society. Throughout the interview Erkki continually questions the sense or appropriateness of the questions being put by the interviewer – for example, 'You can put it that way'; 'And I should tell them [Erkki's dreams] to you? … Let's move on'; 'If you want to call that happiness then go ahead'; 'You once asked that already'; 'sentimental question. Why the hell do you ask that?'; 'Why do you think I want children?'. Erkki also distances himself from society. In answer to the very first question, 'Has any drug campaign had any effect on you?', he responds, 'Not so far (smiling). Don't really see the danger of using drugs', and in answer to a follow-up question, regarding the link between the perceived dangers of drugs and generally accepted norms in society, he replies, 'In what society? The shit hole we live in? Nothing accepted here. Not in general anyway.' He also expresses contempt for specific groups in society, for example Russians, gays, the elderly, women. Asked what he would like to change in the world, he replies, ' As long as I'm fine or ok I don't care about others. If some nigger dies in Africa – who cares. I'm no saviour nor a God. Let the world stay as it is and strongest will survive.'

**Positioning**

This method focuses on the dynamic, immediate and transitory self as constructed in relation to others in conversation (Davies and Harré 1990). 'Positioning' is contrasted with 'role', which Davies and Harré see as static, formal and ritualistic, and a consequence of our attempts to create a consistent and unitary account of ourselves over time, but which denies the variability, shifting and contradictory positions so evident in our day-to-day conduct.

Positioning occurs in the course of conversations, episodes of human interaction. The key analytical components include identifying categories of people, selecting story lines from a wide variety of possible forms, positioning ourselves in terms of the chosen categories and story lines, and recognising ourselves in these positions. These components are manifested in our choice of words, images and metaphors, our way of talking on the occasion, and our political and moral commitments in the course of talking. This analysis reveals the autobiographical elements in our

talk, through which it is possible to find out how each actor in a conversation conceives of themselves and of the other participants. Notable features of positioning are that it is interactive, in that what one persons says influences the positioning of the other person; it is reflexive in that each actor continuously considers his position; and it is not necessarily intentional in that the interaction with another person and continuous reflexivity mean that one's self is ongoingly produced.

Downes' report (2003: 46– 49) reproduces an interview with Maxim, a Russian-speaking 21-year-old attending a methadone maintenance centre, together with extensive comments by the interviewer, a female Latvian university student, on her reaction in the interview. Maxim's responses to the interview questions reveal an empty and very negative view of his life and of the world, and a low sense of self-esteem: he expresses his sense of loneliness, unhappiness; powerlessness, hopelessness, uselessness and the loss of his potential. In response to a question about whether there are many things that irritate him, he also indicates a lack of self-respect: 'Yes. Sometimes everything. I just go along the street and everything irritates me. Cars, people. Seems like they are looking at you like from above. Probably they are not, but that's how I see them.'

While it is not possible to access Maxim's positioning and repositioning in the course of the interaction, it is possible to see how the interviewer positioned herself at the start of the interview and repositioned herself in the course of the interview, in response to Maxim's behaviours and statements and in reaction to her own perceptions and appraisal of Maxim's positioning. As she positions and repositions herself, it is evident how she begins to develop respect for Maxim. She describes how Maxim did not take his jacket and hat off and seemed nervous and tense at the beginning. She started by talking about herself, where she was from, what her name was and why she was there: 'Maxim was rather responsive and that helped us a lot and in a way tore down the possible barrier and distance between us'. She goes on to describe how she was 'surprised' by Maxim's responses, and how she began to realise he was not one of society's outcasts, an angry, negative, suspicious person, but a sensitive person, 'in many ways just like me and all the other young people around'. He used to study, have plans, ideas,

interests and even a girlfriend before he began using heroin. She describes the interview and it is possible to see how, while repositioning Maxim as she listened to his answers, she also repositioned herself, according him the respect that she already accorded herself as a 'normal person':

> He was being very frank and open and didn't view us as a potential threat or someone who has come to look at him from above. I was afraid of that, so during the interview I was trying to sound as natural as possible and be as sincere as I can, so that he would see me as a young person just like him. Just a short sentence was needed to break the ice or a possible wall that was built by my suspicion and prejudice towards him. When asked what is the most important and valuable thing in his life, he answered: 'Mother'. That's when I identified with him and felt like saying, 'I know what you mean. I know just how it feels.' This was one thing that made me realise he was a normal person, it's just that at some point something went terribly wrong and now this young man is lost. (Downes 2003: 49)

**Self-Narrative**

Self-narratives comprise a series of elements (including an endpoint, a sequence of events in a particular order, a causal explanation, and beginnings and endings) which are derived from a range of possible forms available within the narrator's culture (Gergen 1994). Furthermore, far from being scripted through looking inwards to our own individual cognitive processes and interpretations of the world, the narrative is dependent on, and sustained by, interchange and dialogue with others – both those who have participated in the events that we relate in our narratives and those who listen to our stories and appraise them. With an endpoint that is generally invested with value, the narrative gives a sense of coherence, direction and meaning to a person's life. Gergen divides self-narratives into three varieties – a 'stability narrative', in which an individual's life simply proceeds unchanged, neither better not worse, in relation to the endpoint; a 'progressive narrative', in which the individual moves up towards an improved evaluative endpoint; and a 'regressive narrative', in which the narrator moves away from the evaluative endpoint. While not arguing that our life stories are culturally determined or that our identities are shaped by external forces, Gergen (1994: 255) suggests that 'self-narratives do invite certain actions and discourage others'.

