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Community Workers'

Understandings and Practices of Resistance

Thesis submitted by Maria Power to the

National University of Ireland, Cork as part of the

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The School of Applied Social Studies.

Head of Deparment: Prof. Alastair Christie

Research Supervisors: Alastair Christie and Rosie Meade

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This thesis is the work of Maria Power and has not been submitted to any other University for qualification.

Signed:_____

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

In this thesis I argue that the last ten years (2000 to 2010), in particular, have seen unprecedented changes in community development work in Ireland. On the one hand many State agencies, for example the Health Service Executive (HSE) and FÁS[1] training and employment services, now directly employ community workers within their organisations and use community development language - terms such as 'community development', 'participation', 'empowerment' - within their various policy statements and strategies, although these terms are not necessarily defined or shared between agencies or with communities. On the other hand, as a community consultant who has been working across a number of counties for over twenty years, I have witnessed many community-led projects being transferred from community to State ownership and large-scale national programmes, for example, the national Local Development and Community Development Programmes, have been more closely incorporated within existing public and local government institutions and services. Based on my experience where community development is still referenced or prioritised in State programmes - in the work of Local Development Companies, for example the new Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2014 (SICAP) – it's purposes and priorities are centrally prescribed and monitored with reference to State-identified performance indicators. My own experience suggests that most of these changes have been imposed by the State, and without due processes of consultation as opposed to emerging in response to the demands of community groups, social movements or community workers.

[1]Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS) once the largest State training and employment services agency in Ireland (replaced in October 2013 by a new agency called Solas: Further Education & Training Authority).

As mentioned, I have been working as a consultant in the Community and Voluntary sector in Ireland, for over twenty years. Through my professional engagement, I became increasingly concerned about the form, purpose and substance of my work, which is contracted by State agencies, government departments and community organisations. I saw that my own practice was increasingly being re-orientated towards a State-determined agenda and that there were few independent or autonomous spaces wherein community workers and activists could meet, collectively reflect, analyse or dissent from the significant changes that were already underway. In addition and simultaenously, some community-based projects/organisations were requesting my assistance with developing resistance strategies to these large-scale structural changes. While every effort was made to implement such strategies – they met with strong counter-resistance and opposition. In order to make sense of my concerns, I decided to embark upon a Doctoral programme with the aim of gaining greater theoretical and analytical insight into the changes taking place, in particular those changes that seemed to reflect the managerialisation of community development and the expression of resistance to such changes. I wanted to seek out research and critical analysis that related directly to Ireland or to other contexts where similar changes are evident and to develop a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the changing Irish community work situation.

The Community Workers Co-Op (CWC, 2008; n.p.) understands "community work/community development to be a developmental activity composed of both a task and a process. The task is the achievement of social change linked to equality and social justice; and the process is the application of the principles of participation, empowerment and collective decision making in a structured and coordinated way". In keeping with this developmental approach an important role for community workers is to support communities to critically evaluate their circumstances and voice their opinions and needs (Ledwith, 2011). However, and particularly in the context of 'austerity' led social policy (Newman, 2013) there is a simultaneous and increasingly explicit agenda on the part of the State for

community workers to steer and mobilise individuals and communities away from welfare dependence and into work. For example, in the context of austerity budgets, the concept of 'activation' has become increasingly central to the discourse of the Department of Social Protection, which has detailed its own activation programme in the policy statement 'Pathways to Work' in 2011 and can also be seen in the new Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2014 (SICAP), funded by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government. The State's view of productive, responsibilised communities may be very different from what individuals in communities view and demand (Carnoy and Castells, 2001). Some community organisations or groups would argue that it is structural economic and political inequalities that render their communities disadvantaged (Shaw, 2006; Gaynor, 2009). Therefore, they may be unwilling to accept more individualised constructions of non-participating or inactive communities, which represent communities as 'flawed' or 'failing' due to their own lack of motivation or poor mobilization of social capital. Shaw (2008: 32) recognises that;

> "community work is a product of two sets of forces and interests, which reflect the changing context of political relations in society. The first is pressure from above, i.e. the State, and the second from below which stems broadly from democratic aspiration, i.e. a desire to control one's own life, which renders the practitioner (community worker) dialectically and strategically positioned between these competing demands" (Shaw, 2008: 32).

In the time period that is being explored in this study there appears to have been an intensification of the long-standing dilemmas that are discussed by Shaw (2008) in Irish community development. These dual and often contradictory demands can neutralize or hinder community workers' capacity to support citizens in democratically identifying their needs and in demanding appropriate responses. However, the distinctive position that is occupied by community workers, at the

interface between the State and community, could also present new opportunities for resistance, critical analysis and re-imagination of policy. In 2014, there is still an urgent need for community workers to re-assess, re-define and re-evaluate community work in the current environment and consider new purposes for the traditional tools of community development practice. As Shaw (2011) observes, community development is often at its best when it attempts to interrogate and negotiate at the interface of two or more competing forces and represent the views and experiences of those who are frequently ignored (Shaw, 2011).

On commencing the Doctoral programme, I had a very open mind to examining the practices of resistance in community work, which I assumed could be very wide-ranging. I also assumed at the outset that given the high level of structural changes taking place within the community development sector in Ireland, changes which were imposed by the State, that community workers would be resisting such moves and responding in a collective and strategic manner. However, the research process took me in a slightly different trajectory, i.e. workers appeared consumed by the various impacts of managerialism, such as the requirement for a high volume of reporting against key performance indicators; a change in direction of their work based on centrally prescribed goals and the introduction of new terminology into community work, e.g. beneficiary participation rates. This was in addition to mandated structural changes of local Community Development Projects (CDPs) including the relocation of workers' employment status to Local Development Companies (previously known as Partnership companies) and out of local communities.

One point that is worth emphasizing here is how the concept of managerialism and its expression in Irish community development, became increasingly significant as I engaged with the research data. While I carried out a broad literature review prior to data collection, it was after I conducted my fieldwork and I began to analyse and theorise the data that the salience of managerialism became clearer. In so doing

authors such as Scott (1985, 1990), writing about resistance and its various forms, Barnes, Newman and Sullivan (2007), Clarke and Newman (1997) and Barnes and Prior (2009), writing about managerialism in the UK, became particularly useful as I framed and developed my analysis in relation to the data provided by Irish community workers. The research process led my thesis to a more precise concentration on; the enhanced role of the State in relation to community development, the managerialisation of community development and if, how and why (or why not) community workers resisted such changes.

In addition to developing my own analysis and personal insights, I was curious about community workers' understandings of their changing work circumstances. To what extent are they able to work according to what are widely accepted as community work's values/principles in the current environment? Community workers are at the front line or interface between State policy and the lived experience of communities (Shaw, 2008); it is they who are primarily responsible and accountable for the interpretation and delivery of programmes. Therefore, I was interested to hear how they were managing these new tensions. Given the recent changes that were noted earlier and that are discussed in more detail in Chapter Four, almost all community workers in Ireland are now faced with working more directly for the State, in that their positions are funded indirectly by the State through a subsidiary third-party, for example Local Development Companies (see Chapter Four), or they are employed directly by State agencies such as the Health Service Executive (HSE). As the community sector has become more integrated within State structures and programmes, community workers, who have in the past been given their mandate and work direction by local community-based management committees, are now forced to make sense of and negotiate new and potentially turbulent relationships with the State. Such relationships are being negotiated within the State system and centrally prescribed programmes. In my informal and formal encounters with community workers in a range of geographical and project settings, I could see that many community workers, although perhaps not all, were confused about how to proceed as a consequence of these changes. It

is hoped that this study will contribute to a greater understanding and analysis of the changing community work environment in Ireland in recent times.

The remainder of this chapter provides an outline of the focus, aims and objectives of this study, a brief introduction to each chapter in the thesis and finally, I outline some of the main findings of this study in the concluding section to this chapter.

1.2 Resistance: the Focus of this Research

In my personal and professional interactions with community workers, the concept of 'resistance' appears to conjure up all sorts of emotional reactions – both positive and negative. While resistance is often portrayed negatively, particularly by those in positions of power, resistance can generate important political and personal outcomes. Resistance can bring attention to needs, aspirations and identities of resisters and to the issues they raise; it can reduce or re-negotiate hierarchical power relations, often referred to in community work as 'taking back your power'; it can transform existing identities or help resisters to refashion new identities; it can be expressed loudly, publicly and collectively; and it can be practised in more everyday, localised or 'hidden' contexts (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Scott, 1985, 1990). Resistance can be expressed overtly or covertly by individuals, groups and by institutions. It can also be expressed by power-holders to counteract the resistance they themselves face.

From my experience of working in the community sector, 'resistance' is generally a broadly-used term. Many community workers in their conversations with me, refer easily to the term resistance: for example, resisting the rules or language of specific programmes; organising street protests or public meetings against a particular policy; or simply making themselves unavailable to particular arrangements with which they do not agree. In the past where I have witnessed resistance being

utilised, it was often operationalised strategically and in co-operation with others. Given the rapid structural and policy changes that have been re-shaping Irish community development, in this study I was interested in what role 'resistance' plays in community workers' responses and reactions to those changes. While it is widely acknowledged that the community development sector in Ireland is under serious threat of being dismantled (Crowley, 2012; Meade, 2012; Harvey, 2012), there does not appear to have been any sustained large-scale public resistance to such changes. Nor has there been significant evidence of collective strategising to oppose or renegotiate such moves. Therefore, my study seeks to explore if resistance to recent transformations in community work has been practised by community workers; if it has, what forms has it taken? What has it achieved? If not, why not? What factors have constrained its expression?

While 'resistance' has become a fashionable topic in the social sciences in the past few decades, from analyses of collective action and organised protest to literature on everyday forms of resistance (Groves and Chang, 1999; Scott, 1985; 1990, Prasad and Prasad, 1998; 2000), there is a limited body of literature that offers robust theorising about the relevance of this concept within community work. One example, where the importance of resistance was strongly asserted was in the 'classic' community work text *In and Against the State* (London Edinburgh Weekend Return Group, 1979: 88): i.e. 'we must disentangle what resistance really is in the interests of the working class'. LEWRG, (1979) acknowledged that at that time new groups and new issues were emerging at the focal points of class struggle, including gender, 'race', and sexual orientation. This implied that resistance reflects a more inclusive culture of opposition that would recognise these intersecting yet distinct axes of inequality. The requirement for such multi-cultural and identity-based inclusive strategies is also recongised by Mouffe (2000), Powell and Geoghan (2004). The LEWRG (1979) also demanded that community workers, activists and communities, collectively work out their own resistance strategies rather than simply complying with directives, acceding to or reacting to dominant views (LEWRG, 1979) and asserted that community workers must begin to: defend

themselves oppositionally; understand precisely what it is they are up against; identify forms of resistance which can be collectivised and think seriously about how they can transform resistance into an alternative vision of the future, thus remaking power relations. “Wherever there is resistance we need to look for practical ways of giving our struggle a class basis (in the broadest sense): insisting on our needs, defining things our way, spelling out how we would like it to be” (LEWG, 1979: 96). However, as Allen (2000) puts forward, this may require new skills and analysis for new situations and as this study shows many of the aspirations of the LEWRG (1979) remain as relevant and as elusive today.

While referred to easily, nonetheless, ‘resistance’ is a difficult concept to define. Authors from a variety of disciplines - anthropology, cultural studies, geography, political science and sociology - have attempted to construct definitions that reflect its dynamic, elusive and relational character. However, according to Hollander and Einwohner (2004), while there is little agreement on the definition of resistance several core and recurring elements have been identified. For example, most commentators agree that resistance implies ‘opposition’, that there is a link to ‘change’ and it generally involves ‘action’. Hollander and Einwohner (2004) also identify two central questions that lie at the heart of disagreements about whether or not an action represents ‘resistance’: firstly, the issue of ‘recognition’, i.e. who needs to recognise or identify an action as resistance for it to be defined as such; and second is ‘intent’, i.e. is intentionality on the part of the person resisting necessary for the action to be defined as resistance? These debates are looked at in more detail in Chapter Two. Mumby (2005: 23) suggests that “resistance and the theorising of resistance should be understood as an effort to engage in some form of praxis – individual or collective, routine or organised – in the context of established social patterns and structures”. Therefore environments, including work-practices, must be interrogated at both the structural level and everyday practice level to gain an insight into how community work is shaped by resistance and how the community work environment in turn shapes or limits practices of resistance. This will include an examination of community workers’ understanding

of the concept of resistance, what form it takes, how it is practised and what are the conditions that are conducive to successful resistance practice or constrain its expression.

For the purposes of this study, and as will be shown in Chapters Two and Six, James C. Scott's (1985, 1990) layered conception of resistance offers a valuable theoretical basis for interpreting the front-line struggles and everyday resistances of community workers. While he argues that "resistance embodies ideas or intentions that negate the basis of domination itself" he also suggests that under ordinary circumstances subordinate workers want to avoid direct confrontation and instead pursue unofficial tactics and informal resistance in order to maintain their autonomy and independence (Scott, 1990: 86). He thus alerts us to what he calls more 'off-stage' or 'hidden' forms of resistance, and these are discussed in more detail in Chapter Two while the relevance of these concepts are considered with reference to my data in Chapter Six.

While writers have explored the concept of and actions associated with resistance in a variety of contexts, (e.g. Raby (2005) in youth work, Scott (1985) in peasant studies, Prasad and Prasad (1998, 2000) in workplace contexts), very little has been written about resistance in an Irish community work context more specifically. By creating space for community workers to identify, explain and think critically about 'resistance', this study seeks to draw attention to practices (and inhibitors) of resistance that may be on-going but are comparatively ignored by community development literature. My research will generate insights into the factors that both support and limit opportunities for resistance and the various ways resistance is being expressed in the changing community development landscape. Clearly because the State is so closely involved in funding, and more recently in programming and directing community work in Ireland, this study also explores if and how community workers resist the State and its policies. While we know large-scale public protests have not been sustained or highly visible, this research may

inform the community work sector collectively around why this may be so, suggest new roles and highlight the potential role of resistance in future community work.

1.3 Research Aims, Objectives and Approach

Specifically, the overall aim of my research is to analyse community workers' understandings and practices of resistance. I have carried out this inquiry by pursuing the following three objectives in particular:

- To examine community workers' current understandings of the status of community work within Irish society, and the role of the State and the influence of managerialism in defining the purpose and form of community work in Ireland?
- To examine community workers' understandings of the role, relevance and practices of resistance in community work today. Specifically in relation to resistance, the following themes are explored: how do community workers define resistance in their work; what form does resistance take when it is practised and is it part of an overall strategy or single action; what and who are the targets of resistance in community work, who or what supports resistance work and what are the barriers to the practice and success of resistance?
- To explore the value and future role of resistance in community work in Ireland as perceived by community workers. Given the recent managerialisation of community work in Ireland, does resistance have a role to play in this new community work environment?

This study presents primary research that was undertaken with three groups of community workers in each of three counties in southern Ireland during 2011. Community workers were invited to share their understandings and accounts of

resistance, focusing on the period 2000 to 2010 in particular. This timeline was specified because of the intensity and speed of structural changes taking place across the community sector during this time. Using focus groups, I gathered data from 19 community workers who are employed by a range of statutory, non-statutory, geographically based, identity focused, family resource oriented and community development organisations.

My field work emphasised community workers' personal perspectives, and therefore does not claim to represent the views of the organisations that employ them. I chose to use focus groups as the method of data collection, primarily because both I and the community workers are familiar with such group-based interactive methods. I also chose this approach so that new learning and analysis would be generated within the group process for individual participants and myself as researcher (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). There were two focus group sessions in each county, approximately two months apart. Workers offered to meet on a third occasion but time and resources did not permit further sessions. On completion of the six focus group sessions, all participants were offered the opportunity to come together in one large group, to hear and respond to the key findings. This approach ensured a commitment to the principles of participatory, emancipatory research practice and good community development practice as expanded upon in Chapter Five.

1.4 Brief Introduction to Thesis Chapters

Chapter 2: Critical Theorisations of Resistance

This chapter examines various debates about the definition of resistance and its relationship to concepts such as power, hegemony and subjectivities. Through a review of literature, drawing especially on insights from Scott (1985, 1990), Barnes and Prior (2009) and Social Movement Theory (Koopmans 2007; Foweraker 1995), I

examine everyday definitions of resistance and what conditions might be conducive to resistance. This chapter recognises the dynamic, relational and contextual features of resistance, while also acknowledging that it is expressed in pluralised forms. In particular this chapter specifically draws on Scott's (1985, 1990) conception of everyday forms of resistance, exploring where and how these practices can be identified and if such interpretations may offer helpful insights into community workers' understandings and practices.

Chapter 3: Critical Theorisations of the State and the Influence of Neo-liberalism and Managerialism

This chapter theorises key concepts that are vital for understanding the forces shaping community development in Ireland. The chapter critically analyses the overlapping and interplay of influences such as: the State, neo-liberalism, managerialism and social partnership. Given that community development and community workers are predominantly funded by the State and given that social policy delivery is devised and co-ordinated by the State, it is important to understand the current intersections, tensions and contradictions between the State and the community development sector. I specifically review managerialism as this emerged as a significant theme in the data from community workers. In particular, I consider how State managerialism is promoted through technologies of governance, i.e. through discourse, programme guidelines and at civil society level.

Chapter Three acknowledges the multiple and contradictory faces of the State (Jessop, 2001; Newman and Clarke, 2014) as it enables neo-liberalism, while at the same time claiming a mandate to act and respond to its citizens' needs. Community organisations are reacting to a forceful State that is re-orientating community work and workers towards more managerialist practices. Central questions for my study are; what are community workers' understandings of recent changes, can those managerialist demands be resisted by community workers and why would they

want to resist such changes? And if so what forms are their resistances taking and what are their effects? And if not, why not?

Chapter 4: Theorising and Tracing of Community Development in Ireland

This chapter presents a theoretical and contextualised background analysis of community development in Ireland. While not exhaustive, it examines various definitions and approaches and highlights the significant and long-standing political tensions that seem inherent in community development. The main principles and values that are seen to underpin community development practice (i.e. participation, collective action and equality) are also critically examined in order to draw out the challenges involved in practising community work in contested political and social contexts.

This chapter maps key changes in the community development landscape in Ireland historically, and then focuses on policy and programme changes that occurred between 2000 and 2010 (and more recently). Finally, this chapter considers the normative relationship between community development and the concept of resistance.

Chapter 5: Methodology

This chapter theorises and describes the research approach adopted in my study. In particular, I explain and rationalise why and how a feminist, participatory, emancipatory approach underpins my work. This includes an acknowledgement of a level of critical analysis and reflexive steps in my overall approach to carrying out this study. I also highlight my responses to the political and ethical considerations that arose in my study, which were primarily concerned with the identity of participants being exposed. In this chapter I also outline how I responded to issues

such as, the negotiation of power relations, the disclosure of information and ownership of this research, prior to carrying out this research.

The last two sections of this chapter outline the design of the research framework and the particular methods chosen to carry out the research, i.e. data collection through the use of three focus groups made up of 19 community workers, and finally, how the data was analysed and presented.

Chapter 6: Research Findings: Why and How Community Workers' Practise Resistance?

Chapter Six focuses on the data collected as part of this study. It gives a detailed account of the data generated by three focus groups (urban and rural) of community workers from three counties in southern Ireland. Themes covered include: community workers' understandings of key concepts, such as community development, the State and resistance; an examination of the data relating to what community workers resist, why and how they action their resistance; and an analysis of the value and future role of resistance in community development. This includes an examination of resistance in different contexts: resistance to the integration of Community Development Projects (CDPs) into Local Development Companies, both successful and unsuccessful attempts; and everyday resistances practised by community workers, including externally targeted actions and those targeted and practised internally within their own organisation.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This final chapter summarises the main findings emerging from this research. This is presented with reference to the key questions and objectives that animated the study (see Appendix 5) in addition to highlighting other, unanticipated findings that emerged from the process of inquiry. This chapter also provides a brief reflection

on the research process itself and considers whether the approaches used were sufficient and adequate to elicit the data required to answer the questions posed in a rich, deep and meaningful manner. Finally, this study concludes with a look to the future, based on the process and findings of this research and considers how this work could be disseminated as a way of continuing to make progress in community development.

1.5 Conclusion

This research examines if there are various points of intersection at which 'resistance' as a concept can be considered useful and actioned in community work? These actions could be targeted against dominant ideologies or dominant power holders, or they could be focused on specific forms of managerialist practice. This study also inquires into what form resistance takes, i.e. is it small-scale, large-scale, hidden or overt or can it be all of these things simultaneously? Does resistance as a practice need to be reclaimed as a positive resource for community work? Resistance may help protect our right to assert different views, different experiences, different ideologies and express ourselves democratically. However, the forces and targets against which resistance may be expressed may also serve to constrain resistance' potential. Given the recent State-directed changes in Irish community development, this study is particularly concerned with how community workers are responding to the twin influences of managerialism and neo-liberalism, and if and how resistance can be operationalised in this new terrain.

As Chapter Six illustrates, the community workers who participated in this research identify many positive outcomes of resistance, which range from: the learning that takes place when one is being oppositional, at a personal and community level; how practising resistance can itself be an empowering experience and part of developing one's own identity; at a policy level, practising resistance strategically and collectively can force policy makers to rethink and redesign interventions; and

resistance in some cases can achieve its ultimate goal. Regardless of their own individual experiences, all of the community workers agreed that there was a value in practising resistance even if their ultimate goals were not achieved. Most importantly, their responses suggest that resistance builds critical analysis, encourages alternative thinking and views, is inclusive of difference and contributes significantly to a healthy participatory democracy.

The data collection phase of this study was carried out during 2011 while significant policy and programme changes were underway within the Irish community sector. While this presented some challenges, it gave the participating community workers – both individually and collectively - an opportunity to critically reflect upon the immediate challenges they were being faced with, i.e. a rapidly and dramatically changing work environment with goals being prescribed by the State and the increasing managerialisation of their work. The research process itself was dynamic both because of the timing and the methods chosen.

While this research does not provide all the answers in neat packages, it does raise important questions around the right of community workers and citizens to dissent, generate alternative views and organise autonomously. It also offers insight into the importance of creating 'hidden spaces and transcripts' as argued by Scott (1990) (see Chapter Two), where alternative visions and resistance strategies might be collectively created and developed with community work allies. This research has already generated a considerable amount of interest among community workers and some of the research findings have already been disseminated as part of *Critical Thinking Seminars* that have taken place in various locations in southern Ireland (see Chapter Seven). I believe that because of this research's originality and the focus on workers and community work, it offers a unique, albeit limited, insight into the current community work environment, the impact of managerialism, the various forms, successes, conditions and greater potential of practising resistance in community work in Ireland.

Chapter 2: Critical Theorisations of Resistance

2.1 Introduction

This chapter critically analyses the main concept being examined in my research, which is an inquiry into community workers' understandings and practices of resistance. It seeks an in-depth understanding of how resistance is understood and analysed by various authors, and how in turn these interpretations might relate to community development.

Initially, I briefly mention Hollander and Einwohner's (2004) summary analysis of the key features of resistance interpreted across various disciplines. Also in this section, I specifically consider the work of Scott (1985, 1990) whose classification and interpretation of resistance best suits the data provided by community workers' in Chapter Six. Scott (1985, 1990) explores resistance in everyday forms, hidden and public, particularly those tactics used in sequestered spaces by subjugated groupings.

I follow this with an analysis of literature that theorises how resistance and power relate to each other, whether they are opposed forces or whether they are mutually constitutive. Within this section I also explore Gramsci's (1971) notion of hegemony and counter-hegemonic power, the influence of resistance on the creation of subjectivities and the transformative potential of resistance.

Finally, I examine what conditions might be conducive or supportive to resistance, both as an individualised or locally specific action and in creating a broader culture of resistance. In particular, I examine the literature on resistance focusing on key community work practices to establish if there is a link across academic literature: empowerment/transformation, collective action, engagement with social movements and subversion. In this section I again specifically consider Scott's

(1990) concepts of 'hidden transcripts and hidden spaces' and how his analysis might relate to community workers' current understandings, practices and contributions to resistance, given the Irish community work environment (explained in Chapter Four).

In the conclusion to this chapter, I identify the key understandings and definitions of resistance that are used subsequently to frame and analyse the research data collected for this study.

2.2 Key Features of Resistance

According to Hollander and Einwohner (2004) many authors agree that resistance is some form of oppositional behaviour, speech or action. Hollander and Einwohner (2004) undertake a review of academic literature and classify how scholars have used the term resistance to describe a wide variety of actions and behaviours at all levels of human life (individual, collective, and institutional) and in diverse settings, including political systems, media, and the workplace. Indeed, Hollander and Einwohner (2004) observe that everything from revolutions to hairstyles has been described as resistance. While they acknowledge that there is no one universally acceptable definition of resistance, nonetheless, they agree that the term 'resistance' is widely recognised as including two core elements: action and opposition. Resistance occurs in opposition to someone or something, therefore resistance is invariably tied to the system or processes that it resists. It is by definition reactionary and can be defined more by its context and by what it is opposing than by the actions undertaken (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004). The same action might appear and serve as compliance in one setting and as resistance in another. While Hollander and Einwohner (2004) also explore the contradictions and tensions in defining resistance, I do not expand on these here but take forward those elements that are agreed.

