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SUB-CULTURAL CONFLICT & CRIMINAL PERFORMANCE IN FULHAM

by

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Introduction

Fulham is a small borough situated in South West London on the north bank of the Thames. It forms a kind of no man's land bounded in, on the one hand, by the wealthy and fashionable areas of Kensington, Putney and Chelsea, and, on the other, by the traditionally working class boroughs of Wandsworth, Battersea, Shepherds Bush and Hammersmith.[1] For its size, it contains, therefore, a surprisingly diverse population and an extremely complex and varied culture. It is one of those uncertain cosmopolitan areas which only flourish in the decaying inner rings of Britain's big cities. Thus, the "Sunday Times" could refer in a comparatively recent article (January 25, 1970) to the "slums of Fulham" and in a subsequent issue could carry a report of Prince Philip's latest game of polo in Hurlingham Park. The situation has been further complicated by two recent and conspicuous waves of immigration into the borough: the first was a result of the extensive redevelopment of the East End undertaken after the war, which involved a major rehousing project in the new council estates of South London. The second came more recently as a result of exorbitant rents in the adjacent areas of Chelsea and Kensington, which encouraged the more adventurous members of the professional classes to buy houses in Fulham's working-class communities and carry out extensive conversions. In addition to these influences, the West Indian community based in nearby Notting Hill has, since the early sixties, contributed another more anomalous strain to this cultural polyphony. The effects of successive waves of immigration have registered subtly in both the changing physical

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1. In fact, Fulham has technically ceased to exist. In the recent reorganisation of local borough boundaries in London, Fulham was incorporated into Hammersmith. Nonetheless, it retains its distinctive quality and still manages to arouse a protective loyalty in its more established residents.

appearance of the borough and in the transformed image it projects to the outside world. More disturbing still (for the local inhabitants at least), the changes resonate at the deeper cultural level.

The Fulham community is traditionally working-class, introverted and self-sufficient. The borough itself was famed for its market gardens which at least up until the twenties provided the densely packed stalls of the street market at North End Road with a ready supply of green vegetables. Even now, the occasional octogenarian is quoted in the "Fulham Chronicle" recollecting the Golden Age of Fulham when green fields were always within walking distance. Only the few narrow allottments which are still kept up in Bishops Park remain to testify to the continuance of this tradition. But if the fields have disappeared, then the market still thrives and the borough retains its fiercely independent character. The pubs still proliferate, the billiard hall stands lavatorial in green tiles, unregenerate and vaguely infamous at the foot of Putney Bridge and a pie-and-mash-and-jellied-eel emporium still serves its doubtful delicacies in an atmosphere of sweat and steam to the lunchtime clientele at Fulham Broadway. But, of course, the old patterns have been disrupted, and despite the cultivated insularity of the local residents, the outside world has come in different ways to Fulham and left its indelible marks across the culture.

Firstly, the two principal "invasions" require separate consideration: A large number of the Eastenders who were dispersed throughout South London during the fifties found their way to the new high rise estates of Fulham and its environs.

On the nearby Alton Estate in Rochampton, where there was a ratio of 100 people per acre, families converged from as far afield as Paddington and Stepney, Shepherds Bush and even Scotland, all speaking their slightly different languages, all carrying their slightly different cultures on a microcosmic scale inside the family itself. In the final analysis, these influences were assimilated without too much difficulty, the Eastenders and the Fulhamites proving reasonably compatible. Nonetheless, there were times when relations were a little more strained.

In September 1969, a group of boys from the Alton Estate beat a homosexual to death on the edge of Wimbledon Common. During the controversy which followed (over the "skinhead-menace" and the problems of high-rise living), the relationship between the new council estates and the older, more established working-class community was reviewed critically. An article appeared in "The Sunday Times" (February 7, 1971)[1] which more or less debated the proposition put forward by Ken Partridge, one of the L.C.C. architects responsible for Rochampton's "concrete jungle", that:

"If Rochampton Lane had been the Fulham Road this may not have happened".

Mr. James Hammond, the father of one of the boys involved, pointed out that eleven of the fourteen boys who had been implicated in the incident came from "that side of the estate" which contained a large contingent from the East End. He recalls the arrival of the Eastenders with a kind of subdued

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1. "The Queer-Bash Killers" by Peter Gillman.

distaste and implies that they are at least partially to blame for his son's conduct:

"A thing I'll always remember was when one block had moved in and on the patio at the bottom was a group of old dears with caps and shawls and the old boys with braces because they had no front steps to sit on. They were alright . . . . But we didn't see them when we came here".

Indeed, the Alton Estate had always been viewed with a certain amount of suspicion and fear by the inhabitants of Fulham and Putney. There was an alarming tendency amongst the "hard nuts" and skinheads who "ruled" the estate to escalate from a dependency on amphetamines, to heroin addiction; and the tales of beatings, and knifings (even shootings) which filtered down from Roehampton to find their way into the local teenage folk-lore gave the Estate a formidable reputation for toughness throughout South West London. How much of this can be attributed to the influx of families from the East End, and how much to the alienating effects of environment is of course problematic. Certainly, estates inside Fulham itself which, for the most part, served to rehouse local people did not have appreciably lower rates of vandalism or delinquency.[1] The same basic problems were most probably amplified at Roehampton, blown up onto a gargantuan scale by the huge size of the estate. Moreover, although the East Enders had a longer and more spectacular history of lawbreaking behind them, Fulham was

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1. At Lillie Road, Sullivan Court, Lancaster Court, Clem Atlee Court, Wandsworth Bridge Road etc the older estates at Vanston Place and the prison block Guiness Trust Buildings.

not without its own deeply rooted criminal tradition. I shall try later on to establish at what points these two traditions converged, here I should merely stress that generally the two communities coexisted without overt conflict. Moreover, the East Enders confirmed the "cockney feel" of Fulham and ultimately enriched its culture.

This cannot be said of the second wave of "immigrants", however. The housing shortage and the accompanying boom in land values in Central London during the late sixties meant that even the more dilapidated properties became attractive investments for those with money and an eye to a quick profit. Situated ideally in the Thames Valley within easy reach of both the busy West End and the quieter residential areas of Richmond and Kew; served equally well by bus and by tube, Fulham provided the perfect target for the property speculators and was soon subjected to the largely unwelcome attentions of prospective middle class buyers. Along the Kings Road and the Fulham Road, the inevitable erosion of the old class boundaries began in earnest. In the mid 60's the Labour Council had announced its first General Improvement Scheme and had bought up several crumbling terraces which were earmarked for demolition. In 1968, the newly elected Conservatives sold them off instead to owner-occupiers, and declared a modified policy of limited clearance designed to improve the aesthetic quality of the surroundings in which the new residents were situated. The Council was merely adjusting its priorities to meet the new situation - it was improving the "look" of the borough, assisting in the timely destruction of what was after all an anachronistic way of life etc. - and the fact that it was making a lot of money in the process was, of course, neither here nor

there. In fact the intrusion of large numbers of smart middle-class families was bound to produce considerable tension. In an article which appeared in "The Daily Telegraph Magazine" (January 7, 1972)[1] Bel Mooney investigates the reaction of the local community to the sudden appearance of these newcomers in one Fulham street (Maxwell Road). The gulf between the two cultures - one of "the street and the garden fence", the other of "the drawing-room with its tinkling silences" has merely been accentuated by the arrival of the "new people". It is literally there to be seen in the contrasting styles in which the houses are decorated ("all glass and steel and white sofas" v the "slightly tatty" armchairs and the "comfy" settee). One side of the road falls quietly apart through lack of funds and a sense of insecurity, the other is torn to pieces, pulled apart and reconstructed with the confidence that only comes with money and a promise of more in the form of a council grant for improvements. Predictably, Mrs. Faulkener, the "rough diamond" of Maxwell Road, with her folded arms and voluminous paisley apron adopts an aggressive stance in her doorway, and issues an open challenge to the council to try and move her, pointing in disgust at the "bloody toffee noses" opposite with their "bloody (unwashed) curtains" and "their dustbins full of wine bottles".

Of course, this response has its sequel in the arrogant declarations of Dr. Sandford across the street who even claims a philanthropic interest ('I suppose you could call it a sophisticated method of slum clearance with private money') and who recognizes in the interviewer a fellow professional and takes him into his confidence:

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1. "When fashion moves in, brown paint and memories go" by Bel Mooney (the title tells the story).

"Let's face it, they were living like pigs. No bathrooms". Dr. Sandford's dismissal of the local residents is echoed even more jarringly in the comments of his neighbours:

"surely it is to their benefit to move into a flats' community where, not to be snobbish, they are still with their own type".

But not all confrontations are so clearly defined, and Mr. Mooney's article is itself symptomatic (for all its good intentions) of a whole range of less obtrusive though equally unsettling pressures which bear upon the working class community in Fulham. The article concludes with a sympathetic look at "the real old-fashioned thing" and Mooney pens an epitaph to a passing way of life ("the texture, the variety, the evidence of time spent" etc). But for all his sensitivity, and concern, Mooney merely publicises the problem and increases the already morbid curiousity of the liberal middle classes. He is himself an outsider - and that most insidious of creatures, the man from the media, and it is the media's excessive interest in the "folksy" aspects of Fulham life which ultimately threatens local culture with circumscription and gradual suffocation. For the intrusion was accompanied by the usual over-exposure on the media (the vanguard of the middle-class invasion in London seems to be comprised largely of scouting parties for the B.B.C. - script-writers, actors, editors etc). At the moment of writing, however, the influx of an alien class is probably stimulating a revival of old London working-class "mores". There is a renewed interest in rhyming and even backwards slang which is used to exclude unwanted newcomers and to reestablish local identity. Even this outwardly favourable development is merely another desperate step in the race against the camera and the microphone. And nowhere do the irruptions of the media have more unsettling

effects than in the area of deviant culture. For as the first wave of immigrants, the Eastenders had swelled the criminal and delinquent populations, so the second wave has produced films about them. "Poor Cow" appeared in 1967 with Carol White (whose father actually owns a scrapyard in Fulham) as a local girl made bad, and the "colourful-slice-of-life" London genre was launched. "Up the Junction", shot in Fulham and nearby Battersea, told a similarly sordid story and by the late sixties the London gangster film was becoming popular. Again, "Get Carter", "Villain" and "Performance" were shot, at least in part, on location around Fulham and derived much of their potency[1] from the shrewd use which was made of Fulham characters and local folk-lore. Television has followed suit, and in 1972, I.T.V. ran a series called "Budgie" introducing an attractive young Fulhamite (played by Adam Faith) with villainous ambitions and a heart of gold.[2] Fulham, in many instances, then, provided the backdrop against which the British media played out its vicarious fantacies of violent crime in the sixties, and the local population was not unaffected. Perhaps it would be overstating the case to say that, as a result, local people became more aware of themselves as actors (or even more ominously, as extras) but it is certain that the repeated imposition of external definitions altered patterns of behaviour and self-perception inside the community. A study of such patterns should help us to evaluate the signif-icance of aesthetic determinations, and to elucidate the ways

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1. Except that "Villain" could never, by any stretch of the imagination, be called "potent". It was a crass and bungled piece of cinema which starred Richard Burton as a rather unlikely gangster and a totally unconvincing Cockney. His accent slips from Merthyr Tydvil to Bethnal Green and he does a kind of low-key Richard III on Ronnie Kray.

2. This has been replaced by "Thick as Thieves" which portrays the farcical exploits of two Fulham crooks.

in which they are mediated to a working-class community.

The cultural crises which had pertained in many of London's working-class boroughs since the war was presented quite literally in dramatic terms in the Fulham of the sixties, and those crucial moments when choices were made (to capitulate to outside definitions or to evolve one's own) were that much more crucial in the case of Fulham. The community as a whole faced peculiarly complex problems of self-definition, but solutions to these problems were most urgently required inside the deviant group which had to draw up fairly rigid lines of demarcation between itself and the outside world, between acceptance and denial if it was to retain any clear sense of identity at all. Unless the contract between the criminal actor and his public was continually ratified in his everyday interactions with "straights" and "fellow crooks" nothing could make sense and the credibility of his performance was thrown into jeopardy.

✳ Thus, I have chosen to concentrate my study on the pub as it provided the principal arena in which these contracts were drawn up, in which those crucial choices were made, and more important still, were seen to be made. A closer examination of how the criminal behaves in the pub is likely to show, then, how an essentially underground deviant culture reacts when it receives concentrated attention from "intruders", how it seeks and shuns the light, how it evolves its own ingenious techniques of evasion, and its equally sophisticated techniques through which meanings can be appropriated.

But before I proceed to such a study, I would like to make some more general remarks about Fulham's involvement in crime

and the dispersal throughout the community of values which are officially designated "criminal". Ironically, these observations would seem to parallel those made by Walter Miller in his article "Lower Class Culture as a Generating Milieu of Gang Delinquency". But the two approaches remain diametrically opposed: I would claim that the values crystallize and cluster on the "deviant perimeter" and are perpetually transmitted albeit in a diluted form, throughout the community (i.e. through a process of centripetal dissemination) whereas Miller argues an opposite tendency concentrating upon the immanence of those values within working class culture as a whole (i.e. he implies a process of centrifugal dissemination). The significance which can be attributed to the deviant group (and therefore to the study of the deviant group) varies according to where one places the emphasis.

Straight Crooks and Crooked Straights: The Problem of Working-Class Legitimacy in Fulham

The crepuscular nature of working-class legitimacy has never been adequately researched. It would certainly seem that those lines which theoretically separate the "lumpen criminal" from the "respectable artisan" tend to dissolve on closer inspection.[1] In Fulham at least, this seems to be the case. Every job has its dubious "perks", every factory its sharp operators, its very own "fence", who, with a wink and a whispered caution keeps his pockets lined and his friends supplied with cheap stockings for the wife and perhaps a few valuables which fall, with miraculous regularity, off the back of passing lorries.

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1. This is perhaps more true of the South where the Puritan tradition of honesty and industry which Hoggart describes in "The Uses of Literacy" never did catch on in quite the same way.

In some of the smaller workshops and warehouses and most of the big building-sites, the "fiddles" have been formalised. Even the foreman plays his part in shifting stock off the premises. There is even evidence of systems of scaling where everyone gets his "cut" and every "cut" is graduated according to job-status.[1] Blind eyes are turned in every direction and blindness is endemic at half past five.

Every week, the columns of the local paper are filled with stories of employees who have slipped, fallen and "betrayed the bosses' confidence". Whilst cases of armed robbery dominate the front page and capture all the headlines, pages 2 and 3 monotonously tell the same old tales of stolen lead, and missing stock, embezzled cash and shoplifting. To take one case amongst many, the "Woolworths" on North End Road has an extremely rapid turn-over of staff and every other week the "Chronicle" reports the appearance in the dock at the West London Courts of some weeping former shopgirl who pleads domestic pressures, and promises never again to deviate from "the straight and narrow". Of course, it is difficult to estimate the extent of this type of petty pilferage and the number of unrecorded misdemeanours which escape the attention of the courts and the papers is probably incalculable. Moreover, I am not so much interested here in assessing the actual volume of crime in Fulham, as in determining how far criminal values are endorsed by the community at large. To do this, I shall have to resort to a good deal of personal recollection, but I hope to avoid too much shapeless reminiscence by concentrating principally upon material gathered during a recent term of jury-service where the situation itself was

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1. The Heathrow car park racket which I mentioned in relation to the Richardsons was operated in this way.

sufficiently controlled and self-contained to allow a relatively formal analysis to be made.

In May 1974, I served on three juries at various Crown Courts in London.[1] The other members of the juries were mainly working-class people drawn from South and East London (the women seemed to come mainly from Stepney and Poplar, the men from Fulham, Muswell Hill, and Brixton). The central topic of conversation for two weeks was inevitably crime and punishment and the extraordinary circumstances in which we were all placed militated against the normal inhibitions. Confronted with the awesome machinery of British justice with its impenetrable language and its stilted demeanour, jury members tended to evolve a counter-culture fairly rapidly.[2] This culture was naturally marked by a heightened sensitivity to the distribution of power both inside and outside the courts, and generally served to enhance class loyalties. Again, a situation of crisis, where traditional working class values are threatened, can be seen to define those values more clearly, so that they can be realised, and articulated, and hence, protected and preserved. And jury-service constitutes a major crisis for many working-class citizens. The double-bind is there in the phrase itself, and the conflict between class and civic duties itself defines the crisis.