The social functions ascribed to self-narrative indicate why it may prove a fruitful means of investigating the interplay of respect and self-respect in a person's life. Self-narratives are characterised as 'cultural resources that serve such social

purposes as self-identification, self-justification, self-criticism, and self-solidification' (Gergen 1994: 249). They render a person 'socially intelligible', both in helping to explain to themselves where their lives may be leading them to in the future, be it to an improved or a disimproved life, and in explaining to others why they are as they are. As a consequence, a person's sense of their place in life, their purpose in life, their self-worth, can change over time as they retell their story and morally re-evaluate their lives. The incidents in a self-narrative also generally involve other people and it is important to the continued validity of the self-narrative that these people continue to play out certain past roles in relation to the narrator, and that the narrator also continues to play out the appropriate past roles in these other people's self-narratives.

> What this means is that self-narrative is not simply a derivative of past encounters, reassembled within ongoing relationships; once used, it establishes the grounds for moral being within the community. It establishes reputation, and it is the community of reputations that forms the core of moral tradition. In effect, the performance of a self-narrative secures a relational future. …[Furthermore] Identities, in this sense, are never individual; each is suspended in an array of precariously situated relations. (Gergen 1994: 257–259)

In a short story (Hunt 1999: 99–109), written ostensibly about scoring his next fix, the author, Boo-Boo, a heroin addict serving a prison sentence, provides a fine example of a self-narrative that renders the narrator 'socially intelligible'. Dedicated to the author's son, 'for him to read when he is older', the narrative relates the conflicting feelings that Boo-Boo experiences the night he hears he is to be father. There are three very different feelings expressed – one revealing a lack of self-esteem, one revealing unadulterated elation, and one generated by inhaling a chemical substance. Firstly, while waiting for his girlfriend to complete the pregnancy test, he recounts: 'All of a sudden BANG! It hits me and I think, "Fuck me, I could be a dad soon!" I have a hundred different thoughts running around in my head…If she comes out and tells me she isn't pregnant, I know I'd be disappointed. But at the same time, I wonder if I'm ready to be a dad. At the moment I'm nothing but a junkie and have been for the last few years. How can I be a decent father if I can't stop taking heroin?' Secondly, when he hears he is to be a father, 'A great shout of happiness escapes through my lips. I feel over the moon, on top of the world, and nothing on this earth can ever take that moment away from me.' And finally, he describes the feelings he experiences after

injecting heroin – 'As I send the smack home, I get the same old feeling, a little rush through the body' – and smoking cannabis – 'It's very hard to describe this feeling. People have asked me to describe it many times, but I just can't find any words. It's like acting in a film, reading the book of it and watching it all at once. That might sound strange and weird but it's the best I can do.'

The narration of these feelings is embedded in a story that unfolds in a sequence of interactions with a series of different actors in different locations – with his girlfriend, father and mother in a pub, where the news of his impending fatherhood is announced; in a shopping centre, where 'everyone seems to be running around like headless chickens', and where he has an encounter with a car while crossing the street and throws a chip at the driver – 'Fuck off ye baldy prick'; in the flat of Mr Tambourine Man (his supplier), where he injects himself with heroin and shoots the breeze with his friends; in the street again, where he is stopped by the Gardaí, who ask him to empty his pockets – 'I tell him [a Garda] to empty them as I put me hands on the car and spread me legs. They hate when you do that' – and they send him on his way, calling him a 'little scumbag'; and finally at home, where he rolls himself a joint and receives a lecture on giving up drugs from his girlfriend, before going up to bed alone to smoke his joint.

Written for his new-born son while he is in prison, Boo-Boo's story may be read partly as a 'progressive narrative' and partly as a 'stability narrative'. Boo-Boo expresses his pride in becoming a father, something that nothing, not even his own failings, will ever be able to destroy. At the same time he places this feeling of pride within the context of other aspects of his life, which may be expected to reduce his ability to demonstrate his pride in, and love for, his son – his drug-using, which gives him unique and pleasurable feelings, and his relations with others, such as members of the public, law enforcement agents, and his family and girlfriend, which problematise his sense of self-respect. For example, his girlfriend gets at him: '… you can't keep this up now [drug use and crime]. You've got responsibility now.'

Boo-Boo's narrative may be read as expressing his sense of his own self-worth as a father but also as accounting for his lack of recognition self-respect – he is, after

all, in prison – and his lack of recognition-respect for members of the public and representatives of authority and the establishment, especially when they appear critical or contemptuous of him, as evidenced by his contemptuous and unco-operative behaviour towards them. The story is Boo-Boo's attempt to render himself 'socially intelligible' to his son and worthy of his respect. The final paragraph describes how Boo-Boo wakes up to discover his joint has burnt a large hole in his jumper: 'It's smouldering and the smell of it is horrible. I jump up and tear it off me and scrunch it up and put it out.' This may be read metaphorically as conveying Boo-Boo's disgust with his drug habit and his desire to cease using. It is interesting to speculate about the story Boo-Boo will write after he has left prison and returns to the environment in which the events in the story were located, to discover how he accounts for the functioning of respect and self-respect in his subsequent life experiences.