2.2.1 James C. Scott – Everyday Forms of Resistance

Scott's (1985, 1990) broad theorisations, analysis and proposals about resistance is the work that resonated most for me in light of my experience of interviewing Irish community workers. Scott (1985: 29) classified resistance in two primary ways – 'overt' and 'everyday' forms of resistance. Overt forms are explicitly resistant and often include (although not necessarily) large-scale uprisings or revolts. Scott (1985) however notes, that not only are the circumstances that favour large-scale uprisings comparatively rare, but when they do appear they are nearly always crushed unceremoniously. Indeed, he claims "whatever else the uprising may achieve, it almost always creates a more coercive and hegemonic State apparatus" (Scott, 1985: 29); however, it is overt forms of resistance that are most commonly written about in heroic terms.

Scott (1985) instead concentrates much of his analysis on 'everyday' forms of resistance. What these forms of resistance share with the more overt public confrontations is that they too seek to mitigate or deny claims made by superordinate classes or to advance the counter claims of subordinate groups. Scott (1985) observes that such claims ordinarily relate to the material nexus of class struggle, i.e. concrete issues such as poor wages and working conditions, and where institutionalised politics is formal, overt and concerned with systematic change, everyday resistance is informal, often covert, and concerned largely with immediate, de facto gains (Scott, 1985: 33). For many, this form of resistance is regarded as their only practical option and it allows subordinates to express, however obliquely, their discontent with or rejection of dominant relations. Scott gives an example, where a harvest labourer steals rice from his employer because his need to support his family takes precedence over the property rights of his employer. Scott, (1985: 33) classifies this action as a practice of resistance but one that is under the radar of the employer.

In a later work, Scott (1990) expanded his account of resistance and identified four levels of possible behaviour for subordinates. First acquiescence where resisters appear to comply but do not do so genuinely or voluntarily, e.g. where people in poverty do what is asked for a wage or self-protection but do not necessarily agree with what is being asked of them, or where a slave is grateful to their master for 'reasonable' treatment but is very conscious that the master's dominance is unjust. In these examples, Scott (1985, 1990) presents situations where compliance was the only practical option open to subordinates as their circumstances were acutely oppressive and closely monitored, thereby making open resistance potentially counter-productive and unlikely to succeed.

Second, Scott (1990) talks about hidden transcripts where alternative discourses to the dominant public discourse are created and practised but in safe sequestered spaces as publicly expressed resistance would be too risky. Scott (1990) claims hidden (alternative) transcripts thrive where surveillance is minimal. For Scott (1990: 4) hidden transcripts include offstage speeches, gestures and practices that confirm, contradict or inflect what appears in the public transcript. The public transcript is defined as the outward show of conformity or compliance. Hidden transcripts are produced for a difference audience and under different constraints of power than the public transcript. Hidden transcripts, which can be formulated by both dominant or subordinate groups, in most circumstances are not in direct contact with each other.

Third, Scott proposes a politics of 'double entendre' where a public message of compliance simultaneously has a double meaning that can be read by different audiences, e.g. a verbal statement that is seen as a compliant attitude while also being read as a subversive message by others. Scott (1990) explores how somebody being very deferential to their boss could also be interpreted as a form of mockery. This form of resistance is carried out consciously but is deliberately concealed from those at whom it is aimed. For example, Scott (1990: 89) refers to Malay paddy

farmers who resented paying an official tithe: quietly the Malay peasantry dismantled the tithe system without rioting, public dissent, etc., but through indirect methods such as making fraudulent declarations, underpayments, delivering spoilt crops, not declaring land, etc. These forms of resistance were subtle, effective and below the radar but simultaneously gave the appearance of compliance.

Fourth and finally, Scott identifies outright rebellion, e.g. street protests and revolutions as the most obvious and public form of resistance.

These four categories will be drawn upon to interrogate my research data with community workers, to examine if they resist indirectly or creatively, out-of-sight/ear-shot of power-holders, if they use double meanings when ostensibly complying or if they express their resistance more overtly and publicly?

Scott (1990) also suggests that it is possible that everyday forms of resistance may evolve into more public and overt expressions of resistance. The idea being that the risk to any single resister may be reduced when the whole or a broader community is involved. He observes that when resistance takes on this kind of public face it can be referred to as a social movement. Collective resistance can provide support and cover for those individuals who have a grievance and it strengthens the possibility of political success. Collective spaces created by community development could be relevant in this regard if they allow the constraints of structure and the possibility of agency to be explored through critical practices, therefore offering potential sites for resistance to emerge and the development of oppositional strategies (Martin, 1992), thereby putting private troubles on the public agenda.

2.2.2 Other Views

While I do not develop this theme, everyday forms of resistance have also been researched by those interested in organisational or work-place resistance (Prasad and Prasad, 1998, 2000; Fleming and Spicer, 2003). In recent years this research has expanded to include difference and identity-based resistance, e.g. feminist resistance in work-place contexts (Thomas and Davies, 2005). Such authors are typically concerned with organisational theory, mostly large-scale organisations and how work-place resistances may reinforce or inflect the status quo. I do not expand on this work here as community workers in Ireland tend to work in smaller local organisations where employer and employee binaries are less emphasised and clear, and where funding relationships can complicate the chain of command. However, such writers offer similar insights about the form and motivations behind resistance, e.g. how resistance is socially produced and contextual, how resistance can be seen as creating or rejecting (work-place) subjectivities, similar to those proposed by Gramsci (1971), Scott (1985, 1990), Barnes, Newman and Sullivan (2007).

Some writers (Duncombe, 2007; Fleming and Spicer, 2003; Contu, 2008) are more sceptical in their evaluation of the effectiveness of small-scale or 'everyday' resistances, and argue that they make little or no significant political or social impact. Critics can dismiss some expressions of everyday resistances as acts of 'cynicism' rather than purposeful resistance to achieve change (Fleming and Spicer, 2003). Duncombe (2007: 495) denotes 'apathy or devolution' in some such practices which he claims could potentially displace political engagement, while 'decaf' resistance (Contu, 2008) is a term used to encapsulate how day-to-day transgressions change very little, do not constitute a threat to the dominant order and can end up supporting the very order they claim to transgress. Contu (2008) observes the contradictions implicit in people indirectly publicising particular clothes brands by wearing them while at the same time opposing global profit-making corporations. If everyday resistance by workers is interpreted as a real

threat by employers, it may generate new disciplinary codes or regulations, which may be more oppressive and controlling than previously. For example, small-scale pilfering to take-back power from employers could lead to the implementation of more draconian surveillance. Similarly, where community workers' resistance is interpreted as too threatening, closing down projects or incorporating them into more hierarchical organisations would restrict their freedom to resist and react. Equally important then are the unintended consequences of resistance, which can serve to support structures of domination rather than undermine them (Weitz, 2001).

In more general terms, one of the difficulties with resistance is the assumption that it is always oppositional, i.e. a negative force, when in fact it could be seeking positive change or reflecting an alternative view of an existing situation (Hardt and Negri, 2004). Managers may see workers' resistance as negative, obstructive, even deviant. Such negative perceptions may achieve wider traction via media accounts or images. Perhaps an element of the strategising that needs to be considered as part of resistance is the simultaneous promotion of the idea that dissent is necessary, debate is good and therefore resistance as a practice can be positive, albeit while recognising that some kinds of resistance may be regressive in intent.

To conclude, the above authors emphasise that resistance is socially constructed and tied to the system it resists, i.e. actors, events and practices (Prasad and Prasad, 1998) and defined with reference to specific contexts. According to Hollander and Einwohner (2004) understanding the interaction between resisters, targets, and third parties is therefore at the heart of understanding resistance and in turn highlights the central role of power within and between these relationships. What constitutes resistance therefore is that one actor sees it as such.

2.3 Power and Resistance

2.3.1 Binary and Relational Frameworks

In some accounts of 'resistance', e.g. Scott (1985) the concept tends to be framed with reference to its binary opposition to 'power'; here clear distinctions are made between the oppressor(s) and oppressed, between those who are using/controlling power and those that are resisting. In these cases resistance is constructed as an opposition to power rather than as a type of power in itself. This binary frame of resistance can make it easier for observers and for potential resisters to identify prospective targets but may be limited in terms of the complexity and intricacy of the analysis required for effective strategising of resistance across multiple sites simultaneously. Scott (1985) gives an example of this binary oppositional relationship when he highlights rural peasants in Malaysia enacting resistance against their landlords, by the pilfering of crops and manipulation of tax returns. While this example shows definite resistant practices, i.e. opposing landlords' rules and consequently reducing their assets, it tells us little about other aspects of resistance. For example, does the action link to other forms of resistance nor does it tell us about the resisters, their analysis of power relations and what kind of power they perceive they have? Such binary analysis can also polarise conceptions of resistance into 'a them and us' or 'resistance is right and power is wrong' judgement. Notably, as mentioned already 'power-holders' may themselves practise resistance, e.g. resisting collective action or subverting processes of change.

Other theorists such as Barnes and Prior (2009: 68) have moved away from such binary distinctions towards an acknowledgement of multiple forms of power that include resistance. They recognise the complex and diverse lines of force that are in play in particular social situations. In their conceptualisation, there are simultaneously multiple sites of power and resistance that are negotiated and mobilised by a variety of actors in particular situations. Furthermore, power and

resistance interplay and shape each other. Barnes and Prior (2009) and also Scott (1990) acknowledge that resistance can also reproduce or exacerbate relations of domination. For example, patterns in the success or failure of resistance may reflect existing inequalities in resources, and ultimately maintain the status quo. At community level, resistances from actors with privileged forms of discourse, language skills (cultural capital) and even appearance (corporeal capital) can be valued more than contributions from others and these same dynamics can play out also when negotiating resistances.

Kondo (1990) similarly argues that resistance is neither monolithic nor internally coherent and frequently has unintended consequences. What seems like resistance can turn out to be collusive while an apparent accommodation to power relations may generate more long term changes. Kondo (1990) explains that sites of resistance are always shifting: resistance is contextual and can be found in 'everyday' settings as well as more 'public' settings. Its contradictions and tensions therefore need careful scrutiny: for example, some marginalised positions can create opportunities for or apparently spur on resistance but the reality of being marginalised can also mean that instead resisters accept or accommodate to power-holders' demands. What Kondo's (1990) work demonstrates is that we cannot assume that resistance is inevitably either produced or absent in a given relationship. We also cannot presume that resistance always generates positive change or that its outcomes can be read from actors' intentions.

2.3.2 Negotiating Power

According to Hollander (2002) resistance is often targeted at what are perceived to be oppressive and/or dominant power relations. However, and as already noted, resistance in some accounts can be seen as an expression of countervailing power and clearly, while we may all have some or different sources of power, it is unequally distributed. Power relations are not simply those between individuals,

but operate within a structural social context, e.g. worker and capitalism, woman and patriarchy, welfare recipient and Welfare State. In such circumstances the capacity to exercise power and resistance successfully will differ along hierarchical lines. Hollander (2002) explains that those with more structurally legitimised power are better able to impose their definitions of reality on those with less power, which is of particular importance when working in marginalised communities.

In the face of inequality, O'Connor (2000), writing in an Irish context and referring to Clegg (1994), recognises that individuals might simply accept the existing social order because it is seen as 'natural' or 'inevitable' or because they believe they cannot shape the social organisation of power. In contemporary terms, this is often referred to as the TINA affect – 'There Is No Alternative', which has been articulated to rationalise wide-spread acceptance of managerial and neo-liberal hegemony (Hardt and Negri, 2004; Taylor, 2007). However, many authors including Newman (2013), Ledwith (2011) and Freire (2000) suggest that human beings can (and need to) become conscious of themselves as active agents in transforming their worlds and do not just passively accept the image of reality proposed by others. For community development, such consciousness-raising can translate itself into resistance, the active unwillingness to accept prescribed views, and resistance thus becomes relevant to discussions of community participation, empowerment and offering alternative views (Freire, 2000).

Building on Freirean concepts, Barbalet (1985) argues that those subject to power can potentially mobilise social resources in a contribution to power relations through resistance. By negotiating with power, resistance in turn can influence the outcome of power relations. The higher or more widespread the resistance, the lower the probability of those exercising power realizing their goals and successfully achieving their objectives; therefore resistance potentially lessens the power of the 'powerful' and potentially increases the power of the 'relatively powerless' (Barbalet, 1985: 542). In line with more binary accounts, Barbalet (1985) argues

that in distinguishing the holders of power and those expressing resistance as qualitatively distinct contributors to the field of power relations, it follows, that power and resistance are based on different attributes in the social structure of power relations. However, it might also be said that those exercising power may attempt to 'resist' the limitations resistance imposes upon their power (Scott, 1990); therefore we must again recognise the interplay of the two correlative concepts of 'power' and 'resistance' which may refer to different types of action, but which together will determine the outcome of power relations.

Ultimately, according to both Barbalet (1985) and Scott (1985), the key mode of influence for those subordinate to structural forms of power is resistance: the influence on social relationships that is exerted by less powerful agents derives precisely from their resistance to dominant uses of power, often referred to at local community level as 'taking back your power'. Resistance limits the effects of those exercising power and in doing so materially influences the conditions of reproduction of social systems. Significantly, the points of interplay between resistance and power can be many and varied, they can be action orientated or discursive, visible or subtle and may have multiple outcomes (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Scott, 1985; Hardt and Negri, 2004; Barbalet, 1985).

As will be highlighted in Chapter Four, in more critical, [2] i.e. analytical forms of community work, resistance to power is frequently understood as an opposition to 'structural power', i.e. the power implicit in the social system, where resistance is exercised on behalf of or in solidarity with vulnerable or marginalised communities. Such resistance may focus on the policy field or political structures. Resistance may also be expressed against ideological or discursive forms of power that attempt to demonise or to shape communities' or community workers' identities in particular ways: for example discourses and practices that frame lone parents as 'irresponsible and bad mothers' or discourses that construct community workers as

[2] I refer to critical community development practice in Chapter Four.

service providers. While I discuss the State in detail in Chapter Three, it must be emphasised that because of the State's role as a primary instrument and enabler of neo-liberal capitalism and its role in developing social, economic or cultural policy, much of community development workers' resistance will in effect be resistance against the State (Harvey, 2005). The State itself operates as a complex set of power structures (relations and discourses) against, within and with which resistance struggles.

2.3.3 Hegemony and the Creation of Subjectivities

Antonio Gramsci (1971) asserts that hegemonic relations are always a mixture of force and consent and that every society is characterised by the presence of hegemonic beliefs, which appear to have wide-spread acceptance across a majority of people. Gramsci (1971) argues that elites control the 'ideological sectors' of society – culture, religion, education and media – and can thereby engineer their own constant rule. For Gramsci, the apparent absence of direct force or coercion suggests that the working classes are as much enslaved at the level of ideas as at the level of behaviour: therefore the primary task of resistance is to break the symbolic miasma that blocks revolutionary or critical thought. However, as will be explained later, Scott (1990) contests this conception of the pervasiveness of hegemony and suggests that many subordinates hold alternative ideological perspectives on social reality but the expression of these often takes place in spaces away from the potential influence or observation by dominators/power-holders. This results in the apparent dominance of hegemonic ideas in public arenas but not necessarily in sequestered spaces (Scott, 1990). A research challenge may be to find and recognise such sequestered spaces and the resistances within them and this study attempts this challenge in relation to Irish community work.

Subjectivity in sociological terms is generally understood as the self-conscious personal perspective of a person or persons. This refers to identity – how one self-

identifies, what cultural, political and personal characteristics are emphasised more than others, and how social actors talk about themselves. Such self-conscious interpretations can be influenced by diverse social phenomena including dominant hegemonic views and values, local cultures, life experiences and perhaps outcomes of acts of agency such as resistance. Structural circumstances serve as constraints within which actors must choose how to act, but according to Weber (1978) among others, rather than being blown this way and that way by structural forces outside our control, human actors (including community workers) have the capacity to chart our own progress, make choices and exercise agency. This is also known as the human capacity for reflexivity (Freire, 1973; Thomas and Davies, 2005). Such agency is not absolute and how we develop our capacity, skills and knowledge to make choices can be influenced by a variety of sources, e.g. by the State, our employers, religion, education, family, social movements and our peers, etc.

While many texts identify how structural forces shape the subjectivities of individuals and groups, Barnes, Newman, Sullivan (2007); Rose (1999); Thomas and Davies (2005), point to the particular influence of discourse, where language, e.g. managerial language, is used to form or suggest appropriate identities. For example, Thomas and Davies (2005) argue that in the context of contemporary neo-liberalism, managerialism can be seen as a discursive 'identity project' where the professional identities of workers are being re-orientated and re-constituted in line with managerial rationalities. As workers adopt and adapt (or not) to managerialism – taking on its language, forms of accountability, procedures – there is a corresponding demise of the autonomous reflective practitioner and professional. For example, managerial speak such as performance monitoring, beneficiary participation rates, activation programmes now form part of community development language in Ireland and this will become a significant theme in later chapters. This project could also be called the creation of 'managerial subjects', as professional identities, including those of community workers, are being colonized. In the current environment, Clegg (1994) furthermore argues that there appears to

be a lack of 'collective subjectivity' centred around a will to resist and claiming of identity.

2.3.4 Counter-hegemony/Resistance

Like Scott (1990), Moscovici (1976) sees more scope for resistance than conceptions of hegemony might first allow: "it is no less amazing when we realise that, in spite of the enormous pressure towards conformity in thought, taste and behaviour, individuals and groups are not only able to resist, but are even capable of generating new ways of perceiving, dressing, living, developing new ideas in politics, philosophy, art and of inducing others to accept them" (Moscovici, 1976: 1). This potential for resistance is acknowledged in the concept of counter-hegemony. Although sometimes contestations are more widespread and more visible than at other times, hegemonic power must be understood as existing together with its counterpart, resistance. Gramsci (1971) refers to the importance of counter-hegemonic struggles when he acknowledges that consensus is not absolute and dissent entails a disorganisation of consent. Such counter-hegemonic resistance can be expressed in thought, word, deed and in the creation of alternative norms.

This again returns us to an acknowledgement of the potential for humans to exercise creativity and agency against potential adversaries. Scott (1985; 1990) and Raby (2005) argue that we cannot fully understand resistance without appreciating the intentions, ideas, and language of those human beings who practise it: "subjects are dynamic, multiple and hailed by and respond to conflicting discourses" (Raby, 2005: 167). This renders it important to understand how actors understand and conceive their own resistance, which is one of the main goals of this research. According to Scott (1985) the resister is ultimately a knowing acting subject. Resistance can arise from an inherent or essential rage at one's subordination, generated out of experience and/or consciousness-raising. For example, certain 'grand narratives' of management-speak may pre-dominantly

frame interpretive possibilities for community workers, but the struggle over meaning is always open-ended, which makes available possibilities for workers to construct alternative, resistant, counter-hegemonic ways of defining and describing their work. Writers such as Scott (1985), Hardt and Negri (2004), Laclau and Mouffe (2000), Thomas and Davies (2005), Raby (2005), share the view that opportunities exist to create alternative subjectivities; through networking, developing new discourses, developing new collectivities and creating alternative and multiple views of the world in common. At the very minimum such actions can create alternative models, views or subjectivities to those that are hegemonic.

2.3.5 Resistance as Potentially Transformative/Political

As discussed already, if we accept that resistance can re-negotiate power relations, resistance can also empower individuals and groups in their efforts to respond, negotiate and co-construct society's accepted values and structures. The process of resistance, public or hidden, can positively shape identities, as people reshape, reject or review identities that are offered to them (Glavenau, 2009). For example, members of disadvantaged groups, such as Travellers and lesbians, can become aware of the pervasiveness of dominant or hegemonic representations as they practise resistance. They can also be aware of the possibility of developing alternative self-representations and this can lead to an understanding of the wider political significance of those identities.

Facilitating the development of these forms of awareness, a critical consciousness allied to a capacity to enact counter-hegemonic ideas and actions, has been identified as central to a 'critical' tradition in community work over the past forty years. This has been particularly influenced by Freire (see Ledwith, 2011). However, according to Glavenau (2009), there is also evidence that members of disadvantaged groups may internalise hegemonic representations of their identities, even if they are harmed by those representations: for example, when

lesbians internalise homophobia or those receiving social welfare entitlements believe they are 'scroungers'. Therefore contradictory influences on identity operate from many diverse directions and it is within this contested space that community work and resistance must operate.

Thomas and Davies (2005: 727) refer particularly to feminist resistance which they argue is "not only oppositional but also a critical and ultimately generative reflexive process". Resistance is actioned but it is also used as a process to analyse relationships of power and engage in self-reflection simultaneously. This process can be emancipatory for the individual actors involved and such resistance, they argue, can be politically transformative even when resistances might seem small and somewhat constrained. Because such resistances can reduce tensions and discomforts (experienced by women), they propose that resistance therefore can create a more autonomous, positive sense of self but it demands that we practise critical reflection and challenge hegemonic articulations of our identity (Thomas and Davies, 2005: 730). Giroux in Raby (2005) similarly affirms that resistance can be an active expression of agency and can also provide opportunities for self-reflection and struggle in the interest of social and self emancipation (Giroux, 1983: 290). In such instances resistance simultaneously operates at the personal and political level.

Giroux (1983) also concedes that while resistance might be understood as aimed at achieving some sort of progressive change, sometimes, resistance may be defensive – an effort to stop things happening or circumstances worsening – or it may even be politically regressive such as, settled people resisting Travellers living alongside them or resistance to marriage equality for all. At the other end of the power-relations spectrum, resistance can also be mobilised by powerful groups and social elites in order to protect their interests, e.g. bond-holders insisting on repayment of bank loans by taxpayers, elite groupings making it difficult to enter their profession. Therefore resistance is a concept and tool that can be used from many perspectives

and for a variety of purposes, not all of which are politically transformative or progressive.

2.4 Conditions Conducive to Resistance

In this section, I review literature to seek out what conditions might be conducive to resistance. First, I consider Scott's (1990) account of 'hidden transcripts' more closely, as it highlights the importance of sequestered spaces or opportunities where resistance can be practised safely yet covertly, particularly in difficult, oppressive or tightly monitored circumstances. Scott's concept of 'hidden transcripts' was particularly useful in light of my engagement with community workers.

Second, I include a short review on subversiveness as put forward by Barnes and Prior (2009) as this would appear to be a relevant concept for community workers located within institutionalised settings, particularly those workers who work closely with their constituencies or local colleagues. I include this review as institutional rules, regulation and managerialisation became a central theme in my thesis.

Finally, one other potential source for seeking out conditions is social movement literature where scholars such as Koopmans (2007) and Foweraker (1995) in Snow, Soule and Kriesi, (2007) have attempted to isolate factors that create conditions for the emergence of successful collective social movements. Even though social movements are larger in scale and typically adopt more overt forms of resistance, this literature can shed light on factors that may support the emergence, development and extension of collective cultures of resistance: cultures that help make covert forms of resistance overt, and that generate opportunities for resistant practices to be publically and politically actioned. The concept of contention is used

more commonly in this literature but can be seen as similar to the concept of resistance, with both referencing attempts to improve relative positions of power and control over material or ideological resources, by oppositional means on behalf of marginalised communities (Snow, Soule and Kriesi, 2007).

2.4.1 Hidden Transcripts and Spaces

As already noted James Scott (1990) highlights how resistance to dominant power - material appropriation or personal exploitation - can be expressed through public or hidden actions or as both. He refers to interactions between actors, e.g. dominator and dominated, as staged encounters that follow what he calls a 'transcript'. The public transcript (also referred to as the 'official' transcript) is the on-stage and public interaction between subordinates and those who dominate. Out of prudence or fear the public transcript may be shaped and managed so as not to overstep the tolerance of the powerful and to create the illusion of compliance. In contrast he defines 'hidden transcripts' as those off-stage, out-of-sight expressions of opposition that are created among a closed social group, which can be those of either the powerful or subordinates. This latter transcript is produced for a different audience under different power constraints and it can be a vehicle for the expression of resistance or the voicing of critical, dissenting or radically oppositional views. I am interested in the possible creation of such 'hidden transcripts' by community workers, who feel they have little alternative but to create critical responses off-stage, out-of-sight away from direct observation by dominant power holders, e.g. the State, their employers, State agencies. Such transcripts might give voice to alternative values and practices and which are oppositional to dominant rules. Even if we are sympathetic to the validity and utility of 'hidden transcripts' recognising and recording them is a research challenge.

Scott (1990: 91) maintains that "subordinate groups are less constrained at the level of ideology and thought, since they can do so in abundance in safe settings, but are more constrained at the level of political action and struggle, where the

daily exercise of power sharply limits the options available to them". But the question remains, if there are hidden transcripts, in what spaces are they created? Scott (1990) claims that collectively shared hidden transcripts cannot exist without tacit or acknowledged co-ordination and communication among the subordinate group. For that to occur the subordinate group must carve out sequestered and safe social spaces that are insulated from control and surveillance from above. It is in these offstage social spaces that resistance is generated and codified: here resistant practices and discourses are socialised into shared actions and understandings, developed and produced through the process of mutuality, i.e. debate, negotiation and persuasion. It follows that the expression of resistance will be least inhibited when two conditions are fulfilled: control or surveillance by the dominant is least able to reach and when this space is sequestered by a social milieu composed of close confidants who share similar experiences or interpretations of domination (Scott 1990: 118-120). Such social spaces are not a gift – they have to be created, and as such are themselves an achievement of resistance: "they are won and defended in the teeth of power". Hidden transcripts and spaces help nurture the discourse and the behaviour of resistant actors. In this research I will tentatively examine if such spaces exist for community workers or if not is there is a shared understanding of the need for such spaces and where or how they might be created. Scott's contribution to defining the spaces and alternative discourses of resistance, e.g. hidden transcripts for example, could potentially be very useful in community work, particularly if workers feel that their work conditions or the control exercised by the State is too pervasive to allow public resistance to emerge.