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1. One in St. James' Square, Two at Basil Street in Knightsbridge.

2. This was already in evidence at the very beginning of the proceedings. Throughout the rather patronising introductory speech given by a barrister to the assembled company, a group of women jury-members from the East End maintained a voluble conversation and would occasionally interject with an audible "Up Yours!" or would complain to men standing nearby: "They 're trying to turn the whole East End straight!"

Moreover, the status of the juror in the courtroom is ambiguous at the best of times. The judge smiles indulgently and defers to him with silent irony from his elevated throne. The Defence and Prosecution Counsels go through their tragi-comic repetoire of grandiose gestures and inflexions of the eyebrow for his benefit alone and while he is flattered he is hardly convinced. In fact, he is often a little insulted. The police witnesses refuse to acknowledge his presence and address the judge instead; and the ushers and the underlings are at once matey and officious, determined to exercise to the full the only authority permitted them, and yet never quite sure how to go about it. In a word it is a pecking-order and there is never any real doubt as to who is at the bottom. The juror sits invisible but necessary, the dispensable decision-maker whose decisions have already been made for him. In fact, he is probably closest to the defendant who is also insecure, bewildered and sometimes paranoic, who is also fallible, vulnerable and all too human (unbewigged, unbegowned). One gets the impression that the courts could function far more smoothly without jurors and defendants.[1]

If the juror is working-class, all these contradictions are accentuated. The bonds which tie him to the defendant are strengthened and the pressures which alienate him from the process in which he is supposed to be involved are intensified.[2]

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1. The equivalent status perhaps accounts for the rumour which was circulated amongst the jurors that one of their number had fallen asleep and was fined for contempt of court. The rumour is apparently generated spontaneously within each new group of jurors and, discounting the possibility that it originates in the judge's chambers and is designed to keep us on our toes, I would suggest that it betrays secret Kafkaesque feelings of guilt and is an expression of solidarity with the defendant.
2. The two middle-aged women from the East End were so alienated that they said they found "Crown Court" (the T.V. series) "more real"!

He is likely to speak the same language as the defendant, to share the same problems, whereas the verbal gymnastics of the Prosecution Counsel, which might well earn the mute applause of his "learned colleague", are likely to leave the juror cold. He does not use language, as the court does, as an end in itself, he does not love it intrinsically for what it is, and therefore he does not place so much faith in its power. Ultimately, he does not really trust it and by refusing to acknowledge the rules (the rules of rhetoric, the rules of the Debate), he places himself outside the game, sits back and waits for the "reasonable doubt" which will stop the whole painful process. Thus the basic criteria which the judge uses to assess the "truth" of a given testimony are often not shared by the jury. Other factors are likely to influence the final decision and not least among these is an overriding sympathy for the underdog. For instance, the Prosecution Counsel in one case attempted to establish the defendant's guilt by proving that he was a "liar". He drew attention, during cross-examination, to the criminal argot which abounded in the verbal statement allegedly made by the defendant to the police. The aggressive tone of his questions (backed up by meaningful glances at the jury) implied that to admit one' knew the meaning of such words was tantamount to admitting one's guilt. The defendant was understandably edgy, and fell into the trap, denying all knowledge of such terms. The Prosecution concentrated upon one word "dipping":

"What about this word here ... 'dipping'? I don't suppose ... (here a laugh) ... I don't suppose you meant you were ...

The defendant, obviously confused, replies that he might have meant that if he had said it but the Prosecution pursues the point, until eventually the defendant is made to look ridiculous and contradicts himself. At this point, the Prosecution Counsel rallies on his prey, turns to the jury, hands clasped triumphantly on his lapels, and declares that he has proved the defendant "a liar". The fact that the defendant has flatly denied saying the thing in the first place is tactfully ignored; and the jury is obviously meant to be swept away by the Prosecution Counsel's sheer mastery of language. It is a moment which Edgar Lustgarten might have made much of - one of those "historical moments" which demonstrate the barrister's skill and vindicate the British system of Justice.

Except that it fails to impress the jury; for when we adjourn to consider our verdict, it becomes immediately apparent that the Prosecution Counsel has seriously misjudged his audience. One juror opens by criticising the statements of the "Old Bill"[1] and a man from Fulham relates a long story about the police planting firearms on a young man ("not unlike yourself" he says to me sensing a willing audience "about your age") who lives down his street. This triggers off a wave of approbation and a chain of confirmative personal experiences. The majority agree that the police are, on occasion, prone to "do things" like doctoring evidence ("We all know it goes on, don't we?"[2]) By the time we came to consider the Prosecution's moment of triumph, a consensus has been reached (although two people refuse to subscribe to it) that the police are corrupt. This

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1. i.e. the police.
2. All the following bracketed quotes are approximate transcriptions of the comments made by various jurors in the jury room.

predetermines our response to all the prosecution evidence. When we consider the defendant's statement, most jurors agree that he has probably been "verballed up". One man points out that a "bloke who's obviously a villain (though that doesn't mean he's guilty, here, does it?")" who, in addition seems exceptionally circumspective under pressure, would never have made such a damning statement. Furthermore, it conspires that everybody is familiar with the criminal argot, and some jurors doubt that certain terms (namely "dipping" and "pusher") are still used in the underworld and suggest more modern equivalents. One man points out that the defendant is Scottish and that "dipping could mean anything up there", and everybody agrees that he was doubly disadvantaged by his accent and his inarticulateness. Finally, a juror (another Fulham man) identifies explicitly with the defendant.

"You've got to remember that it could be any one of us up there, you know."

Many jurors nod in agreement; a vote is taken and the defendant is acquitted by a majority verdict. A precedent has been set (everyone having declared himself) and subsequent discussions (and verdicts) follow more or less the same pattern. Once a consensus had been established, the tension lifted noticeably. Jurors began to relax, and over the two weeks, several admitted that they were naturally predisposed to a not-guilty verdict (though many said that they would consider a case involving violence more carefully). Many of the older men became frankly conspiratorial, winking and chuckling over their lunchtime pints in the pub nearby.

Ironically, the Prosecution regularly appealed to the "common sense" of the jury (whereas the Defence was inclined to place its confidence in the jury's "logic and sense of fairness"), and "worldly wisdom" was instead enlisted in support of the defendant. During the initial debate, rules of conduct which would normally operate at a subconscious level (i.e. at the level of "common sense") were drawn out and articulated. This was essential if the challenge to communal life which the court represented was to be met and overcome. The formalised legal language and the predetermined nature of the court's responses required a parallel codification at the jury's <u>own</u> values. Thus, that which was potential became apparent, and the values which emerged can be said to reflect, on a micro level, the priorities of the working-class community in South London.[1] These can be expressed thus: property is less important than life, and life is more complex than the court allows. No one is perfect, and laws are made to be broken ("Who wouldn't have pocketed the bloody thing? Let's face it, you see something like that lying in the road, you're not going to walk past it, are you"). Thus, language is deceitful, even treacherous, fostering dangerous illusions of certainty ("They can do anything with words - it's their job"). Everyone agreed that "truth" was rather less accessible than language,[2] and that "real life" was fluid and open to an infinite variety of interpretations.

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1. The jury comprised 11 men and one woman. All the men came from South London except one who came from Hampstead. The woman came from Stepney.

2. The jury's lack of confidence in the transforming power of language and the efficacy of debate was most in evidence when we failed to reach a decision. After a period, the judge summoned the jury into court, where he urged them to try to reach a unanimous verdict, and then stated the majority he would accept in the absence of such a decision. Rather than reopen the issue, jurors preferred either to sit in silence or to conduct private conversations until a "respectable" time had passed (about 20 minutes) and a majority verdict could be given.

/"it all depends how you see it" . . . "it could mean anything" . . . "you've got a right to your opinion" . . . "your opinion's good as mine" (to the two jurors who persisted in the belief that the defendant was guilty)./ Obviously, it could be argued that any jury, irrespective of its class background, might come to similar conclusions, and a middle-class juror is just as likely to allow compassion to influence his verdict. But it is doubtful that his interests and those of the defendant will ever coincide sufficiently for him to be able to completely transfer his allegiances from the Bench to the Dock. And it is exactly this shift of sympathies which encourages the working-class juror to make his larger criticisms (of language, of the police, of authority in general) so that a normally latent system of values can be crystallized and allowed to surface. It also gives him the means with which to enlarge his definition of what constitutes a "reasonable doubt" so that he can, in most cases, "give the bloke the benefit". The working-class juror, then, can reconcile the contradictory pulls of class and civic loyalties, simply by voting the defendant not-guilty.[1]

It would be hard to find a more reliable indicator of working-class "respectability" than membership of a jury.[2] And yet we find jurors from South and East London, not only identifying openly with defendants and tempering their judgements accordingly, but actually transcending[3] the concept of guilt itself, by subscribing

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1. The large number of "sympathy verdicts" has recently alarmed Sir Robert Mark who urges an end to the jury-system.

2. Picked at random from the electoral roll, the juror must satisfy only one requirement (apart from age) namely that he or she has never been convicted of an indictable offence.

3. "Transcend" might be a bit strong, perhaps he or she only

to a set of values which are officially defined as "anti-social" or "criminal". If the constrictive atmosphere of the court is thought to introduce a whole range of extraneous factors which are not specifically relevant to this study, I would merely point out the chief advantage of constraint - namely that it solves problems of presentation enabling material to be contained within a reasonably fixed and comprehensible framework (i.e. form does have its uses!)

One has only to turn from the closed and ordered discourse of the courtroom to the looser structures of the street to appreciate the magnitude of those problems. A permeance defies precise definition and it seems impossible to convey the subtler nuances of crime unless one resorts to evocative words like "texture" and "colour". And yet the hints are there on every street corner in the pubs (packed even at lunch time), and the betting shops (packed from the time the pubs close to the last race at Aintree), in the scrapyards and the junkshops (now called "antique markets" to exploit the new trend). Industry in the area seems to be very light indeed, and work does not, on the whole, constitute the major commitment in people's lives. In fact it rarely seems to matter at all, and money tends to be transmuted into "pleasure" buying instant gratification in the form of drink and food, clothes and two weeks in Spain rather than the more sober reassurances of durable items. Moreover, the injection of capital into the area which followed the property boom did stimulate certain sectors of Fulham's economy. The influx of middle-class families, intent on converting neglected houses into ideal homes gave the building trade a considerable boost and the self-employed builders, the painters, and decorators, and demolition men all thrived

visibly.

Thus, in certain pubs, the more expensive tastes are regularly indulged and spirits flow as freely as mild ale. Consumption can take place on a colossal scale, is always conspicuous, often spectacular, and a drink can be used to define identity more adequately than a job, and allows for that magical margin of doubt. Thus, at closing time at three o'clock, everyone seems to work for himself and further enquiries are met with an enigmatic silence and a sapient smile. To further complicate the issue, criminal associations tend to cluster around certain jobs and the lines between fact and fiction, legality and law-breaking are even more confused in these cases. Some occupations are obviously eligible (i.e. the used-car salesman, the mini-cab driver[1]) but others are less likely. For instance, window-cleaning seems to be a profession which has its fair share of ex-cons, and window-cleaning rounds change hands only at a price, and even then are only available to those "in the know". Of course, myth and ritual are mystifiers, and conventions have been established which channel expectations. Thus a mini-cab driver is expected to be a "heavy character" perhaps, and a "sharp customer" certainly, but there is no way of determining how much of his demeanour derives from a "real" involvement in crime and how much from less tangible sources. I would suggest that a recognition on his part of the expectations of his audience might encourage him to realise a group fantasy.

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1. The mini-cab firms in South London are notorious for their sharp practice and rivalries tend to escalate into open warfare (petrol bombs etc). Ben, who had been a driver for a local mini-cab firm, told me that within a week of working there he had been given the phone number of a "heavy" who lived in South London

To turn from one doubtful area to another, it would be difficult to ascertain how far criminal values are endorsed and supported by working-class women in Fulham. Generally, the pub does not play such a central role in the woman's social life, and consequently she has less access to the attitudes which circulate most readily in a pub-environment. Furthermore, until recently at least, "respectable" working-class women were particularly susceptible to the conformative pressures of a patriarchal society to submit to authority at home and at work. These pressures were presumably responsible for larger deferential patterns (in relations with the law, in attitudes to Royalty, etc), but it seems just as probable that communal loyalties would take pride of place over all other considerations at times of crisis (i.e. when a member of the family, or a neighbour clashes with the law). Certainly, a stolen article is not necessarily less attractive because it is stolen; on the contrary, it would seem that there are times when the appeal is positively enhanced by the extra element of the forbidden and the dangerous which knowledge of theft bestows. Thus, a man who set up a makeshift stall on the North End Road openly advertised the fact that his goods were stolen and the crowd, which mainly comprised women, grew visibly as he became more and more outspoken about the nature of his "nightwork".

"I work nights . . . an hour and a half every other night without fail . . . me and me two brothers . . . sorry, I mean one brother . . . the other left the firm a bit sudden last Tuesday fortnight . . . he's now on holiday at Her Majesty's expense . . . in Brixton . . . etc. etc.

Though this "spiel" was basically designed to attract attention and keep the crowd amused, the vendor was also inviting his audience to participate vicariously in the original theft. Speed is essential in transactions such as these, and a speedy sale can be guaranteed if the goods are known to be "hot" (because stolen goods must go at bargain prices). But the vendor not only managed to escape apprehension by adoping this approach, he also introduced excitement and risk into what was otherwise a thoroughly ordinary exchange and the purses which he was offering up for sale became that much more desireable.[1] His entire stock was snapped up within minutes and he had disappeared before the police arrived on the scene to investigate the obstruction.[2]

Moreoever, when the activities of the more ambitious protagonists of Fulham's criminal culture attract the attentions of the national media, all the defence mechanisms of the local community tend to become operative, and men and women close ranks against the press and the police. After the Great Train Robbery, at least, this was the case. The widespread support and sympathy which the Robbers received[3] was naturally reinforced by local ties, and there were plenty of these. Two of the Robbers (Gordon Goody and Roy James) drank regularly in Fulham pubs and were widely respected figures in the underworld of

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1. The sexual implications don't really need drawing out. I would merely point out that the dilatory way in which the hawker told his story was designed to titillate his audience - a kind of verbal "striptease".

2. I actually witnessed this incident. I was told another story about a woman who was asked to act as "lookout" whilst her husband burgled a local warehouse. Apparently, as soon as he had broken into the premises, she telephoned the police and had him arrested. However, I think this throws more light on matrimonial conflicts than on women's attitudes to crime in the area!

South West London, and another, William Beal, actually lived in the area. In one case that I know of, sympathy was extended into actual assistance. A woman who lives near the flat[1] in which Ronald Biggs stayed after the crime, told me that everyone locally knew that he had been involved and that he was living there. Information was withheld not through fear of possible reprisals but as a gesture of solidarity with the wanted man. Subsequent police enquiries met with the customary conspiracy of silence.

Some local people, not themselves totally immersed in the underworld, will allow communal allegiances to outweigh all other considerations, even in the case of the most violent crimes. Judgement is held in reserve, and criticisms can be qualified if the criminal "looks after his mum", or is "good with the kids" and generally shows "that he's not all bad". For instance, after an attempt had been made on the life of a Fulham betting-shop owner who had testified for the Prosecution in the Kray case, a local man, who had had the occasional drink with the terrified bookie said:

"I don't understand it . . . you couldn't hope to meet a nicer bloke. Why, he wouldn't even land one on you unless he was paid to do it!"

But this is an example of extreme indulgence and is in no way representative of the community as a whole. There are usually quite definite limits to local tolerance, and the sensational case of Tony Lawrence and "Ba Ba" Elgar, which I referred to in an earlier footnote,[2] exposes those limits.

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1. This was actually in the adjacent borough of Wandsworth.

2. See Part 2 Section 11 for this footnote.

As the case also takes us to the centre of that confined yet chaotic universe of criminal violence and fantasy which we have already examined in relation to the Krays, I feel it requires a more detailed analysis. The following account should serve as a transitional passage which closes the discussion on "mainstream working-class legitimacy" and reunites us once more with the "deviant periphery".