## 4.2    Reflexive Thought

An interest in the language and discourse surrounding the functioning of respect and self-respect in the lives of drug users begs the question, how do researchers themselves understand the concepts in their lives and in their research, and how does this affect the research process and their findings? In Chapter 1.2 I discussed the symbolic interactionist view that the researcher's work is profoundly affected by the researcher's attitude and respect or lack of respect for his research subjects. In this section I consider three participant observation studies of groups of people involved in the world of drugs, exploring whether and how the researchers worked reflexively. I use the concept 'reflexive' to refer to the manner in which researchers conduct their research not only with reference to independent definitions and normative understandings of the concepts but also through reflection on the functioning of the concepts in their own lives and in the research process.

Interested in researching 'deviance', Lawrence Wieder (1974) secured a job with the Department of Corrections in Los Angeles. His task was to investigate why a half-way house in the city, designed to support narcotics felons leaving prison, did not improve parole addicts' chances of abstaining from drug use. Entitled

*Language and Social Reality*, Wieder's study compares traditional ethnographic and ethnomethodological approaches to the analysis of language in the research situation, and considers how the research approach influences the research findings and conclusions. He uses the discourse around respect by his research subjects as an example for illuminating his theoretical argument.

What is interesting for the purposes of this dissertation is the way in which Wieder's account of the functioning of respect between persons in the half-way house varies according to the methodological approach that is being used. In the 'traditional ethnographic' explanation, which posits a 'legitimate, normative order' and observes behaviours which deviate from the normative order, i.e. deviant behaviours, and which regards 'talk only as a source of data for analysis', we are shown how the residents give grudging directive-respect to the staff and their house rules, but reserve appraisal respect for their fellow residents, which is given within the context of their own 'convict code'.

Turning next to a 'folk-sociology' account,[22] in which residents and staff describe and analyse the commitments, beliefs and actions of residents by formulating their accounts in terms of the 'code', Wieder finds that the research subjects formulate a 'social reality', containing moral alternatives, role relationships, caste conflicts, and rational action. Respect plays an important, and richer, part in these formulations of the situation. Residents explain how their behaviours are constrained by the 'code', by the normative requirements of their group, and staff, in turn, describe how they recognise and respect the residents' obligations to their 'code'.

Wieder goes on to suggest that this 'folk sociology' account is akin to an oral history, 'an exegetical organised narrative', intended to help participants analyse their experiences and to instruct outsiders, through acting as 'embedded instruction' for seeing the formal structures of resident conduct. However, the narrative is still separate from the occurrences it describes; it serves as a

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[22] Folk sociology, in which the research subjects produce the account, is characterised as sharing ' many formal and substantive properties with the explanations of professional sociologists' (Wieder 1974: 44).

commentary on what occurs; the hearer listens passively to the narrative, rather than actively encountering and engaging with the narrative. It is to this 'telling of the code', in which the code is 'told' in the course of continuous, connected and consequential action, involving both the researcher and the researched, that Wieder next turns.

From the point of view of the teller, usually a resident of the half-way house, telling the code is 'a *method* of persuasion and justification' (p. 175; italics in original), and a means by which the teller of the code can command the respect of others:

> This means that inasmuch as the way that alter's activity appears to ego as coherently organized and meaningful is dependent on the ways alter talks about what he is doing, ego's sense for what alter is doing is contingent upon whatever 'goals', 'projects', or 'interests' alter attempts to realize in or through his interaction with ego. … Guided perception through description has the character of being subject to 'interests' in this way, because the same explanatory and descriptive utterances often are, and always can be, sanctions, justifications, or urgings of some course of action in the relationship between hearer and speaker. (p. 175)

The staff of the half-way house are also concerned to be respected by residents as well as other staff. Wieder describes how residents could use the telling of the code to indicate to staff how the resident assessed their competence, i.e. their knowledgeability about the code, and to show respect or disrespect for a member of staff would use the 'telling of the code'. Staff with demonstrably poor understanding of the workings of the code were described as 'stupid, square, fools, and naïve, and, therefore, they could not be respected'. They were given derogatory nicknames and stories were circulated underlining their stupidity.