The social reach of the 'hidden transcript' is often limited to familiar subordinates who share similar experiences of domination but which can extend through networks such as those mentioned in section 2.4.3 by social movement theorists Koopmans (2007) and Foweraker (1995). Scott (1990) argues that the 'hidden transcript' is always pushing against the limit or pressure of what is allowed publicly and many authority figures and power-holders tolerate a remarkably high level of

practical non-conformity so long as it does not actually tear apart the public fabric of hegemony. Crossing the threshold of oppression in a public manner requires a judgement in relation to safety and consequences – both collectively and individually. However, as Scott (1990) claims, the vast majority of people have been and continue to be subject to a range and variety of dominant power-relations. In practice therefore it is understandable that many acts of resistance are designed to be informal, obscure their real intentions and avoid direct confrontation with higher authorities yet still carry the potential to bring about real change, particularly if co-ordinated and implemented in a collective manner. Such informal resistances can occur in suppressive environments but also in ostensibly harmonious environments, such as local partnerships, where community workers are dependent for their funding and their employment (Scott, 1990).

2.4.2 Subversive Workers and Citizens – the Views of Practitioners

Newman (2013), along with Barnes and Prior (2009) have examined the political agency and resistance that is expressed by what they call 'subversive citizens', which include workers in the community and public sector who are expected to work in managerial and prescribed contexts (Barnes and Prior, 2009). In particular, Barnes and Prior (2009) consider how such workers (and citizens) negotiate their values, make decisions about the right thing to do, and how they challenge or resist the identities that are offered to or imposed on them via government policy or their employers in the community/public sectors. These authors draw on a number of case studies from the UK but similar forums, organisations and government structures also operate in Ireland and so their work may have relevance for the Irish context too.

Barnes and Prior (2009) claim that there are multiple and complex interactions between the formal policies and programme guidelines put forward by government and employers, referred to in the literature as technologies of government, and

practitioners' own informal interpretations of situations. Workers' interpretations may be based on their values, past experiences, on tacit or local knowledge of particular circumstances and on subjective, emotional responses to the issue they are required to act upon. In the face of governmental technologies workers make their own 'situated judgements' about the action to take. Barnes and Prior (2009: 22) argue that practitioners' such as community workers' critical awareness of the emotional and moral dimensions of their decision-making is likely to be enhanced when their practice involves direct encounters with citizens who are the intended targets of policy outcomes (Barnes and Prior, 2009: 22). Barnes and Prior (2009) show that greater exposure to and engagement with 'target' communities, may inform and reinforce potentially subversive or resistant practice by workers. Such exposure can also contribute to alternative views of needs, priorities and the substance of policy or its implementation. Barnes and Prior (2009) claim that for workers the uncertainty generated by such differences or inconsistencies in interpretation between government guidelines and their own 'situated judgements' can open up real possibilities for alternative forms of action other than those mandated by government. They thus generate opportunities for resistance to take place particularly if bolstered by encounters with or voices of target communities. This suggests that the cultivation of strong statements of shared values and the creation of close working relationships with communities can support resistance to emerge among community and public service workers who believe they have a responsibility towards citizens in their work purpose.

Building on this concept of uncertainty, Hardt and Negri (2004) observe that when our ideas, our affects and our emotions are put to work, i.e. subject in a new way to the command of employers or the State, we often experience new and intense forms of violation or alienation. This makes resistance necessary and may contribute to its formation, but the parallel forces of control or surveillance also make for a difficult environment in which to resist or be critical. Hardt and Negri (2004) highlight the characteristics of 'immaterial labour', which they argue is the hegemonic form of labour in contemporary society, which can include being

managerialised. Immaterial labour draws upon the information, knowledge, relationships, communication and emotional resources of workers and this has parallels with community work. It is the depth of this emotional labour and its proximity to self-identity and values that allows for it, under certain conditions, to be 'flipped over' for resistant purposes. For example, they observe that in contemporary economic systems capitalist accumulation demands the creation of networks. Such networks are themselves based on communication, collaboration and affective relationships; attributes that may potentially be brought into the service of a politics of resistance and the creation of critical networks. Hardt and Negri's (2004) dialectical reading of the possibilities inherent in contemporary forms of economic and social organisation therefore highlight how 'immaterial labour' can be exploited, reclaimed, and redefined by resisters. Hardt and Negri (2004) hope that resistance derived from such opportunities can be transformative in the right time and space – though such opportunities need to be more widely recognised and understood by actors and activists.

In Chapter Three the emergence of managerialism and its influence in community development are considered. Looking at aspects of resistance, Barnes and Prior (2009) and Hughes (2009) explore how workers develop strategies to resist (State) managerialism including the managerialisation of community work. These resistances can be collectively articulated, e.g. through trade union action and through networks of community workers. They are also increasingly expressed through individualised responses to changes that are experienced as personally stressful and as undermining the values and commitments that brought people into front-line community development work (Hardt and Negri, 2004). Hughes' (2009) research outlines how centrally developed policies for Youth Offending Teams in the UK are variously and subjectively re-interpreted by local professionals who are directly responsible for their implementation. In some cases, local workers subverted or resisted national guidelines by ignoring rules and regulations in relation to decision making in particular youth justice cases. Instead, by relying on their experience and 'gut' reaction as to what was best, in the interests of their

service users, they developed alternative practices. Hughes (2009) found that workers resistance to implementing guidelines was expressed in a non-threatening and non-confrontational manner and legitimised with reference to their professional values, identities and proximity to community. This might be interpreted as operating resistance below the radar or as protecting professional judgement and subjects in the face of managerial control.

As Mumby (2005: 33) observes "although certain grand narratives of management may frame interpretive possibilities, the struggle over meaning is always open-ended, that makes available possibilities for constructing alternative, resistant, counter-hegemonic accounts of organising". This suggests that frameworks used in programme guidelines or social policies can be re-interpreted and re-defined by workers. Resistance by workers or citizens can involve developing alternative strategies, individually or collectively, in response to specific situations in order to achieve outcomes other than those prescribed in official policies. It may not be explicitly framed as resistance but instead as 'workers just doing their jobs' when responding directly to community needs. Such processes of constructing alternative actions, subversively or overtly, may be achieved by workers alone, by citizens alone or through dialogue between workers and citizens. It may involve actors tacitly allowing alternatives to proceed, actively facilitating them or 'turning a blind eye' to practices that diverge from the official guidelines. It is conceivable that in the current community development environment, these practices are carried out in Ireland too, and this will emerge as a central question in my data analysis in Chapter Six.

Significantly, Barnes and Prior (2009) also propose that the introduction of managerialist practices across the public sector (and community sector) can be understood as a response to the resistance of workers, i.e. where increased focus on accountability, recording and surveillance is reflective of a desire to counteract aspects of worker agency that undermined the achievement of national policy

objectives. They reference New Labour politicians (in the UK), who identified front-line workers as the 'enemy' standing in the way of modernisation. In such circumstances public sector and community workers are demonised for holding back progress, not up-skilling in particular managerial practices and being inefficient (Barnes and Prior, 2009: 8). This issue of counter-resistance by the State and community workers being seen as opposing or undermining national policy will be explained further in Chapter Six. It also illustrates the dynamic aspects of resistance and its potential to create new forms of expression of power.

2.4.3 Insights from Social Movement Theory

Social Movement Theory in general explores and analyses the rise of new constituencies, values and forms of collective action that are prompted by, respond to and in some cases recreate, structural changes in modern society (Koopmans, Tarrow, Snow and Soule, 2007). Much has been written about social movements, why and how they form, act and behave, and the literature can be interpreted as an analysis of the motivations that drive activists towards collective resistance. Community workers may organise along similar lines to social movements, e.g. according to class, gender, issues or identity, and in some cases they may simultaneously participate in multiple movements. The insights and understandings generated by social movement theorists into how resistance can be collectivised are a potential resource for community work practice, particularly if community work is seen as a critical practice exposing communities' contradictory experiences and understandings of the world (Popple, 1995).

There are different traditions in social movement analysis including Collective Behaviour, New Social Movements, and Resource Mobilisation Theory. The authors drawn upon for this section come mostly from the Resource Mobilisation Theory School. Foweraker (1995) explains the basic orientation of 'Resource Mobilisation Theory' by acknowledging that social discontent is universal but collective action is

not and that for a social movement to succeed, particular resources (human and material) are necessary. As collective action/decision making is identified as a defining feature of community work, (see Chapter Four), I am interested in exploring if such literature offers insights into how localised, collective or individualised resistances may become public and strategic in a political sense.

To summarise, writers Koopmans (2007) in Snow, Soule and Kriesi (2007) and Foweraker (1995) identify a series of features that contribute to the dynamic and possibility of resistance. These are: new political opportunities, also referred to in the literature as political opportunity structures (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2001; Koopmans, 2007) and which are, in effect, changes in the political landscape, forms of governance or policy environment which may provide opportunities to collectivise resistance. Such changes may present opportunities, which may reduce the power disparity between authorities and challengers, or which may create transitional environments where alternative ways of doing and being are possible or more tolerated. For example, periods of political instability where governments are perceived to be weakened and where popular support is diminishing may create a climate for private resistances to be articulated publicly. The changing political landscape may facilitate resisters to form relationships with new allies, as a reduction in the power of opponents or periods of confusion may undermine normative expectations of order and legitimacy. Therefore, such changes need to be noticed and assessed for opportunities to collectively develop and action strategies of resistance (Koopmans, 2007). These opportunities can also be referred to as 'Timing' i.e. the right time to resist, where the conditions are more accommodating of challenges.

Foweraker (1995) and Koopmans (2007) also argue that socially embedded communication processes (networks) are an important mechanism for resisters to spread key messages and collectivise opposition. By this they mean that oppositional messages are spread by way of established network links, weak links

being easier to utilise as they are not as collectively entrenched in shared views compared to strong network ties. In other words, key messages or contentions spread or gain popularity along different lines of interest: for example, across projects which may be organised differently or located in different regions, or across community workers who may be located in different types of organisations. Each node or network link is frequently linked into other networks and this can build solidarity. In contemporary society, social media (weak links) presents such opportunities where membership, engagement and communication is open to individuals and groups who may otherwise have no link to each other. Such opportunities provide groups with the possibility of spreading key messages, building support and can provide greater access to resources, i.e. access to more people who in turn may have additional resources.

Another significant feature according to Koopmans (2007) is the identification of allies and adversaries. For social movements and acts of resistance to be successful, it is crucial that the challengers/activists are clear about who their allies are and who their adversaries are prior to taking action. Here Foweraker (1995) highlights the concept of solidarity, which is taken to mean many people agreeing on an overall broad purpose, which acts as a source of strength and enhances both the likelihood of and potential success of resistance. Proximity and comparability of circumstances can, according to Foweraker (1995) also support resistance to emerge. For example, dissatisfied workers in the same factory or community have a greater opportunity to collectivise around strategy and action making the potential of success higher.

The need for tactical innovation (or strategising) is also emphasised by Koopmans (2007). Choice of tactics can be influenced by many factors including resources, capacity, notion of risk, vision, ideology and leadership. It is important for resisters and co-ordinators of resistance to consider the tools, capabilities and creativities they can mobilise that will allow for collective resistance to be expressed, but that

will also encourage a wider range of supporters to actively participate. Choice of tactics influences perceptions of social movements and facilitates a greater or lesser degree of popular participation. A good choice of tactics which can enhance the possibility of success will be one which is effective in both expressing resistance clearly and in securing the involvement of many actors (McAdam, Tarrow, Tilly, 2001; Koopmans, 2007; Foweraker, 1995).

Resisters are part of an intricate web of social relations who are ecologically interdependent on one another. Therefore even slight openings of opportunities for one group, e.g. environmentalists, can set in motion the expansion of contention for another group, e.g. anti-austerity groups. In time, such groups can network, build and strengthen each others' resistance agenda; therefore the existence and compatibility of other active social movements should be considered.

Koopmans (2007) and Foweraker (1995) conclude by saying that resistance also depends on what came before, i.e. the history of the grievance, action around it, experience of resisting and what is happening elsewhere in relation to the same or similar grievance.

I will be examining the data to find out if these features exist in community workers' practices of resistance and if they do exist do they contribute to resistance being successful or not? To conclude on a note of caution, it can be difficult to judge or assess the 'success' of resistance. Giugni (2004) acknowledges that 'success' can mean different things to different people even within the same collectivity. Individual resisters make their own subjective judgements, success is subjective and the notion of success often overstates the extent to which participants are clear or unified about their intentions. Giugni (2004f) notes there may also be short and long term successes and failures, and as will be observed on page 206, failed resistance may generate important opportunities for consciousness raising, social analysis or skills development. When I examine the outcomes of

resistance practiced by community workers in Ireland, I will attempt to ensure that workers' conceptions and expectations of success are privileged and I will not be seeking to designate success from an external vantage point.

2.5 Conclusion

Resistance as a concept is complex and operates along a continuum/spectrum. It is tied to the very system or process it is attempting to resist, i.e. it is relational to what is being resisted and can be defined more by its context than by specific practices. Resistance should be seen as an action or a set of actions which can vary in scale, visibility and intensity. Resistance can negotiate and shape power relations, be they structural, ideological or discursive and the related changes can be symbolic, transformative or personally empowering. Operationalising resistance can put workers in contradictory positions and can highlight their already contradictory status, e.g. resistance against the State by a project that is funded by the State or resistance can be against local management committees although they officially govern the worker's conduct. Resistance can also reproduce dominant power relations, e.g. where responses to resistance are even more oppressive, or where resistance actually reinforces dominant discourses or cultural status (Contu, 2008).

The context in which resistance is expressed and the terms used to name it may include: social movement; protest; subversion; contention; challenge or resistance. In general it can be said these terms all imply oppositional activity that is against someone or something, although writers are not unanimous that resistance is always intentional (Hollandar and Einwohner, 2004). Resistance can also be seen as counter-hegemonic to dominant views, discourses or structures which makes the creation of alternatives possible.

The forms resistance take can also vary significantly from outright protest and rebellion to more subtle forms as expressed in small workplace resistances or what

Scott (1990) describes as 'hidden transcripts'. The data will be examined for Scott's (1990) four categories of resistance (see Chapter Six). In practice, the context regularly determines the form of resistance to be chosen and several forms may be actioned simultaneously in response to oppression or as a strategy to lessen the power of dominant or unjust institutions, policies or discourse.

Scott (1985, 1990) and Hardt and Negri, (2004) assert the valuable political contribution that resistance can make: empowering individuals and communities; its role in creating and supporting counter-hegemonic views or at least offering alternative views of the world; and to the possibility of creating alternative subjectivities. But these gains are not always publicly visible or seen as politically significant. Consideration will also be given to the extent to which resisters resist the identities imposed on them or the communities they work with by government and State agencies including the managerialising of workers and communities. Drawing on Barnes and Prior (2009); to what extent do workers explain their resistance as being based on resisting centralised management control of their work because the values of community development work are in conflict with these technologies of government? Do community workers feel managerialism is a counter-action by the State to their resistance to implement specific government policy (Barnes and Prior, 2009) and do subversive workers and communities assist with such resistances?

Finally, earlier sections highlight the key conditions which are conducive to collective resistance, some of which might be found within the community work sector and others sectors in the general polity and State. There are a range of conditions identified by Scott (1990), Barnes, Newman and Sullivan (2007), Barnes and Prior (2009), Koopmans (2007), Foweraker (1995), which will be explored *vis-a-vis* the community workers in this study. This will include examining the data for the existence of 'hidden transcripts' or 'sequestered spaces' as proposed by Scott (1990) in which critical analysis may exist.

Chapter 3: Critical Theorisations of the State and the Influence of Neo-liberalism and Managerialism

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Two focused on the concept of resistance. As understood and practised by community workers, and as will be shown in Chapter Six, resistance is frequently targeted at the State and in particular against State managerialism. This Chapter sets out to theorise the context for community development, with regard to changing conceptualisations of the role of the State, which over the past forty years has been the main funder of community development in Ireland. Significantly, Shaw, (2008) Ledwith, (2011) Meade, (2012) and the LEWRG, (1979) argue that it is not possible to analyse community development without also analysing the State.

The State means different things to different people but today nearly all of us have a link to one or more of the State's institutions, e.g. schools, hospitals, tax offices, local authorities and almost one third of the working population in Ireland are employees of the State (CSO, 2012). For many people who live in, work with or identify with marginalised communities or groupings, the State and its institutions have a core role in their daily lives: as provider of welfare, as regulator of conduct, as source of intervention and as target for critique or protest. Therefore, how marginalised communities interact, negotiate and are directed by the State is of prime concern to community development writers and practitioners. Of additional importance is how the State interacts, negotiates with or seeks to direct community organisations and the conduct of community workers. Chapter Four gives a brief history and identifies some recent changes specific to community development in the Irish context. Here I consider more broadly the changing roles and expectations of the State in contemporary neo-liberal society.

Following a short discussion of the form the State takes in Ireland, I consider the dominant ideology currently influencing contemporary conceptualisations of the State, namely neo-liberalism, the pervasiveness of which has had wide-spread effects on the role of the State, communities and community development.

The next section takes a closer look at the parallel and associated rise of managerialism. Managerialism has had significant effects within the administration and delivery of public services and by extension community development. In particular I examine technologies of managerialism, i.e. language/discourse, performance monitoring and managerialism at local civil society level.

I then explore the overall tone in the relationship between the State and the community sector during the last ten years, examining a significant structural and ideological development, that of 'Social Partnership'. This is a distinctive model of corporatist[3] governance that operated in Ireland, which included representatives of the State, business, farming and trade unions, (and in later years representatives of 'civil society' joined he process). Arguably, the Irish State's adaptation to neo-liberalism has been supported by the Partnership ethos and practice (Allen, 2000).

I conclude this chapter by highlighting the changing role of the State in Ireland and in particular in relation to community development.

[3] Corporatist is taken to mean here a system of representation that seek to secure pacts between representatives of various sectors and promotes consensualism (Meade and Donovan, 2002).

3.2 The State

3.2.1 The State in Ireland

In Ireland, the State is generally regarded as presiding over a liberal representative democracy. This is characterised by an overarching constitution; the formation of Government through popular vote; a separation of powers, i.e. distinctions in the role and authority of the Government and the judiciary; and electoral participation by citizens at various levels of government, e.g. local government, national government and the presidency. The model of democracy practised in Ireland could also be seen as reflecting 'aggregative democracy', where political parties compete for votes with self-interest being a primary consideration for all and can result in what Barber (1984) calls 'thin democracy'. Thin democracy does not take into account minority viewpoints, which can be large in number and, furthermore, it supports individualistic choice rather than public discussion, debate and collectivism in the formulation of choices. While the role of the State in Ireland continuously changes, it is argued in this study (Chapter Three and Chapter Four) that the State's influence and directing of community development during the past decade has changed significantly from 'enabling' to 'disciplining'.

State theorists often go beyond describing the particular features of liberal democracy to consider if the State has a particular character, i.e. if it is shaped by, reflects or is receptive to the interests of some groups rather than others (Newman and Clarke, 2014). For example, a common perception of the liberal-democratic State is that it reflects a pluralist distribution of power, whereby power is spread across various interest groups who bargain, jostle and manoeuvre for advantage with the State (Held, 1996: 242). According to King (1975) however, the State in aiming to respond to different interest groups and retain popular support, becomes too large and inefficient, thereby creating the notion of the 'big State' with unwieldy bureaucracies. It is also argued that the many and various attempts to keep interest groups on board has undermined public confidence in the State's ability to govern, which has contributed, at least partly, to the rise of neo-liberal responses, which will

be discussed later (Osborne and Gabler, 1992; Jones, 2001; Crawford, 2006). A key consideration therefore in pluralist conceptions of power and its expression within the State is, in whose interests is the State acting? While some observers would claim that the State is a facilitator of diverse interest groups, others would claim that the State is influenced by powerful vested interests, e.g. church leaders, big business and banks. Marxist theorists have long debated the extent to which the State is an instrument of elites or whether it reflects more structural relations that transcend the interests of individual capitalists (Jessop 2001). What they and pluralists share is a recognition that State power is not neutral or reflective of all interests. According to Newman and Clarke (2014: 1) the State is both an expression of publicness and paradoxically in recent years, an instrument for the destruction and evacuation of public attachments and identifications – including community development programmes.

I wish to reflect briefly on the role of the State referred to in the literature as the 'Welfare State'. The 'Welfare State', implies the provision of public services such as education, health, social security, which are of particular importance to marginalised communities who engage with such services on a regular basis. These public services are mostly located in State institutions or are provided by agencies that are regulated variously or enabled by the State. However, as Pateman (1970: 173) suggests, because such services "are an integral part of everyday life the State is part and parcel of the mechanisms that maintain and reinforce the inequalities of everyday life". T. H. Marshall (1970) viewed the 'Welfare State' as an outcome of both democracy and capitalism's need to sustain itself by addressing aspects of poverty and inequality. In recent years, including the past decade, there are clear moves towards reducing the 'Welfare State' and entering into an era of 'contracting for services'. The Irish State continues to be centrally involved in welfare delivery but as austerity budgets[4] impact, public services have been subject to significant cuts, both in the number of employees working in this sector and the budgets

[4] Seven austerity budgets in five years between 2008–2013.

allocated to deliver public services (Harvey, 2012). This also includes the community sector through which many welfare services are targeted or delivered.

3.2.2 A Decentred State

In light of the impact of neo-liberalism, Rhodes (1997) argues that the State has been hollowed-out. This is also reflected in the use of the concept of governance[5] rather than government to illustrate that power is now being utilised by the State through decentralised institutions, contracting out and networking, i.e. a mix of bureaucracy, markets and civil society providers. Similarly, Osborne and Gaebler (1992) contend that the central role of the State has changed from one of 'rowing', i.e. directly responsible for the delivery of democracy, services or programmes to 'steering', i.e. directing other agencies and organisations, including community projects in carrying out such work.

Opposing such assessments of the hollowed-out State are writers such as Smith (1999), who notes how the core executive role of government has been strengthened; central government is still more highly resourced in terms of authority, finance, and control than any other domestic institution, which means it continues to have dominance in key policy fields, for example: education, health services and social partnerships amongst others. Furthermore, while the State may be losing ground to the market and pandering to its demands, it may as suggested earlier, be simultaneously deepening its reach into communities through local partnerships, community projects and local government. These issues are considered in more depth in Chapter Four. The State therefore must be seen as an unstable system that is interdependent with and on other systems in a complex social order. By virtue of its structural selectivity and specific strategic capacities, its powers will always be conditional or relational and therefore subject to negotiation and influence (Jessop, 2001). However, it can also be argued in ordinary daily terms,

[5] Sometimes referred to as the post-regulatory State.

that the role of the State has expanded into new areas with greater control from the centre over its institutions and potentially, its publics.

Overall, for the purposes of my research I will take as my definition a State: that is not monolithic in form; is multi-faceted, sometimes contradictory and where relationships with the State can be negotiated at different points of intersection, e.g. locally with public servants and services, with politicians, with government and related institutions at national level also. I am particularly interested in how community workers describe their relationship with the State, when and if they see the State as an ally or target of resistance or both.

3.3 Neo-Liberalism, Managerialism and the State

3.3.1 Defining Neo-Liberalism

Authors across many disciplines contend that we have been living with an increasingly neo-liberalist paradigm internationally for the past forty years (Clarke and Newman 1997; Clarke, Gerwirtz and McLaughlin, 2000; Harvey, 2005; Lynch 2012, 2013). O'Brien and Penna (1999) partly attribute this large-scale sea-change in policy consensus – within and across many States – to the theoretical influence of Friedrich Hayek (1982) and supporters of his work, the Friedmans (1978), and Prime Minister Thatcher and President Regan during their periods in office in the UK and US respectively.

Neo-liberalism reflects an ideological and policy shift away from broadly social democratic principles, and from Keynesian approaches to economic intervention, which dominated many economies post World-War II up until the 1970s. O'Brien and Penna (1999) argue that Hayek and the Friedmans successfully promoted a critique of State provision, welfare intervention and public services which was based on the following assumptions. Freedom meaning that the private activities of

individuals should not be coerced by anyone – it is a negative limited view of freedom but one which should be the over-riding concern of liberalism. Individualism is the ultimate way in which freedom can be experienced and expressed, i.e. little or no interference in 'private behaviour' where order arises from the spontaneous actions of individuals and the formation of self-regulating structures, and where cultural adaptation is encouraged through competition/choice and tradition. Knowledge is understood as evolutionary, subjective and where meaning is mediated by the mind. We can only ever access a tiny fragment of what knowledge there is to be known, therefore market competition encourages the most reliable forum for access and provision of information, which in turn enhances wealth creation and prosperity. These assumptions, which often go unacknowledged, typically underpin neo-liberal ideals and practices (O'Brien and Penna, 1999).

Hayek (1982) also suggests that humankind is spontaneous but rational and therefore while social order may be precarious and unpredictable, successful processes of socialisation will be transferred culturally and generationally. For neo-liberals, given the spontaneous nature of social order, it cannot be designed or prescribed by the State. These understandings underpin the valorisation of free markets and competition whereby (Hayek, 1982) describes the Market as the spontaneous inter-related actions and economies in which individuals pursue their own individual and multiple ends but which result in the increased well-being of all. Social solidarity is achieved through the interdependence of people in the market thereby maximising social welfare (Hayek 1982).