2. A few of the Performers - Very "Ronnie" indeed

'"There was disagreements, but most of them trivial. It's ego, a lot if it. Private, you know".'

Ronnie Kray quoted in "Sunday Times" (Oct. 19,1969.)

"'I don't know why he came to my yard. That's a logical question but you can't discuss Lawrence logically, he doesn't do logical things. I think I was to be an example to others'."

Jim Sullivan quoted in "Sunday Times", January 25, 1970.

"'Lawrence definitely wanted to be the bigshot, the number one'."

George Marshall quoted in "Sunday Times", January 25, 1970.

On February 11, 1968 the London editions of the Sunday newspapers carried reports of a gun battle which had taken place the night before in Hazelbury Road, Fulham. A local scrap merchant had been seriously injured and his foreman killed. Hysterical editorials warned of "Chicago-style gunmen" and the facts were promptly adorned with the usual fabrications. Thus, it was rumoured in the press that two young "professionals" had been "brought in from outside" and given £1,500 to murder a rival. Final paragraphs referred darkly to the boom in the

copper market precipitated by the Rhodesia crisis, and spoke of "Al Capone type business methods". Other reports tripled the number of suspected men and stressed their ruthless professionalism: "Six men who sat round a table to discuss murder were being hunted by detectives etc". The following Friday, the "Fulham Chronicle" glumly announced in its headline: "No one is talking in Hazelbury Road", and proceeded to quote verbatim the wordless responses of the neighbours. After two columns of carefully chronicled headshaking and closely observed slamming doors, the "feature" ended with the customary footnote about "fear on Fulham's streets" and "threats of gangland reprisals".

The facts which lie behind the incident are somewhat less spectacular and rather less lucid than these early reports suggest and the case of "Baba" Elgar looks a little ridiculous inside its mythical pinstriped suitings. The Chicago model can only be invoked ironically in this instance, and the Cagneyite ambitions of Tony Lawrence who was indirectly responsible for the death of his own foreman, seem to tower hopelessly above his actual performance. For Lawrence's "rise to power" was hardly meteoric, and, though the persona he presented to the outside world seems to have blended the basic characteristics of Charlie Richardson and Ronnie Kray, something essential was conspicuously absent. In short, Lawrence lacked originality his aspirations seem doubly derivative, his actions twice circumscribed, and where Kray appears to parody, Lawrence merely mimics.

The comparisons suggest themselves immediately: Lawrence was born in 1935, one year after Charles Richardson, and two years after Ronnie Kray. Family, (in particular fraternal) bonds were taken very seriously indeed and we shall see how the original

like Terry Belding and Elgar who were in their early twenties and John Terry who was only nineteen. The consolidation of power followed the pattern which Charles Richardson had already established in South East London, and Lawrence began to accumulate the symbols through which the gangster communicates his intentions to the outside world. Thus, the walls of Lawrence's flat were hung with fighting swords and he cultivated a certain fastidiousness in matters of dress, acquiring several dozen suits and sometimes bathing and changing his shirt three or four times a day.[1] In fact, Lawrence recreated with meticulous care, the vain and violent image of Ronnie Kray[2] and the petty feuds and rivalries which dissipated the energies of the Fulham criminal reproduced on a miniature scale, the larger disputes which occupied the Krays and the Richardsons elsewhere in London.

The incident which sparked off all the trouble was, in itself, remarkably trivial. At lunchtime on Boxing Day 1966, Lawrence was drinking in the public bar of the Queen Elizabeth in Bagley's Lane, Fulham, with his father and his two brothers Kenny and Johnny. After the last bell had been rung, Tony Lawrence asked the landlord, Michael Ahearne for a gin and bitter lemon but was refused. As Ahearne walked back into the saloon, a bottle was thrown which narrowly missed his shoulder. Lawrence came through the bar and smashed another bottle over Ahearne's head. As Kenny

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1. All this information and most of the facts about the Elgar shooting have been taken from an article in the "Sunday Times" (January 25, 1970).

2. Ronnie Kray had lived for a time in Chelsea and it was not unknown for him to spend an evening in certain clubs down the Fulham Road. Even those only marginally involved in the London underworld of the mid-sixties would be thoroughly familiar with the name of Kray. Some local villains could boast a modest acquaintanceship with the man himself; some even did the "Colonel" the occasional favour, and one Fulham betting-shop owner, as we have seen, got rather heavily involved.

and Johnny Lawrence began to bear Ahearne also, a customer, Thomas McGowan attempted to go to his assistance. McGowan was dragged outside and kicked to the ground, and Jim Sullivan, another Fulham scrapdealer and friend of the Lawrence family, intervened and stopped the brothers inflicting any further injury. By the time the police arrived, the Lawrences had left the scene.

The tension between the four conflicting codes of honour which are in evidence here (one of the family, one of the friend, one professional (i.e. of the landlord) and one which can, perhaps, be best described as "personal") is ultimately irreducible and those who participated in the original incident were trapped in a conundrum. The various lines of action adopted by the central protagonists can be interpreted as strategic attempts to restore some kind of equanimity, to vindicate one or more of the codes, and thus to escape the conundrum. The violent initiative taken by Lawrence sprang from both personal and family codes and was designed to punish an imagined infringement of the code of friendship. The landlord's resolve to prosecute was hardened by a desire to validate personal and professional codes. As we shall see, Sullivan's position was particularly problematic and the final resolution depended ultimately on which options he took. The moment when Sullivan agreed to appear as the main Prosecution witness in the Lawrence trial represents a resolution and a transcendence of all four codes, and can be said to define the larger collective ethos of Fulham's working-class community.

Despite three convictions for receiving stolen metal, the last conviction fetching a 2 month prison sentence, Sullivan was generally considered "straight" or at least not overtly criminal and existed in that no-man's land between legality and law breaking,

which, as I have tried to indicate, appears to be quite densely populated in Fulham at least. But if his relationship with the law was somewhat equivocal, then his private friendships were to prove even more divisive. Sullivan's loyalties were split between Ahearne the 'straight' landlord and Lawrence, the crooked fellow scrap merchant. Sullivan had helped Tony Lawrence to start his scrap business and had acted as guarantor when he bought his scales from Avery's. The two became confirmed friends and, at one time, had even considered opening a yard in South London together. But Sullivan had also grown to like Ahearne who had given Sullivan a crucifix when the scrapdealer's three year old son had died of a throat infection. Sullivan's first resolution appears to have been fairly smoothly accomplished, nonetheless. When Kenny and Johnny Lawrence were arrested on charges of wounding, assault, and making an affray, they asked Sullivan to appear for the Defence. Notwithstanding the pressure which had been brought to bear on Ahearne to withdraw (threatening phone calls, offers of a bribe), Sullivan agreed to make a vague statement for the Defence which nevertheless did not help the two brothers who received 12 and 18 month sentences respectively. Sullivan had commited perjury but the crucial choice between law and crime. landlord friend and scrapmerchant mate had been taken and apparently without too much difficulty.

However, when Tony Lawrence himself was arrested on May 7, 1967, and was charged with making an affray, assaulting Ahearne and McGowan and causing them grievous bodily harm, a state of moral emergency was declared once more, and this time a different decision was taken. Lawrence obviously required a more committed statement from Sullivan, if he was to avoid the fate of his brothers, and, as a close friend, he expected Sullivan to co-operate

and perjure himself more thoroughly on his behalf. When Lawrence was unexpectedly granted bail on June 2, he sought out the other scrap merchant and stated his position. Sullivan only agreed to consider Lawrence's request and Lawrence asked him to bring two other men who had been in the Queen Elizabeth on the day of the incident to his house for further consultation. When they refused to come, Lawrence grew furious and the two men's cars were later found damaged. On July 2, Sullivan's yard in Garratt Lane was damaged (though not very badly) by a bomb thrown from a passing car, and if this was intended to force a decision, it certainly succeeded. For Sullivan was sufficiently alienated to refuse to offer any statement whatsoever in Lawrence's defence. Still, the idea of contacting the police was never seriously entertained, and though Sullivan grew apprehensive, he declined to acknowledge that war had been declared, hoping that his discretion would mollify Lawrence and enable him to avoid more disasterous confrontations.

But for Lawrence the vendetta was merely postponed and during the summer he made contact with two Coldstream Guards, Wayne Crofts and Michael Melaney who began to supply him with arms stolen from the nearby Chelsea barracks. By September, he had built up a sizeable armoury which included several pounds of plastic explosives (which were very difficult to get from underworld sources at the time) a number of hand grenades (which were well nigh impossible) and a Belgian high velocity rifle which he stored in the dog's kennel on the scrapyard in Waterford Road. Meanwhile, relations between Lawrence and Sullivan's foreman, Charlie Jennings, had deteriorated to the point where open conflict seemed inevitable. Jennings was a large belligerent man who, like his boss, occupied an uncertain position on the borders of

crime, but unlike Sullivan, he was willing to force a showdown with Lawrence. As summer moved into autumn, the tension reached breaking point and, in the afternoon of November 29, two men burst into the Garratt Lane shop, threatened Sullivan's eldest son, Larry with a gun and proceeded to shoot Jennings in the legs. Eventually, Jennings' left leg was amputated but he resolutely refused to identify his attackers. Despite the apparent failure of Sullivan's policy, of appeasement, he continued to try to affect a reconciliation and at Christmas sent the Lawrence family a large gift of food.

But Lawrence showed no signs of forgiving and forgetting and he began to turn his attention toward Ahearne, the offending landlord, who, as far as Lawrence was concerned, had precipitated the whole disasterous affair. On the 29 December, Lawrence, Elgar and John Terry arrived at Sullivan's yard and peremptorily demanded a length of copper tubing. This was used as the casing of a bomb which was placed outside the Queen Elizabeth public house the following night. The explosion blew in the wall of the public bar and glass shattered across the street. On the night of January 11, the saloon bar was partially destroyed by a fire bomb which was thrown through the window. Having merely strengthened Ahearne's determination to see him convicted, Lawrence turned once more towards Tooting and finally managed to provoke Sullivan beyond endurance.

On the night of January 22, whilst Sullivan was presiding over a benefit social in aid of the injured Jennings at the Britannia pub in Fulham, a hand grenade was thrown into the office of the yard in Garratt Lane. Large pieces of shrapnel actually penetrated the floor of the flat above which had been rented to a young family. Both Jennings and Sullivan were openly

appalled by this action and interpreted it as a transgression of the family code's most inviolable clause which dealt with the sanctity of innocent life. Obviously, the threshold of Sullivan's tolerance had been reached and all hopes for any possible reconciliation in the future were discarded. At this point, Sullivan decided to redefine his relationship with the law and went to the police. He was whoeheartedly supported in this by Charlie Jennings who was apparently prepared to overlook his own disablement, but could not permit this new outrage to go unpunished. He explained his reaction to the "Sunday Times"reporter Peter Gillman:

"I've been a thief, I've never been a police informer, but I'll never condone this involving women and children".

Sullivan is similarly disgusted and admits that the fact that Lawrence's henchmen had threatened his son a few months earlier "had really decided me".

"A man could steal the Crown Jewels and I wouldn't care. But if he attacks innocent people whose only crime is that they live above my property etc....."

Finally, Jennings explains how the "twilight zone" which he inhabits is lit by certain constant lights at least, and how any attempts to extinguish these lights amounts to an act of betrayal. Jennings implies that without these transcendent laws, life would be impossible outside the Law itself:

"Straight people say that the people who are beneath the law live in the jungle. But there's a law of the jungle. It's like a religious code. If you are involved in the twilight zone there are certain rules laid down, and you abide by them".

Thus, Lawrence's excesses had finally broken the moral deadlock

in which Sullivan had found himself and had recommended a specific course of action once more. The personal code of honour which had compelled Sullivan to defend Thomas McGowan against the blows of the Lawrence brothers had been suspended whilst loyalties were allowed to untangle and declare themselves. This code could only come into operation again if a new order could be established and Lawrence's transgressions made such an order possible. Ultimately Lawrence had forfeited his friendship by challenging the sacred principles upon which the wider community depended for its very survival, and Sullivan, for his part, could interpret his "betrayal" of a friend as an act of self-sacrifice undertaken to protect that community. So Sullivan went to Earlsfield Police Station and related the story of the copper tubing and the bombing of the Queen Elizabeth.

A fruitless search of Lawrence's flat produced one result at least - it alerted Lawrence to the new initiative which Sullivan had taken and Lawrence, like Jennings, found betrayal unforgivable and demanded retribution. Early on Saturday, February 3, 1968, he called on an old friend, Georgie Marshall, at his home in Halford Road, Fulham. A thief by profession, Marshall was in his mid 30's and had worked with Lawrence before the era of the scrapyard in Waterford Road. Lawrence asked Marshall to kill Sullivan and he accepted on condition that he could do the job with a friend called Ian Horton. Lawrence agreed and Marshall and Horton promptly decided to work a confidence trick which though somewhat risky, seemed likely to succeed.

The events which followed bear a remarkable resemblance to the Jack "The Hat". episode which had taken place one year earlier in the East End. Like McVitie who had failed to carry

out Ronnie Kray's commission to kill Leslie Payne, Marshall found it difficult to take the idea of assassination seriously. The provocation which Sullivan had offered seemed negligible, and out of all proportion to the punishment which Lawrence sought to impose. However, Marshall did not hesitate to accept an advance payment of £190 for a job which he had no intention of doing. It seemed probable that Lawrence would be in prison before the end of the week as his case was due to come up for trial on February 8, and Horton and Marshall were convinced that the whole affair could be quietly forgotten with Lawrence out of the way. However, Marshall had underestimated his "mark", and the con, as in the case of Jack "The Hat" was to misfire and end in death. On the afternoon of February 3, Marshall and Horton drove over to Sullivan's yard and warned him of Lawrence's plans. Sullivan, acting in accordance with his new resolve, contacted the police who assured him that Lawrence would be behind bars before his injunction could be carried out. However, Lawrence's trial had not been concluded as quickly as Marshall had anticipated and the two would-be assassins were forced to enlist all their powers of ingenuity to combat Lawrence's rising suspicions. When Lawrence confronted Marshall during a lunchtime drinking session on February 10, Marshall prevaricated once more but Lawrence had obviously grown impatient. That night Elgar drove Lawrence and the two assassins to Horton's flat in Hazelbury Road, where there was to be a discussion of the various strategies which Marshall and his accomplice could adopt for the murder. An argument suddenly developed as Lawrence produced the Belgian rifle which he had acquired in the summer. As is usual in such matters, the exact point at which the atmosphere of mutual suspicion was replaced by one of open hostility is in

doubt. It transpires that both Horton and Marshall were armed and Marshall implies in his statement to Peter Gillman, that Horton fired the first shot.

'Lawrence was rucking with Sailor /Horton/ but I knew Lawrence and it's the way he performs. It's very hard to describe a fight. It just happens. If we'd stopped still he would have shot us both.'

In the exchange of fire which followed Elgar received a fatal wound in the back and Lawrence was hit in the face and the neck. Horton and Marshall quickly made themselves scarce and the police arrived soon after they had fled. At this point, Lawrence allowed his desire for personal vengeance to lead him into his second major violation of the all-important communal code. When asked by the police if he knew who had shot him, he replied:

"It was Horton and Marshall . . . and Jimmy Sullivan".[1]

When Marshall gave himself up a week later, he soon realized that Lawrence had incriminated him deliberately and was suitably outraged:

'I thought he'd say (the guns) went off by accident. It's the way you work. If you get nicked together, you don't give names'.

Thus, Marshall and Horton (who was arrested in Bolton) felt justified in telling the police the whole story and were ultimately acquitted of murdering Elgar. Their disclosures contributed to Lawrence's second conviction, and his infringement of the code

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1. Sullivan's alibi proved watertight.

of silence was repaid in kind.

On February 28, Lawrence made a last dramatic public appearance at Elgar's funeral. Photographs appeared in the press showing Lawrence dressed in a black overcoat and dark glasses brooding inscrutably over the flower-covered coffin of his former henchman. He was arrested soon afterwards, and, on May 16, he appeared at the Old Bailey on the three charges relating to the original incident which had taken place at the Queen Elizabeth in 1966. Ironically, Sullivan did not give evidence for either the Defence or Prosecution in this trial, and Lawrence was found guilty of causing an affray and assault. He received a three year prison sentence.