Turning to the listener (the researcher), Wieder shifts his attention from describing the objects experienced by the ethnographer to describing the course of experiencing the occurrences *qua* objects. Defining it as the 'documentary method of interpretation', he describes how the ethnographer gradually elaborates his schema through assembling pieces, as in a jigsaw, to produce reality. The ethnomethodological turn is to suggest that the shape of the social reality that is described is dependent on being instructed by the actors themselves as to the actual patterns of behaviours and motivations: 'The "instruction" is accomplished from within a setting for an observer who attends to the ways that members

[research subjects] talk about their affairs' (p. 189). Without the research subjects' talk, Wieder suggests that the observer's understanding of what is occurring may be quite different. For example, without knowledge of the residents' code, strictly applying rational choice theory to the residents' observed behaviour in the half-way house, and assuming that the residents are orienting their behaviour to maximise their opportunities to achieve a certain type of therapy, Wieder suggests that it would be possible to interpret the behaviours categorised as 'doing disinterest' and 'doing disrespect' as negatively sanctioning forms of therapy that the residents do not think beneficial, rather than showing disinterest or disrespect (pp. 194–195). Alternatively, without the residents' talk, the group of behaviours could be seen as complying with a stylistic maxim 'Stay cool':

> Compliance with the maxim, 'be cool', requires that one show his dominance over his circumstances by suppressing any show of affect and interest in occurrences in his situation. Persons complying with such a rule do so out of motivations to obtain the *respect* and *admiration* of their fellows, in contrast to motivations to obtain the *trust* of their fellows, which is the motivation to comply with the maxim, 'Show your loyalty to the residents' (p. 198; italics in original).

Without delving further into the debate on the different research approaches, these different takes on social life, and the functioning of respect and self-respect, in the half-way house underline the need for an inquirer into the functioning of respect in everyday social life to have regard to the context in which she is observing interactions, and the role of the researcher and the researched in producing and recording data. Is it evidence of respect or self-respect, and, if so, what kinds? Or is it evidence, in reality, of some other social phenomenon at work, such as a desire for identity or for power? Two other ethnographic studies set within the drug world highlight how the researcher's interactions with her research subjects and her collection and analysis of data can influence the resulting account of the functioning of respect and self-respect in the lives of the research subjects.

Between 1974 and 1980 Patricia Adler and her husband, Peter Adler, lived and socialised in an upper-level drug dealing and smuggling community located in the south-western United States. Based on participant observation over the six-year period and depth interviews with individual participants, the resulting ethnographic study of the community is entitled *Wheeling and Dealing* (1985). Adler's approaches the study from the perspective of existential sociology, which

'analyzes behaviour as being motivated by underlying "brute feelings", drives and emotions, … [which] are independent of and dominant over norms, values, and cognition, although these commonly run into and pervade each other' (p. 2). She argues that the driving force behind people's entry into and remaining in the community is hedonism.

Notwithstanding a question mark over the validity of Adler's determinist approach to sociological analysis, her account of the economic and social substructure of the drug dealers' world indicates the importance of recognition (institutional-)respect in the extra-legal world of drug smuggling and dealing in the 'prestige hierarchy'. Adler describes the phenomenon of 'prestige mobility', whereby recognition (institutional-)respect could be won and, almost inevitably, lost, as the drug trafficker's early rationalism, goal-orientation, and self-control gave way to the heavy partying, impulsive behaviour, and present-orientation so prevalent within the subculture of hedonism. While recognition-respect is viewed as important in sustaining the substructure, Adler's account suggests the research subjects had no need for evaluative respect or self-respect. Self-esteem, or even self-indulgence, appears to be all.

> When they separated from the mainstream culture and ideology, they abandoned their predominantly instrumental, goal-seeking, controlled, and future-oriented behaviour. They ceased to think of their selves as something to be 'attained, created, achieved,' and focused instead on discovering and satisfying their deep, unsocialized inner impulses. They therefore sought self-expression in those acts which resulted from lowering inhibitions, freeing themselves from rational planning, and indulging in 'mad desires and errant fancies.' Satisfying their immediate pleasures thus came to take precedence over planned behaviour. (p. 154)

In Wieder's terms, Adler's account may be classed as a 'traditional ethnography', based on the formulation of a normative paradigm and observations charting participants' conformity or deviations from the paradigm. Interestingly, respect and self-respect are presented as important features neither of the normative paradigm nor in the lives of the research subjects. Furthermore, Adler herself expresses what amounts to a lack of respect for her research subjects. She discusses the 'cultural clash' between herself and her husband on the one hand, and their research subjects on the other: '… as researchers try to get depth involvement, they are apt to come across fundamental differences in character,

values, and attitudes between their subjects and themselves. In our case, we were most strongly confronted by differences in present versus future orientations, a desire for risk versus security, and feelings of spontaneity versus self-discipline' (p. 24). She remarks, moreover, that she and her husband often felt 'frustrated' by their research subjects' behaviours and actions, which they saw as 'irrational' or 'foolhardy'. It may be asked, if Adler had interacted more reflexively with her research subjects, would she have generated a more nuanced and ambiguous account of, *inter alia*, the functioning of respect and self-respect in the lives of her research subjects.