Friedman (1978) earlier work contributed to this paradigm shift by arguing that the rising costs of the Welfare State undermined incentives to work, individual responsibility and led to the development of powerful producer groups of State services. Neo-liberals such as Seldon (1988), argue that the involvement of government in the provision of such public and welfare services will operate to the

lowest common denominator and, in attempting to satisfy many interest groups, politics will stifle innovation, alternatives and competition. These arguments were being made at a time of economic crisis, high unemployment and growing disillusionment with the State's capacity to respond to acute social and economic needs in the late 1970s, early 1980s. This environment helped to increase their influence.

Finally, O'Brien and Penna (1999) state that within neo-liberal discourses there is a growing reference to morality. It would appear that in recent years, neo-liberal theory has directed its attention towards what it perceives as the moral problems of welfare provision. Welfare is problematised for the supposed creation of a welfare dependent population, the breakdown in traditional family values and poor individual responsibility. Thus we see a pervasive sense of judgement regarding individual moral responsibility, e.g. for choosing healthy lifestyles, for waste management, for paying your way, for creating your own employment opportunities. Consequently, Harvey (2005: 2-3) argues;

> "neo-liberalism has become hegemonic as a mode of discourse. It has pervasive effects on ways of thinking to the point of where it has become incorporated into the common-sense way many of us interpret, live in and understand the world. The process of neo-liberalisation has, however, entailed much 'creative destruction', not only of prior institutional frameworks and powers (even challenging traditional forms of State sovereignty), but also of divisions of labour, social relations, welfare provisions, technological mixes, ways of life and thought, reproductive activities, attachments to the land and habits of the heart" (Harvey, 2005: 2-3).

In short, neo-liberalism describes the subjugation of the public to the private, the State to the market, and the social to the economic.

In neo-liberal terms, “inequality is seen as an inevitable outcome of market processes in capitalist societies. Life is seen as a lottery, in which we all receive a ticket at birth. What happens to us depends upon our innate capacities and luck” (O’Brien and Penna, 1999: 94). There is no acknowledgement of the influence of structural inequalities and how these maintain social hierarchies. Such assumptions, sometimes tacit, sometimes explicit, now inform many policies promoted by the State and related agencies nationally and internationally. Concepts such as consumer choice, efficiency, active-citizenship, modernised management and the contracting out of services are deployed, as States variously and to different degrees adapt to the hegemony of neo-liberalism.

Pratt and Lavelette (2001) who agree that there has been a widespread paradigm shift along neo-liberal lines claim that this has occurred with little effective resistance or alternatives being offered over the past forty years. This poverty of resistance is regrettably noted in Ireland also. Pratt and Lavelette (2001) note that discourses and practices of neo-liberalism have been increasingly dominant even when there has been little evidence of the (British) economy improving, unemployment levels reducing or labour output being any different than in 1979 (i.e. election of Thatcher). They instead point to outcomes predicted by Gray (1984: 32) “palpable insecurity running through almost every layer of society, about jobs and the chronic risk to a civilised standard of life that unemployment threatens for almost all of us”. Later in the chapter the mechanisms used to achieve such wide-spread acceptance of neo-liberalism are considered.

3.3.2 Neo-liberalism Irish Style

Kitchin, O’Callaghan, Boyle, Gleeson and Keaveney (2012) explore the idea that Ireland has its own distinctive model of neo-liberalism that is influenced by the particular character of State institutions and political culture. Neo-Liberalism operates within a clientelist political culture that has been influenced by the long

history of Anglo-Irish relations and the country's emergence as a post-colonial State. They argue that this makes for a neo-liberalism that is ad-hoc, populist and which is contradictory (Kitchin, *et al.* 2012). Nonetheless, they also point to hallmarks of neo-liberalism which were embraced during and post 'Celtic-Tiger'[6] Ireland: deregulation, public-private partnerships, privatisation and the sale of State assets. Collins (1997) claims that the Irish neo-liberal project is typically framed as one of 'modernisation' within State discourses. This is a political project, to facilitate and take up opportunities offered by the market, which commenced in earnest during the 1990s. However, in Ireland this project was not consciously identified as 'neo-liberal' and like many other political projects was pursued for ostensibly pragmatic reasons with its ideological underpinnings being denied or evaded (Collins, 1997; Kitchin, *et al.* 2012). As Kitchin, *et al.* (2012) note, Ireland attempts to combine neo-liberalism, in the form of a free-open market economy, policies aimed at attracting foreign direct investment and light regulation whilst at the same time operating a clientelist, local political system that demands politicians curry favour for votes. Therefore the impacts and application of neo-liberalism are ad hoc, contradictory and not always inherently consistent or visible (Kitchin, *et al.* 2012). It can also lead to politicians supporting neo-liberal policy at party level yet decrying its effects locally. (In Chapter Six, community workers refer directly to such instances of contradictory conduct).

Lynch (2012) agrees that Ireland's post-colonial history along with its heavy cultural reliance on Anglophone countries has produced its own hybrid of neo-liberalism. Although focussed primarily on neo-liberalism's impact on the 3rd level educational sector, Lynch (2012) identifies the pervasiveness of neo-liberal's defining characteristics: privileging the market, performance monitoring, managerialism and the promotion of particular types of business friendly knowledge. As with the extension of neo-liberalism in other sectors, Lynch (2012) highlights the lack of dialogue with publics around its impacts and implementation which she argues is

[6] Celtic Tiger refers to the economic boom period in Ireland from 1995 – 2007.

detrimental to learning, capacity building, democracy and which must be challenged as part of any resistance struggle.

3.3.3 The Neo-liberal State

According to Harvey (2005), the neo-liberal State generally works towards the promotion of strong individual property rights, the rule of law, and its institutions enable freely functioning markets and 'free' trade. These are the institutional arrangements considered essential to guarantee individual freedoms. Pure neo-liberalism suggests little State involvement but many neo-liberals concede that the State is necessary if only as a facilitator of neo-liberal conditions, i.e. encouragement of markets and enterprise, individual responsibility for welfare and a competitive deregulated environment. Therefore Harvery (2005) and Clarke (2005) observes that neo-liberalism is a sophisticated project to facilitate the expansion of capitalism, and neo-liberals demand that the purpose of the State be re-defined in line with that logic.

Harvey (2005) also argues that just as the neo-liberal State has been constructed and become hegemonic, the concept of civil society has become more central to formulations of democracy. While civil society can pursue oppositional politics, it is also being conditioned to carry out State functions thereby reducing the core responsibilities of the State. This may have both negative and positive effects, e.g. exploitation of voluntary labour or an enhanced role and involvement of communities in local decision making. Harvey (2005) also claims that there has been a radical reconfiguration of State institutions and practices, particularly with respect to the balance between coercion and consent. Ironically the State has become much more prescriptive in public life, reaching further into communities, seeking to regulate and govern conduct in line with market imperatives and promoting its definitions of 'active' or 'responsibilised' citizenship (see also Clarke, 2005). (I will expand on changing State roles later in section 3.3.4, when I examine

these changes in an Irish context.) Furthermore, Bourdieu (1998) argues that populist variants of neo-liberalism over the past 15-20 years have legitimised the kidnapping of the State and the resulting hollowing out of its welfare delivery role in favour of market-led individualism. Bourdieu (2010) however remained optimistic that pan-European alternatives are being developed against a neo-liberalism that protects a narrow range of interests and elites. A challenge for civil society (and community workers) lies in the State's deployment of civil society in the interests of a market-let economic agenda, raising questions such as if and how resistance might be made effective?

To conclude, neo-liberalism is a pervasive ideology which has colonised language, national policies and has redefined the objectives of many of our public services. The economic sphere is dominated by market values and the social world is defined by depoliticised ideas such as building social capital and social inclusion (Geoghegan and Powell, 2008). Laclau and Mouffe (2000) acknowledge that in today's environment presenting an alternative or rolling back neo-liberalism is not easy, given that it is now necessary to defend democracy not to mind radicalise it. They argue that the high level of cynicism about the political class combined with the tyranny of the markets and their related 'economic rationality' makes for a tough environment in which to resist or envision and proactively pursue an alternative type of society. Laclau and Mouffe (2000) suggest that parties of the left, traditionally viewed as allies of community workers, working class communities and social movements, are struggling to construct and articulate collectively a coherent alternative to neo-liberalism. This is exacerbated by divisions between progressive elements. There are a variety of identities fighting various forms of oppression, e.g. based on class, identity or destruction of the environment, but these various struggles require collaboration if an overall resistance strategy (vision) against neo-liberalism is to be found, articulated and become effective.

3.3.4 Managerialism and the Managerial State in Ireland and Beyond

According to Clarke, Gewirtz and McLaughlin (2000), one of the most significant dimensions of the reconstruction of the 'Welfare State' in Britain has been the associated process of managerialisation: the shift (in public services in particular) towards managerial forms of organisation and co-ordination. While the 'Welfare State' in Ireland evolved differently and not as extensively at local level compared to Britain, in some aspects it has been based on a similar system, model and vision (Forde, 2009). The concept of the managerialist State refers to a distinctive approach to the co-ordination of publicly provided services, and it is described by Butcher (1995), in Clarke, Gewirtz, McLaughlin 2000: 46) as, "a set of practices and values, based upon a new language of welfare delivery, which emphasizes efficiency and value for money, competition and markets, consumerism and customer care". According to Clarke, Gewirtz and McLaughlin (2000), features typically ascribed to new managerialism include: attention to outputs and performance rather than inputs. For example in Ireland, Pobal (2010) issued guidelines for the National Local and Community Development Programme, which emphasize 'key performance indicators', 'evidence-based data' and 'logic modelling'[7]. Public or community organisations are viewed as agents in low-trust relationships, which are linked by contracts or contractual type processes so that local projects are expected to deliver on centrally prescribed criteria rather than design and determine their own programmes (Clarke, *et al*). The separation of purchaser and provider or client and contractor roles within formerly integrated processes or organisations is a reoccurring feature. There is a breaking down of large-scale organisations and using competition to enable 'exit' or 'choice' by service users, for example promoting greater use of private health care as a competitor to public health systems. Finally, they reference the decentralisation of budgetary and personal authority to line managers, thereby elevating the role of 'management' (Adapted from Dunleavy and Hood, 1994 in Clarke, Gewirtz, McLaughlin, 2000: 6). As will be shown in Chapter

[7] Pobal Logic Model is a tool used most often by managers and evaluators to evaluate the effectiveness of a programme.

Four and Six, most of these features have been introduced into community development programmes in Ireland in the last decade.

Furthermore managerialism is defined by Clarke, *et al.* (2000) as a process of subjecting the control of public services (including community development projects) to the principles, powers and practices of managerial co-ordination. At the core of managerialism is the invocation of 'neutrality' whereby management techniques are offered as reasonable, with no hidden agenda but to provide 'evidence' of work and achievements. This disguises their ideological character and Clarke (2007) suggests that 'managerialism' played a substantial role in legitimising change and heralding a new social order for the new-right governments of the 1980s in the UK. This included a large-scale process of cultural change through which 'hearts and minds' could be engaged and support could be won as people would feel saved from inefficient bureaucracies and failing economies. This process of change uses distinctive discourses and language as key agents of change, e.g. words like 'efficiency', 'customer' or 'performance' are now widely promoted in public sector work. Rather than language/discourse just simply being a descriptive representation of the world, it is implicated in the creation of new identities (see also Chapter Two.) In Ireland, the State has instigated large-scale public sector reform,[8]and in so doing has explicitly drawn on these discourses. (Related issues are explained on page 66 and in Chapter Two.)

Clearly, managerialist approaches elevate and promote attention to a particular language, generally associated with the private business sector, e.g. logic modelling, targets, efficiency, value for money, etc., and in turn omit more in-depth analysis of the social, political and contractual changes that public services and community projects are faced with and work within on a daily basis. The technocratic language implies that the community sector and communities, if properly managed, can resolve their own social problems and issues, while there is less emphasis on

[8] Better Local Government (1996), Putting People First (2012) local government reform programmes.

citizens, rights and equality (Harvey, 2005). Consequently, according to Barnes, Newman, O'Sullivan (2007), the emergence of managerialism may have serious consequences for community workers and other public servants not least the amount of time spent on administrative and compliance duties compared to working directly with communities and residents. These changes are also confirmed by Jones (2001) who examined social workers' experiences of managerialism in recent years. In addition to high levels of tension and frustration being experienced by practitioners, and despite their knowledge and training, social workers argued that they were being hindered by managerialist practices, procedures and budgets. These social workers (Jones, 2001) also reported that they felt they were no longer trusted or recognised for their professional skills and abilities and their work could no longer be described as social work but instead that of gate-keeping and policing. It will be interesting to see if community workers interpret their new environment in a similar manner to social workers, many of whom work with the same families and in the same communities.

3.3.5 Technologies of Managerialism

This section briefly expands on three specific 'technologies of managerialism': i.e. language and discourse; performance monitoring; and managerialism within civil society, in order to uncover how such technologies are being deployed within the public and community sectors.

3.3.5.1 Managerial language and discourse

As already noted, discourse and language has been identified as one of the strongest mechanisms for anchoring managerialism in public sector agencies. Clarke and Newman (1997) calls this 'transformational discourse'. The mutual interaction of politics and management is partly sustained by the ways in which the transformative agendas of both are represented through common discursive structures and strategies (Clarke, 1997: 45). Change and chaos within organisations

are now presented as normal; and those that attempt to resist change are presented as 'out of touch', 'un-dynamic' and a hindrance to progress. Newman (2001) claims that public services and their employees in the UK are being realigned and reoriented to conform to State requirements through such discourses, e.g. where there is talk of 'reinventing government'. In Ireland this is presented as 'Putting People First' (2012), which implies that 'people' have not been put first to date. The significance of this is more profound than a mere shift in language as it seeks to effect a shift in identity also. Chapter Two noted the relationship between discourse and identity formations: Clarke (2007) and others such as Hancock, Mooney and Neal (2012) argue that the identities and subjectivities of public sector professionals are being recast along managerial lines, where work expectations have radically shifted in recent times and meanwhile the identities of citizens are recast as consumers. For example, according to Clarke (2007: 2);

> "the citizen is embodied in public identifications and practices; where the consumer is usually thought of as a private figure. In the public realm, people as citizens fulfil their obligations to one another, engage in mutual deliberation and exercise thought and choice in the definition and pursuit of the 'public interest'. By contrast, the consumer is a figure motivated by personal desires, pursuing their own interests through anonymous transactions in which relationships between buyer and seller are characterised by mutual indifference".

In neo-liberal discourses 'negative' identities are also demonised and public services are encouraged to get tough on such identities (Clarke 1997). For example, even in the current economic recession, many on welfare are represented as 'scroungers', and referred to increasingly as welfare dependents - not citizens with entitlements (Mayo, Hoggett and Miller, 2007). Understanding and wide-spread awareness of these significant changes, including how language is re-orientated and

incorporated, is required at many levels of society including community development if such changes are to be opposed, resisted and alternatives put forward.

3.3.5.2 Performance monitoring

The term 'performance monitoring' has become one of the dominant features of new managerialism across all public services including community development. Performance monitoring is a relatively new practice in community development and promotes concepts such as, 'pathfinders', 'value for money', 'beneficiary participation rates'. Lynch (2013) who has examined new managerialism within the university system in Ireland contends that 'ranking', which is closely linked to performance monitoring, can profoundly transform what we choose to do, who we try to be and what we think of ourselves. Centrally designed and determined indicators of success and targets can circumscribe what it is 'we ought to be doing', what is expected and normal. If organisations including community projects are now viewed as chains of low trust relationships, where constant monitoring is needed, the effect can be a curtailing of experimentation, critical reflection and 'new' creative responses (Turner and Martin, 2004) to complex issues. Ironically given neo-liberalisms' privileging of a 'small State', centrally driven performance monitoring frameworks greatly extend and deepen the reach of the State. "Centrally driven objectives can threaten the very purpose of (community) development work" (Mayo, Hoggett, Miller, 2007: 673), by undermining local knowledge, skills and responses. Therefore, performance monitoring systems are reflective of a more directive State and thus challenge the assumption that the State is made redundant by neo-liberalism.

In addition, there is a (debatable) risk of 'de-professionalisation' or 'deskilling' as workers under centrally driven performance monitoring focus on short-term outputs and administrative reporting rather than the achievement of longer term

social change goals. Professional identities, motivations and values are rooted in individuals' personal biographies and develop as professionals reflect on their changing experiences over time, in addition to training and education (Mayo, Hoggett, Miller, 2007). Compliance with performance monitoring procedures can render professional judgement obsolete and place an emphasis on 'tangible' outputs, i.e. narrow versions of effectiveness and efficiency rather than social change outcomes (see Jones 2001) which many community projects ascribe to. In such circumstances there is a real risk of community development practitioners (and related skills and knowledge) being turned into administrators of community services rather than being the facilitators of critical analysis and strategising by communities.

3.3.5.3 Managerialism at civil society level

In neo-liberal and managerial discourses the notion of "choice" is privileged as a right but, according to Bauman (in Clarke, Newman, Smith, Vidler and Westmarland, 2007), choice is often only available to those who have the economic capacity to make or realise choice. Lack of disposable income or education renders many people excluded from real choice, e.g. in jobs, health benefits, leisure activities. In these instances, the myth of 'choice' can exacerbate inequality. As will be shown (in Chapter Four and Chapter Six) the shift from an emphasis on public provision to the private markets and consumer choice is being replicated in community development: there is a growing emphasis on 'activation' and 'welfare to work' programmes and efforts at the responsibilisation of communities have increased, e.g. pressure to participate in joint policing committees at local level or to engage with particular forms of training delivery. In Chapter Four I consider how neo-liberalism and managerialism has influenced the forms and purposes of the community sector and how community work can be used by the State to achieve its own goals.

However, on a more optimistic note Clarke, *et al.* (2007) says that citizens are not the passive victims of ideological domination, aligning themselves un-problematically with the 'market or the manager'. Citizens, professionals and community workers are also reflexive subjects and not just addressed or summoned by dominant discourses but also 'answer back'. Community workers, for example, can and have provided a standpoint for critical reasoning about government programmes and proposals – although, as is shown in Chapter Four, this type of work is being undermined and re-orientated to service provision.

3.4 Social Partnership

In Ireland one cannot reflect on the form and functioning of the State and its relationship with community development without considering the particular influence and legacies of social partnership. During the 1980s and 1990s key sectors, including some organisations involved in community development, embraced social partnership as a model of economic planning and shared governance. According to Forde (2009), this was perhaps the most important catalyst for growing State involvement in community development and as put forward by Geoghan and Powell (2008: 445) embodies the constant danger of the co-option of protest and the silencing of the critical voice of civil society. Ling (2000) also shares this analysis stating that partnership is a new form of goverrnance, enabling the reach of the State and where civil society is being drawn in to a new strategic arena. From 1987 there were seven national partnership agreements,[9] which were negotiated by representatives of Government, Trade Unions, Employer Organisations, and the Community & Voluntary Pillar (after 1996). This fourth pillar which was lobbied for and created in 1996 was seen to represent civil society groups and organisations. National partnership structures were replicated at local level through Local Area Partnerships/Local Development Companies, which have a similar representative structure at corporate governance level. (More specific

[9] The term used for the triennial national development plan including pay agreements adopted in Ireland.

details on partnership programmes and their relevance to community development are included in Chapter Four.)

As already mentioned, social partnership can be seen as a model of governance, i.e. a corporatist system of deliberation adopted by governments that seeks to secure pacts between the State and interests groups, which are seen to be of key strategic importance for the development of the national economy (Meade and O' Donovan, 2002). In Ireland the momentum behind corporatist models was influenced by EU policy and it was posited as a response to economic crisis. The early national social partnership agreements were largely concerned with economic growth and unemployment. Later agreements addressed a wide range of social and economic issues as the continuity of social partnership became valued as an objective in its own right (Meade 2005). Corporatism and its Irish variant of social partnership promote a view of the State as a neutral, consensus builder that is acting in the national interest or good (Forde, 2009). While social partnership at national level fell apart in 2009 after the financial and economic collapse of the country, its impact over the past twenty years has been substantial and it is these type of arrangements that have subsumed community development projects at local level and national level.

Critics of corporatist partnership arrangements refer to them as anti-democratic as they foster consensualism at the expense of real debate and ensure that policy-making is dominated by privileged and powerful insiders (Allen, 2009). Others such as Meade (2012) claim that partnership has played a crucial role in normalising neo-liberalism in Ireland as it supported associated economic and public sector reform. These authors highlight that the Irish model of social partnership resulted in high levels of consensus across many sectors and themes, a deepening privileging of co-operation from national to local level between State agencies, interest groups and communities, and a disallowing of dissent. As will be explained in Chapter Four, with the emergence of the post-colonial free State in the 1920s, the Irish

Government sought to promote cohesion, unity and consensus in the name of economic stability: today, corporatism renders democratic deliberation and a recognition of inequality secondary to the need for economic consensus (O' Carroll, 2002). O'Carroll continues to argue that the inclusion of community representatives in social partnership contributes more to the legitimisation of the State than to the objectives of community development. This co-option of the community and voluntary sector stymies the opportunities to develop alternative spaces, work with allies or develop alternative views based on different experiences and perspectives. Allen (2000) also argues that social partnership over time became a cloak behind which deep inequalities became depoliticised and sanitised by professional discourses of social inclusion. Social problems were managed rather than resolved as issues of conflict were effectively off the table. According to Allen (2000) such a system greatly advantaged a small elite at the expense of the majority. Social partnership facilitated the advance of neo-liberal policies where the main focus was on economic and not on social outputs.

For the community development sector, social partnership has presented great challenges and at times it has proved divisive. In some circles it is claimed that State-mediated partnerships have generated community participation that is more tokenistic than real, and it is argued that State co-option has corroded much capacity for critical thinking. On the other hand, there are those who would argue that it has served as an opportunity to influence and integrate the demands of the community sector into national policy (see Meade and O'Donovan, 2002 for a review of these debates). However, as Murphy (2011) and Allen (2009) conclude, the effect of social partnership has been to restrict rather than encourage ideological debate and curb resistance. At a local level partnership became a default setting for community engagement with the State, and this was reinforced by the dominant role of the State in sponsoring, funding and now prescribing programmes. Furthermore, this dominant role of the State in the promotion and funding of community development enhances its power and reach into local communities. As Chapter Four will show, while the State claims to enable

communities (DSCFA, 2000), its practice in directing and monitoring organisations would suggest it is a 'disciplinary' State that is increasingly regulating and monitoring their activities. Lloyd (2009) claims that that the Irish States' agenda is to mould community development into a service delivery role and to shift it away from an advocacy or campaigning role that characterise a healthy democratic society. Such issues are given more detailed attention in Chapters Four and Six.

It is argued in this thesis that the processs of managerialism in community development has intensified during and post social partnership at local and national level, and the integration of the local community development programme into local partnership structures was to facilitate the extension of such managerial practices and discourses.

3.5 Conclusion

While Ireland, similar to many of its European neighbours follows a broadly liberal democratic model, the form and functions of the State have been captured by the international extension of neo-liberalism. In Ireland this has been paralleled by the increasing focus on manageralism in the public sector and by the establishment of national and local social partnership structures. The State affects arms-length control using performance monitoring indicators and a new transformational language, which denies its own ideological basis, to promote market-like or market-enhancing policies in the delivery of welfare services and community development activities. The cumulative consequences of these new forms of control can result in undermining the trust, experiences and the skills of community workers and of communities, and may ultimately result in ineffective and failing social change or social inclusion strategies (Crawford, 2006).

Clearly, the role of the State has changed in recent times. It is an active agent of neo-liberalism and managerialism rather than a passive victim of retrenchment. While in some ways the State has been hollowed out, the State has simultaneously become more directive and coercive in its interactions with public services and local institutions including community development. While we must recognise that the State is fluid, contradictory and responsive in many directions (Newman and Clarke, 2014) it is re-created in relation to various pressures, demands and contexts and can have multiple faces simultaneously. More hopefully, this implies also that the State can be moulded and influenced by democratic, community and public pressure, though this will require a significant level of skill, knowledge and experience if it is to organise successfully (Allen, 2009).

This chapter has begun to explain how the State, in relation to community development in particular, has promoted a strong managerialist language and approach in service and policy delivery. The new managerial State certainly presents challenges not least because it is constituted as much as through language as well as structure and because it potentially shapes the identities of workers and citizens. Dominant austerity, neo-liberal economics and corporatist politics do not facilitate critical voices but as Newman (2013) argues, it is vital that we open up these apparently totalising narratives, especially those of managerialism and neo-liberalism, to critical analysis. By focusing attention on narratives of resistance and oppositional alternatives, we may expose the underlying contradictions of the neo-liberal project and create spaces for politicised publics as argued for by Geoghan and Powell (2008) post-austerity. This is one of the key aspirations of this study. In addition to this chapter contextualising the Irish State, the following chapter presents a contextualised account of community development in Ireland which also serves as a background for analysing the community workers' responses that are presented in Chapter Six.

Chapter 4: Theorising and Tracing Community Development in Ireland

4.1 Introduction

The literature review that follows is carried out with specific reference to Ireland, and with particular regard to the years 2000 to 2010. Firstly I clarify how community development approaches vary and highlight some of the tensions associated with its use. Because community workers typically assert that their work is informed by principles/values, those values are critically analysed by focusing on three recurring concepts, i.e. participation, collective action and equality.

Having discussed community development in more abstract terms I then look at community development in Ireland. A short history is followed by a more detailed account of the context for community development and related changes since the year 2000 as this period is the focus of my research. Building on this discussion I examine the various roles performed by community workers and how they have changed in that time frame. These themes are revisited in Chapter Six when I analyse the responses of workers themselves.