The major trial, which dealt with the more serious offences, opened on June 12. Crofts and Melaney, the two guardsmen who had supplied Lawrence with the rifle and explosives were dealt with first. It is hardly surprising that the judge, Mervyn Griffin-Jones, should take this opportunity to deliver a lengthy harangue against declining standards of discipline in a "civilised" society" which is "struggling . . . with so much gangsterism increasing". Crofts was sentenced to ten years in prison, Melaney to eight. The trial of Lawrence and Terry followed. Sullivan appeared as the chief prosecution witness and identified the piece of copper tubing which had been found after the explosion at the Queen Elizabeth as the one taken from his yard on December 30th. But in the event, Sullivan's appearance was somewhat overshadowed by the testimony delivered by Terry Belding. Belding confirmed that Lawrence had indeed received the stolen rifle from Crofts. Despite the fact that he had been intimidated by various "heavies" before the trial, he had been determined to

make his statement, and explained why he had decided to turn on his former associates:

"It did me barmy when Baba got shot . . . It if wasn't for Lawrence, Baba would still be alive today".

Belding's appearance in court finalised that process of rejection whereby Lawrence was steadily denied the protection of the community. When Lawrence himself, took the witness stand, he adopted the well-tried tactic of denouncing all the Prosecution witnesses as "liars" and labelling their allegations "ridiculous".[1] Lawrence became particularly incensed over Sullivan's statement and moodily invoked his old friendship making clear his sense of betrayal:

"I used to go all over the place with him. We was <u>like brothers</u>".

Lawrence's bitter denunciation can be read back to the original incident and helps to explain the intensity of Lawrence's hatred for Sullivan. Sullivan had not pledged himself wholeheartedly to the Lawrence family cause in the Queen Elizabeth that day. Instead, he had defended a stranger who had come to the landlord's assistance, and by refusing to ally with the family, he had, at last, declared his true colours. Lawrence's original judgement was confirmed by Sullivan's refusal to make a more useful statement on his behalf at the subsequent trial. To sum up, Sullivan had been "a brother" only up to a point, and, in the opinion of Lawrence who was perpetually at war with the outside world, this was just not enough. Lawrence was found guilty and

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1. This word crops up again and again in the statements made in court by Reggie Kray, Charles Richardson, and "Mad Frankie" Frazer. It seems to be an appeal to the outraged "common sense" of the straight audience , an articulation of its imagined response.

sentenced to 14 years; John Terry, who was acquitted of receiving a hand grenade knowing it to be stolen, was sentenced to 5 years for his part in the bombing of the Queen Elizabeth.

I have presented a detailed account of the events which took place in Fulham between December 1966, and February 1968 because I feel that such detail is absolutely necessary if we are to appreciate the complexity of the relationship between Fulham's "subworld" (somewhere between the underworld and the surface!) and the law, and the density and diversity of criminal interactions in the area as a whole. At various points throughout the narrative, a differential committment to criminal values was in evidence and as the events unfolded, the conflict between the two central characters (Sullivan and Lawrence) began to revolve increasingly around the question of this commitment. Ultimately, the dispute forced the two men to adopt extreme positions, so that the terms of the original conflict could be transcended. Sullivan, the scrapdealer with criminal connections turned to the police (the "straight" solution); Lawrence, the criminal with a scrap yard turned to violence (the "criminal" solution). To explain how this polarisation had come about, I postulated the existence of four separate codes of honour which had dictated the initial choices made by the actors involved in the Boxing Day fracas. Some of these codes were complementary, others contradictory, and the relationship between them was kinetic so that action depended upon which code took precedence at any given time. The various actors organised these codes in hierarchies which corresponded to their needs at the moment of crisis. Taken absolutely (i.e. not in the spirit in which they were intended), the choices made at this moment also indicated

the intensity of the actor's commitment to criminal values and ideally defined his relationship with the law. What Lawrence did was to freeze and prolong the moment of crisis and demand that the implications of those original choices be drawn out to their "logical" conclusions. Lawrence had intersected the diachronous line along which choices are made at a point which was arbitrary to all but himself (i.e. he had initiated the conflict) and had replaced a situation of moral flux by one of moral fixity.

For Sullivan this was peculiarly painful, for his allegiances were distributed equilaterally and thus no one code could take precedence. He was morally neutralised (petrified in more ways than one) until that moment when Lawrence had completely realised the implications of his original choice and had exploded the protagonists back into time by instigating a new crisis.[1] It was only when Lawrence had broken the spell which he himself had originally cast, that Sullivan could act once more with conviction. In short, Lawrence had created a claustrophobic situation by arresting those processes which allow one individual to accommodate to another; he had introduced the concept of finitude by replacing relativities with absolutes, and the account of his vendetta with Sullivan demonstrates what happens when a system of closure is implemented in everyday life.

Lawrence had reduced the game of gangsterism to its barest essentials, to a point where the power drive functioned undisguised. No attempts were made to displace power into profit, and with Lawrence there were no protection rackets, and no financial interests in clubs. He was a gangster without purpose

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1. i.e. a violation of the communal code.

underway, could not be made more immediately apprehensible than in Hazelbury Road's two contrasting claims to local fame, and I shall now turn to consider how the problems of self-definition and self-determination which the middle-class invasion exacerbated, were dealt with in the central arena of the public house.

3. The Pub and the Performer.

"There must surely come a point at which unwilling consumers will resist unwelcome change".

Christopher Hutt in "The Death of the English Pub."

The scene in which the original drama which Lawrence had initiated had taken place, was significant enough in itself, and the confrontation between a scrap merchant and a publican provides an appropriate introduction to the study of criminal interactions in Fulham. For the pub is the single most important area of play available to the working class individual in this country. It is generally more spacious and less inhibiting than home itself; it embodies a collective past, promises a shared future, and somewhere in between the optics and the pumps it offers some kind of sanctuary from work and television. In Fulham, where play tends not to be taken lightly (in that "subworld" at least), the pub can dictate a whole lifestyle and embrace a whole world supplying a complex of social and economic needs. It provides the chief locale for meeting friends and doing business; making contacts and settling feuds, and, as such, it occupies a central position in many people's lives.

The way in which power is distributed inside a pub is therefore absolutely crucial to the "regulars" who frequent it, and yet even the relatively formal relationship between the

customer and the publican is fairly flexible, and is open to a variety of interpretations. The landlord is the salaried host, the benefactor who depends on the good will of his customers and, in the pub, the counter which separates the seller of goods from the public which he serves invites an even greater ambiguity than it does in the market or the small local grocery. The landlord can be the customer's friend, sometimes his enemy, sometimes his accomplice. More recently, he can be the agent of unwanted change, a minor cog in the machine which is disrupting local life, the anonymous official in the bureaucracy of the big brewery.

To understand this new development, we must first consider the transformed economics of inebriation. The "Big Six" breweries who own approximately 80% of Britain's locals have inaugurated a policy of "systematic rationalization" which is designed to streamline and modernize all aspects of the industry. This has had profound effects on the structure of the pub at all levels. Basically, it has served to reactivate the controversial question of the diminishing control exercised by local people over communal institutions and the environment in general. In practical terms, the new directive from the breweries has involved a fundamental redefinition of the relationship between landlord and customer. Firstly, the old tenant landlords who were permanently attached to one particular pub so that a reasonably amicable dialogue with the customer was generally possible, have been supplanted in many cases by the breweries' own managers who receive a fixed salary and are moved regularly from pub to pub so that no equivalent rapport can develop. This innovation, traumatic enough in its effects, has often been accompanied by equally disasterous changes in the physical environment of the

pub; changes which are often deeply resented by the clientele who are never consulted beforehand and are rarely considered by the architects who perch them on precarious stalls and take away their dart boards. The "regulars" sit amidst the formica and the chrome, and, naturally, frustration is displaced into anger, and anger is directed at the "brewery's man", the faceless official who never seems able to break the ice, the brand new "gaffer" who hasn't actually earned the title.

At least, this would seem to be the case in several Fulham pubs and is certainly true of one local pub - The "Durrell Arms". The Durrell, situated on the corner of Munster Road and Fulham Road, until fairly recently comprised a saloon bar which was roomy, comfortably seated and dimly lit and a public bar complete with dart board and quiet corners. This was replaced in 1970 by one large, flashily decorated bar with mock-Victorian light-fittings, blue and red wallpaper and plastic furniture. The dartboard and public bar prices[1] vanished along with the elderly customers who had quite literally sat with their backs to the workmen whilst the conversion was being accomplished. Visually, the new Durrell was strange to say the least, even, in places, a little surreal. The old glass and woodwork which had survived the transition clashed violently with more recent innovations and a window vainly promising "Billiards" was set in a freshly painted bright red wall. The lights were pure music hall and the mirrors reflected row upon row of "tasteful" prints arranged in severe symmetries after the fashion of the "classical" living room. Cut loose from its past, for all its burlesqued history, and uprooted from the communal experience despite its heavy "common touch",

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1. The public bar has since been reopened minus the dartboard.

its studied jocularity, The Durrell seemed to drift in a dimension of unspecified fantasy. Like a set from a Hollywood period drama, the pub showed signs of heavy expenditure and was filled with a mass of misconstrued detail which somehow did not quite add up, and the Durrell no longer appeared to be situated anywhere in particular. Moreover, all the dark corners were now brilliantly illuminated and the jukebox joined with the garish visuals to drive away the quieter regulars (including the more discreet hustlers, conmen and thieves, etc). A more boisterous atmosphere began to prevail and the clientele generally became younger and more extroverted.

However, this new regime was only gradually established, and whilst the old landlord remained a certain amount of continuity was automatically assured. Though not a particularly gregarious man, he had won considerable respect and it was generally agreed that he "knew how to run a good pub". He had, moreover, been resident at the Durrell for several years, was familiar with the local customs, catered to the local tastes and had been more or less absorbed into the community. The pressures of adjustment were further alleviated by the landlord's tactful handling of the situation. Thus, when Ted, a powerfully-built regular in his early 40's stole some of the prints from the wall in full view of the assembled company, the landlord simply asked him to return them when he had sobered up. The threat of the "bar" (being excluded) was enough to encourage Ted to comply with the landlord's request.

However, when a new manager took over in 1971, the tension which had been accumulating since the conversion could no longer be contained and complaints about the poor quality of the beer,

the short measures, the garish decor, the bad service, etc became more frequent and more audible. Relations with successive landlords have continued to deteriorate, and, from March 1973, to April 1974, The Durrell has had three new managers none of whom have managed to overcome the initial antagonism of the regulars. Whereas the old landlord was often and quite good naturedly referred to as a "moaney old bastard", the new manager is immediately called a "cunt", which is a word which usually denotes a real antipathy[1] and is short and sharp enough to allow for a venomous delivery. At certain times, the conflict between the publican and his clients has been conducted on an epic scale. For instance, when the manager insisted on introducing "live" entertainment, the reaction of the customers was so fierce that one regular tried to organize a mass exodus to the nearby Wheatsheaf and actually succeeded in leading an expeditionary party to the new pub. During the subsequent hostilities, several people were "given the bar" and fights began to break out regularly inside the pub itself.[2] Bottles and glasses were thrown across the crowded bar and one man threw a bottle at the optics and was later arrested. Furthermore, aggression began to focus specifically around the bar itself. A soda siphon was thrown at a barman who had spoken tersely to a customer and another younger man, Barry, who boasts a series of convictions for "G.B.H." (Grievous Bodily Harm) has been involved in a protracted feud with the present manager. In April of this year, the battle between the brewery and the customers actually reached the pages of the "Fulham Chronicle" when one regular was fined £100, at the West London Courts, for assaulting the landlord.

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1. Especially when it is unqualified by "daft" or "silly".
2. Prior to the conversion, people who intended to fight usually went outside into the street.

Obviously it would be simplistic to attribute all these incidents directly to the transformation of The Durrell's interior, or even to the reorganisation of the pub's management. The acrimony has no doubt been increased by the incompatability of certain individual customers and certain individual landlords; and tardy and inefficient service had been known to produce violent reactions in the past. Nonetheless, violent responses became far more frequent after the conversion, and aggression generally tended to flow through more open and immediate channels. Moreover, though the "new look" had attracted a large contingent of volatile young men, they could not be held exclusively responsible; for many of the older customers were drawn into the hostilities. It seems more likely that the manager's relative impuissance - his subordination to a higher authority - was made more apparent after the pub had been physically altered by an edict issued from the omnipotent brewery. As the obedient lieutenant of some higher power, he was firmly situated in the world outside the community - the world of inflexible hierarchies, and was associated with all those impersonal, external forces which were becoming increasingly intrusive and oppressive. As an obvious outsider and a newcomer, (the present "gaffer" is Irish), his presence was doubly provocative, and consequently his autocracy was repeatedly challenged. The degree to which the landlord is now grouped with the official organs of authority (the police, the boss etc) can be gauged by the following exchange which took place in December 1973 between Barry and the landlord.

Barry, who had been "barred" from The Durrell the night before, made an ostentatious appearance during the Saturday lunchtime session. As he did not attempt to get served, the landlord hesitated for a few minutes and then confronted the younger man.

Conversation in the vicinity of the two combatants was suspended, and the regulars watched this new episode with obvious interest:

"Landlord: I've warned you . . . now get out!

Barry : Alright, alright. I heard you.

Landlord : I won't say it again. Now be on your way!

Barry (aware of his audience): I said alright. I heard you the first time.

Landlord : Now listen, I'll phone the police if . . .

Barry (mimicking with obvious contempt): "I'll phone the police!" . . . you wanker!

Landlord : What did you say? What was that again?

Barry moves forward, the landlord wavers between the bar and the staff door, determined not to lose face and yet anxious for his personal safety. Suddenly, Barry darts forward and punches him in the face. Barry leaves, with the landlord declaring publicly: "That's it! That's it!" as if he had, at last, been compelled to abandon restraint and was now a force to be reckoned with. He phones the police and, despite Barry's lack of popularity with the older regulars ('he thinks he's Jack the lad'), many of them smile and shake their heads as though their low opinion of the landlord has been confirmed. The incident has been decided by the landlord's identification of his own interests with those of the police, and Barry translates this into a confession of weakness and a demonstration of the "gaffer's" dependence on external supports.

It is through confrontations such as these that authority-structures inside the pub are regulated and hypotheses about the nature and extent of instituted authority can be tested. Thus, the conflict is not confined to the customer and the landlord, and

when other representatives of officially sanctioned power are located inside the pub, similar patterns of challenge and withdrawal can be observed. For instance, when a group of men drinking at the bar were recognised as off-duty members of the police force, people began to gravitate towards that end of the pub which was furthest away from the offending party. Some people used grandiloquent gestures to publicize their antipathy - scowling and turning their backs squarely to the bar. Others sought to undermine the confidence of the policemen by quietly ridiculing them. The police reacted by contriving to present a united front of aggressive joviality in order to combat the cold shoulder. Normally, these ritualistic displays of mutual antagonism would have sufficed to restore order, and the evening would have passed without further incident. However, one regular, a man in his 30's, whom I shall call Alan, became somewhat obsessive, and, as closing-time approached he became openly abusive, claiming that the "gaffer" was giving the pub a "bad name" and exhorting the police to "fuck off and find (their) own pub". After a time, the police could no longer tolerate this provocative behaviour, and one of their number was delegated to silence the malcontent. Alan was told that he had "gone too far" and that the police were "now out to get (him)." He immediately became more subdued, and, fearing that the police were planning to plant drugs on him, he asked a young friend to act as intermediary so that the disaster of arrest could, at least for a time, be averted. This young man had recently served a prison sentence for theft and was familiar with some of the policemen present; and his penitent approaches succeeded in stabilising the situation. Whilst Alan did not apologize directly, his conduct was taken as a recognition of the ultimate

power of the police, and thus both parties could retreat without losing too much dignity. The customary compromises had taken place behind the bar and the landlord had incurred strong criticisms by fraternising with the police, sharing the occasional joke and generally ensuring that the privileged guests received prompt service. Once more, traditional antagonisms had been expressed and the pulse of deference and defiance had been maintained. Once more, the protagonists had exhibited a heightened sensitivity to relationships of power which seemed to have stemmed from the ambiguous "leisure" context in which the pub is placed (e.g. policemen out of uniform and working class customers "subordinated" to the doubtful authority of the landlord).