For five years, between 1982 and 1986, Terry Williams spent two hours a day, three days a week, 'hanging out' with a 'crew' of eight teenage cocaine dealers, mainly of Dominican descent, in the Washington Heights area of New York City. He wanted to find out about kids who sell drugs – how do they get into the business, how do they stay in it, how transient is their involvement, can they get out, where do they go if they do get out, and what are the rewards for those who succeed? In *The Cocaine Kids* (1990) he gives a graphic account of the cocaine trade in New York City. The participants occupy various levels in an 'institutional' hierarchy, comprising wholesalers, suppliers, dealers and a host of lower functionaries; they maintain and improve their position in the hierarchy through evidence of their ability, discipline and reliability, and their capacity to manage the complex business of obtaining and selling drugs and to interact effectively with a wide range of people. Sine qua nons are staying out of prison; avoiding the use of crack, although snorting cocaine is acceptable; and maintaining loyalty to family and friends. The possession and visible spending of money are critical to maintaining position and status. Williams acknowledges the deprivation and marginalisation that the kids experienced in their growing up as a factor leading them into drug dealing (p. ix) and sees the world they inhabit as being separate from the rest of society through its being beyond the law (pp. ix, 1-2, 8, 132).

The 'heart' of the book, however, is the stories of the young cocaine dealers – their lives, their struggles with family problems, how they managed money, girlfriends and boyfriends, how they ran a business, and made decisions about

their futures. In a form akin to a novel, Williams portrays a series of characters who bring their own personalities, skills and expertise, goals and aspirations to bear on their interactions with others: 'In many ways, these kids and others like them simply want respect: they are willing to risk their lives to attain those prized adult rewards of power, prestige and wealth' (p. x).

Although respect may be a 'simple' want, obtaining it is a complex, dynamic process for the cocaine kids. Williams describes an interactive process of giving and receiving respect among themselves and in their business, social and family worlds. Self-respect is tied up with a raft of emotions and feelings including trust, loyalty, love, hope, ambition, fear and doubt. Relations with outsiders are characterised by avoidance and mistrust: the kids do not appear to expect or seek respect outside.

The 'crew' is held together by its organisational purpose of obtaining cocaine from suppliers and selling it to customers. Selecting people to work in the crew involves looking for people with skills to manage the substance and also the interpersonal encounters – in short, people who enjoy institutional (recognition-)respect. For example, Max, who runs the crew, has become established after wining the trust of a 'connect' (a high-level drugs supplier) through demonstrating his ability and reliability: 'Nobody trusted me with any material at first. … I had to convince people I could do it. I didn't have my hand out for no charity. I worked hard to get established' (p. 32). In turn, Max recruits and tests his second-in-command, Chillie, who is adept at running the business and holding the crew together on the ground. However, Max will not introduce Chillie to his supplier: 'I [Chillie] made over a million dollars selling this stuff. If the connect knew what I was doing, he would want to see me. Max knows I do the best business out here. I don't want except a little money and a little respect' (p. 19). Jake, working as a street dealer for Max, seeks recognition-respect via a different route: 'When I got the nine millimeter [gun], I told everyone. I wanted them to know I was no pussy and not to fuck with me. I wasn't going to hurt nobody, but I didn't want to be soft – like they thought I was because I did what Max told me' (p. 60). The gun provided Jake with obstacle recognition-respect, and also recognition self-respect based on his enhanced sense of autonomy.

Recognition self-respect is an important element in the minds of several of the other kids as well, who sought it, however, outside the cocaine world. 'It is clear that the Kids who left the [cocaine] business were those who had a stake in something. … All the Kids except Jake have also begun to live outside the underground: for them, I believe, the cocaine trade was only a stepping stone to the realities of surviving in the larger world' (Williams 1990: 131). It does not work out for all of them. For example, Chillie informs Williams, 'I go to school now for college credit at the City University. …I really wanna finish. I don't want to get trapped in this coke business. But as long as I don't do that and have my goal, I'll be alright' (p. 75). However, Chillie's sense of self-worth is vulnerable. After a visit to his house by the police, Chillie switches to selling on the street instead of from his house: 'Not only did he [Chillie] not like this, he felt it was beneath him, a man who once had workers dealing for him, a payroll, a reputation, respect and pride' (p. 118). He begins sniffing more cocaine, cutting classes, and finally not attending school at all. Another crewmember, Masterrap, is also aware of the bigger picture: 'When Chillie asked me to be part of his crew, I told him I would do it only for two years. I said I would do it if we could make some crazy dollars. I wanted the money to make a demo [demonstration record] and go into the record business. I've made some money now and I got my demo. After this year, I stop. It's been more than two years, I know, but I'm moving in a way I feel good about' (p. 88). Masterrap does not make it into the record business: he has begun living with his girlfriend, is expecting a child and needs to make steady money, so he has taken on a job as assistant to a chef (p. 125).