Finally, I consider community development and its relationship to resistance. Even though the definitions and interpretations of resistance vary widely, I highlight if and why the concept of resistance is seen as a core component of community work in Ireland and in particular in recent times, given the significant level of change to this sector, why resistance might be practised or not.

4.2 Approaches and Tensions in Community Development

4.2.1 Approaches to Community Development

Community development operates at local, national and international levels and more recently at European and global levels, e.g. the European Community Development Network. Community development encompasses many diverse practices and to allow comparison and academic analysis, writers have tried to conceptualise distinctive models or approaches (Commins, 1985; Shaw, 2008; Gaynor, 2009; Hoatson, 2001; Emejulu, 2010; Powell and Geoghegan, 2004). These differing model-frameworks are invoked to illustrate the varying rationalities and ideological positions embedded in community development practice and thus help to illustrate its deeply contested nature. While such models are not always recognised or applied in community development contexts, they do help to highlight the diversity of issues and strategies that animate the work. The table below summarises one such account of models/approaches. As is apparent they reflect how community development projects are variously positioned vis-à-vis embededness in State policy and programmes, the status of professional and citizen knowledge, commitment to individualised, local or structural change and focus of control and project direction.

Table 1: Typology of community organisation frameworks by Kenny (2002).

Characteristics	MODELS/APPROACHES			
	Activist/Critical	**Welfare**	**Charity**	**Market-led**
Idea of civic virtue	Solidarity and mutuality	Rights and obligations	Work, duty and compassion	Self-sufficiency
Methods of operation	Political mobilisation and advocacy	Application of rules and procedures	Individual patronage	Competition and exchange relations

Commitment to programme standardisation	None	Strong	None	None
Solutions to social issues	Structural change and redistribution of resources	State intervention and policy changes	Philanthropic activity	Incentives through market forces
Commitment to politics of equality	Strong	Strong	None	None
Commitment to giving voice to marginalised groups	Strong	Weak	None	Weak
Commitment to community participation	Strong	Weak	Weak	None

Community development in Ireland includes projects using all of the above approaches, though often without projects self-identifying as a particular model. Indeed, community workers can operate out of more than one model, especially where community development work is part of a larger organisational agenda, e.g. Local Development Companies. However, according to Geoghegan and Powell (2008: 436), "activist civil society is a site of politico-cultural conflict, and as such, is inextricably bound up with a local, participatory, emancipatory, activist politics. While there are different models and objectives in community development practice, there is frequently a broad consensus on the pursuit of justice, public good and sometimes common good" even where different approaches are utilised .

4.2.2 Tensions in Community Development

There are many tensions in community development and as Mayo (1994: 24) notes in relation to community development, "it is not just that the term has been used ambiguously, it has been contested, fought over and appropriated for different uses

and interests to justify different politics, policies and practices" therefore who is espousing community development and for what purpose are crucial questions at any given time. In relation to Irish community development I examine two key tensions below.

4.2.2.1 State-funded community development

According to Craig (1989), community development work is too often drawn into implementing the latest fashions in government policy because that is where the funding is, rather than maintaining a clear or more autonomous analysis to inform action on behalf of communities. In Ireland over the past ten years community development has been re-directed to respond to changing government agendas around education, training and job readiness (Pobal Guidelines; 2002, 2006, 2010). This has been underscored by the Irish State's privileged status as a funder of community development. There are limited alternatives to State funding, other than a few notable philanthrophic funders, which bring with them other considerations and concerns. This trend of the State directing community work has intensified and become managerialised as the State tries to grapple with a deep Irish and global recession, and compliance with an austerity programme signed up to by the Irish government with the 'Troika'[10] in 2010. As we will see later in the chapter the circumstances, contexts and criteria through which community development organisations in Ireland engage with the State have changed significantly in the decade 2000 to 2010.

Given the potency of 'top-down' meanings, intentions and consequences of State funded community development, the question is what interests are benefited by the State deploying policy to manage, organise and regulate people in communities? To what extent can or should State-sponsored community development be resisted and transformed into a bottom-up process of community

[10] The Troike is made up of the European Union (EU), European Central Bank (ECB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

development? Do the aims and purposes of State-sponsored community development coincide with and reflect the needs and aspirations of communities – particularly those most disadvantaged (Martin, 2003; Hancock, Mooney and Neal, 2012)? Suttles (1972:9) puts it another way;

> "unproblematic reference to 'community' (development) can conceal the reality that policy is active both in contriving and managing communities. Policy is not simply a neutral mediator of diverse community interests, which is why the role of influencing and negotiating with the State is an important one in community development work".

Tensions for community workers are associated with managing these differing agendas in the context of limited time, resources and supports, in addition to the constraints imposed by employment terms. Evidently community development is at the intersection of a range of opposing ideas, traditions, visions and interests (Cook & Shaw, 1996). This needs to be understood if community development is to 'talk back' to power or to practise resistance and not just manage communities or provide local services according to externally imposed conditions or criteria.

4.2.2.2 Defining key concepts

In recent times in Ireland, the use of community development language has become more widespread and clarity about who is pursuing a community development agenda or why becomes difficult in this discursive environment. Shaw (2008) argues that in the UK, the adoption of a public service reform agenda that is aimed at promoting consent and managing dissent, partly explains why the language of State agencies and community development organisations has been aligned and, as will be seen later in the chapter, such alignments have being taking place in Ireland too. Arguably the contrasting and diverse ways in which community

development language can be used has resulted in the social change objectives or democratic ethos of community development work being diluted (Gaynor, 2009). Therefore who is using it, what interests are being served and how is it being deployed, are critical questions.

For example, words like 'participation' or 'community', which generally have positive connotations and which are part of the language of community development, can be variously appropriated by community members and workers, the State and other agencies, without genuine or meaningful commitment to their realisation (Hancock, Mooney and Neal, 2012). To take this a step further, consider the problematic and inherently challenging in terms of specifying its meaning and purposes is the concept of 'community'. Shaw (2008: 25) explains "the relationship between individual freedom and the common good as expressed through community is one of the central concerns of social and political theory. However for community development this relationship produces particularly sharp ideological tensions, which have been explored over time in various typologies that have sought to define and locate it (Barr, 1982 and Thorpe, 1985 in Shaw 2008; Popple, 1995; Taylor, 2003)". While Shaw (2008) agrees that definitions can promote some clarity of purpose, the academic debate over such definitions can also distract from a more nuanced local analysis of key issues such as power, agency, structure, exclusion and inclusion and the associated purposes of community development work. It is in such local contexts that community development is mostly practised and experienced, and each location has its own social, cultural and economic features. It is in these contexts also that 'community' is made meaningful and its dialectical potential is played out.

The next section focuses on core principles/values which broadly underpin community development practice and, as will be seen, these concepts are struggled over and also cause many tensions in community work theory and practice (Shaw 2008, Gaventa 2001).

4.3 Community Development Principles/Values

What is broadly agreed in the literature (Young, 2000; Ledwith, 2011; Shaw, 2008; Forde, Kiely, Meade 2009) is that community development work is typically represented as being defined by values and principles more than by a given set of practices, though these values/principles are very much under threat in Ireland in recent years (Meade, 2012). Whilst I appreciate that there has been a significant amount of debate and theorising in relation to all concepts, this discussion concentrates on three that are frequently referred to in community work; participation (including democracy), collective action and equality, and which can be seen as highlighting the challenges and struggles community workers face in their understanding and practice of community work and of resistance.

4.3.1 Participation and Democracy

4.3.1.1 Participation

Some authors, e.g. Barnes, Newman, Sullivan, (2007) and Cornwall (2008) suggest the term participation implies inclusion in particular structures or institutions and giving communities a voice, e.g. inviting community representation into social partnership structures. Significantly, for Pateman (1970), this very process of merging the public and private interests also educates citizens and provides them with the personal resources and motivation to continue to participate (see also Wolfe, 1985). These findings are also confirmed by (Baiocchi 2001; Community Workers Co-Op, 2008; and Ledwith, 2011). Others (Meade, 2009) refer to participation in a more abstract or theoretical sense linking it to broader concepts of democracy and good democratic practice, e.g. enhancing the public realm through the general participation of civil society. These views offer positive interpretations of the term participation.

However, there are also more cautious views of participation. Barnes, *et al.* (2007) based on their research findings of 17 cases-studies of public participation in the UK conclude that attempts to foster participation (in these cases steered by public services) frequently seem to reinforce, rather than challenge entrenched hierarchies of access and often end up with participants being captured in governmental fields of power and agendas. What emerges is that opportunities to participate are mediated by factors such as access to power, resources and material supports and the results of participation varied depending on the groups' histories, mandate, autonomous identity and ability to negotiate power. Therefore, Barnes, *et al.* (2007), and others (Taylor, 2003; Murphy, 2010) recommend vigilance when considering participation.

In 2000, the Irish Government endorsed the concept of 'Active Citizenship' in its white paper *Supporting Voluntary Activity,* which, on the face of it, would suggest an acknowledgement of the contribution and importance of public participation. However, Bauman (2001) and Barnes *et al.* (2007) highlight how discourses of active citizenship, to which participation is often linked, have been adopted by UK governments as rhetoric and used to justify managerialist conceptions of 'responsible' citizens and to promote highly localised or individualised responses to difficult social problems. Similarly in an Irish context, Gaynor (2009) argues that active citizenship as defined and enacted by the Irish Government is focused on getting communities to address their own needs, while simultaneously denying them a voice in querying or analysing how these needs have come about. Consequently she says "the State is depoliticizing the community sphere" (Gaynor, 2009: 38), while adopting the discourse of participation. In addition and also in an Irish context, Murphy (2010) argues how participatory processes can stifle or reduce opportunities for protest or resistance as community workers pursue strategies of negotiation rather than confrontation. While there is very little evidence of large-scale protest or resistance being utilised as an action or tool in community development work in the last ten years, there are very few learning spaces about how and why protest among many strategies might be useful.

Nevertheless, Murphy (2010) does highlight that in today's environment, community participation needs careful consideration, particularly with regard to who is seeking it and for what purpose.

4.3.1.2 Democracy

Participation is often linked to the idea that more wide-spread and deliberate participation strengthens democracy (Geoghegan and Powell, 2008; Barber 1984). Indeed Shaw (2011: 128) states that "historically, community development has been centrally concerned with democracy".

Recent Irish research shows a high level of commitment by community workers to the principles of participatory democracy (Doherty, 2010; Forde, 2009). Research into community work practice, by Doherty (2010), gives examples of capacity building interventions by community workers, which foster among participants a distinctively public form of reasoning. He also highlights that these community workers see their role as working to create conditions under which participatory deliberation is more likely to result in social justice outcomes. They hold these aspirations to be implicit in the principles of participatory democracy (Doherty, 2010: 11).

It is these types of processes and associated values that can make community development distinctive and appealing. Unfortunately today, such democratic processes are marginal and may be further circumscribed by policy changes and political trends linked to managerialism and neo-liberalism. The risk, according to Shaw (2011: 130) is that "democracy is reduced to a managerial procedure, whilst politics is something to be publicly consumed rather than produced" and thus participation is more about fulfilling criteria according to an externally defined measurements rather than citizens' voices and experiences being heard.

Managerialism and the managerialisation of community development has been expanded upon in Chapter Three and in section 4.4 of this chapter.

4.3.2 Collective Action

In general the process and practice of all versions of community development is based upon ideas of collectivity and mutuality (Ledwith, 2000). Collective action grows in strength as individuals form groups, groups identify issues and develop projects and projects form alliances that have the potential to become social movements (Ledwith, 2000; also Fishkin, 2009; Fraser, 2000; Young, 2000; Barnes, 1999; Cornwall, 2008). Collectivities can form around geographic communities, communities of interest or identity, but also by identifying around common issues or problems.

In Ireland, according to Meade (2009), community development projects espouse a strong commitment to collective practice, ranging from joint management and decision making in projects to identifying private troubles that then become public collective issues. One of the reasons for this collective approach is the identification of structural causes and not just the symptoms of inequality, oppression or poverty. By taking a collective approach, structures can be challenged therefore action potentially becomes transformative, although it can be slow and unpredictable work if communities are resisted or ignored (Forde, Kiely, Meade, 2009).

Emejula (2011) identifies three pre-requisites of collective action. Firstly it needs the existence of shared purposes/common dreams among the public/community – of which there can be a variety, e.g. decent employment, proper homes, better health. Secondly there must be active and reciprocal citizenship – in order to achieve a shared purpose/common dream, one needs to mobilise in order to achieve collective and self-interest goals; the public must 'stand in relations of

equality to each other' (Anderson, 1999: 3). Thirdly, in order to succeed individually and collectively there is a need for a majoritarian and intersectional form of progressive politics (Emejulu, 2011: 122). Such a politics resists particularity and individualism and instead focuses on a range of different social issues that must be recognized by different social actors and solved in a spirit of reciprocal social citizenship. Clearly such work, while essential to community development, also seeks to override the atomising and individualising tendencies that are linked to neo-liberalism in particular.

According to Ledwith (2011), within processes of community building or collective action, community workers often represent themselves as facilitators. This positions community members as active agents, with the right to self-determine their own priorities and issues, and community workers as facilitator-leaders who support rather than impose processes of collective identity formation. Unfortunately, in today's environment many community workers can be blocked from creating or supporting such collectivities. Some workers may not always practise from such an approach but may also hold perspectives that construct local communities as 'passive', incapable of deliberation on deep-seated issues, bewildered by changing times or as constituted from an undifferentiated homogenous group of people and therefore neediing to be managed by outside 'professionals' or 'experts'.

4.3.3 Equality: Definitions and Challenges

Regardless of the type of equality at stake, for example, political, social, legal or economic, the pursuit of equality generates a wide variety of criticisms and alternatives, again making the concept highly contested (Nagle, 2002). Egalitarians see equality as a core value to be pursued while in contrast, some (neo-liberalists) see the pursuit of equality as nonsensical; as an interference with people's basic freedoms and that left alone, the market will right itself thereby creating

opportunities for those less well off (see Kirby, 2008 for discussion). While 'equality' or its opposite 'inequality' is commonly referred to in community development texts and practice (CWC, 2008; CDX, 2012), how it should be pursued and or defined in practice may vary significantly from one community development project to another. Some projects pursue 'greater equality' using charitable or top-down processes as opposed to 'rights-based' approaches as described by Lynch (2013).

4.3.3.1 Equality of Opportunity and Equality of Outcome

In their practice, many community development projects promote equality of 'opportunity'. Equality of opportunity means that formal barriers to access or active discrimination need to be overturned. The implicit assumption is that greater access to opportunities would inevitably result in greater equality of outcomes for these same groupings. However, according to Miliband (2006), outcomes don't automatically follow opportunities and therefore there is a need to monitor the impact of interventions which aim to mitigate inequalities and ensure services change and respond to diverse needs. This argument is also supported by Baker and Lynch (2005). According to Miliband (2006) those that support this form of equality, i.e. opportunity and outcome, must therefore be concerned with the building of strong public services and public institutions, which are flexible and responsive to different needs, and which can fundamentally make a difference to people's lives. This approach leads to community development that places responsibility on the State for redistribution and that demands positive interventions on behalf of minority or excluded communities. While opportunity may be theoretically open to all, a concern with equality of outcome demands that policy be evaluated by the extent to which inequalities are minimised in society.

4.3.3.2 Equality and Difference

Perceptions of difference, particularly articulated in literature on 'race', 'gender' and 'queer' theory, have challenged unitary notions of equality. For example,

feminists have challenged the use of a fixed/unitary conception of 'woman' and the designation of one type of equality for all women (Williams, 1976; Dominelli, 1995). The activist disability sector has reclaimed a collective identity rather than staying with the individualising medicalised identity imposed on them by institutions. All of the 'differences' articulated by activists and social movements in recent years have had implications in community development work theory and practice. These differences and greater levels of 'identity' focused analysis may problematise equality policies, by eroding the apparent clarity or unity of goals and purpose in community development (Meekosha and Pateman, 1991).

4.3.3.3 Equality in Practice

Albeit espousing collective equality, writers observe (CWC, 2008; Lynch, 2013; Fraser, 2000; Meekosha, 1993) that some projects pursue equality with a focus on advancing individuals' opportunities by encouraging and supporting them to take up education, training or enterprise opportunities. Others take a more collective and rights-based approach by promoting participation, encouraging self-determination and critical analysis of socio-economic contexts. Some projects take strategic structural decisions to work closely with institutions, e.g. health services or educational services, to improve access and availability of such services to those that are disadvantaged. For community development projects, addressing inequality on an individual basis, an approach which appears to be on the increase (Lynch, 2013), may bring positive results for that individual/family, but does not address the underlying structural causes that perpetuate disadvantage. Individualised approaches do not contribute to a greater equalisation of opportunities, outcomes and resources across society. As Lynch (2013) explains, it may instead conceal an increase in inequalities because the focus is taken away from broader and deeper structural patterns and trends and significant energy is devoted to personal development (Lynch 2005, 2013).

To summarise the tensions in pursuing equality in community development. Firstly, there is the potential conflict between interference with individual freedom (minimal State involvement and more market) and the promotion of a strong role for the State towards a perceived greater good. This is especially challenging in neo-liberal times. Secondly, individual opportunities may trump collectively articulated rights as a focus for action because of pragmatic reasons or for political expediency. Thirdly, inequalities can be based on economic/social/legal dimensions and can be experienced differently by different groups of people, e.g. unemployed, lesbian/gay, ethnic minorities. There are different degrees of inequality, which can co-exist simultaneously in one community, have different implications and in turn require different strategies thus making the pursuit of equality a complex task.

As can be seen from an examination of the three concepts above, it is these various and cross-interpretations that can make community development so challenging and highly contested among practitioners and at the same time dynamic and responsive across a range of interpretations and conditions.

4.4 Community Development in Ireland

While the previous section outlines key theoretical aspirations and tensions in community development, this section analyses the environment in which community workers are expected to operate in Ireland. The following pages review the history of community development in Ireland up to 2000 in a chronological but brief manner. This is primarily because I want to focus on the years 2000 – 2010 in particular, a time in which many changes have occurred both structurally and ideologically for community development. The workers who participated in this research study reflect on their experiences in Chapter Six during this time span in particular.

4.4.1 1920 to 2000: A Brief History

Forde argues that given our colonial past and having established our independence from Britain in 1922, "it is unsurprising that some of the key distinguishing characteristics of Irish society after independence were conservatism, authoritarianism and the predominance of elites" (Forde, 2009: 128). In the wake of a war for independence and a civil war the primary concern of successive Irish governments was to ensure cohesion and solidarity, which it did by emphasising 'the nation' and consolidating a self-identity with Ireland represented as a national community. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the dominant political model was a clientelistic one (O'Carroll, 2002) based on close relations between elected representatives and their constituents. From 1922 to 1973, this Irish democratic model also favoured State control, little devolution of power to local or regional level and curtailed deliberation and debate in the legislature (Forde, 2009). This national identity stressed homogeneity of members, extensive social control and male-dominated consensus building, ably assisted by church and local civil society institutions such as Muintir na Tíre and the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA). Precious little public or private space was therefore available for alternative cultural, moral or political articulations (Powell and Geoghegan, 2004: 175).

While Lee (2003) traces community development in Ireland back to the rise of the co-operative movement more than a century ago, she claims that there was significant civil society activity in the years after independence including various trade unions, Irish unemployed workers' movements, rural community activity and organising fostered by Muintir na Tíre (who continue to encourage voluntary community activity today); and women's organisations, including the Irish Countrywomen's Association and the Irish Housewives' Association. All these groups were active around people's everyday concerns, while also responding to deep economic crises and broader social issues (Forde, 2009).

While there was significant civil society activity from the 1930s to 1950s, community development as a critical or challenging practice was not evident in Ireland until the late 1960s and early 1970s. Instead notions of self-sufficiency were emphasised, with a strong focus on parish-based development. A new community development approach was promoted particularly by the first European anti-poverty programme 1974 to 1979. This programme supported pilot community development projects outside the framework of social work, and was informed by the US War on Poverty programme of the 1960s, which had promoted the principle of community participation albeit with mixed results. The European programme which was delivered via local projects in Ireland also instituted the employment of paid community development workers. Within the programme they were presented as facilitators of local action, changing predominantly voluntary community work into a paid role, which on the one hand provided much needed resource to communities but on the other became an instrument of State policy (Forde, 2009).

According to Meade (2009) the 1980s, which were marked by high unemployment and long term unemployment in particular, saw a significant growth in the number of community development projects seeking to develop local responses to these problems, although projects were significantly under-resourced. The European influence evident since the late 1970s continued in the form of two more Anti-Poverty Programmes and the emergence of community developments projects across the State led to the announcement of a more formalised Community Development Fund in 1990. This was perhaps the most high profile and extensive community development programme in the history of the Irish State (Meade, 2009). The programme was co-ordinated and supported by the Combat Poverty Agency, which had a distinct focus on research and advocacy in relation to poverty, local participation and social analysis. From 1986 the Combat Poverty Agency had a statutory responsibility to support co-ordinated approaches, including community development, to anti-poverty work, e.g. responding to debt, drug-addiction, rural under-development. (In 2009 this agency and related programmes were subsumed

into the Social Inclusion Unit of the Department of Social and Family Affairs)[11]. In addition to the above developments, the 1980s saw a liberalising of social attitudes due to transnational exchange and exposure to international media, along with increased activism by social movements and protest groups that had emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This led to an expansion in the number of community development projects engaged in identity based work in addition to geographically based projects, which were mostly situated in disadvantaged areas (Lee 2003).

1987 saw the introduction of social partnership as a formal mechanism for deliberation and planning on economic development. Under national agreements various national development priorities were established, and one agreement, the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP) in 1991, led to the establishment of local partnership companies. While the title of these agreements varied they were subsequently resourced to deliver the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (2000 to 2006), administered nationally by Pobal and which continued into 2009. This was followed by the current programme titled the National Local and Community Development Programme (2010 to 2013), extended recently to July 2014. These local partnerships were area-based in focus and their governance structure reflected a similar sectoral mix to that of National Partnership, i.e. State, Employers, Trade Unions, Community and Voluntary. Local partnerships supported community development among other actions and became centre points for policy delivery for the broader community development sector. 1997 also saw the introduction of the national anti-poverty strategy (NAPS), which explicitly acknowledged the role of community development in the rejuvenation and mobilisation of local communities. EU intervention led to the establishment by government of the National Social Inclusion Office in 2003, which is still in place today, though it is very under-resourced (Forde, 2009).

[11] Now (2014) named the Department of Social Protection.

While Ireland has a long history of community activism, since the mid-1970s community development has become a more formalised and State funded strategy to address issues linked to poverty, unemployment and inequality. Government policy and programmes have represented community development as increasingly central to an integrated and socially cohesive society. However, community development changed over time from being primarily characterised by locally-led voluntary activism to a higher presence and greater influence of paid professionals directed by voluntary community management committees. As State intervention has become more central in determining the resourcing and agenda of community development, questions have emerged regarding power, autonomy and the purpose of community development in Ireland.

4.4.2 Post 2000: The Managerialisation of Community Development

This section highlights some of the key changes that have taken place in community development in Ireland over the past decade. It is argued in this study that community development has been radically re-orientated through State managerialism, away from community-identified goals and towards delivering on State prescribed policies and agendas.

4.4.2.1 The era of reviews

In 2000, an evaluation of the national Community Development Programme was carried out by Nexus Research Company in association with Farrell Grant Sparks. It reviewed the Community Development Programme, which at that time funded 83 Community Development Projects (CDPs) across Ireland (Nexus, 2000). Those projects were managed by local voluntary management committees who employed workers to support community development processes that were in line with national programme goals while still grounded in local needs and issues (Nexus, 2000). According to Nexus (2000) at project level many of the longer established CDPs had reached the stage where the impact of their work was very evident and

extremely impressive. These impacts in disadvantaged communities were particularly notable, given the relatively small amounts of investment (Nexus, 2000). The evaluation report also confirmed that CDPs had contributed very significantly to changing community circumstances and creating opportunities across a range of indicators; improvements for individuals accessing and engaging in training and education, enhanced capacity of people to engage in identifying their own needs and responses, and establishing local infra-structure through which other services and programmes improved their own delivery to local communities and target groups (Nexus, 2000). The recommendations of this evaluation focused mostly on the need for longer-term strategic development of the programme and resources as well as addressing managerialist concerns such as the standardisation of recording of activities, outputs and impacts. Overall, it was a positive evaluation of the impact of local CDPs and given its tone it might have been expected that the work of CDPs would be affirmed by central government.

In 2003[12], two years after the completion of the Nexus evaluation another review of CDPs was initiated by Minister O' Cuiv, which was carried out by Area Development Management[13] (ADM). The review was aimed at reforming the sector, to "streamline the structures from the top" (Changing Ireland, Summer 2003), as well as addressing issues such as transparency, co-ordination, improved control of funding and democratic accountability of agencies and service providers. While this review was taking place, core funding to projects was allocated on an interim basis awaiting the results of the review. Because this caused anxiety at local project level, at a national seminar in June of that year, Minister O' Cuiv sought to allay the fears of many community workers by stating that his government department recognised "the huge expertise and commitment (of community development projects) built up over the years and they were not about to scrap that". He followed that statement with "I want to make one thing clear here: it is my belief that you either

[12]2003 saw the establishment of a new government department for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs under Minister O' Cuiv of Fianna Fáil.