Though the reorganisation of the pub seems to have exacerbated tension between the working-class customer and authority in general, the types of conflict which I have described are by no means peculiar to the Durrell Arms. Certainly questions of ownership have been raised in the Durrell by the introduction of unpopular managers - questions which have remained unasked in those pubs where more suitable candidates have been chosen for the job or the old tenant landlord has been retained. Nonetheless, the pub is, by definition, one of those borderline areas (cf the betting-shop) which hover uneasily between business and pleasure. It is a weak link in the economic structure and the sanctions and controls which normally regulate supply and demand, and determine the consumer's passivity simply do not apply. Inside the pub, order can only be established by perpetual conflict along the boundary which the bar represents and controls can only be tentatively introduced and are subject to constant testing and revision. The pub provides a space which is never possessed

in an absolute sense by either landlord or customer[1], and the claims of both parties are paradoxically incontrovertible. In fact, it is disputed territory, and the stereotypes of the consumer, the shopkeeper and the boss are inevitably confused and often discarded. The dissolution of these stereotypes conspires with the theatrical setting which the pub provides to allow problems of self-presentation to be focussed more clearly than in the mundane surroundings of home and work where roles are relatively fixed. I shall now go on to consider the various ways in which these problems are dealt with and shall try to differentiate between approaches to role-playing which merely embrace and confirm dominant definitions and those which strive to subvert or even transcend them. I shall start with the performance itself.

3. The Performance[2] and the Law of Diminishing Outrage

No more self-defeating device could be discovered than the one society has developed in dealing with the criminal. It proclaims his career in such loud and dramatic forms that both he and the community accept the judgement as a fixed description. He becomes conscious of himself as a criminal, and the community expects him to live up to his reputation, and will not credit him if he does not live up to it".

Frank Tannenbaum - "Crime and Community"

"Nature
This passionless spectator this unbreakable iceberg-face
that can bear everything
this goads us to greater and greater acts"

Marquis de Sade in "Marat-Sade" by Peter Weiss.

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1. i.e. it is owned by the brewery.
2. I should perhaps mention here that "performer" means violent criminal in underworld argot.

All the violent confrontations which take place over the bar and elsewhere inside the pub involve an aggressor, a victim (this role is only occassionally alternated - the original terms are usually respected) and a silent third party - the audience. In fact, the audience deserves as much attention as the two central contestants, for the confrontation will achieve nothing unless it is witnessed, verified, judged and acted upon. If we turn back to the fights which took place at The Durrell, the stimulative effect of the spectators can be appreciated immediately because in this particular situation, the performers tended to articulate an aggression which was widely felt but was generally repressed When fights broke out, the younger men would leap onto seats and some would peer over the partitions which section off parts of the bar in order to get a better view. After one particular feud between two rival groups had resulted in several of the pub's most pugnacious characters being given "the bar" on the same night, many of the regulars became excited and exhilerated, and several minor unconnected scuffles broke out at a private party, after closing time. The following lunchtime saw the pub packed with expectant regulars, anxious not to miss any new developments and speculating as to whether or not any of the barred men would put in an appearance and force a further confrontation with the management. In all these incidents, the relationship between the assaillant (the performer) and his audience can be said to be symbiotic. He can champion the group to which he is affiliated, defend its rights or establish its ascendancy over other groups. The other customers and the bar staff will be compelled to adjust to his new status and will therefore feel involved in the actual confrontation: group myths will be nurtured, confirmed or refuted. The recipient

is equally conscious of his public and will attempt to extricate himself with as little injury as possible. He is aware at all times that he is participating involuntarily in a public spectacle and must vindicate his honour and preserve a maximum of self-esteem if he is to maintain any prestige inside the pub. This triangular relationship pertains to most conflict situations which proceed as far as actual physical violence, but if the bonds which unite consumers at the Durrell are felt to be unusually strong (thus upsetting the balance of this triangle) I shall move across the river to another pub - The Bricklayer's Arms - to analyse the relationship more closely.

The Bricklayer's Arms is a very small one bar pub, situated on the towpath just beyond Putney Bridge. Unlike The Durrell, The Brick has not been affected by the breweries' policy of modernisation, and the tenant landlord has been retained. The pub's "authenticity" has become a positive asset and a "Bohemian" image has been so successfully projected that The Brick recently received a favourable mention "Good Pub Guide" for its "colourful qualities. The interior, in direct contrast to the "smart" Durrell, is overgrown with the tarnished grotesquerie of successive generations of drinkers: jazz posters of the beatnick era, photographs of boxers, lithographs of Dickensian characters, a battered mousse's head and several pairs of antique skating boots are just some of the relics which litter the walls and hang from the ceiling. The limited space remaining is packed nightly with an assortment of self-styled artists, actors, criminals, survivors from the Drug Culture of the sixties, and spectators drawn from the wealthy area of Putney nearby. The Brick has a visible history, plenty of dirt and a perpetually postponed demolition order - all the ingredients of a pub with "character".

The ratio of group to group within the pub is by no means static and the landlord, unlike The Durrell's manager, is not forced to rely on regular custom. But despite the fluctuating composition of the clientele, certain general trends are detectable. Basically, the influx a few years ago, of a group of garrulous, and extroverted "heavies" encouraged many of the quieter customers to move away for good. It seemed that the less boisterous criminal, who lives more by his wits than his muscle and to whom anonymity is essential, had been frightened off by too open a discussion of trade secrets which had led to more concentrated attention from the police; and too much performing before people whom he could not take seriously. Certainly the pub had its fair share of performers, and there was always a large, receptive audience ready to watch and listen, applaud and give credit where credit was due. Again, the violent encounter can be interpreted as a spectacle mounted for the benefit of the onlookers - it is their presence which necessitates a dramatic resolution of conflicts - and the performer often seems more concerned with the psychological impression he is making on his audience, than the physical impression he is making on his opponent. The following is an example of such a situation. A short, extremely muscular middle-aged man came into the Brick with a woman who was obviously "rent".[1] A younger man, aged about 19, made a derogatory remark about the woman which everybody in the vicinity heard, whereupon the other man picked up a bottle and smashed it on the table directly in front of the boy, shouting: "I'll have your bleeding ears off son - I'm not afraid of Uncle Bill (the police) - the old Bill don't worry me" etc. This went on for about five minutes until the landlord confiscated the bottle and

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1. i.e. a prostitute

This is certainly true of Frank, who was probably at one time the most feared man in the Bricklayers' Arms. Frank had built up a formidable reputation over the years, and, in the late sixties, he had actually succeeded in becoming a household name. He was swamped in myth and celebrated in a mass of anecdotes which were all the more disturbing because dates and scenes were never specified and circumstances were always somewhat vague. His history had been constructed in retrospect, and, using Goffman's words again: "He (was) anchored as an object for biography". Thus, at school he was alleged to have been "a vicious little bleeder", during adolescence he had been a "young thug" ("He was tooled up (carrying a gun) before he was 20") and at 30, he was a "real villain". He had reputedly carried off some very big jobs and was currently running a protection racket extorting money from the local bookies and publicans.[1] Moreover, myth (and dramaturgical metaphors!) are unavoidable in Frank's case for he had invested in his own alienation, and had appeared in several films ("Poor Cow", "Get Carter", and "Performance") and in various television programmes (e.g. "Z Cars", "Special Branch", as a stock criminal character, and, of course there was no real transition to be made from the street to the screen. In fact, on or off the film-set he was exactly what he seemed and the two media (the cinema and the saloon bar) crossfertilized and produced the immaculate image - the gangster par excellence. Frank's name was associated with those celebrities whom the press affectionately term the "hell raisers" and every exploit was eminently newsworthy. He always appeared at the "Brick" surrounded by an entourage of "heavies" (some of whom had thick Glaswegian accents which amplified the menace), and, however outrageous or exhibitionist his behaviour, it always met with instant applause and approval,

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1. It is difficult to confirm this but it does seem likely.

the boy left. It was because the boy had refused to respond, and had remained silent throughout, that a physical fight had been avoided. The performer had been able to castigate his opponent, vindicate his challenged virility and defend the woman's name without recourse to further violence and beyond this, he merely had to wait for the landlord to intervene. Victory had been conceded by default and the champion received the muted recognition of the rest of the patrons. Once again, the ritual was enacted so that a clear decision could be made and a rank order could be established inside the pub.

If a dominant position is achieved, new problems of self-clarification emerge. The reputation which the "heavy" criminal has acquired demands constant confirmation in his everyday demeanour; and his role becomes increasingly constrictive, dictating his responses, and conditioning his reflexes. He must maintain a high profile at all times, he must allow no slight to go unpunished, no challenge to go unanswered; but most of all he must keep his audience in awe, for if he loses his status he loses everything. He pays for power with his personality, and buys a desperate kind of freedom by sacrificing the freedom to say no, and he can never afford the luxury of compromise. Erving Goffman diagnoses his condition when he comes to examine the transformation of a "private person" into a "public figure":

"Where an individual has a public image, it seems to be constituted from a small selection of facts which may be true of him, which facts are inflated into a dramatic and newsworthy appearance, and then used as a full picture of him".[1]

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1. "Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity".

even when it involved actual damage to the property of his audience. For instance, when Frank picked up a large tin drum which he had been rolling around outside the pub at closing time and rammed it through the windscreen of a parked car, no complaints were made and his followers were positively congratulatory.

Of course, the dynamic relationship between the actor and the gallery demanded escalation, and crime was displaced into purer forms of drama and lost its initial rationale. As his actions became more extravagant and dangerous, his audience became increasingly difficult to impress, and, ultimately, Frank was eclipsed by his own performance. After a time, it was generally agreed that he suffered from a "death-wish" and his doom was prematurely sealed in the stories which began to circulate in The Brick which told of Frank's "last" exploit. It was said that his arms had been broken by big East End villains, that the tendons in his legs had been cut and he was confined to a wheelchair, crippled for life. But the audience was denied its catharsis and Frank merely faded away from Fulham. Eventually he was absorbed into the world of films and he was paradoxically removed from the community at the very moment when he became the official representative of Fulham's criminal culture.

Frank may seem to constitute a special case,[1] but his situation is symbolic of the predicament in which many violent criminals find themselves. The "performer" defines himself against the reaction of his public - he <u>is</u> only in so far as he is <u>seen to be</u> and he must find his self image reflected in the eyes of his spectators. Like the moral entrepreneur, the violent criminal thrives on

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1. But see Section 2 on crime and film. In fact, he may not be so extraordinary - a report appeared in the "Fulham Chronicle" (Feb. 9, 1973) recording the appearance in court of an actor who had appeared in the T.V. series "The Villains". He was accused of taking part in a shotgun raid on a local bingo club.

outrage and is likely to be faced with a similar dilemma. For outrage is an exhaustible resource; it must be perpetually recycled, and if the "heavy" is to survive in a form which he can recognise (i.e. if he is to remain finite), he must move with his audience. A kind of brinkmanship develops (with the camera, with the audience) which forces the violent criminal into ever greater excesses, into ever more contorted and stylized postures, and, ultimately, the audience manipulates him as much as he controls his audience (a fatal symbiosis!). In fact, the spectacular "disaffiliate" (one who "voluntarily acts irregularly and somewhat rebelliously") or "social deviant" (who "temporarily refuses to accept his place") threatens to decline to a point where he serves his audience as a mere entertainer, and "performs the clownish functions" of the "in-group deviant" who, like the "village-idiot, the small-town drunk and the platoon clown" acts as a communal "mascot" and dances on the end of strings which he no longer holds.[1] When the criminal tries to avoid the intolerable fact of his own expendability by performing for the crowd, he is no longer in full possession of himself and he is, at least partially, owned by his audience.

The "heavy" image is basically a distancing device allowing the criminal to differentiate himself from the "straights" who surround him. It is designed to take him above the crowd, presumably to an area no longer accessible to dominant definitions where he can relax, expand and be himself. Instead, it merely confirms dominant expectations, renders behaviour more predictable (and more visible) and the "heavy" dwindles inside his role until the image takes over completely. His statements are direct and

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1. These categories are Goffman's (see "Stigma").

unambiguous and therefore comprehensible (i.e. assimilable). He remains inside the game, and he is as subject as the "nobodies" and the "straights" to external determinations. Indeed, his movements are, in many ways, more restricted than those of "private persons", and the options open to him are severely limited. In short, his world has been closed and Frank, like Tony Lawrence, can be described as very "ronnie" indeed.

To examine other more sophisticated distancing devices which seek to transcend or subvert the game itself, and to break the rules of social interaction at a far deeper level, I shall turn to a group of rather less ostentatious deviants. As this group maintains certain connections with the West Indian underworld of South London, I shall be punctuating the following sections with the occassional references to the relevant Jamaican subcultures.

4. Some Teaheads and a Rule of Silence

The ability to adopt a certain role, to play a part or tell a story convincingly, is perhaps the most important skill those involved in various forms of non-violent crime can possess. The confidence trickster is not the only criminal who depends upon his acting ability to make a living. A thief must be able to talk himself out of a difficult situation if he is to avoid arrest for any length of time. In a more abstract way, the criminal often seeks to evade or deflect inquiries and undertakes to escape classification for its own sake.[1] His determination to work outside any code or framework, however sympathetically constructed, which is imposed from outside indicates an extreme

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1. See Archie in Tony Parker's "Frying Pan".

individualism and he often validates this by adopting an anarchist position.[1] If the only certainty upon which one can depend is to know what one is not, then those who presume to define what one actually is are going to be greeted with considerable suspicion, and the best way of staying unknown is not to say anything at all. A specific example will illustrate how the rule of silence operates.

Before The Durrell had been redecorated it had served as a convenient meeting-place for various hustlers and villains who were attracted by the pub's discreet atmosphere. The heavy curtains and the dimly-lit corners promised enough privacy for the shadiest of transactions, and drugs, amongst other things, could be bought and sold without too much difficulty. William Burrough's description of "teaheads" applies equally well to a certain group who regularly used The Durrell: "They were gregarious, they were sensitive, and they were paranoic", and Burroughs found them "unfathomable".[2] Aged between 30 and 40, they belonged to a kind of first generation of marijhuana users and were probably more culturally affiliated to the groups which Becker describes in "The Outsiders", than to the hippie-groups which were receiving enormous publicity at the time. In fact, some were jazz-musicians and many showed an interest in the more esoteric modern jazz and commonly used the distancing techniques which Becker describes ("straight" v "cool" etc). But the group derived its singular identity from more local sources and the black immigrant community in nearby Notting Hill and Ladbroke Grove

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1. See Bert in Tony Parker's "Frying Pan"

2. William Burroughs: "Junkie"

had exerted a considerable influence.[1] Both the marijhuana and the music had provided bonds of interest which had drawn the two groups together. Firstly, in the early 60's, the smoking of "grass" had been confined mainly to the West Indian community in London, and, as the market had been controlled by black dealers, a certain amount of contact between immigrant subcultures and white groups who sought access to the drug was inevitable. This commercial transaction often led to exchanges at a cultural level and music began to pass along the same subterranean channels which linked the two communities. Thus, black and white jazz musicians would "jam" together and influence each other's styles; reggae rythms began to provide the percussive bass and the jazz took on an "Afro" feel.[2] Other meanings were of course transmitted; contained within the music and wrapped around the "charge"[3] and these registered at levels less susceptible to analysis. Suffice it to say, that speech patterns, argot and the complex of rituals and taboos which surround smoking were surreptitiously passed back and forth between the two subcultures and formed another basis of communication. It can be reasonably assumed that amongst these subtler decantations, the various techniques of distancing, of limiting access, and controlling the flow of information to the

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1. Now there is a fairly large West Indian community in Fulham itself, and a controversy was raging throughout January and February 1973 about the influx of black families into Fulham Court. As usual, they were blamed for the deterioration of local "amenities" and a fair amount of racial tension developed and was concentrated particularly upon the record shop which serves the residents at Fulham Court and deals exclusively in reggae.