Not only may a person's self-respect be vulnerable, it may also be ill-founded, which in turn leads to others' withdrawing their respect, which leads to a spiralling downwards of self-respect. Max's older brother, Hector, who works as a member of Max's crew, was once a major dealer. He got into trouble with the police and was imprisoned for a year, after which he wasn't 'good' any more, as Max explained: 'He was still making money for his connect, but he owed him twenty thousand dollars. The cops took the car. He wasn't getting no respect from his people because he wasn't reliable enough and plus everybody knew he was on the pipe [smoking base cocaine, i.e. with the hydrochloride removed]. It was

killing him' (pp. 44–45). Hector himself attributed his decline to a denial of recognition-respect by others: 'You know, certain people put you in a position, but they don't have no business being there. I mean like the cops – they don't know how to go about dealing with people. When I got busted for taking some coke in my car, I admit I was incorrect in that move. But the cops never told me about my rights. After that happened, I just wanted to strike back in some way. All my life I have seen people like that, who hold you in a position to tell you what to do, or keep you down. And they want you to give up trying' (p. 43). On another occasion, he refers to his own lack of recognition self-respect: he attributes his craving for cocaine to having no money, his inability to find a job and his lack of will power (pp. 121–122). Max, on the other hand, attributes Hector's decline to an over-vaunted evaluation self-respect, blaming Hector's own ignorance and obstinacy, and his belief in his invincibility (pp. 43–44).

Occasional crewmember Splib highlights the complex interrelationship between self-image, self-respect and respect, and again how self-deception can distort perceptions of these. Williams introduces Splib thus: 'He is wise, handsome, and above all else a survivor. He also takes great pleasure in his ability to con and manipulate people [including his friends and colleagues]' (p. 21). Williams describes how he has a strong ego and an over-riding belief in his own abilities and rarely admits to being wrong: if something does not work out; it is due to events beyond his control. This belief generally carries the day: 'Although Splib is known for his daily lament of disasters, he is still respected for his keen wit, intelligence and an uncanny ability to emerge unscathed from the most difficult situations' (p. 67).

The frailty of the link between Splib's self-image and reality comes to the fore in his relationship with his wife Kitty, the eighth member of the crew. Splib's ego drives him to want to dominate all the women he meets, including Kitty. He claims that he taught her everything she knows about cocaine and dealing, blames her for failings in the marriage, and intimates that he is the strength behind the relationship. Finally, however, Kitty has had enough and leaves him, thereby asserting her own self-respect: 'Splib told me he wanted to get back together, but I think it's not possible. I tried to overlook the past and I cannot do it – I mean, fuck

the past, look at the present. He's humiliated me too much. … I told him that I didn't want to share him with anybody – I mean especially physically, but he has refused to accept me, my feelings. You know, Splib has never treated me like he wanted me – he always wanted something from me. If he had his way, he wouldn't work at all, he would just have me do everything, including make all the money' (pp. 127–128). In explanation of these self-deceptions, Williams suggested these kids' 'only shield against fear and uncertainty was a sense of their own immortality' (p. 2).

While the kids aspire to move out of the cocaine world into the straight world, using the money that they will have earned through their coke dealing, they reveal difficulties in dealing with the outside world and a consequent diminution of their sense of self-worth. Hector's resentment of the treatment he received at the hands of the police, which amounted to humiliation, has been mentioned above. Williams believes that Hector's brother, Max, who could barely read or write English, was 'reluctant to discuss school when Chillie was around, perhaps because Max is genuinely embarrassed about his lack of schooling and doesn't want Chillie to have the upper hand in anything' (p. 74). In discussing his failure to learn, Max does not blame the school or the education system, but rather sees it simply as not something for which he was suited: 'I never cared much about school because I was facing the street every day. There was a time I'd think about school – but not that much, because everybody don't fit in school. I didn't. … I never liked the school, I never liked the teachers, and I never liked the kids' (pp. 74–75).

Notable in the responses Williams elicited from his research subjects is their willingness to talk to him. Williams' remarks about his first meeting with crew-leader Max, 'I assumed we would talk and go our separate ways: he trusted my friend [who made the introduction] but he was shy; there was certainly no reason for him to talk with me about anything, and I was not about to press the issue. But there was something special about Max, and he became my friend and guide for nearly five years. I think we got along because I was an outsider and he had a story to tell, and he chose me to tell it to' (p. 13). All the kids spoke openly with Williams, justifying it by saying he should 'get the truth' for his book: he was

perceived as 'the sympathetic listener, the person who could hear all and everything and still be trusted' (pp. 82–83). This is the closest any of the research studies examined come to revealing the actual need of the research subjects to be valued and respected by another person.

Williams describes his approach to his research as follows: 'For more than four years, I asked questions and recorded the answers without trying to find support for any particular thesis. In the process, I found that the truth was embedded in a complex, miniature society with institutions, laws, morality, language, codes of behaviour all its own' (pp.1–2). While not an ethnomethodological approach, Williams' ethnographic account accesses the inherent ambiguities and contradictions, in other words the evolving nature of the kids' own perceived respect-standing, through describing the interactions between themselves, between them and outsiders such as law enforcement agents or educational institutions, and also their responses to structural demands such as the need to make money in order to support a child.

## 4.3    Concluding Remarks

In this chapter the application of a selection of methods of discourse analysis has revealed that the relationship between respect and self-respect in social interactions is not a simple linear process but is part of a complex web of dynamic interactive factors. These factors include the purpose of the interaction as it is understood by each participant, and their evolving perception of its purpose a the interview progresses, the evolving interests and motives of each participant in the interaction, the physical circumstances supporting the interaction, such as location, and the wider socio-cultural context within which the interaction occurs including other people associated in some way with the interaction, with their own interests and motives.