[13] ADM had national responsibility for co-ordination of the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP) delivered by Local Area Partnerships/Local Development Companies.

change or die. It's nothing to do with all those rumours you hear about saving money" (O'Cuiv, 2003: 11). While members and workers from CDPs, FRCs[14] and Partnership companies attended this seminar, there remained real anxiety within the community sector regarding the purposes and transparency of the review.

In 2007/8, the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs[15], this time under Minister Carey of Fianna Fáil, decided to carry out another review of the Community Development Programme. This review was carried out by staff of the department during 2008, and recommended the amalgamation of some CDPs and the abolition of others (Changing Ireland, Winter 2009). Up to 30 CDPs were identified as unviable and earmarked to lose their funding. This review and subsequent appeal process was heavily criticised by the Community Workers Co-Op (CWC, 2009) in a statement entitled "Results of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs Review Appeals Process is unfair and undemocratic". Among some of the claims made by the CWC one was that no project was given any information about the review and no project knew the criteria against which they were assessed. The CWC also contended that the appeals board did not have any independent person and nor did it include anyone experienced in community development on the board. In hindsight, both these government-led review processes appeared to be the start of a process of dismantling or integrating community development projects within a new structure. Either way, it left many CDPs and workers angry, dismayed and reeling from such an untransparent decision-making process (Changing Ireland, Winter 2009).

Simultanesouly and in response to the global and Irish fiscal crisis, 2008 saw the establishment of the Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes (colloquially known as *An Bord Snip Nua*), which was an advisory committee established by the government to recommend cuts in public spending

[14] Family Resource Centres set up by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.
[15] Previously named the Department of Social and Family Affairs

in order to save up to €4bn. The review group, chaired by economist Colm McCarthy, published two volumes of findings commonly known as the 'McCarthy report' on July 16th 2009. Identifying public expenditure cuts up to €5.3bn, the McCarthy report recommended cuts of up to 60% to the Community Development Programme, remarking that there was little evidence of positive outcomes from either the Community Development Programme or the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (McCarthy Report, 2009). This contrasted significantly with the findings of previous reviews.

4.4.2.2 Community development experts

Also in 2008, the Centre for Effective Services (CES)[16] was contracted by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to review community and local development work in Ireland. The CES subsequently made significant recommendations in relation to the restructuring, management and accountability of the local development[17] and community development programmes. Arguably, with the creation of the CES, we see a new designation of expertise in community development, one that is being used to discipline and reorient the sector towards national policy goals and not, as previously claimed by Government Ministers, towards locally identified needs and responses. As noted by Meade (2012), the CES reports and web-site is replete with scientific definitions, managerial jargon and speak, which is heavily reflected in the new programme guidelines for the national Local and Community Development Programme (Pobal, 2010).

[16] The Centre for Effective Services on their website describes itself as "part of a new generation of intermediary organisations across the world connecting **scientific evidence** of what works to **policy** and **practice** to improve the lives of children, young people and the families and communities in which they live".

[17] In 2008 - 2009, smaller partnership companies (who were responsible for the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme) were amalgamated with other local development structures, e.g. rural development co-ordinated by Leader Companies. Similarly the State's key equality bodies, i.e. The Equality Tribunal, National Disability Authority, Equality Authority and Irish Human Rights Commission, were all merged with reduced budgets – all under the directive entitled 'cohesion'.

In 2009 the CES published a paper entitled “Effective Community Development Programmes”. This paper provided the rationale and informed the design of the new national Local and Community Development Programme (LCDP) into which the existing Community Development Programme was integrated. The CES (2009) emphasised national coherence and the need for local programmes, which often vary in response to complex needs locally, to “adhere to effective practice standards and accountability to national priorities, and that local complexity must be managed and to some extent constrained, if large-scale programmes are to be effective, and to be seen to be effective” (2009: 14). This conclusion by the CES is significant and contradictory given it acknowledges elsewhere in the report that community development is inherently focused on local participation, empowerment and community self-determination. However, its recommendations went on to inform the actual reform of the programmes, resulting in goals and outcomes that are no longer determined by local communities or projects, and community workers who instead of working to a community-led agenda are expected to prioritise performance monitoring and reporting.

While there was significant criticism of the process leading up to the findings of this paper, particularly by the Community Workers Co-Op (2009), Government Ministers continued to reassure community development projects that “their work would receive all the support they need” and that “CDPs have nothing to fear” (Minister Carey, Changing Ireland: May/July 2010: 2). It would appear from such reassurances that government politicians too play an insider and outsider role in implementing policy, i.e. implementing government decisions while at the same time reassuring projects that they will be defended against those same decisions. These contradictions makes for a difficult environment in which to analyse and develop strategies of resistance.

4.4.2.3 The professionalisation of community workers

As community development work in Ireland has become managerialised and more centrally directed by the State in the last number of years and in addition to concerns about such State directiveness, another significant controversy has emerged about the professionalisation of community development (Fitzsimons, 2010; Komolafe 2009). Professionalism in community development generates conflicting and ambivalent responses. Professionalisation according to Ledwith (2011) has given rise to a new type of practitioner who is concerned with policy goals such as social inclusion. She claims that practitioners increasingly speak a managerialist language and that "professionalism has silenced us, obscuring our commitment to act for the common good" (Ledwith, 2011: 29). This shift to professionalisation and accredited learning in Ireland can also be seen in the number of community development related courses now on offer by various educational institutions and national bodies including some which are accredited by UK agencies (Changing Ireland, Autumn 2011). Critics argue that these training inputs have shifted away from the community development skills of group work and social analysis to an emphasis on more managerial skills (Changing Ireland, Winter 2010), such as performance monitoring, quantitative-recording, evaluation and project management (Fitzsimons, 2010). These different influences produces different interpretations and tensions in community work at local level.

This critical analysis of the implications of professionalisation and its tendency towards 'social closure' is also reflected in the work of Eversole (2010), Macdonald (1995) and Fitzsimons, (2010). These tensions are explored by Fitzsimons (2010: 154) who argues that the professionalisation of community work in Ireland has been detrimental to radical practice because of its encouragement of individual progression for learners and a favouring of professional practitioner benefits over collective community gain. She also highlights the 'social closure' that is a feature of professionalisation and the consequent over-emphasis on technical competence above ideological debate and local experiential knowledge.

The positive and progressive aspects of professionalisation have been endorsed by the CWC (2008) who have emphasised 'quality standards', where community development values are central to the training and formation of workers. However, these moves towards establishing standards and qualifications risk creating and reinforcing social distance between the community members or participants and the worker practitioners (See Bane, 2009; Meade, 2012; Crickley and McArdle, 2009; Eversole, 2010). Meade (2012) argues that in Ireland wide-scale acceptance of community development's professional status is still a work in progress; within the sector there remain those who have yet to be convinced that professionalism is desirable or justifiable. She argues that in the context of growing State control, it is a risky strategy for many community workers to define and engage further in the professionalisation of community workers.

The debate about professionalism was not pursued at length in my research but it is notable that the 'qualifications' of the community workers who participated in this research varied and they also exhibited differing individual views regarding their expertise and role vis-à-vis community work with less emphasis on a collective identity. These issues were not and cannot be resolved within this study but it is important to acknowledge them as part of the political backdrop shaping and reframing community development in Ireland today.

4.4.2.4 Transformation or abolition of local community development?

On September 18th 2009, Minister Curran announced that the local Community Development Programme and the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme were to be integrated into a new programme called the national "Local and Community Development Programme" (LCDP) to be administered by local development/partnership companies, commencing in 2010. This implied the legal disbandment of 180 community development projects across the country from the original programme. While there was a significant level of disquiet and concern

about such moves including the re-orientation of the community development programme towards more intense levels of managerialism, officials from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG)[18] and from Pobal (national programme co-ordinating body) remained resolute in their determination that integration or isolation and loss of funding were the only options available to Community Development Projects (Changing Ireland, Winter 2009). Public protests involving up to 30,000 people took place between September and December 2009, but there was no change in direction even though the DECLG encouraged the development and submission of alternatives to the model proposed by the Department. Commencing in 2010, approximately 160 Community Development Projects were integrated, i.e. lost their autonomy[19] and transferred into Local Development Companies, with approximately 10 projects closing and approximately 10 projects resisting integration and finding ways to survive independently[20]. Some of the projects that remain autonomous and outside the national programme continue to do so but on very limited resources. Funding to the Community Worker's Co-Op, which supported the development of the community sector's policy role ceased in 2011, and as a result it too was forced to close its offices.

From all of the changes outlined above, it would appear that community-led and managed community development has been severely undermined, if not eradicated totally, by the cohesion, integration and alignment processes that have taken place to date. This has resulted in a loss of autonomy and ownership of projects by local communities to a version of community development which is understood as adhering to nationally prescribed guidelines and responding to centrally prescribed objectives. In other words, these imposed changes brought about the State-managerialisation of community development in Ireland.

[18] Previously titled the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.
[19] Though all CDPs were funded by the State to varying degrees their programme of work was locally identified, planned and managed.
[20] Some projects aligned with the Health Service Executive (HSE) or other national organisations such as the National Traveller Partnership or the National Collective of Women's Networks and a few went it alone.

At the end of 2011, after an abrupt change in government, the new Minster for the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG), Mr Phil Hogan, set up a steering committee to advise on the alignment of local government and local development systems and structures. An interim report was provided (December 2011) and a final report "Putting People First" was submitted in June 2012. The Minister's proposals on alignment and the new LCDP prioritised top-down versions of accountability and constructed community development as a tool of government policy but did not attend to issues of deliberative democracy, public participation or the engagement of civil society (DECLG, 2012). "Putting People First" also recommended aligning many other public services by mid 2013, with many being downsized and amalgamated across regions. It proposed the replacement of all town councils, a reduction of regional authorities and assemblies from eleven to three and amalgamation of city/county local authorities from 114 to 31 (Putting People First, 2012). These recommendations are part of the local government reform programme entitled "Better Local Government". The impacts of austerity can also be traced in these developments. Changes to local government and local development structures was legitimised and rationalised as cost savings and achieving greater efficiencies as part of the general austerity discourse[21].

4.4.2.5 Integrating community development and local development

In 2011, the Community Workers Co-Op (CWC) assessed the cumulative impacts of these developments, i.e. cohesion, integration and alignment over the past five years: "Community development and local development are erroneously presented as being one and the same. They are not. They are in fact two distinct approaches, although they can be complementary and both have important contributions to make in these challenging times. CWC believes, and experience shows, that community development requires autonomy and full participation by marginalised communities that are its constituency if it is to contribute to addressing and reversing the outcomes of the recession" (CWC, 2011: 3). The CWC (2011) argues

[21] The 'Celtic Tiger' period with a thriving economy and an unemployment rate of 3.5% in 2004 was replaced by a recession in 2008 and an unemployment rate of 15% (CSO, 2010).

that community development does this best when it is resourced to operate independently. From a CWC (2011) perspective the change in the community development landscape post 2008 has grievously undermined the democratic ethos and participatory base of community development with State power, always present in more benign forms, becoming more obviously disciplinary and controlling (CWC, 2011; Jones and Novak, 1999).

Local development organisations were created to deliver on the European Structural Funds, e.g. Rural Development Programme among others and have a strong local focus on infra-structure. Humphreys (2011) in her review of Local Development in Ireland similarly observes that the pursuit of accountability, has led to models of development which are less flexible and are not particularly amenable to the spirit of local development. Over-dependence on State funding has led to sterility in local development. This may be the result of local development being treated as a delivery system for public programmes and not primarily as vehicle for civil society to engage, participate and direct our future collectively (CWC, 2011; Meade, 2012; Humphreys, 2011).

The summary table below compiled from CPA (1995) and Pobal (2010) guidelines, highlights the main characteristics and changes in emphasis of the Community Development Programme by the State, over the past twenty years. It demonstrates an underlying change in approach and rationality, whereby disadvantaged communities are increasingly seen as passive, i.e. to be managed and monitored by others. It also highlights the intensification of managerialism in community development referred to earlier, e.g. budget allocations and specific goals prescribed by central government. It is thus apparent that community development is being transformed into pursuing standardised goals, delivering and being accountable under pre-determined nationally set key performance indicators, which privilege service provision (Pobal, 2010).

Table 2: Characteristics of Community Development Programmes 1990 - 2010

Characteristics of Community Development Programmes	
1990	**2010**
Core characteristics of CDPs[22]: • Have an **anti-poverty** focus • Work from **community development principles and methods** • Provide **support** and act as a **catalyst** for community development activity • Act as a **resource in the communities** of which they are part • **Promote co-ordination and co-operation** between community, voluntary and statutory groups in their areas • **Involve representatives of groups which experience poverty, social exclusion with their management structures.** • It is also about how the work is carried out **– both the task and the process are important.** Reporting: written quarterly programme report and return of a spreadsheet showing accounting of spending to budget allocation.	State prescribed programme guidelines[23]: • Goal 1 (budget 10%): **Promote awareness, knowledge and uptake** of a wide-range of statutory, voluntary and community **services.** • Goal 2 (budget 40%): Increase **access** to formal and informal educational, recreational and cultural activities and resources. • Goal 3 (budget 40%): Increase people's **work readiness** and employment prospects. • Goal 4 (budget 10%): **Engagement with policy, practice and decision making processes on matters affecting local communities**. Reporting: quarterly programme statistics, qualitative comments and all financial accounting in prescribed templates via a system called IRIS.[24] It includes terms such as 'beneficiary participation rate' and value for money.

4.4.2.5 What now?

This last ten years, have seen significant structural change and large funding cuts to the community development sector in Ireland. These have been exacerbated by austerity policies. An independent evaluation of the sector published in 2012, (Harvey 2012) and commissioned by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, noted that

[22]Taken from Working Together Against Poverty, Combat Poverty Agency, 1995.
[23]Pobal LCDP Guidelines, 2010-2011. Extended to July 2014 and now titled Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme 2014 (SICAP) – reduced to three goals.
[24] Pobal's Integrated Reporting Information System (IRIS) known generically as a CRM - Customer Relationship Management System.

the voluntary and community sector had, at the start of the financial crisis in 2008, a value of €6.5bn, received about 1.89bn in State funding and employed 53,098 people (full-time equivalents) (Harvey, 2012: 3). The funding cuts have resulted in a contraction in the order of 35% leading to a loss of employment in the voluntary and community sector of 11,150 jobs by the end of 2013 (Harvey, 2012: 3). Harvey (2012) projects that only 36,638 will be employed by the end of 2015. According to Harvey, such cuts appear arbitrary and incoherent and were never explained or justified by government. He concludes that despite government pledges to protect the most vulnerable, to the contrary the most disadvantaged geographical areas and target groups appear to have suffered at least as much, and arguably more so. Harvey (2012) thus observes that this contraction, which is unmatched in any other European country, has resulted in the influence of the community sector becoming inconsequential, raising significant questions about the government's commitment to community, democracy and citizenship.

The above highlights a significant change in direction and thinking by the State towards community development (Gaynor, 2009; Meade 2012; Crowley, 2012), where community development is now seen as an activity to be directed by the State. There have been subtle shifts in terminology, with concepts such as 'activation' and 'job-readiness' becoming prominent. Actions have been re-orientated away from capacity building of local communities to carry out their own social analysis or to participate and have a voice, towards instead linking local communities with public services and local government structures. Most of these changes have been imposed by the State as opposed to occurring organically as a result of community-led demands, grassroots action or social movements (Gaynor, 2009; Meade 2012; Crowley, 2012). Arguably, as a result of these large-scale changes, State policy in Ireland is currently re-orientating community development towards a marketised model (Kenny, 2010) bringing with it definite managerial practices and cultures. There is sporadic evidence of collective critical analysis by community workers who have challenged these policy dictates but they have been limited and fragmented. Ostensibly the limited levels of protest and resistance

(Murphy, 2011) suggest that many community development projects have indeed been 'captured' by the State. Fear for resources and survival may have been significant factors in dissipating opposition (Crowley 2012). Nevertheless, Kenny (2010: 17) writing about similar changes in Australia asserts that "we need more than a settled form of community development based around social maintenance and defensive active citizenship. An unsettled and edgy community development is needed which requires critical, pro-active, visionary and active citizens who are prepared to challenge existing power relations". One first step, I would argue is that there needs to be greater acknowledgement of the contradictions, inter-sections, and fluctuating position of community development by community workers such as is being researched in this study and which is also observed by Crowley, (2012); Meade, (2012); Shaw, (2011) and Newman (2013). This in turn might encourage workers to build closer relationships with marginalised communities, beyond the parameters of State agendas.

4.5 Community Work and its Relationship to Resistance

Given some of the claims made for community development it might be presumed that resistance is a strong feature of practice, i.e. that radical community development might lead to more public and consciously oppositional forms of community engagement. Similarly one might expect the potentially regressive or controlling aspects of contemporary managerialism and its influence in community development to generate overt resistance or even everyday resistance or subversive engagement with the performance monitoring templates required by national programme co-ordinators. These issues are explored in my research with community workers as I invite them to consider the place of resistance in community development, the extent to which and the ways by which they practise resistance, and their assessment of resistance's positive effects. For example, if community workers believe that the core principles/values of community development are being undermined through the incorporation/integration of community development projects within State agencies or Local Development

Companies /Partnerships, do they feel it is their moral and professional obligation to resist such moves? If so, how does such resistance find expression? As this chapter and the proceeding one have shown the introduction and implementation of managerialist approaches in community development have generated significant tensions for community workers. The translation of standardised programmes and prescribed practices into complex local contexts brings unavoidable challenges for community development's identity as a critical and participatory process. However, such managerialist pressures may prompt workers to subvert or resist in various ways. This may take the form of refusing or ignoring particular managerially defined tasks; developing strategies to minimise their impact; continuing to perform work or roles 'not allowed' under prescribed agendas; or by developing new alliances or building new 'spaces' with community members in order to restate or reclaim community works' purposes in this new environment (Newman, 2013).

While my research seeks to highlight practices of resistance, successful and otherwise, there has been a lack of analysis or literature on resistance as practised by community workers. Clarke (1997) and Shaw (2008) proposes that one of the achievements of the discourse of managerial-led change, also highlighted in Chapter Three, has been to produce consent to the programmes of restructuring and in some cases those who traditionally resisted on the grounds of inequality and injustice have found themselves co-opted or marginalised by the new managerial discourses. This discourse of 'change' and restructuring of community development through local development companies and local government, may have demobilised potential opposition and alternative possibilities as managerialism has been successful in 'winning consent' to one kind of change agenda and in silencing others (Clarke, 1997: 51). This poses a significant challenge for community workers who wish to hold on to critical community development values such as those described on pages 81 to 88. My research seeks to explore if and how community workers have acceded to these changes or alternatively if they have resisted them.

The managerial transformative agenda, referred to in greater detail in Chapter Three, which is associated with New Public Management (NPM) identifies worker resistance as stemming from flawed personal, organisational or social motives, and is often construed as the protection of 'vested interest'; therefore it creates suspicion of resistors (Clarke, 1997). Dissent may be difficult to articulate and may generate backlashes and so resistance may appear in more passive forms. Again, my research explores these issues with workers. Naming and countering such dominant managerial 'logic' presents a professional as well as ethical challenge for community workers along with risks to status and job security, especially since most are directly or indirectly employed by the State. In this research, I will be seeking out if resistance, in such difficult and contradictory circumstances, is being contemplated or actioned and if so how is this being practised?

4.6 Conclusion

As can be seen from the previous sections, concepts related to community development are highly contested in theory and in practice. This makes for both a contentious and dynamic sector in which to work.

While it would appear that community development has a long and varied history and secured a growing prominence in the State's anti-poverty programmes during 1970s/80s/90s, it is apparent that there have been considerable structural changes to community development in recent years. Since the mid-late 2000s there has been a significant transformation in this programme, as the majority of local community development projects have now been integrated into larger local development structures and are subject to the rise of State managerialism. The focus is now on prescribed national guidelines, governance and accountability measures and where the work is evaluated according to nationally set performance monitoring indicators. The connection between projects and local residents/communities has been significantly reduced and in some cases almost

erased. Where relationships do exist between the Local Development Company (LDC) and communities, it is primarily focused on service provision, not critical social analysis or the enhancement of public participation or democracy. These changes have been forcefully imposed and facilitated by local social partnership (local development) type structures.

Therefore community workers are struggling on several fronts: to articulate their concerns about the new forms of community development being prescribed and in responding to the new roles being demanded of them by the State. However, if community workers are as committed to their principles as they claim to be, if workers want to respond to communities and not just to the State and if workers are committed to critical practice, they may seek out and create opportunities to resist the forces that constrain both their work and the potential participation and collective action of community members. In today's community development settings, the State has a stronger role and that influence simultaneously promotes a culture of managerialism. This study seeks to explore if and how, within this context, resistance is understood and practised by community workers, at what is it targeted, using what kind of strategies and how the current environment is being perceived?

Chapter 5: Methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the philosophical positions and understandings that have informed both my role as a researcher and the methods used to carry out this particular piece of research. The chapter is organised under the following key headings: the main theoretical perspectives embedded in my work; my position as researcher, including the political and ethical issues that required consideration; the research sample and methods used to carry out my data collection, data analysis and presentation.

As detailed in Chapters Three and Four, I argue that there have been many changes in community development in recent years, not least those brought about by a changing State apparatus that has promoted a strong neo-liberal, managerial agenda (Meade, 2012; Allen, 2009). As a result, the role of community development and community development practices are also changing. I am interested in how these changes are being understood by community workers and how they are being resisted, if at all.

More specifically, my research is focused on community workers' understandings and practices of resistance. I chose this topic for two main reasons: one, the term resistance is widely understood in community development work as a core, albeit frequently unquestioned, component of community development work and; two, given the significant structural changes being imposed on community development work, i.e. the neo-liberalisation and managerialisation of community development, I wanted to develop an understanding of the forms of resistance engaged in by community workers and what they now envisage for themselves in terms of future

resistances. While I carried out a broadly related literature review initially, I allowed the data which emerged from focus groups of community workers to lead my main theoretical literature review and analyses. This resulted in my research being largely focused on community workers' understandings and practices of resistance to the managerialisation of community development.

5.2 Theoretical Framework

The following are the key theoretical principles to which I committed when undertaking this research process:

5.2.1 Community Development/Feminist Research Practice

There is some symmetry and overlap between feminist research practices/ aspirations, e.g. meaningful participation, engagement, shared agenda-setting, and approaches in community development practice. This is why feminist research theory and tradition has influenced the choice of methods and the processes employed in this study.

Byrne and Lentin (2000) argue that feminist research demands a deconstruction of the power relationship between researcher and researched, a political commitment to emancipatory practice and models of research and practices which privilege participation, representation, interpretation and reflexivity. While it is acknowledged by Byrne and Lentin (2000) that there are many variations of feminist research, (e.g. postmodernist, Marxist, standpoint), they concur with Humphries (1998) that in general, feminist research is committed to ways of knowing that avoid subordination and that question the dichotomies that are often taken for granted around issues to do with knowledge creation. Daly in Byrne and Lentin (2000) expands that feminist research is not just the pursuit of knowledge; it is ultimately oriented towards bringing about positive social change. I carried out

this study with the intention of making a positive contribution to community development research in Ireland.

In line with feminist research practice, my research was committed from the outset to a 'participatory' and 'emancipatory' vision. That is, I am seeking community workers' own accounts and interpretations of their experiences first and foremost, and prior to any interpretation or critical analysis by me as researcher. I believe, as is common in my field of work, that by posing well-structured questions, those who are the target of the inquiry are well positioned to inform, interrogate and analyse their own situations. That is not to say that one should simply listen and not challenge or probe deeply what is being said, but it does acknowledge that those with relevant experience are well placed to reflect on the key concepts under review and to illuminate the varied nature of the community development landscape. This study therefore affirms the value and validity of participatory processes.

However, this approach is not politically neutral: to believe in and promote this approach is to believe in the intrinsic importance of community self-determination. In Ireland, there still remains strong resistance from powerful institutions that promote immediate impact or pre-ordained outcomes (see Chapters Three and Four). I made every effort in this research process to open up spaces for the consideration of new interpretations of community development concepts and relationships. I did this by posing challenging, sometimes uncomfortable, questions whilst at the same time ensuring all participants were encouraged and supported to contribute. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) and Humphries (1998) also promote the aims of 'emancipatory research', i.e. research that seeks to contribute to liberating and empowering people through dialogue and self-awareness. I believe many of the community workers found the research process of this study to be empowering and educational.

While I have made every effort to ensure the full participation of all those who attended, I acknowledge that not all participatory research is emancipatory. Some participatory approaches can be tokenistic, e.g. consultations where decisions are already made, but institutions or agencies want the 'optics' of public consultation. Similarly, participation and settings can be deliberately contrived, thereby structured towards generating the answers one wants. This often occurs when groups only have participants from dominant groupings which confirm only dominant views and not those of excluded or marginalised groupings. The participants in this research came from a variety of professional, geographic and employment backgrounds and while I had a loosely structured agenda, I allowed the groups to contribute to agenda setting and followed their lead when group discussions and debates highlighted new points of interest or points of difference.

Oleson in Denzin and Lincoln (2008) identifies some of the challenges in feminist research practice; such as research implying that all women (community workers) are the same, or speak with a common voice; the ethical challenges involved in supporting participation by diverse and potentially contradictory voices; and ensuring accurate interpretation of findings so that they reflect the integrity and spirit of the data shared. These issues also emerge for community development practice and require constant reflexivity on the part of the researcher/workers. I am confident that the deliberate inclusion, participation and engagement of the community workers in open discussions and analysis of their own work situations, can help to expose the various contexts, complexities and understandings that shape community work. It also may potentially go further to challenge hegemonic views and assumptions and contribute positively to social change.