2. A song which is still sung at parties attended by members of this group, shows how the two central influences have been synthesised. Several people join arms and whilst one keeps up a simple scat which sets the rhythm (chikka chick-cha-cha etc) the rest sing: "Maroo . . . maroo ana
   Maroo . . . maroo ana
   I like marooana, you like marooana, we like marooana too".

3. i.e. marijhuana.

outside world (i.e. the form of that social interaction) were also invisibly exchanged; and the first rule is, of course, the rule of silence.

Thus, conversation in The Durell was conducted in an atmosphere of perpetual understatement and meaning was intimated by gesture and glance. One learned to listen for the significant pause, to read between the spoken lines and fill in the omissions, and information could only be accumulated very gradually indeed. For instance, the abrupt disappearance of Nick, a formerly popular regular failed to attract any comment whatsoever, and direct enquiries were swiftly deflected. Eventually, I was able to piece together a tentative picture of what appears to have happened. It transpired that Nick had been arrested for possession of drugs, and had received an unusually heavy sentence (this itself was the subject of a humourous anecdote about Nick and a crusading lawyer from Release). Nonetheless, his appeal was immediately successful and he was free again before the end of the month. This seemingly inexplicable sequence of events represented a riddle which was finally solved for me by Terry, another group member with a talent for equivocation, who said cryptically. "Let's just say that, at that time, a lot of heads started to roll that shouldn't have". No more was said - I was left with just enough information to make the correct inference and the subject was promptly dropped.

It is only by supplying the missing pieces that episodes such as these can be rendered comprehensible. But absences, though eloquent are never unambiguous, and the authorised version of the story of Nick's betrayal can never be written. Refracted through time and the group perspective, fact has modulated into

memory, even mystery; and, in the final analysis, interpretation is a matter of belief. The sentence of silence (i.e. expulsion from the group) is passed in silence and Nick has quite simply ceased to exist for Terry. However, Terry, though circumspective to the point of paranoia, has provided a key and the episode unfolds itself elliptically. Certain other members of the group have evolved more elaborate screening devices, and have extended that margin of doubt upon which communication depends into a whole system of discourse.

I shall now analyse that system and see how it is used to discriminate against outsiders and to mislead public interest.

5. The Wind Up - Rather "Rasta"

"No Moroccan will ever tell you what he thinks, or does, or means. He'll tell you some of it and tell you other things that are completely false and then weave them together into a very believable core which you swallow, and that's what's considered civilized. What's the purpose of telling the truth? It's not interesting generally. It's more interesting to doctor it up a bit first of all, so it's more decorative and hence more civilized. And besides, how could anyone be so idiotic as to open himself up to the dangers involved in telling the unadorned truth to people?"

Paul Bowles quoted in "Rolling Stone" (May 23, 1974)

"Give me the facts, ma'am, just the facts".

Detective Jack Friday in American T.V. series "Dragnet".

If Terry demonstrates how silence can be made to communicate, then the wind up shows how verbal communication can be used to preserve silence - to prevent anything "real" being disclosed to the outside world. For the wind up is the game of fabrication,

formalised and played at various levels for amusement and for profit, and, as a kind of in-group anastrophe, it implicitly distinguishes the "straight" from the "crooked" initiate. Thus, when Billy who is definitely a jazz musician, probably a thief, and perhaps a pornographer is introduced to a new face, he will immediately proceed to wind the stranger up by relating a series of personal exploits which become progressively less credible as the conversation goes on. At some point in this spiral, the "victim" will realise he is being duped and can either beat an embarrassed retreat or engage in the game itself, but, whichever option he chooses, he can no longer ignore the fact that alien frames of reference are being used which invalidate the normal rules of discourse. At one sweep, the wind up dispenses with the fundamental conventions of verbal interaction and breaks the tacit agreement which, under normal circumstances, unites two speakers by openly declaring its commitment to untruths. In this way, the wind up performs an inherently subversive function, and, even if the "straight" victim accepts the terms of the game, he cannot translate his "findings" back into a more familiar language because a totally different epistemology is governing the exchange.. He has forfeited his control of the meanings generated within that exchange and can only transcend his original status as victim if he is prepared to abandon his position in the "straight" world (i.e. if he takes to crime like Laing to madness). The wind up is therefore used to ward off undesireable outsiders who are reluctant to make this crucial transition and the "intruders" provide a constant source of amusement and an occasional source of income for the criminal using the wind up technique. To take on example, Billy told me how he had carved a "primitive" figure in wood, covered it in

black boot polish and taken it to a newly opened antique shop on the Fulham Road. He claimed he was given £30 for what the owner had believed to be a valuable African piece and Billy ended his account by drawing his own moral: "Those geezers don't know nothing". This comment simultaneously closed the narrative and completed the wind up sequence by undercutting the story which had preceded it and intentionally diminishing the speaker's own credibility. With a purposefully prolonged glance into the eyes of his audience, Billy intimates that no one is exempt from the wind up - that the wind up itself, could be a wind up, and with all the details thrown into doubt, only the initial motivating contempt for the outsider is unequivocally communicated.

All conversations with wind up artists are liable to the sudden "double take" and the even terrain of conventional pub discourse is discarded for a more unsettled sphere where "reality" is constantly being questioned, disproved and reevaluated. Indeed, many of the criminals employing the wind up technique have experimented with L.S.D. which has radically affected their ideas about perception and has enhanced the importance of subjective observations.[1]

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1. When working in the cloakroom of a Birmingham discotheque, I witnessed an exchange between a student and an "acid-head" which closely resembled a wind up sequence. Huwie, a young thief and notorious "head-case" presented the student with a riddle as the latter combed his hair in front of the mirror:
   "What colour is that mirror?"
   The student hesitated, but, as Huwie has a certain intimidating prescence, he attempted to find the right answer ("It's yellow (the colour of the wall behind).." "It's whatever colour it reflects" etc). Huwie rejected each of these replies and added to the student's obvious discomposure by openly taunting him. ("Come on, you stupid sod, you're supposed to be clever.." "My kid sister knows the answer and she can't even write" etc). Finally, the student was forced to accept defeat and Huwie disdainfully solved his own riddle: "It's the colour of water". There had been an in-built bias in Huwie's favour throughout, and the student had never really been given a chance to sieze control of the situation. Although it is a more openly aggressive, and crudely rigged tactic than the wind up, Huwie's insoluble riddle does serve a similar function, asserting the importance of non linear meanings and questioning the validity of "straight" definitions.

Thus, certain members of the group seem to live on manifold planes of fiction, which they are constantly shifting to amuse each other and confuse onlookers, and these shifts are automatically accomplished by the magic words "wind up". Meanings are therefore extremely motile and a stable consensus cannot be established inside the group because these meanings are subject to abrupt and apparently random falsifications. As personal disclosures by individual members of the group can only receive a temporary and cautious ratification, and can, at any time, be repudiated by any other member, relationships inside the group are characterized by distance and unanimity can never to assured. Perhaps it cannot even be considered, and, as there is no standard by which to gauge the verity of a statement or the sincerity with which it is given, opinions tend to aggregate instead of cohering in a "group perspective".

Just how complicated such an anarchic situation can become is, perhaps, best illustrated by an account of a brilliantly sustained and thoroughly bewildering wind up conducted in August 1969 by two criminals, Bernie and Den. Both men are professional criminals, have been convicted several times for offences involving theft and violence and have both "done plenty of porridge".[1] Bernie is a stocky 40 year old who cultivates a "bizarre" image, and claims to have worked in an obscure capacity for the Krays. His head is sometimes shaved and he talks in quick staccatto bursts, using a curious mixture of beatnik and criminal argot which he intersperses with the occasional Jamaican swear-word. He has spent several years in a mental institution being treated for a

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1. i.e. spent a lot of time in prison.

schizophrenic condition,[1] and has taken L.S.D. frequently. Don is a small wiry thief and driver, renowned for his uncontrollable temper and his "colourful" language. The long and bitter experience of prison is indelibly written across his face, and although about the same age as Bernie, he looks at least ten years older. The wind up began in earnest when Don was driving Bernie, myself, and another passenger to a wedding reception after the pub had closed. Don's driving suffered from the effects of the gruelling session which had just been completed at The Durrell, and he also claimed to have been "swallowing" (i.e. taking amphetamines) since early evening. The following is an approximate transcription of the conversation:

Bernie: Cool it, Don, nice cool ride - let's have a nice cool ride.

Don: Alright, alright. I know how to fucking drive.

Bernie: Your driving's cool, y'know - (turning to us) - this cat's a good driver - y'know? He drove for Joe Bananas once - You know Joe? A big hood up the West End - a cat with some muscle up there - but no so good with his eyes - very shortsighted, y'know? Well, Don's driving Joe round the Elephant[2] and Don wants to stop and post a letter - y'know? -Well, he stops the wheels at the lights - sees a post box - jumps out and posts the letter - comes back, sits down - Joe taps him on the shoulder - says "Who wuz that flash-looking guy in de red suit you wuz talking to?"

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1. The circumstances in which he came to be hospitalised are not without interest. He insists that he only pretended to be insane to avoid the 10-15 year prison sentence he would have otherwise received after having been arrested for armed robbery. He maintains that his only problem is that he can't stop acting the part!

2. Elephant and Castle (an area of South London).

(Much laughter. The car stops to allow Den to sober up a little).

Bernie: I'd like a spliff[1] - There's two cats here would like a draw. They're cool; they're cool (looks at Den then at us). I would rather turn on two cats like you than lay a virgin. Can I have the gear, Den?

Den: You've got it, you cunt!

Bernie: I have no shit, Den - It's gone - I swear, I have no gear.

Den: You lying bastard - you've got your own smoke and you've nicked mine out of me pocking - you fucking cunt!

Bernie: Leave it out, Den, leave it out. Would I do that? You're a brother. Straight up; I dropped the gear in The Durrell and the scene was such that I couldn't pick it up - The cat behind the bar had his bins[2] on me - I could not recapture it.

Den: Bollocks! Fucking bollocks! You lying bleeder - you've had my smoke!

Bernie: Would I do that? (Stops to appeal to us). The scene was such that . . . .

Den: You mean bastard. I know you.

Bernie: On my two babies' lives, I did not touch that gear and Eddy and his friend here would like a smoke and all you can think about is keeping your gear to yourself, and other such aggravation.

(Gives Eddy the cigarette papers with which to start "building" the "spliff").

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1. A cigarette rolled with marijhuana.

2. Spectacles.

Den: What you wanna nick off a mate for, eh? What you wanna nick off me for? You cunt!

Bernie: Come on, Den - I haven't touched your lousy gear - now let's turn on these two nice cats and leave all this nonsense out of it.

Den: Right, we won't have none . . . (the car shoots forward and snakes off dangerously).

Bernie: Nice cool ride, nice cool . . .

Den: Shuddup!

Bernie: I must apologize for this cat, y'know? - Too much acid screwed up his head.

Den: Don't come all that bollocks - I'm alright - It's you who's got to worry. You're a bleeding maniac, you and all that with Rene.

Bernie: We're friends, Den - right? Brothers.

Den: Yeah, yeah - but what you have to kill her for? There was no need to fucking kill her.

Bernie: Cool it, Den - that's all in the past and you're there dragging it all up again (starts shaking Den to make him change the subject, but also affects his already unsteady driving).

Bernie: Now let's get to this gaff - nice cool ride, nice cool ride.

Den: Shut your fucking mouth - you, and your nice cool ride, nice cool ride - Why don't you get out and fucking walk?

We arrive at the reception, but the argument continues and becomes more and more vociferous until the other guests separate and allow the protagonists to "take the floor". Den confronts Bernie in the centre of the room and repeatedly accuses him of theft. Bernie makes silent appeals to his audience, raising his

arms in an exaggerated fashion and generally inviting the other guests to join him in deprecating his companion's unreasonable behaviour. As the drama shows signs of losing its initial impetus, Bernie introduces a new theme and announces that he knows a place in Ladbroke Grove where he can "score" some more "smoke". He goes round collecting £1 from each person to pay for the "gear" but a new argument develops over who is going to drive Bernie to Ladbroke Grove. Den refuses to allow anyone else to use his car, and Bernie, for his part, points out that Den is unfit to drive. This continues for about five minutes until Den eventually concedes defeat and reaches into his pocket for his car keys. At this point, Bernie leaps forward and slaps Den in the face with the pound notes he has just collected chanting "Bread! Bread! Bread for your head!" Den pushes him off and the two men begin to grapple, knocking into the furniture and the other guests. Locked in an embrace, they stagger across the room and fall to the floor. They are separated, apologise to the bridegroom for making the bride cry and leave. After their departure, conflicting explanations of what had really happened are discussed by the remaining guests, and, for a while at least, the wedding is eclipsed by this new dramatic incident. I left the reception soon afterwards and saw the two men in Den's parked car quietly enjoying a smoke together.

This episode contains a whole complex of interrelated wind ups which systematically undermine each other and overwhelm the observer. Each moment denies its predecessor, and, though there is a sequence, there can be no pattern for, in the last moment (when Den and Bernie share a smoke) all previous moments are atomized and the wind up dismantles itself in retrospect. Moreover, the sequence was not initiated by a signal so we can assume that Eddy and myself merely intersected a continuum and though we constituted the original

victims, the relationship between the two central protagonists is itself by no means unambiguous (in fact we can say that the wind up revolved around this central ambiguity).[1] The humourous "gangster" anecdote about Joe Bananas, and the "murder" of Rene were most probably introduced to wind up the audience, but the alliance between Bernie and Den was itself supremely unstable and it is highly likely that the two criminals were winding each other up either to see what they could get out of each other or to avoid sharing their hash with too many people. Alternatively, we could see the whole event as a ritual contest inaugurated by the two criminals so that they could test their skill at the game; but as the "game" itself hovers alarmingly between "play" and "not-play" (i.e. it is almost <u>about</u> playing games) it would be more meaningful to say that Bernie and Den were <u>testing the distance</u> which separated them in the real world rather than <u>using the symbolic distance</u> of ritual to protect themselves from the normal implications of their actions. The problems of interpretation remain insoluble, the motives of the protagonists inscrutable. The only thing that is certain is that the incident constitutes a spontaneous performance, enacted by two mutually suspicious criminals.

The wind up is characterised precisely by the unpredictable quality of the performances it produces and if we turn back to the scenarios into which Frank wrote himself, we can begin to assess in what ways and to what extent it is innovative. Whereas Frank habitually fulfils the expectations of his audience, Bernie and Den manipulate and falsify those expectations in order to achieve a measure of freedom from those external controls, which an audience normally impose. Once more, the forms of social interaction have been subverted (cf Rasta language/perception) and this subversion

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1. The ambiguity is summed up in the contrast between Bernie's remark "We're brothers" (cf Tony Lawrence's complaint against Sullivan "We was like brothers) and the behaviour of the two men.

is accompanied by a disaffiliation from the goals of the society in which the protagonists are situated. Bernie and Den are both extremely hostile towards any "straight" organisation and welcome their deviant status resisting any attempts by "normals" to colonise the outlands which they inhabit. The wind up artist, in general, regards the media as a gigantic conspiracy designed to stultify the "straights" and simplify experience and he responds aggressively to the interest he arouses in the media. Consequently, he attempts to ridicule and mislead as much as possible and the wind up acts as the convenient smokescreen behind which he can live out his life unmolested. In effect, he is waging war on the Word,[1] and it is at the level of linguistics that a fuller exposition of the wind up is now most appropriately directed.

Language as a Transformed Commodity

"You'd really hate an adult to understand you. That's the only thing you've got over them - the fact you can mystify and worry them."

16 year old mod from South London quoted in "Generation X"

When we attempt to describe the wind up as a particular type of speech event we are faced with what appear to be insuperable difficulties. The wind up does not declare itself as ritual. It is remarkably flexible and can fluctuate from one semantic level to another. It is at once a game and not a game and it is designed specifically to elude definition. It can even deny its own existence in the perplexing tautology: "The wind up itself is only a wind up".[2] To appreciate the magnitude of the problem,

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1. See William Burroughs for a radical critique of the Word.