Not only is the relationship between respect and self-respect interdependent in a complex, non-linear manner but it is also intersubjective. The study by Wieder (1974) highlights the way in which the reflexive thought of both the researcher and his research subjects influence the way in which respect is observed to

function, and functions. Williams' (1991) account of the lives and experiences of the 'cocaine kids' is a revealing and insightful account of the functioning of respect and self-respect, owing to the manner in which the researcher describes the functioning of respect and self-respect not just from the perspective of his own interactions with the research subjects, but also among the research subjects themselves, and between the research subjects and outside agencies. It is important that the researcher demonstrate a capacity for reflexive thought, i.e. a capacity to reflect on her own role in the research process and the intersubjective nature of the creation of research data by both the research subject and the researcher.

# Conclusions

Given that this dissertation's intention was to provide a 'survey' of possible approaches to the investigation of respect and self-respect, the conclusions that follow are offered as a preliminary, provisional template for further inquiry.

Social research studies that consider the functioning of respect indicate that the concept may be viewed as functioning in everyday social life as an organising principle, whereby a person orders her social world. It provides a means whereby she can categorise other people according to some objective value, such as dignity or character, and rationally order her social preferences. It is also a means whereby she may assess the sources from which she receives respect, and the amount and value of the respect she enjoys, and decide how to act, according to whether she is satisfied with the respect she is accorded or wishes to increase it.

The studies considered have indicated that the concept of self-respect has two principal functions in everyday social life. On the one hand it serves as a means whereby a person may adjust her actions, behaviour, appearance and so on, to match her actual status or a status to which she aspires in society (recognition self-respect). On the other hand, it serves as a means whereby a person may decide on a course of action consistent with her personal standards or character (appraisal self-respect). As a social mechanism, self-respect articulates between the individual as she perceives herself in the social world and as she perceives herself in the moral world. Its functioning is linked to the 'social emotions' of pride and shame.

Respect and self-respect in everyday social life function in a manner akin to a private social accounting process, in which the person continually calculates the value of various relationships and associations to her own respect-standing, and makes adjustments in her own dispositions and behaviours accordingly, both to indicate respect or lack of respect for others and to protect or enhance her own self-respect. Tending towards the establishment of a social equilibrium for each person, each individual's social accounting process contributes to a continuing

dialectical, intersubjective process, as that person's calculations with regard to respect and self-respect are interdependent with other people's calculations in regard to their respect-standing and respecting behaviours.

Considering theoretical approaches to investigating respect and self-respect, I have ranged across a wide selection of possible sociological approaches, including functionalism, structural analysis, critical discourse analysis, face-to-face interaction, symbolic interactionism, social constructionism, discourse analysis and ethnomethodology. These approaches, which have each provided useful insights or interpretive/analytical techniques, have haled from both sides of the structure/agency debate. This eclecticism is probably appropriate. Respect and self-respect do not observe the distinction between agent and structure. Goffman's[23] depiction of the interaction order as embracing both the patterns contained in social structures on the one hand and the diversity of individual intentions on the other, provides a model that accommodates the functioning of respect and self-respect as outlined in this dissertation:

> … what one finds, in modern societies at least, is a nonexclusive linkage – a 'loose coupling' – between interactional practices and social structures, a collapsing of strata and structures into broader categories, the categories themselves not corresponding one-to-one to anything in the structured world, a gearing as it were of various structures into interactional cogs. Or, if you will, a set of transformation rules, or a membrane selecting how various externally relevant social distinctions will be managed within the interaction. (Goffman 1983: 11)

With regard to methodologies, I have focused on the qualitative approach, on the assumption that, as a data-gathering method, it will yield complex and densely-nuanced evidence. As anticipated at the start of the research, the findings from the one quantitative research study consulted (see Chapter 3.2), which investigated, *inter alia*, self-respect in the lives of the heroin users, were found to be problematic. The concept was not contextualised and the opportunity to infer the ways in which it functioned in the lives of the research subjects was restricted.

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[23] In a rare interview, given in 1980 (Verhoeven 2000), Goffman describes himself as a 'structural functionalist' (p. 213) and a 'positivist' (p. 219), dissociating himself from ethnomethodology (p. 221), symbolic interactionism (pp. 226–8) and social constructionism (pp. 218, 231–2). He aligns himself with Robert Merton and Talcott Parsons, saying of the latter: 'Parsons … provided, in *The Structure of Social Action*, at the time, the first statement that it was reasonable to be thinking in theoretical terms, … he provided something of an epistemology that I've always found congenial and reasonable' (p. 219).

A diverse collection of qualitative methods has been applied to analysing the evidence of the functioning of respect and self-respect found in the selected studies, be they in-depth interviews, reports based on participant observation, or written texts. Arguably, this scatter-gun approach is appropriate, given the different dimensions of respect and self-respect that have been considered.[24] Analysis of demeanour and deference rituals and discourse analyses such as warranting voice and positioning have proved useful in exploring face-to-face interactions. Other techniques such as game theory and conversation analysis may also yield useful insights. Where the actions of one individual or group in an interaction is the focus of interest, other analytical methods, such as critical discourse analysis, rational choice and risk theory, and discourse analysis around interpretive repertoires and self-narratives, have been found useful.