5.2.2 Being Critical and Reflexive

5.2.2.1 Being Critical

Another feature of my approach to this research was a concern with being critical. According to Kincheloe and McLaren (2008) critical research is interested in exposing how power operates to sustain hierarchies; it exposes how institutions, processes and structures define insiders and outsiders and how they reproduce inequality. My research includes an examination of structures, practices, discourses and ideologies that influence contemporary Irish social policy and practice in its interactions with community development. The relationship between resistance and power, or the idea of resistance as a kind of countervailing power or counter-hegemonic force was explained in Chapter Two.

As explained in Chapters Three and Four the changes in community development and practice over the last ten years are substantial and have been experienced as disruptive, so that it is incumbent on me as a critical researcher to highlight the overarching ideologies and forces behind such changes. Because community development work in Ireland is very much 'tied to' the State in terms of policy and funding, this study invited community workers' to share their understandings of how the State locates and exercises power. In particular, I examine how the new managerialist definitions of purpose, practices, terminology and processes, which are being advanced by the Irish State, are interpreted by the groups of different community workers, asking if these workers resist managerialism and, if so, why and how?

My focus on critical research reflects an effort, as Bauman (1992) states, not to replicate common sense, but to struggle with the social reality that underlies it. Critical researchers are interested in playing an active part in putting 'private troubles' on the public agenda and uncovering 'hidden' or subtle macro agendas. In my case, the State's introduction of large scale structural reform including new

managerial practices to the Community Development Programme (see Chapter Four) emerged as a defining issue for community development workers. Reflecting the spirit of a critical emancipatory paradigm, this study brings attention to the oppressions that community workers face in trying to practise resistance, represent their constituencies and reflect community development values. These struggles are experienced individually by workers but this research created temporary, collective discursive spaces for those experiences to be shared. This process in itself is politically challenging given the current extent of State surveillance and control over community work, including workers and my consultancy practice.

However, there was a tension in my research study. On the one hand I wanted to facilitate a critical discussion about community development in the current difficult environment, by examining 'resistance' and how it might be operationalised by community workers. On the other hand I was acutely aware of how unsupported and worn down community workers were in trying to do their day-to-day job, never mind having to activate resistance in a co-ordinated strategic manner. I believe that my approach to the research could be described as being a 'critical friend'. Given that almost all participants were willing to travel for focus group discussions on two different occasions in three different counties, I believe that my research and the opportunities it presented were seen as valuable, offering worthwhile spaces for participants to engage and debate.

I am also aware that research processes are themselves sites of power, potentially reflected in relations between me as the researcher and the participants. Consequently, just as transparency about roles and purpose should be common practice in community development work, in the focus groups we consciously acknowledged potential power dynamics in the research relationship at the beginning of our meetings. As a researcher one always runs the risk of perpetuating relations of dominance (Humphries, 1998). For example, I was acutely aware that academic knowledge is almost always represented as superior compared to

experiential or oral knowledge. This is especially true for members of the Traveller community. My concern was about how my research could contribute to Traveller community development positively and while I cannot know for sure at this stage, I would hope that by deliberately including Traveller community workers' voices, it will contribute to a richer understanding of community work and resistance.

5.2.2.2 Reflexivity

According to Hsiung (2008), reflexivity is one of the most fundamental concepts and practices that differentiate qualitative from quantitative research. I undertook to adopt a reflexive approach from the start to the finish of my thesis because I believe that such an approach supports and mirrors the emancipatory, participatory, transparent approach espoused in feminist praxis and community development. I practised reflexivity in my discussions with community workers, but also with my supervisors when we reflected on the process at each step of the way. This resulted in continuously reflecting on the questions being asked, the manner in which they were being asked, if the data was sufficient to answer the questions, if new questions were needed, if participants were safe, if the data and analysis reflected participants' views and contributions, if feedback to the participants was required and if the final presentation of data reflected the individual and collective spirit in which it was shared.

Owens (2007) explains that reflexivity demands that researchers examine their motivations and that we critically consider why and how we are using particular research tools. Therefore, after each session I took time to reflect on whether I was getting the data I required to answer my questions; if focus groups were too conciliatory as environments for critical questioning and whether I was prepared to be critical enough in my questioning. At all times, I reflected and attempted to get a balance between the aim of the inquiry and allowing participants to direct the flow of the conversation. In addition, I kept personal field notes of each session which I referred to later to double-check my understandings. Furthermore, I am an

experienced consultant in the use of such reflexive practices as part of my everyday professional work practice.

Finally, attempting to create spaces that are reflexive, critical and emancipatory within one piece of research is very ambitious, given the limitation of time and resources. However, this research is a contribution towards the creation of a space within which community workers and others can reflect upon key issues and it may open up some new thinking towards social change. It could also be argued that the commitment to and use of feminist principles and approaches, which have traditionally been core approaches of community development practice, are in today's terms a practice of resistance. Many community workers find themselves fighting to use such practices and resisting the demands for outputs without due attention to process.

5.3 My Position as Researcher

First, let me be clear on my position as researcher. I am both an 'insider' and an 'outsider' (Silverman, 2010) to the community workers I engaged with in this research. I have been working in the community and voluntary sector as a consultant for over twenty years and on occasions I have worked directly with some of the community workers who participated in the focus groups. Therefore, I bring to the research certain pre-dispositions, values and assumptions, which I share with many community workers such as:

- A personal commitment to the principles underpinning community development work as stated by national organisations such as CWC (2008).
- A belief that community development can be empowering and emancipatory both for the participating communities and for the workers.
- A belief that local autonomous community development practice can allow marginalised communities to challenge dominant ideologies and voice alternatives.

On the other hand, in my role as a consultant in the community and voluntary sector, some of the participating community workers would see me in an external professional role, there to advise, evaluate and critique their practices. In addition, it became apparent that some community workers had never previously discussed the topic 'resistance', particularly in a collective environment, and were a little cautious that I might challenge them too much. Others, because they are familiar with my methods of working, were happy to attend knowing that I would ask challenging questions, bring some new energy and dynamism to the group discussion and raise new material and ideas for them to debate. My openness about my sexual orientation and work experience with identity-based groups encouraged some workers to attend and feel they could express their views safely. For others, such openness would be seen as challenging.

I believe that my 'insider' and 'outsider' status, in addition to my many years as a community and lesbian activist, has given me a greater awareness of the complexities of social life, particularly for community workers. I also believe that my reputation as an independent consultant allowed me to access data that community workers would not generally discuss in public, insights referred to by Scott (1990) as 'hidden transcripts'. My work practice encourages collaboration, participation and critical approaches to research, evaluation and planning; adopting these approaches within this research process encouraged in-depth and rich contributions from community workers. My research also raised a number of additional political and ethical issues. I outline these issues below followed by a description of how I addressed them.

5.3.1 Political Considerations

In exercising my role as researcher, both my analysis of the data and carrying out of the research involved making choices, judgments and interpretations. It is I who chose the topic, the methodology to be employed and subsequently structured the data analysis and final report. In this I held a significant amount of power. However,

the research participants ultimately had power in deciding to participate or not and the degree to which they engaged with focus group processes. Due to my familiarity with community development work, I believe that the community workers who actually participated in the research (eighteen out of the nineteen of whom are women), expressed trust in me both professionally, in terms of my facilitation and research skills, but also personally because of my shared understanding of their gender, identity and professional positions.

The composition of the focus groups varied across several lines of intersection. Two of the three focus groups were women only and the third group included one man (though three other men had committed to attend). According to Komolafe (2009) community development in Ireland is primarily (not exclusively) a women-centred practice, i.e. most community workers are women and most participants at local level are women although there has been a small increase in men's participation in recent years. Furthermore, community development regularly deals with issues associated with dominant constructions of femininity, related to caring, family and household, while often focusing on the negative impact of dominant constructions of masculinity and practices of men, e.g. everyday practices of men's violence against women, children and other men (Dominelli, 1995). The focus groups also included two publically 'out' lesbian activists and two Traveller workers – all of whom work (paid and voluntary) in identity-based community development projects. These workers see themselves and their community work practice as more politically motivated and rights-based rather than being focused on service provision. The focus groups were also mixed in terms of professional experience, background and location (rural/urban) and this contributed positively to the range and depth of analysis provided by the participants in each of the focus groups. Some community workers are employed in area-based partnerships/local development companies, statutory agencies, Family Resource Centres and in what were formerly known as Community Development Projects. These mixed focus groups required a high level of facilitation skills which I possess.

Given that my approach involves co-operation and mutuality, it seeks to serve "the community in which it is carried out, rather than exclusively serving the community of knowledge producers and policymakers" (Denzin, 2008). However, Lincoln (2008: 201) argues that there can be a double oppression at play when researching community workers: firstly, the oppression they feel themselves as workers, when trying to carry out their work in such restricted or prescribed contexts; secondly the oppression that workers try to reflect or communicate on behalf of the communities with whom they work or represent. Based on the focus groups it seems that this oppression is experienced both internally and externally by the workers I interviewed: they spoke of a strong sense of responsibility towards communities that are marginalised or oppressed, while they themselves experience more limited scope for action and analysis and at times being 'silenced'.

While there are a myriad of ways that social research can be identified as political, Truman, Mertens and Humphries, (2000: 146) believe that it is the researcher's commitment to the 'production of valid and relevant, evidence-based knowledge' that gives it its credibility, though I acknowledge there are many interpretations and sometimes agendas' influencing what constitutes 'evidence'.

5.3.2 Ethical Considerations

All focus group participants were over eighteen and the topics were not highly sensitive or invasive. Prior to commencing my data collection phase all those who agreed to participate were sent out an information sheet and consent form to be completed and returned prior to commencing the focus group sessions (see Appendix 6). As part of my Doctoral programme I sought formal ethical approval from University College Cork Social Research Ethics Committee which was granted in 2011 (see Appendix 4).

However, there were still some ethical issues that required consideration such as: the divulging of information and the expression of views that could potentially be emotionally upsetting and/or challenging for members of the group. I needed to be cognisant of participants who had failed in their resistances; the risks inherent in disclosure of information that is in direct opposition to participants' legal obligations as employees and/or as citizens; and the final ownership and publication of the report, all of which I refer to below. In particular, my research focus groups included workers from small city/rural settings and there was an expressed concern at the outset that revealing their understandings or practices of resistance which would be shared in open discussion could have work-related consequences outside of the focus group. Having identified these potential ethical issues arising in my research, below were my responses:

5.3.2.1 Disclosure of information

Firstly, there is always the potential for conflict or tension when disclosing information or offering personal opinions. In recognition that strong opposing views could be expressed by participants within the focus group, I set and reviewed ground rules at the beginning of each focus group session. These ground rules referenced: the need for confidentiality of information shared within the group; the requirement to show respect for each participant's contribution and opinion by actively listening and waiting to respond; and finally the requirement of each participant to be safe and create safety for others by committing to constructive communication and debate with no verbal attacks. The ground rules appeared to work well as participants agreed them collectively, discussed them at the outset where this was required and the written text was left hanging on the wall throughout each session.

In my study, while individuals are able to decide what information they wish to disclose and control access to their own private domains (Homan, 1991), I have had

prior contact with some of the participants and have insights into some of their experiences by virtue of that other role, i.e. as community consultant. Therefore the familiarity born of one role can be used to promote a rapport for the purpose of another role. It is in that combined capacity that I as researcher was granted permission to explore and inquire into community workers' understandings and experiences of resistance in its broadest sense. From a personal point of view, it is a great privilege to have been given the trust of community workers and access to such insights and experiences at a time when many community workers' positions were 'under threat or under siege' and where expressing personal views was perceived by them as risky. At the start of all my focus group sessions, I acknowledged my privileged access, whilst also discussing my role as researcher, differentiating it from other roles such as colleague or facilitator.

The second potentially 'unethical' scenario is where participants disclose information about actions taken that contradict their formal obligations as employees. While many resistant type activities, particularly for State community workers went outside the official remit of their employment, most of the actions described were covert or below the visibility line so as not to cause concern to employers. All community workers appeared to justify this type of resistance on the grounds of their allegiance to the values and principles underpinning their role and the communities they serve, rather than seeing themselves as serving their employer only. I am somewhat concerned that my research could cause problems for these workers if the detail of actions or views which can be attributable to specific community workers becomes known. I attempted to deal with this concern, and the next related concern identified below, by changing the names of workers for the data analysis (Chapter Six) and striving to ensure there is no substantial risk that workers' identities will be revealed. However, this aspect of the work has also been challenging as the community work sector in Ireland is very small.

Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity was a key concern of the participants: they wanted to be reassured that there was 'safety' in the group to speak their minds. Furthermore participants were keen to ensure the report reflected their views accurately and that their identities would be anonymised. As Homan (1991: 140) states, "within social research, confidentiality is less related to concealing opinions than with protecting identities of human subjects". This aspect of my research was time-consuming as the quotes given and used are often identifiable back to local projects and or workers. However, as I explained in the previous paragraph, I have attempted to address this issue as best I can.

5.3.2.2 Ownership and publication

The third area requiring consideration was 'ownership' and submission for academic judgment of the research report to external actors. In relation to publication and ownership, I have already requested permission to publish all or some of my research report through my informed consent form (see Appendix 6). In addition, I agreed to send out my data analysis and findings chapter to members of focus groups who wished to have a copy, prior to completion of my thesis. While some community workers requested this at the start of the process, at the finishing stages they were less concerned about reading my chapters. Participants from the focus groups instead wished that I would continue meeting and facilitating them in further discussion and analysis, indicating a desire to overcome the current absence of such opportunities.

I would like to conclude this section on ethics with a reference to social and feminist ethics made by Olesen in Denzin and Lincoln (2008). Within a feminist communitarian model, the mission of social science research is 'interpretative sufficiency'. Interpretation is sufficient when the research fulfils three conditions: it represents multiple voices; enhances moral discernment i.e. where moral views are explored and analysed through discourse; and it promotes social transformation. 'Interpretative sufficiency' means taking seriously lives that are loaded with

multiple interpretations and grounded in cultural complexity" (Denzin, 1992: 283). I believe my research achieves these aims, is interpretatively sufficient and can contribute to the enhancement of community development work in the longer term.

5.4 Research Sample and Methods

5.4.1 Sample Frame

I chose to carry out my research through focus group sessions with community workers located in Southern Ireland. I identified possible participants based on my extensive knowledge of organisations and agencies who employ community workers. I chose to carry out my research across three counties, proximate to where I live and work and which would ensure a good mix of rural and urban workers. Across the three counties I contacted all known community workers directly in their organisations and agencies. Initially I contacted the workers by phone, explained the broad purpose and approach of my research and asked them if they would be willing to participate. The only criteria for inclusion were as follows: participants must self-identify as community workers and attend the sessions representing themselves and their own views and not as representatives of their organisations. My sample frame of community workers is purposeful, reflecting a form of non-probability sampling (DeVaus, 1995).

The total sample size was twenty-six community workers[25]. Their employment contexts varied and included the Health Service Executive (HSE), Local Development Companies/Partnerships, Community Development Projects, Family Resource Centres and Community Enterprise Centre. Significantly, this sample size reflects almost the full population of projects with paid community workers in the three counties. Twenty-five out of twenty-six of the community workers approached

[25] The total number of community workers that I was aware of from my consultancy practice working in the three counties.

agreed to participate in the research, but only nineteen actually attended the focus group sessions on the scheduled dates. While six of the invited community workers[26] chose not to attend focus group sessions from the outset, nineteen did so consistently. Most of the workers informed their employers of their decision to participate and took time off work to do so, however all nineteen agreed to participate in the research whether they obtained approval or not from their employers. While non-attendance of six workers is not a high number, I am aware from my local experience that five of these workers operate out of a critical model of community work and were actively engaged in resistance work at the time of the focus groups.

5.4.2 Methods

I chose to use focus groups for data collection purposes, a decision informed by my belief that this method would facilitate a dynamic conversation among community workers who were located in different types of organisations and occupied positions not always agreeable to each other. For example, focus groups included State agency community workers and community workers working for local management committees (urban and rural). In agreement with Silverman (2010), I also felt that focus groups would facilitate a deeper conversation as threads in one conversation could lead to another angle on the same conversation. While overall I am happy that I used focus groups as a method to gather data, there were some limitations to this method which I discuss in the concluding Chapter Seven.

There were two distinct but related focus group sessions in each county, of three hours duration each, with the second meeting building on the findings and topics of the first. The focus group sessions took place between March and July 2011, a time of great change for community development. I attempted to set minimum quotas

[26]Six who were invited, agreed to participate but did not turn up on the specific date for a variety of reasons.

for the group size, an average of eight participants per focus group, in order to ensure that the data being offered was reflective of the diversity of community workers in each geographical area.

All participants in each group completed a profile questionnaire prior to the group discussion. (See Appendix 5A for questionnaire and 5B for a summary of the participants' profile). The aim of the questionnaire was to gather some background information on the experience and educational qualifications of the participants and also to present primer questions around concepts that were central to the research i.e. community workers' definitions of community work, resistance and the role of the State. Of the nineteen workers who participated, almost all had community development related qualifications; the majority had many years of practical/activist experience and all engaged in on-going but varying forms of professional development/training. To put this in context, the community workers who participated in this research had the following range of qualifications: 82% had primary degrees in social science/community and youth work; with 3 people holding their primary degree in business, history or nursing. 47% had post-graduate qualifications to masters' level in social science related areas. All participants had completed additional professional training in areas such as facilitation, assertiveness, mediation/conflict resolution, equality studies, and two listed further training in data-base development and management skills.

While I prepared questions to guide the overall focus group discussion (See Topic Guide in Appendix 5) and prompt responses that I needed for my research, for the most part I allowed participants to engage in discussion and debate with one another. I allowed the discussion to follow an organic flow and this resulted in an engaged and lively dynamic, where participants were as interested in the topic for their own self-awareness and development as for my research purposes. While most of the conversation focused on resistance to integration, i.e. the new structural realignment of CDPs, group members also considered their everyday

practices of resistance to discrimination, inappropriate State policy, form-filling, dominant ideologies.

The format of the sessions were constructed around the following pattern: relaxed introductions, a discussion of ground-rules, which I referred to earlier on page 119, a general discussion on community development, followed by more intensive examination of community workers' views on current community development roles and the sectors' relationship with the State, with most of the focus group time being allocated to an exploration of the concept of resistance and community workers' practices of same. The last session closed with questions about the future and a discussion on community workers' positive experiences of community development. This helped bring closure to the data collection phase of the research project. All sessions were held at venues agreeable to the participants. Focus groups were audio-recorded, and notes were taken by a colleague who was not an active participant in the group. Light refreshments were provided at the end of each session.

I prepared all focus group sessions extensively and reflected on the experience of each session after its completion by reviewing the field notes, listening to the recordings repeatedly and discussing same with colleagues and supervisors. This process allowed me to question and reconsider my approaches in the following session, to revisit any concept or topic that I felt was under-explained and it also supported and developed the work by building my own confidence in posing challenging questions and creating a space for complex in-depth discussion.

5.4.3 Focus Groups

Using focus groups as a method created opportunity for participation and dialogue, and dynamics within the group fostered critical analysis. These were 'safe' spaces within which beleaguered workers were able to critique structures and policies,

while also identifying successes and new opportunities for resistance. Maguire (1987) maintains that research must be grounded in and take seriously the struggles of those who are the subject of the inquiry and not simply privilege the researchers' aims and expectations. Kotchetkova, Evans and Langer (2008: 73) state that "focus groups allow participants to frame issues in their own terms and may, therefore, be able to reveal the more complex, and context dependent nuances" that underpin their practices, values and expectations of their roles. Based on my experience of carrying out this research, it is clear that focus groups are a very useful tool for examining topics in-depth. Their richness comes from the discussion and interaction within the group which allows participants to recognise and build on new insights throughout the session (Finch and Lewis, 2003). Focus groups allow data collection to become more naturalistic and engaging. In this study all the sessions were highly interactive, energising, engaging and each three hour session ended with everyone feeling the time had passed incredibly quickly and all offered to meet again if I wished.

However, a common criticism of focus groups is that the group can exert a pressure on its participants to conform to the dominant viewpoints within the group and not discuss divergent views or experiences (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). In each session I encouraged a diversity of viewpoints, through the use of probing, sometimes challenging questions. I did this in an open, relaxed facilitation style. While I did not observe to any great extent that the community workers felt compelled towards dominant views or socially acceptable viewpoints, there were examples of workers not being able to articulate or answer the more challenging questions at times. For example, two workers looked baffled at the idea that as a community worker one might resist State policy or programmes, when the State was the main funder of their employment. It also has to be acknowledged that community workers through their experience and training are generally very comfortable in group settings, and behave in a manner which is tacitly understood by other members in the group based on their own work practices. This includes finding ways for the safe expression of robust and varying opinions or challenging each other within a group

setting. At the first group session, in addition to it being my first attempt at data collection, I felt I should not be too overtly challenging as some community workers came across as worn-down, despondent or deflated by recent challenges and in relation to their own attempts at resistance. This affected my approach in that, while I wished to probe group members' analysis of the current situation, I did this by attempting to facilitate greater self-analysis by group members, in the hope that this might stimulate thinking around alternative future actions and possibly, as a group process, be more empowering rather than simply judgemental. The approach to the first session facilitated me as researcher to be more critical and challenging in the second session as participants became more familiar with my style and objectives.

Wilkinson (1999) claims that one of the advantages of focus group research is that it reduces the power of the researcher over those researched, because the researcher is required to operate transparently in front of several participants, which makes the data more difficult to manipulate. This was my experience of the focus groups and given that the findings were agreed subsequently through a formal presentation of my research (to which all participants were invited), it confirms my approach as suitable. In my study, the majority of participants were politically aware and familiar with group work. They would not confirm research findings in a group setting if they did not agree that they reflected the process accurately and included their views.

Within focus group sessions, all of the community workers had the opportunity to represent themselves, their experiences, opinions and analysis. Their responses were recorded and the interpretation of the data, which is presented in Chapter Six, was based on the interaction of community workers' interpretations and mine as researcher. My own interpretations sought to review, collate and make sense of their views in light of key theoretical concepts and debates, policy developments and procedural changes. In turn I reviewed those developments and theoretical

debates in light of community workers' responses. In some cases, an analytical link between the direct experience of community workers and prevailing ideologies was explicitly made, with references to neo-liberalism and managerialism. But for many participants these links were not made, only explanations of the changes being experienced, including dominant policy rules and regulations, were articulated. However, when I made analytical and theoretical connections and presented them back to the research participants as findings, there was overall agreement. I believe that the use of focus groups was a highly successful method for conducting my research as participants in all three locations wished to continue meeting as a '*critical thinking network'* after my research work was completed.

5.5 Data Analysis and Presentation

5.5.1 Data Analysis

When all the focus group hours are added together there was a total of eighteen hours of recorded data, totalling approximately 146,000 words of transcribed text. I listened to the recorded data from each group repeatedly over a long period of time. Simultaneously, over this same period I had each compact disc transcribed for each focus group and re-read the transcripts for each group for recurring references, notable exceptions or divergences.

Initially, I analysed each transcription for key themes related to the concept of resistance, i.e. using the Topic Guide as shown in Appendix 5. I highlighted in green all references to resistance allocating a number and letter to each highlighted piece of text, which indicated a response to the particular question asked about resistance, e.g. 3a to 5h. I then collated the main data categories arising relating to resistance, e.g. external resistance, internal resistance, method of resistance (overt and hidden) and target. I carried out this analysis by each geographical location and then collated the data related to all three locations according to each category.

Each location and category was re-analysed in order to arrive at main macro-level findings across the research; findings which reflected both similarities in perspective and differences.

Next, I re-examined my key findings in relation to overarching concepts identified in the literature, e.g. the State, neo-liberalism, managerialism, partnership. I chose these headings as the data took me in this direction. These were highlighted in orange and exact responses were identified and differentiated. I re-listened and re-read all transcripts again to ensure that no important emergent issues were being left out. From the first and second trawl of data analysis, I was able to highlight key themes and responses in relation to community workers' understandings of community development, the State and resistance as a practice. I was also able to revisit and confirm specific nuances, e.g. around motivations, internal practices, as well as contradictions and tensions among community workers interpretations and understandings. As the volume of data was significant, re-listening to the recordings regularly assisted with identifying overarching themes, obtaining detailed answers and forging new connections between different sections of the transcripts, between groups and to the literature.

I believe there is a high degree of reliability and validity to my data collection and analysis (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The quantity and quality of data captured and available for analysis from eighteen hours of conversation was significant, particularly as the conversations were focused on a small number of key themes.

5.5.2 Presentation

Chapter Six presents the data according to the main analytical headings:

- community workers' definitions and understandings of: community development, the principles underpinning it, its relationship with the State, and their conceptions of 'resistance' as it relates to community work;
- detailed examples of what community workers resist, why and how they do this in practice;
- and community workers interpretation of the value and future role of resistance in community work.

In most sections I start by presenting key quotes which are reflective of workers' contributions to allow the reader to start from the same place I started. The reader thus gains an insight into community workers' understandings first and foremost, followed by several paragraphs of analysis linked to my literature review and theoretical concepts. In some cases and, where I felt it was required, I introduced the quote with some explanatory sentences in order to provide a context. Quotes are followed by the community workers' aliases, an indication of the location of the worker (rural/urban), followed by initials indicating if the worker was a State (S) or non-State (NS) worker.