2. In fact, the wind up is no longer acknowledged by the group who originated it (although it is still used) because access to the technique is no longer restricted, and the words "wind up" have passed into the general vocabulary of The Durrell.

we need only invoke William Laboy's rules for ritual insults which are used to describe "sounding" - an overtly similar type of discourse. Sounding is a competitive game of ritual (i.e. impersonalised) insults played by members of adolescent negro gangs in urban America. Each player takes his turn and one sound is built on another e.g.

"Roger: 'Your mother got a .45 in her left titty'.

Money: 'Your mother got a 45 degree titty'.

Boot: 'Your mother got titties behind her neck'."

Improvisation is strictly limited within this framework and Labov manages to formulate a fairly rigid interactional structure, arguing four basic properties:

"1. A sound opens a <u>field</u>, which is meant to be sustained. A sound is presented with the expectation that another sound will be offered in response and that second sound may be built formally upon it. The player who presents an initial sound is thus offering others the opportunity to display their ingenuity at his expense.

2. Besides the initial two players, a third person is necessary.

3. Any third person can become a player, especially if there is a failure by one of the two players then engaged.

4. <u>Considerable symbolic distance is maintained and serves to insulate the event from other kinds of verbal interaction</u>." (my underlining).

Now, whenever the word "sound" occurs in rule (1), the words "wind up" can be substituted, and the other two rules require no modifications at all. However, the last rule cannot be transferred so easily, for the wind up is characterised precisely by the absence of such <u>symbolic</u> distancing, and in so far as a wind up sequence is not openly initiated by an identifiable signal (cf "Your mother"...) it cannot be differentiated from the welter of discourse which surrounds

it. It can inform the exchange invisibly (i.e. as a set of expectations) or it can be used to reclassify a previously "straightforward" exhange (i.e. "You're winding me up"... This is a wind up"). That is to say, the wind up can either organise the perceptions of the speakers in time and remain unacknowledged, or it can work backwards through time / having been made apparent by one of the speakers. To use Korzybski's distinction[1] the wind up is, at any one time, either all map or all territory and the two are never allowed to coincide (i.e. it would not be possible to say: "This is a wind up - Do you want to play?") Certainly, the event has formal aspects (it has a name) and knowledge of the event is shared, but the wind up is used to differentiate between individuals inside the group as well as to define the group itself against the outside world. Conspiracy is, so to speak, the name of the game (i.e. A + B ∨ C), but, as we have seen, it is possible for one conspirator to wind up a co-conspirator whilst still subscribing to the initial compact (i.e. /A ∨ B/ ∨ C). As the symbolic distancing which is achieved in a clearly signalled ritual is absent in the wind up, the players are not insulated properly from the normal world and this can result in severe dislocations within both the group and the individual (i.e. real symbolic distancing). Labov defines a ritual as a "sanctuary" in which the actors "are freed from the personal responsibility for the acts" in which they are engaged but the safeguards which usually bracket off the ritual exchange from other types of discourse are absent in this case and the wind up does not even qualify as ritual in Labov's sense of the word. And, as all discourse can be negated in retrospect by any group member, Labov's first rule can no longer be used to describe the wind up (because all discourse is potential field), and the task

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1. A. Korzybski argued in "Science and Sanity" that the following equation pertained - map: territory : : word : object. If we say the words "wind up", we immediately translate territory into map etc.

of definition remains as forbidding as ever.

Gregory Bateson's theory of the Double-Bind can perhaps be applied to the wind up with rather more success. In his famous series of essays,[1] Bateson demonstrated that play, fantasy, art, poetry and schizophrenia are all "trans-contextual syndromes" which develop in response to experienced breaches in the weave of contextual structure (i.e. in response to double-bind situations) Russell's discovery concerning the exclusive nature of Logical Types was used as the epistemological base for Bateson's own communications theory which revolved around an examination of the relationship between contrasting levels of abstraction (object: sign: context : mode) as used in ordinary verbal interactions. Each message was contained in and defined by a larger message which Bateson called a "metamessage" and conventional communication was said to depend upon the correct (i.e. consensual) identification and decodification of these metacommunicative signs (i.e. signs about signs e.g. "This is play"). These metacommunicative messages corresponded to psychological frames which served to locate the whole message within a context and therefore to give it meaning. The frames were designed to avoid the paradoxes of abstraction by containing them. Thus the frame which corresponds to the metamessage: "This is play" contains the Epimenidean paradox: "These actions in which we now engage do not denote what would be denoted by those actions which these actions denote". This was expressed diagramatically thus:

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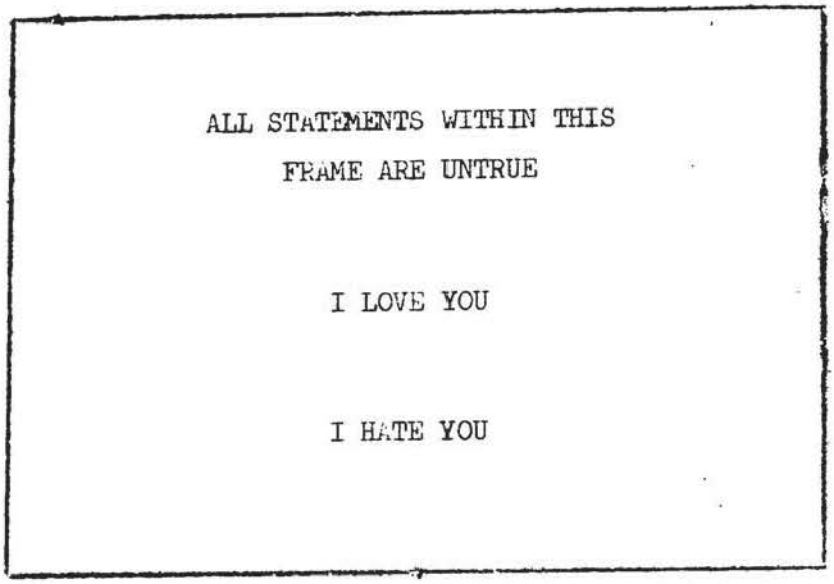
1. See "Towards an Ecology of the Mind" selected essays Gregory Bateson

THIS IS PLAY



(Fig. 2)

The first statement within this frame is a self-contradictory proposition which carries all the other statements with it for the message or signals exchanged in play are not "really" meant and denote something which does not "really" exist. The "trans-contextual syndromes" mentioned above represented the various responses to "meta-communicative tangles " - those moments when the mode of the message was confused. Thus, if the signals which identified the mode of the message (i.e. which established whether it was literal or metaphorical) were involuntarily misinterpreted, the individual could become severely disturbed and a schizophrenic condition could develop. The schizophrenic's "word-salad" of unlocated metaphors was attributed to the patient's inability to surround the verbal message with the appropriate frame. Ultimately, the schizophrenic's verbalisations can be said to metacommunicate the end of communication (i.e. "There is no relationship between us".) and can be said to mean that meaning is impossible. In effect, the paradoxes are no longer contained and

have become themselves the subject of the communication.[1] Bateson argued that normal discourse, on the other hand, is conducted at multiple levels of abstraction and non-psychotic individuals were credited with considerable dexterity in dealing with sudden shifts in the various levels at which a message could be located. Humour, for instance, often compelled are evaluation of earlier signals and mode-identifiers were deliberately falsified in certain instances (e.g. the confidence trick). Communication between two individuals can therefore be said to depend precisely upon the synchronous discrimination and labelling of the mode in which that communication is cast.

Obviously, we have now encountered a language which can be used to describe quite adequately that class of discourse of which the wind up is a member. It seems strange that Bateson himself did not undertake such a description. Instead, he merely mentioned in passing that another and "more complex form" of interaction based around the question" "Is this play?" could be identified, and it is to this category that the wind up can be most appropriately assigned. I would maintain that this form deserves far more attention than it has been accorded in the past because it actually bridges the gap between normal and pathological responses to metacommunicative tangles (i.e. between creativity and schizophrenia). We have argued that communication between two speakers depends upon correlated frames of reference being used simultaneously by those speakers, and without a

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1. Laing, of course, went on to explore the implications of Bateson's theory and the "unremittingly incomprehensible" "gambits" of Smith and Jones which are used to introduce the discussion of "The Schizophrenic Experience" in "The Politics of Experience" demonstrate how completely the paradoxes stand exposed in schizophrenic "conversations":

   Jones: A lot of people talk that way, like crazy, but Believe It or Not, Believe It or Not, but we don't have to believe anything unless I feel like it.

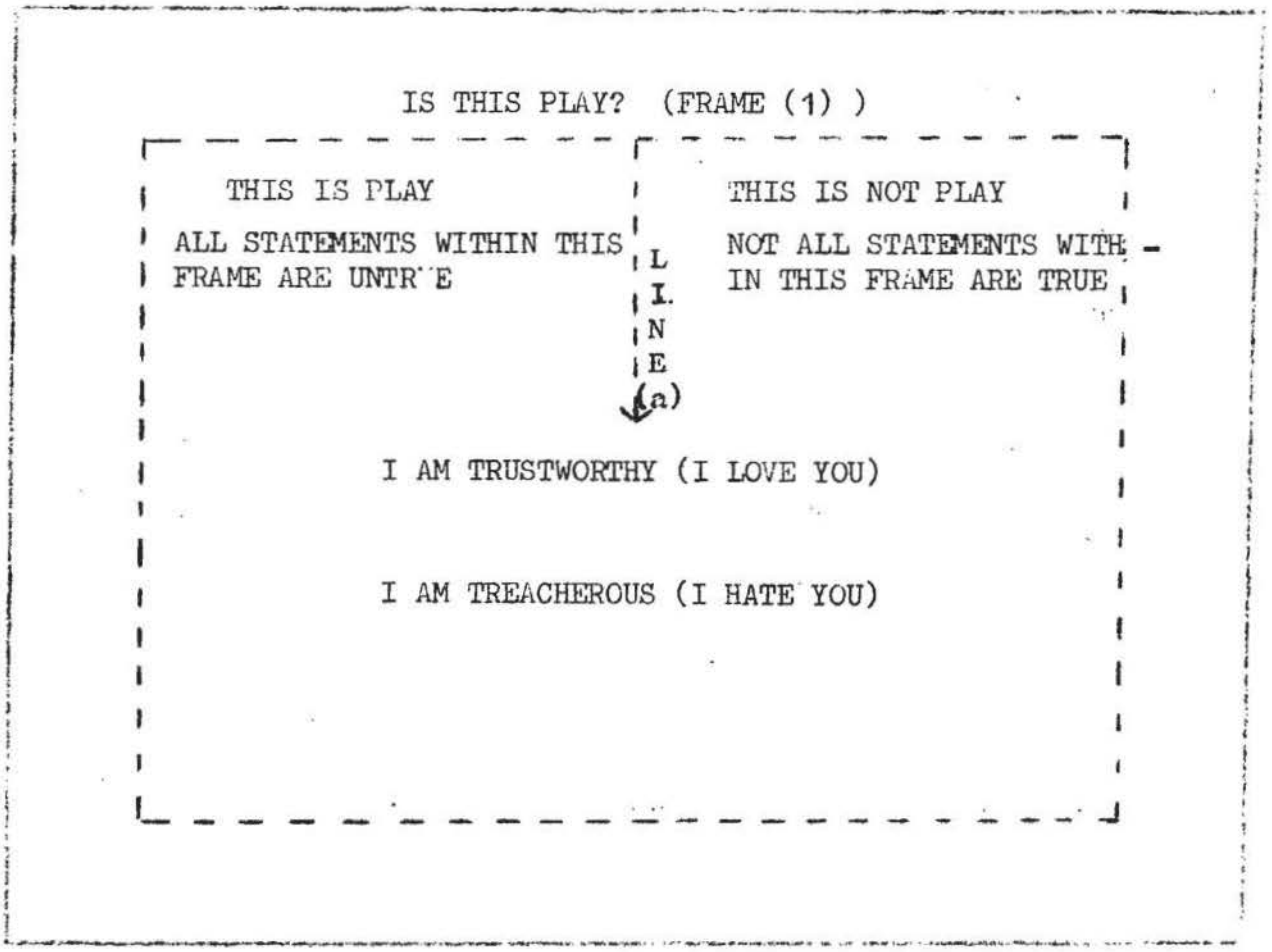
   Smith: What do they want with you and me? How do I know what they want with you? I know what they want with me" ... etc.

high degree of congruence at the various levels of abstraction from which these frames are constituted, communication is itself impossible. Thus, we can say that the function of communication is to provide answers (i.e. to establish relationships between things). Now, if the exchange is framed by a question (e.g. "Is this play?) this cannot be accomplished properly because a question does not allow for the kind of stability which meanings require. The context itself is unlocated, and as the forms alternate between the mutually exclusive contexts of play and not-play, the paradoxes are multiplied and the frame threatens to disintegrate exposing those paradoxes and exploding communication. The frame (that is to say the metacommunication) only exists to be seen and when it is obscured -(i.e. when it is quite literally in question) there is an automatic regress towards the first available context which can be used to define the meaning of the messages which are being exchanged. This, the second frame (or metametacommunication) of that discourse which the question "Is this play?" has failed to contain, corresponds to the metacommunication (or first frame) of the schizophrenic's verbal "exchanges" which can be formulated axiomatically thus: "There is no relationship between us".

To sum up, I have argued that a frame which is a question is a contradiction in terms. I have attributed the ambiguity of the messages exchanged within a wind up sequence to the fact that they are constructed around the question "Is this play?". As they are framed by a question, the forms generated within the exchange are inconclusively located and are therefore extremely insecure. When the paradoxes prove unmanageable, the frame collapses and "entropy" or "negative feedback" can be said to occur in the communication system. We are now acquiring a fuller understanding of the implications of the wind up and related forms and we can summarize our discoveries in the following diagram:

The Wind Up:

THERE IS NO RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN US (FRAME (2).)



(Fig. 3)

Now, although the paradoxes of abstraction are theoretically contained by the question "Is this Play?" they are never effectively framed because the messages cannot be decisively located in either context (This is play/not play). In other words, the frame cannot resolve itself and, as the paradoxes multiply and accumulate along line (a), frame (1) can no longer contain them. Thus, at certain key stages in that sequence which is the wind up, frame (1) splits temporarily and is replaced by frame (2). "Negative feedback" occurs at these crucial points and meaning itself is in the balance for the duration of these crises (i.e. until frame (1) is stabilised. once more.)

To understand this process more thoroughly, we need only invoke the experience of the schizophrenic. We can use the mutually double-binding relationship which exists between the therapist and his patient as a model for the relationship between the "social deviant" (the criminal who embraces an outlaw status) and the "interested straight". The therapist requires the patient to discard his own epistemology so that the schizophrenic's world can be discussed and the unlocated metaphors which characterize that world can be firmly situated inside the therapeutic context (i.e. so that the words "as if" which the schizophrenic has forbidden can be interpolated into the exchange). As the therapist's approach denies the metameaning of the patient's verbalisations (i.e. "There is no relationship between us"), the schizophrenic responds to his enquiries by becoming more and more evasive and a complementary schismogenesis develops.[1] In the same way, the "social deviant" is convinced that there can be no congruity between himself and the straight world and the approach of the "interested straight" is interpreted as an attack on the epistemological foundations of his "crooked" system. In Goffman's words, he knows that even "where placement is favourable", he is still going to be placed in someone else's context, and is likely to be defended "in terms of his stigma".