Although I have not specifically explored methods for analysing the functioning of respect at the level of social collectivities, reference was made in Chapter 2.3 to the potential of Coser's (1956) analysis of the functions of conflict in society for understanding how respect functions at the social, as opposed to the individual, level. Network analysis may also yield useful insights into how people organise themselves with a view to obtaining and maintaining social respect.

In the course of the dissertation I have discussed a number of issues that could affect the validity of the researcher's interpretation of the functioning of respect and self-respect.[25] They include instances of false respect and contested

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[24] Organising his study of the situation of inmates in asylums in four separate, unrelated essays, written from different sociological vantage points, Goffman (1961) pleads the undeveloped state of the discipline of sociology. He suggests that each approach needs to be used where it best applies and only then should its wider connections in the family of sociological thought be explored: 'Better, perhaps, different coats to clothe the children well than a single splendid tent in which they all shiver' (p. 11).

[25] Validity in qualitative research is not regarded as an independent test applied to the process, as much as an ongoing state of mind, the application of continuous philosophical rigour to the research effort: 'A valid argument is sound, well grounded, justifiable, strong and convincing' (Kvale 1996: 236); 'judgements of validity … concern your conceptual and ontological clarity, and the success with which you have translated these into a meaningful and relevant epistemology' (Mason 2001: 188). Kvale and Mason both talk about validity in the context of the 'quality' of the research, or the 'craft' as Kvale calls it. Kvale (1996: 242–244) describes three critical dispositions that contribute to ensuring valid research: continual 'checking' of assumptions and procedures; continual interrogation of the epistemological basis of the analysis and interpretation of the data; and ongoing theorising about the nature of the data generated.

allegations of disrespect or lack of respect, the need for careful consideration of the context and timing of data sources, and the need reflexivity. The issue of whether it is necessary for a researcher to have respect for her research subjects has also arisen in several contexts.

Insofar as respect is a rational process, I suggest it is necessary for the researcher to have respect for her research subjects as rational beings. If the researcher does not accord her research subjects respect, she will not be able to demonstrate conclusively how they make use of respect in their lives. In Chapter 2.2, I noted that sociologists in the symbolic interactionist tradition argued the need for respect between researcher and researched in order both to access important sources of data and to obtain accurate data. These research studies were all found to provide convincing evidence of the importance of respect and self-respect in the lives of their research subjects. On the other hand, in Chapter 4.2, in discussing the work of Adler (1985), it was noted that she indicated a lack of respect for her research subjects. I suggest that this lack of respect weakens the validity of some of her findings. She describes the importance of institutional recognition-respect in the functioning of the community's 'prestige hierarchy' but does not see self-respect as being important in the lives of these hedonistic 'outsiders'. Self-respect may not have been important to her research subjects, which is why it is not described; however, her lack of regard for her research subjects may account for the failure to find evidence of self-respect among these research subjects.

To return to the problem outlined in the introduction, the 'respect deficit' in modern Western societies between public commitments to ensuring that every member of society enjoys respect and the widely-perceived lack of respect among members of socially-excluded groups, I believe that investigating social exclusion through the prism of the functioning of respect and self-respect in society has certain advantages. It facilitates the study of all individuals and groups in society within a single framework, constructed around their interactions relating to the functioning of respect and self-respect. No individual's or group's perspective on the grounds for, or functioning of respect, is privileged. It is a dynamic framework

which can respond to and accommodate changes in the circumstances of any individual or group over time.

Erving Goffman's account of the interaction order was proposed earlier in this chapter, as an appropriate framework for thinking about how respect and self-respect function in everyday social life. Judith Shklar's discussion about the importance of 'character' in political life is now proposed as a useful way of thinking about how this interaction framework is animated in relation to respect and self-respect. Having questioned the sincerity of respect as a moral process (see Chapter 1.1), Shklar argues that we should not seek out ethical and moral principles as a means of understanding and explaining contemporary political and social life, but rather pursue an understanding of 'character'. Character will enable us to find an acceptable balance between the unresolvable conflicts, contradictions, uncertainties and complexities that are inherent in modern liberal democracies. In the following quotation, replace 'most politics' with 'the functioning of respect and self-respect in everyday social life' and Judith Shklar's words read as an apt summary of the main conclusion of this dissertation:

> Most politics are not a question of stark choices at all; they involve bargains, incremental decisions, adaptations, rituals, display, argument, persuasion, and the like. …What we look for in both public officials and our friends is character. Not a set of discrete, heroic, ethically significant decisions, but the imperceptible choices of dispositions that are manifest in the course of a lifetime. And character is an indissoluble amalgam of motives and calculations. (Shklar 1984: 242, 243)

An investigative approach that examines the functioning of respect and self-respect within a single interactive framework, integrating such disparate concepts as power and dominance, respectability, responsibility, identity, stigmatisation, pride and shame, has the capacity to yield valuable insights into how modern Western societies include some and exclude others.

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