It is through the wind up that such placement can be avoided and the threat which the intruder represents can be neutralised. Thus, the wind up constitutes a group strategy which parallels the

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1. Bateson created this category in "Culture Contact and Schismogenesis" and developed the theory of schismogenesis in "Naven". It refers to "all those cases in which the behaviour and aspirations of the members of 2 groups are fundamentally different". For example, if Group A exhibits patterns O, P, Q in dealing with Group B, which group replies with patterns U, V, W and this continues unrestrained a complementary schismogensis can develop which leads to "a progressive unilateral distortion of the personalities of the members of both groups, which results in mutual hostility between them and must end in the breakdown of the system."

individual schizophrenic's tactic of consistent evasion. However, it occupies a completeley different category precisely because it is a group response (i.e. there can be "communication" about the impossibility of "real" communication). Whilst the wind up could, perhaps, be described as tactics one stage removed from madness, that distance between the two responses, must always be maintained. For those actively involved in a wind up merely debate the proposition which the schizophrenic lives out, and though the validity of psychological framing is brought into question (because the frame itself is a question), the matter is never conclusively decided one way or the other. This can be demonstrated if we refer back to figure (3). Although frame (1) is permanently on the brink of disintegration, it is never dispensed with entirely. Instead, it merely lapses temporarily at those crucial points in the wind up sequence which I have already indicated (i.e. when the paradoxes prove unmanageable and the wind up is registered in the "victim's" responses). Nonetheless, at these points, entropy does occur, and once the wind up has been recognized as an immanence in the communication system, the stability of that system is jeopardised and all previous communication is seriously devalued. The wind up, then, is integrated into the structured discourse of the pub and yet it can be used at any time to undermine that structure of which it is a part. Ironically, it is the inapplicability of Labov's rules which tells us most about the wind up, for the "social reality" which Labov explores is a communicable reality - a reality

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1. From "Stigma" Goffman goes on to quote a criminal who distrusts the interest he arouses in "normals":
'I always feel this with straight people - that whenever they're being nice to me, pleasant to me, all the time really underneath, they're only assessing me as a criminal and nothing else".

of relationships, and the wind up artist is continually questioning the validity of these relationships and denying their existence. And if language provides an essential matrix for the relationships which pertain within a given society, then the wind up is intrinsically "anti-social" because it challenges the principle of pattern itself by actively dwelling upon the disjunction between those contrasting levels of abstraction upon whose harmonious interplay communication depends.

In this section, I have argued that the wind up can be located somewhere in between those "trans-contextual syndromes" which are "normal" and those which are officially defined as "pathological". I would now assign the Rastafarian mythology to the same intermediate category. For the metaphors which abound in reggae are at once located and unlocated and the dubious area in between is the medium through which "dread" can be communicated (Rollston Kallyndyr defines "dread" as that "incommunicable point between the Rude Boy and the Law"). The cult of Ras Tafari itself rests on ambiguity (is the "as if" clause omitted on purpose?) and retains its diabolical connotations by continually shifting the modes in which its messages are placed. We can distinguish similar patterns of assimilation and inversion, acquisition and denial in the creation of both the Rasta mythology and the wind up technique. Both the Rastaman and the wind up artist embrace their outlaw status, refusing to be drawn away from the fringes of the societies in which they are situated and both publicly declare their disaffiliation from the goals and norms of those societies. This antagonism towards dominant values permeates every level of subcultural meaning and has dictated innovations in the infrastructure - at the levels of language and perception. To understand how these innovations were accomplished, we need only

turn back to the mods and to the transformation of the commodities which they took to themselves. Just as the mods appropriated those commodities by redefining their use-value (i.e. by disrupting or at least rearranging the syntactical relations which pertain between the consumer and the commodities he consumes), so the wind up artist and the black subscribing to the Rasta mythology transformed language by first taking it and then turning it back upon itself so that it came to perform a profoundly subversive function. The reallocation of meanings at this level amounts to the final act of appropriation open to the deviant subculture which is sufficiently alienated from the dominant system to make an ideological break with that system, but which finds itself unwilling or unable to engage in "straight" oppositional politics. And it was the failure of the mod movement as a whole to make innovations in the infrastructure which accounts for its ultimate exploitation and assimilation during the mid-sixties.

I shall now go on to finish that task of comparison and contrast which I outlined in Part 3, and shall attempt to differentiate between the various responses to public interest exhibited by the deviant subcultures in Fulham. At the same time, I hope to clarify those descriptive categories ("ronnie", "rasta") which I have been using throughout this section, and to focus on the problematic area of aesthetic determinations once more, so that some of the questions raised during this study of subcultural conflict can be resolved.

7. Who's directing this film? - The Wind Up as Falsified Performance

I have punctuated the preceding account of subcultural styles in the sixties with repeated references to the popular cinema and

the archetypes which that cinema generates. Film recommended itself as a peculiarly accessible medium to both the student and the subculture, and, by identifying two totally different responses to a specific genre, I hoped to delineate as large an area of subcultural meaning as possible. I went on to argue a correspondence between the aesthetic parameter and other adjacent dimensions, and suggested, in particular, that a graduated commitment to dominant forms of expression could indicate a parallel commitment to the status quo. Hopefully, in the process, "popular culture", which is all too often presented as an undefined amalgam of literary prejudices, or as a figment of the "sociological imagination" was revealed as a heterogeneous complex of shifting relationships. Thus, we could talk of cinema dictating style and meaning; creating expectations; organising perceptions; even, finally, reaffirming the conditions of its own production.[1]

These observations were underpinned by the premise that the cinema provides an ideal medium through which the dominant ideology can be unobtrusively transmitted, and that film can therefore be used to represent those concealed channels through which dominant definitions are mediated to members of the working class. As form and content literally pass through the same nodal points in that lens-system which <u>is</u> cinema, it was necessary to introduce a term which would at once suggest a simultaneous and congruent causality, and, therefore, I referred to a whole set of intermediary aesthetic determinations (the word "determination" being used as an ideographic sign for itself).[2] We can now

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1. See first four sections of Part 2.

2. i.e. a determination is at once a force and a velocity (or a pressure and the direction in which that pressure is exerted).

define role as the means through which these two parallel functions are realigned within the individual consciousness (i.e. a role is a determination in practice). The ways in which the various subcultures attempted to deal with aesthetic determinations, the ways in which they appropriated the meanings of the relevant genres which had provided them with their "styles" were consequently absolutely crucial and could be said to define the value systems which the respective subcultures were ultimately to adopt. Hence, the binary opposition which was set up between the Kray/Gangster and Rasta/Rude Boy styles simultaneously symbolised the distance between two contrasting responses to a formative genre and two totally different ideological systems (i.e. a system of closure and a system of transcendence/detachment).

When we came to consider the context in which subcultures were evolved in the Fulham of the sixties, the cinematic metaphor proved particularly appropriate, and the importance of aesthetic determinations could be immediately appreciated. For, as I have already pointed out, the middle class "invasion" of Fulham coincided with (perhaps even directly produced) an intensification of the media's interest in the "colourful" local culture and the resulting conflict between dominant and subterranean definitions was literally projected onto the cinema screen. Consequently, problems of self-determination and self-presentation were exacerbated and made immediately and dramatically apprehensible. Resolutions were required with a greater urgency than is, perhaps, usual. The tension thus created was most noticably registered in the pubs which provided arenas in which these conflicts were acted out before an audience whose keen interest was often translated into actual involvement (e.g. at The Durrell). I would

argue that the lines of demarcation which separated the "crooked" performer from his "straight" audience depended not only upon the outcome of these confrontations but also upon the manner in which the performances themselves were undertaken. To demonstrate this, I shall merely elaborate upon the distinction which has already been made between the straightforward response to outside interest exhibited by the performer (e.g. Frank) and the devious and ambivalent reaction to the same interest exhibited by the wind up artist (e.g. Bernie).[1]

When describing the performances in which Frank involves himself, I explained how he scrupulously preserves the ritual distances which separate him from both his victim and his audience and attempts (albeit unsuccessfully) to transcend dominant definitions whilst still fulfilling the expectations of his public. Bernie, on the other hand, adopts a totally different approach, and deliberately plays with appearances, confusing the relations which pertain within that triangle which encompasses the performance; and subverts the game itself by falsifying those expectations. We can say that whereas Frank rises to the occasion and, in a sense, "loses himself", Bernie only appears to do so, and, by undermining the communication process, he manages to remain "private" and inscrutable. In practice, this means that Frank acknowledges his public and gives more daring performances for its gratification, whilst Bernie misleads that public and moves secretly behind the impenetrable wall of the wind up. We can now complete that diagram (figure 1) from which were derived the two descriptive categories which were originally used to differentiate between the performances of Bernie and Frank (and the influences which

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1. Alternatively, it could be summed up in the contrast between Billy's adroit manipulation of the antique-shop owner and Barry's blunt "handling" of the manager of The Durrell.

bore upon them), by postulating a parallel polarity between those two responses along the parameter of the London "villain" genre:

Fulham

THE PERFORMANCE — THE WIND UP

LONDON "villain" genre

INCORPORATION — WITHDRAWAL

(Figure 4)

The difference is basically one of control,[1] and though both modes of interaction result in patterns of complementary schismogenesis being set up, one proceeds against the will of the principal protagonist (i.e. Frank is manipulated by his audience) and the other is deliberately initiated by the principal protagonist (i.e. Bernie positively seeks the breakdown in the communication system which schismogenesis inevitably produced and the audience is manipulated by him). In effect, the wind up falsifies the performance by negating all those meanings which "normals" attach to it and shifts the onus of definition back onto the subject once more. Bernie can thus become at once actor, dramatist, director (and critic!), and is able to avoid the constraints usually contingent upon public performance by making redundant the whole concept of role.

To return yet again to a source which I have already plundered to an unwholesome degree, Goffman suggests in the final chapter of "Stigma" that:

"In theory, a deviant community could come to perform for society at large something of the same functions performed by

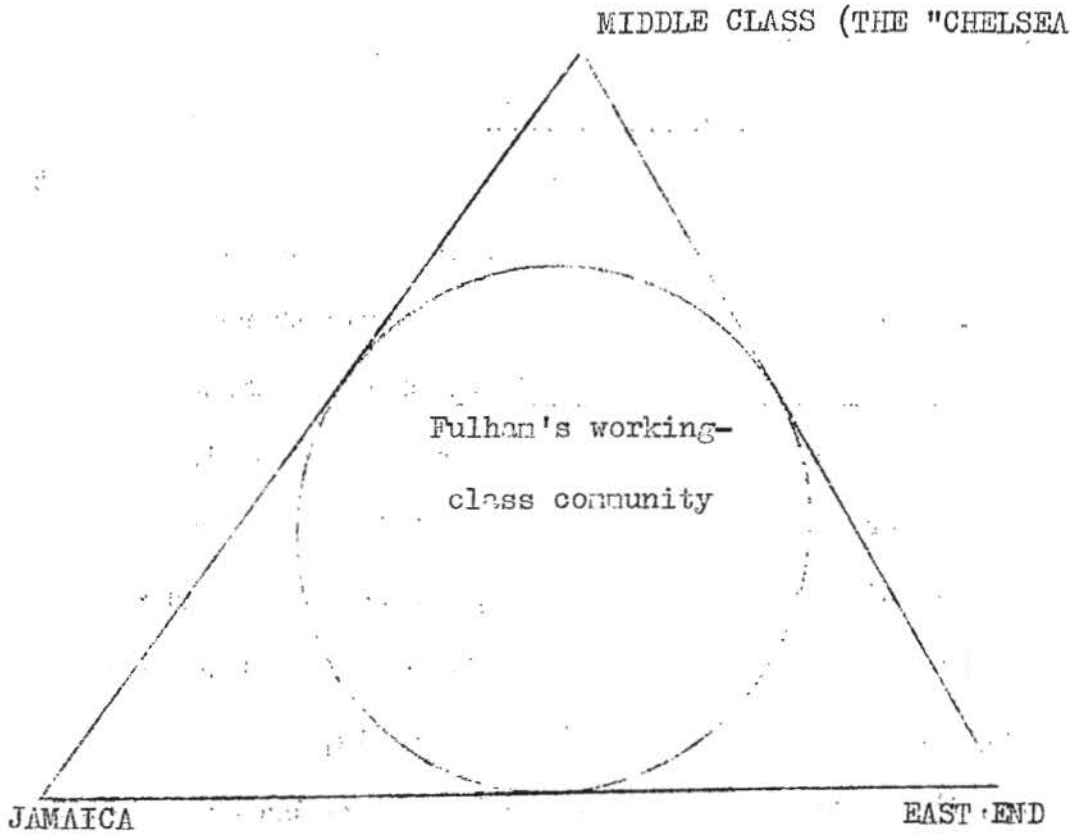
1. Though there is, in this case, a literal dimension as well. Frank is a professional film actor, whereas Bernie distrusts the media and satirizes cinematic archetypes (see his Damon Runyan type delivery of the Joe Bananas story).

an in-group deviant for his group."

In many ways, Fulham's criminal community was made to perform precisely that function during the 1960s, and the performer and the wind up artist chose to respond to the demands of public performance in ways which are diametrically opposed. Whilst the performer capitulated to those demands, the wind up artist consistently refused to play the game. Instead of performing the "clownish functions" to which he was assigned, he sought to preserve his status as a "social deviant". Perhaps, considering the avant-garde forms to which he aspired in his music and which he attempted to carry over into his everyday life, it would be more accurate to say that the wind up artist created his own category becoming a "deviant deviant" - one whom I would define as a permanent and unrepentant exile from that larger society to which he no longer seeks access. Moreover, if we consider the pressures which have impelled the wind up artist to elaborate this, his most intricate distancing device, I feel that any attempts at further definition would not only be inappropriate but would also be highly presumptuous, and I shall therefore abandon this consideration of the wind up forthwith.

To conclude, in this final section on Fulham, we have been examining a situation of extreme subcultural conflict which was created, in the late sixties, by the influx into the area of large numbers of "immigrants" from an alien class. The threat to the indigineous community which these "immigrants" represented, was countered by a more rigid demarcation of the lines which separated local deviants from local and "imported" straights, and by the codification of those values in the working class culture as a whole, which are officially defined as "criminal". Both these

processes were assisted by the absorption into Fulham's criminal community, of meanings generated within two other deviant sub-cultures with which that community had had considerable contact over a period of years. The first set of subcultural meanings was brought over from the other side of London by the large numbers of East Enders who had settled in Fulham and the adjacent boroughs after the war and the second from the Caribbean, and more specifically, from Jamaica, by the black immigrants who converged upon South London during the fifties and sixties. This triadic constellation of influence and meaning can be said to represent the various options open to Fulham's working class community and can be used to situate the culture of that community in the following way:



(Figure 5)

As far as the deviant sections of Fulham's population were concerned, the meanings which clustered along the base of the triangle in figure 5 were used to combat the threat contained within its apex. In other words, the tactics which the

indigineous criminals had learnt from the subcultures, brought into the borough by two successive waves of immigration, were used to counteract the threat constituted by a third group of "immigrants" from an alien class.

Obviously, there is a risk here of reducing what is, after all, a highly complex process of selective assimilation to its lowest common denominator, and, consequently, of circumventing rather than clarifying the problems of interpretation with which the student is faced. Certainly, the importance of direct lines of communication can be easily overstressed (because a subculture is not a "tabula rasa"), and, so, I established a second scheme of indirect references which was designed to evaluate the various responses of Fulham's deviant group as they were encountered according to the semantic differential theory put forward by Osgood and Tannenbaum in "The Measurement of Meaning". The responses were thus projected onto a scaled parameter set up between two disparate subcultural systems which corresponds to the base of the triangle in figure 5. The system which I have used could therefore be described as anastomotic having collateral channels which link a real situation of culture contact and subcultural conflict to an ideal sphere where exclusive categories pertain and relationships can be clearly discerned. In this way, the phenomena under consideration in this final section can be read back through the regress of contexts available within this thesis, and, at the same time, those phenomena already studied can be brought forward and made to bear adjectivally upon the data collected in the study of Fulham's subcultures. Bilateral organisation is, of course, by no means unique to this work, but, although the anastomotic system possesses some structuralist aspects, it retains, in marked contrast to conventional structuralist techniques, a commitment

to qualitative and evaluative distinctions (i.e. a moral commitment), and, to the extent that it uses scaling procedures, it remains undisguisedly subjectivist and is therefore ultimately fallible. Indeed as I have not eliminated the "I" from this thesis, my "findings" are deprived of the magical auspices of "scientific validity". However, though I see no virtue in making a flag of fallibility, I can see no point in postulating a "scientific base" for a work of this nature. And it was by dealing directly with the question of aesthetics, that I hoped somewhat paradoxically to prevent this thesis from degenerating in to the aesthetic game towards which the "science" of structuralism seems naturally inclined. The aesthetic parameter along which the various polarities were organised was therefore designed not only to represent a specific dimension of meaning in a "scientific" system of subcultural semantics, it was also meant to be concerned directly (i.e. to be about) the problem of meaning which the phenomenonological study of subcultures habitually raises.