In Chapter Six where I present an analysis of the data, while I use quotes extracted from the transcripts, I acknowledge that choosing which quotes to use is an exercise in power and judgement by the researcher. Data selection and analysis was a critical point in decision-making for me as researcher as I made decisions about framing and connecting participants' ideas, experiences and realities with my understandings and conceptual analysis. The researcher cannot set aside her own language, life and understandings when making interpretations. However, as I was committed to community development practices, e.g. worker's analysis and interpretations of key concepts and practices, and gathered a significant amount of data – this resulted in Chapter Six being longer than anticipated at the outset. I have attempted to use participants' quotes directly to allow readers to interpret

the data for themselves. This is in addition to the commentaries that are offered by me as researcher based on an extensive literature review.

As I mentioned earlier, at the outset I offered participants the opportunity to read their focus group transcripts and or a draft copy of the full thesis. While there was enthusiasm for these offers initially, later on neither offer was taken up. I did organise and invite all participants from all locations to attend one final meeting in the last year of my thesis write-up. This took place in a neutral venue in March 2013. I presented an overview of my data analysis, outlining key findings and updating on the progress of my thesis. This session was attended by twelve out of the nineteen focus group participants and all in attendance identified and agreed with the thrust of my findings, including those that were critical and challenging. I feel this final get-together brought better closure to my research project for both the participants and me. It also provided a final opportunity to validate the findings from a content, context and ethical perspective.

5.6 Conclusion

This study was informed by the principles of feminist research practice and community development practice. This ensured the research process was as participatory as possible, that it was emancipatory in its approach, that it questioned dominant power relations, that it was critically reflective of community workers' and my own views, and, given the particularly gendered nature of community development, that it reflected that gender profile in its composition. In addition, throughout the research process I was cognisant of both the political and ethical implications involved and feel that sufficient safety was created for participants to offer their insights and contributions, although it was challenging at times.

I invited community workers from the full population (twenty-six) of projects/organisations in three counties, which included community workers from a variety of work settings. While one person did not take up the invitation to participate, twenty-five agreed. Out of the twenty-five who agreed to participate, nineteen actually attended on the scheduled dates and this demonstrates substantial interest given the total sample frame size.

The focus group method worked very well given my target group of community workers and the topic under review. The focus groups were dynamic, energised, critical and genuinely participatory around the topics being queried and discussed. They also facilitated peer learning, debate and analysis which was generated collectively, and which I believe added to the richness of the findings.

I aimed for interpretative sufficiency (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008:202) to acknowledge and reflect the complex meanings, interpretations and sheer amount of data being made available to me by community workers. I have presented the findings in the spirit of workers' statements as best I can within the constraints of a thesis. Before the completion of my thesis a summary of my analysis and findings was presented to most of the participants from across the three counties collectively. This process reassures me that this study reflects a valid picture of community workers' understandings at this time. The feedback session also facilitated a further development, namely the creation of a community development *'critical thinking network'* for those interested in continuing to reflect on and analyse the current environment. The network held its first seminar in June 2013, for a group of approximately 45 community related workers and three more seminars have been held since that date. I would conclude from this development that my research has made a positive contribution to the future of community development in Ireland and that workers are 'hungry' for such autonomous spaces, in which to debate and reflect on praxis.

Chapter 6: Research Findings: Why and How Community Workers' Practise Resistance

6.1 Introduction

As detailed in Chapter Four, there have been significant structural changes to community development in Ireland over the period 2000 to 2010. These changes have resulted in community development priorities being centrally prescribed and monitored using key performance indicators and significant changes in local community work practices. The data collated and analysed in this chapter looks at community workers' understandings and practices of resistance in relation to their everyday work but also in relation to those structural changes that have been imposed upon them, which includes the managerialisation of their work.

For data collection purposes, there were three groupings of workers, two urban and one rural. In all groups the workers were somewhat familiar with each other's work and, in their roles, negotiate, cooperate and disagree with each other at different local, regional or national forums. Each group was mixed in terms of the employment background of workers, with workers employed by statutory agencies, partnership structures and local projects. Because community workers are used to group work they tended to build on each other's contributions, whether agreeing or disagreeing and often without indicating a distinctive starting point. Some of their views were communicated through nods and shaking of heads – signifying agreement or disagreement. Finally, some workers were cautious about what was said publically in the groups. Consequently they could be vague or oblique, perhaps so as not to implicate themselves or their projects. Participants often referenced shared experiences or knowledge abstractly without clearly naming them and expected others to interpret. As I recognised such communication styles from my

professional work, I will clarify and paraphrase where appropriate in order to facilitate the readers' understanding.

Nineteen community workers in total participated in three different focus groups for this research. The two urban focus groups, while mixed in terms of workers' employment contexts, demonstrated more uniform views and understandings of community development's key concepts. In contrast, the rural-based focus group participants held more diverse views, understandings and experiences of community development. Individually in the rural group some participants were cautious about participating and speaking out about the concept of 'resistance' (less so in the other two groups). This was evidenced by their hesitation to enter initial discussions and the comparative silence in others.

Some members of one urban group (Urban 1) were also cautious initially in responding to my questions and regarding the safety of the group process. For example, Lilly and Una in their opening remarks say:

> *"I'll have to see how it goes. I am not sure about safety of the space in the sense that Kate is a partnership employee and that's where she is coming from and I am I suppose a new partnership employee although I am resisting saying that, I'm resisting thinking that so I'm wary about, I will be wary about what I say" (Lilly, Urban, NS).*

> *"Am, I think it is difficult, do you know we've all, some people have histories with each other, so it is a difficult enough space to be in, to speak in" (Una, Urban, NS).*

Broader contextual issues may have impacted on this group's dynamic. Recent national programme changes to the Community Development Programme (CDP) – see Chapter Four - meant that many of the (Urban 1) workers had seen their employment conditions and circumstances change significantly, while others remained within existing structures. These different outcomes and their consequences resulted in tension between some workers in this group.

The remainder of this chapter is presented under the following sections including related sub-questions:

6.2 Community workers' understandings of key concepts: community development, the principles/values underpinning it, its relationship with the State, and their conceptions of 'resistance' as it relates to community work?

6.3 What do community workers resist, why and how?

6.4 What is the value and future role of resistance in community work?

6.5 Conclusion

The following sections (listed above) deal directly with the data I gathered in my research. The data is presented as follows: I present a short explanation of the issue and the context within which it was discussed, followed by extracts from community workers' transcripts, which are shown in quotation marks. Each quotation is followed by (in brackets) the community workers' aliases, an indication of the location of the worker (rural/urban), followed by initials indicating if the worker was employed in a State (S) or non-State (NS) organisation. A range of views are presented throughout.

6.2 Community Workers' Understandings of Key Concepts

6.2.1 The Status and Position of Community Development in Ireland

Below are responses from two urban-based community development workers who shared their understandings/definitions of community development. Both workers work for separate CDPs in the same city, and both projects were in the process of being integrated into the area-based Local Development Company around the time the research was being conducted:

> *"I think* [community development is about] *challenging the structures to stop ignoring groups of people and areas ....because I think there is a mind-set about; just feed them enough resources, money, funding, whatever, and just keep the lid on it. I think that our role in terms of community development is to get that lid off. I would certainly see the role of community work is to challenge that, is to stop being appeased, to stop saying, ok this little bit of funding, these few resources are enough, ya we want more than that, we want to effect change ourselves" (Pauline, Urban, NS).*

> In reply to the same question but building on Pauline's account Lilly says: "*I think what's happening at the moment shows very clearly that, it's not keeping a lid on it, it's squashing it* [community development] *into a bin, into the bottom of the bin and it's gone, you know, there isn't really a voice for anything anywhere, you know, there isn't a voice for any of us" (Lilly, Urban, NS).*

Pauline and Lilly argued that 'real' community development is currently being 'strangled' by the State and its funding programmes, and that flawed versions are

being used to control communities, as argued by Clarke (2005) and Hancock, Mooney and Neal (2012). Lilly's tone and level of desperation suggests that she feels overpowered by the State and pushed, along with the communities she works with, to "the bottom of the bin". Despite their negative assessment of its current status, for both Pauline and Lilly, community development is, at its core, about challenging the status quo, giving communities a voice and supporting their right to bring about social change themselves at both a policy and a structural level. In this they reflect a critical vision of community development such as that outlined by Ledwith (2011) and others. This approach was also asserted in other responses across the three groups, where community development was defined as:

> *"Effecting change" (Holly, Urban, NS).*
>
> *"Challenging the mind-set in government departments, challenging the structures to stop ignoring groups of people and areas" (Pauline, Urban, NS).*
>
> *"Giving voice to local people" (Sharon, Urban, S).*
>
> *"Challenging the norm, the perceptions that are there, the way that society views, for example, women as being the carers and the home makers and all of that … " (Kate, Urban, S).*

This kind of critical perspective - which highlights elements of structural and ideological change that can be supported by community development - was broadly shared by the participating community workers, particularly by those in the two urban focus groups, many of whom are practising community work for a long time[27]. There was less consensus in the rural group.

[27] There was an average of 18 and a half years community work experience per person among the research participants (see appendix 5B).

The following contributions reflect contrasting responses to the same question, provided by two rural-based workers who are located in two different Family Resource Centres (FRCs) in the same county. For Darina community development is:

> *"…a big umbrella, it incorporates environmental groups, it could be an arts group, it could be a group representing disability, social disadvantage, but it's not always related to social disadvantage, it can, like community to me is any kind of a group that gets together to make formal change or to serve, to represent a certain identity I suppose" (Darina, Rural, NS*).

Writers (O' Cinneide and Walsh, 1990; Forde, 2009), note that the origins of community development in Ireland go back to the 1920s, where its original goals predominantly supported a consensus-building, self-help approach. This was in line with the ideological project of building support for the newly emergent independent Irish State (see Chapter Four). This broad-based consensus ideology continues to be a significant force in community development in Ireland and is reflected in Darina's comments. Often associated with rural settings, this form of community development is ostensibly pluralistic and inclusive in terms of the interests reflected and, arguably, it tends to have a less conflictual relationship with both the requirements of managerialism and the State's regulation of programmes (Kenny, 2002; Ledwith, 2011).

Indeed, Molly another rurally-based community worker reflected back the complexities of practising community development in areas where communities are more mixed in relation to social class but where the illusion of consensus along with dominant beliefs, values and opinions strongly influence collective thinking, behaviour and action. Her reply below to the question, "what is community

development?" highlights how hard it is to get marginalised voices heard in mainstream rural groups:

> *"I would say community development and community work is about voice - voice of those who are not heard. The groups that I would be engaging with and the constant challenge to have their voice heard and to have their opinions validated just goes on and on, you know, and even when you feel you've got that respect going in the group, as you're coming out the gate you'll get the side comment",* [from a local elite] *"you know now that they're into drugs and all that don't you?"*

> [And what happens is]*: "We'll have a meeting before the meeting where the 'recognised players'* [dominant views] *from the parish are there, and* [the question is] *do you do that, or do you say no we'll have the meeting proper? And yet if you don't do that, you have the potential to lose the powers that 'be' in that process" (Molly, Rural, NS*).

The comments of this community worker suggest that for critical, questioning community workers, rural environments are difficult to work in and they can be quite isolating. Her reply also suggests that community consensus may be illusory, masking inequalities and alternative views. Molly thus illustrates a recurring dilemma in community work around whether to work with dominant views to try to reshape them or work directly against them, i.e. resist. Molly's contribution also suggests community workers' 'resistance' may need to be focused on a variety of targets including locally dominant views and elites.

Again reflecting a more critical perspective, Rachael, an urban-based community worker (Urban group 2), working for a State agency rather than a locally based project, explained that:

> *"You cannot take the politics out of community work because it's about power and power relations and changing those so that it is a more equal society for all" (Rachael, Urban, S).*

As noted already, in urban areas community workers seemed to be more homogenous in their views regarding the purposes of community development. In the course of the focus group discussions they generally agreed that there was a difference between 'community work' and 'community development': the former representing a wide variety of community-based activities, such as those suggested by Darina (page 138). In contrast they tended to agree that community development represents a more politicised, potentially radical form of action that challenges social structures, hegemonic views or dominant ideologies. Many authors share this interpretation of community development as an inherently political practice even if its contested politics are not always explicitly acknowledged (Shaw, 2008; Ledwith 2011; Meade, 2012; Geoghan and Powell 2008).

6.2.1.1 Recent notable changes to community development – State managerialism

Here, I present three reflections from across the groups on the form and scale of the recent managerialist turn in community work (see section 3.3.4 page 64) for further explanations). Their responses suggest that quantitative measures of accountability are increasingly privileged and that they are somewhat bewildered by the mandated changes in the direction of their work:

"And I think to me what is the biggest change in community work is that you have to have all your ducks in line, you have to have all your boxes ticked before you can be vocal about what is wrong or, you know" [Molly indicates visually that there will be consequences] *(Molly, Rural, NS*).

"I also think community work is so much more than ticking boxes and counting numbers, about KPIs[28] *... I hate that term. It drives me crazy. It just dehumanises* [our work]*, you know it really takes it away, because community work is about the changes you cannot document a lot of the time" (Jane, Rural, NS).*

"If you look at the newest version of the programme [Local and Community Development Programme] – *like last year's version, 20% of this and 40% of this counted, work out your day in terms of the 10, 20, 40%s. I hate fucking evidence based at this stage, I feel like saying fuck off with this space." (Rita, Urban, NS).*

Here Molly, Jane and Rita disclose the intensity of and their dissatisfaction with managerialist programme requirements, which privilege quantitative top-down accountability, performance monitoring and a pre-occupation with outputs. Indeed Molly implies there is an inherent threat of censorship and funding withdrawal if workers are not compliant. Clearly, Jane and Rita have strong negative feelings about the ways in which they are now expected to account for their work; Jane questions whether the work can even be measured in this quantitative way. Across the groups participants referenced and expressed reservations about these managerialist requirements, often signified by the amount of paperwork now

[28] Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as defined in the Pobal Guidelines, 2010.

demanded of workers. However, only a small number of the participants in the three groups expressed their views in such vivid terms or made the analytical connection between the trend towards new managerial requirements and away from direct social change work, resulting in the depolitisation of community work. This may suggest that at the time of the focus groups, workers were still trying to conceptualise or theorise the ongoing changes.

Chapters Three and Four analyse the impact, forms and implications of managerialism, both in the public sector and in community development contexts (Clarke and Newman, 1997; Clarke, Gewirtz, McLaughlin, 2000; Clarke, 2005, 2007; Lynch 2012; Turner and Martin, 2004; 2012; Shaw, 2008, 2011; Barnes, Newman, Sullivan, 2007; Hancock, Mooney and Neal, 2012; Newman and Clarke 2014). Even when not employing the concept itself, all of the community workers in this research confirmed this shift to managerialism is happening in Ireland and they held mixed views on whether they should resist such changes. Some workers interpret managerialism as a deliberate undermining of community development's principles and purposes; diminishing workers' role in giving voice and challenging power (see also comments on pages 143-151, 179, 191-197). For example Lilly claims:

> *"There has been a concerted attempt to break down that kind of ideological base that has grown up within communities in terms of radicalism and resistance" (Lilly, Urban, NS).*

In contrast with this more critical appraisal of State rationalities and the impacts of managerialism which was widely reflected in the focus groups, two workers were somewhat accepting of the new managerialist systems. Their views are presented on pages 152 and 153. However, most contributors echoed the sentiments of Lilly and Pauline (Urban 1), Jane (Rural) county and Rita (Urban 2), who feel overwhelmed and overpowered by these changes.

A related issue was the discernible change in the language of community development:

> "W*hat's being pushed on communities* [is to become] *neighbourhoods, like the whole push towards neighbourhoods coming from the Council, everything's assimilated, all our work is assimilated very easily now by that kind of stuff, so you know there is a resistance to these terms" (Lilly, Urban, NS).*

Here Lilly suggests that the shifting of terminology from community to neighbourhood reflects how community development practice is being assimilated into new technologies of governance and the reform agenda of local government. This transformation in language relates to changing administrative structures in local government rather than forms of collective action favoured by communities. Other discursive or terminological changes cited by participants included: "welfare to work; citizens becoming consumers; a shift from rights to responsibilities; self-reporting according to prescribed key performance indicators; value for money and a growing focus on professionalisation", which was widely understood as the de-facto managerialisation of community work. These changes confirm the sanitization, depolitisation and State managed versions of community work now operating in Ireland, and which were noted by Hancock, Mooney and Neal (2012) as also operating in the UK.

Janette, a rural community worker employed by a Local Development Company, observed that similar language is being used in monitoring systems operated by different State agencies or government departments. From her focus group contributions, Janette sees the harmonising of this language as linked to an over-arching 'big-brother' agenda that is being operated by the State without any real

democratic oversight. She feels that her role is being absorbed by an increasingly monolithic State agenda of control:

> *"I said hang on here a second, who ever developed the Pobal Irish* [monitoring] *system* [for community development] *is developing your* [social welfare monitoring system] *as well. It was just uncanny you know, and I actually feel like I work ..... for social welfare, honestly" (Janette, Rural, S)*

As discussions evolved it became clear that, from the perspectives of the three groups of workers, the State is more prescriptive than in the past (prior to 2008), when community work was still funded by the State but worked more to a community-led or community-managed agenda. The deeper politics of this shift in community work was interrogated by some community workers and was described by one urban State worker as evidence of:

> "*Life being saturated with neo-liberal ideology*" (Rachael, Urban, S).

While Sharon says:

> *"Even in recent times you could see the language changing, it's about consumer participation and client participation .... it's even going away from the word community" (Sharon, Urban, S).*

Clarke and Newman (1997), Clarke (2005, 2007), Turner and Martin (2004), Banks (2011) and Hancock, Mooney and Neal (2012) denote similar linguistic turns in UK public services and community development, turns that are underpinned by the broader shift towards neo-liberalism. This language reflects the goal of steering or

responsibilising communities to participate effectively in the market place, and to self-identify as responsible consumers. Notably, the terms highlighted by workers in the focus groups – "consumer or responsibilities", "value for money" - mirror this linguistic and ideological shift.

Finally, a related concern is the depoliticisation of community work and Rachael argues that:

> *"Effectiveness* [and compliance with rules and regulations] *has replaced justice as the fundamental value of what community workers are supposed to be doing" (Rachael, Urban, S*).

She observes that new accountability measures or State-led agendas take time away from community engagement, organising and participating in autonomous spaces, critical social analysis and community action. This is an erosion of the essential analytical and activist work that was also referred to earlier by Molly and Sharon, among others. As noted in Chapter Four, Gaynor's (2009) work expands on the issue of depolitisation of community development in Ireland, when she examines the linguistic shift in State policies from an emphasis on participation to active citizenship (see Chapter Four). It is apparent that Gaynor's (2009) arguments resonate with the experiences of many community workers in this study. Across the focus groups there is agreement that the State has appropriated and transformed the language of community development: interestingly though workers' professional, personal or individual responses to these changes vary.

6.2.2 The Co-Option and Reframing of Community Development's Principles/ Values

When asked about their understandings of the principles underpinning community development, most of the participants' responses centred on a discussion of the concept of 'participation', in its various guises and referring to other principles with less emphasis. During the discussion the workers did spend time considering how those principles were being challenged and eroded in the current context. They tended to use the term 'values' and 'principles' interchangeably and referred to them with ease throughout all discussions. The following principles were identified as central to community development; "participation, democracy, social justice, equality and social inclusion".

Community workers' were critical of how the principles of community development, particularly 'participation', are being interpreted and applied in today's policy environment. Frequently, participation is referred to in community work to mean; being democratic, having a voice, inclusion, right to self-determination (Cornwall, 2008; Ledwith 2011). The contributions below however illustrate the more contested and politicised nature of participation:

> *"Community development,* [in the eyes of the State] *became a legitimate thing and it was something that kind of found its way into a lot of discourse. The whole issue of participation, and maybe there is more understanding in terms of the whole participatory democracy of it* [participation], *and bringing the voice of those who previously didn't have a voice or didn't have access to any expression, more into the mainstream. But now I think there is a turnabout again...instead of talking about development, instead of talking about participation, we are*

talking about welfare-to-work, I think the whole agenda has moved more right wing, am, globally as well" (Lilly, Urban, NS).

Lilly suggests that community development principles had been moving towards becoming mainstreamed within and by the State and related agencies: interestingly she calls this becoming 'legitimate'. Clearly she feels that this momentum has now been lost as 'participation' is no longer viewed as important by the State and its agencies. Lilly also makes the link between participation and democracy, a discursive connection also considered in Chapter Four, where Meade (2009) and Ledwith (2011) note that community participation is potentially (but not always) associated with theories of deliberative democracy.

This theme was taken up in all of the groups where community workers critiqued the misuse of the concept 'community participation'.

"I think you know a lot of the language [participation] *has been stolen from the community sector and has been infiltrated and put into reports and various things and it doesn't make any sense" (Una, Urban, NS).*

Here Una references the co-option of community development concepts and their representation in new performance monitoring reports, where they become linked to technocratic processes and reduced to measurable data and evidence. In her view, (and similar to Jane on page 141), such data cannot reflect the substance or complexity of the work being carried out. This also echoes the work of Berner and Philips (2005) who argue that participation, which is potentially a radical concept and the foundation stone of participatory democracy, has been diluted by mainstream development theory and rendered a technical exercise. Responses

from all of the community workers in this research suggest that they share this analysis.

Aside from concerns about the abandonment or dilution of the language of participation, workers were also critical of the practices of participation being mandated by the State. Molly assesses the outcomes of community participation in State invited spaces (Cornwall, 2008; Barnes, Newman, O'Sullivan, 2007) and its effects on participants; rather than becoming empowered to assert their own agendas or interests, community members instead become assimilated into other agendas or captured in new fields of power:

> *"What I often find interesting, it's those community leaders within groups who are, you know, engaging with agencies and become, almost, agency in themselves. They lose that fundamental, I suppose, very grounded approach. I think they morph into that kind of agency. They've become very formal, they become very structured and sometimes I feel they lose their message" (Molly, Rural, NS).*

Barnes, Newman and Sullivan (2007) highlight similar processes of assimilation in their analyses of the impacts of participation in State created community fora in the UK. While acknowledging the political and educational opportunities that may arise from public participation in such invited spaces, they conclude that attempts to foster participation by outside professionals, frequently reinforce rather than challenge entrenched forms of power (Barnes, *et al.* 2007). Molly's similar assessment of the impact of participation on some community leaders highlights the potential consequences of participation, not all of which were intended or desirable. She suggests that community leaders begin to mimic the styles and routines of professionals and State officials rather than express community issues in their own voices and on their own terms.

Within the focus groups there were different views regarding the relationship between participation and empowerment: For Aine, who is a State agency employed community worker, participation is;

> *"About working with somebody, it's about building their capacity to engage in the long-term, and that's about power for them. You know, helping them to even recognise the power that they might have in small situations in their life. I do think it is about empowerment in the sense of trying to give people voice" (Aine, Rural, S).*

This view of participation as personally empowering is a common one in community development, (see also Chapter Four), and it emphasises how individuals may benefit in a variety of ways from their engagement in collective processes in community contexts.

Rita on the other hand highlights below the more political issues associated with power and participation and argues that community workers must seek to go beyond individual or even localised change:

> *"Ya to do with the values bit and the challenge around power differences, around injustice, I think often there's a necessity to work at local level and also work at a kind of a mental level as well* [in order to make sure] *there is impact, real changes for local communities. Maybe that's where the politics comes in, there's a certain amount of things that can happen locally and can be done collectively, you know using all the right values in*

terms of changing the structure of inequalities and there's a kind of a need to work at a second level as well" (Rita, Urban, NS).

Rita thus suggests that community work must take place on multiple levels: locally in terms of action and participation; and on an ideological level with individuals, by facilitating social analysis and a critique of relevant policies. This reflects a view of citizens and community workers as reflexive subjects with the potential to express agency and critical understandings, even within constrained circumstances (see also Clarke, 2007; Ledwith, 2011; Shaw, 2008).

While all community workers agreed on broadly defined principles – using terms such as participation, democracy, social justice, equality and social inclusion, it is evident that many have real concerns regarding recent structural changes and their impacts, including the undermining of the possible collective and shared expression of those principles by the communities with whom they work.

6.2.3 Community Development's Relationship with the State

As detailed in Chapter Three, it is not possible to analyse community development without simultaneously analysing the State (Shaw, 2011). In this study, all community workers recognise that they have a direct working relationship with the State and that the State itself embodies many faces and roles. With this in mind, I asked 'how would you describe the relationship between the State and the community sector at this time?'

Respondents varied somewhat in their expectations and evaluations of the performance of the State vis-à-vis community development: Rachael and Rita located in Urban 2 replied in a similar vein:

> *"I think the State has exerted huge power over community work in very negative ways and at the same time I don't want to live in a Stateless society, I know that. A democratic State really matters to me, it's a core value to me" (Rachael, Urban, S).*

> *"I think the State is implicated in* [maintaining or addressing] *inequality, and fosters* [inequalities] *in some ways ...* [there is a Department for Justice and Equality] *... but there's also a bit of me that would be very strongly wanting to hang onto the State – so there is that constant move along the line"* [from wanting less State to wanting more State] (Rita, Urban, NS).

Against this Ger proposes that;

> *"There is need for a space where you're totally unconnected to the States' influence"* (Ger, Urban, S).

And Holly says;

> *"There's no voice for us anywhere, am, so you know I think there is something about, am, the State keeping a lid on the ordinary, everyday people, not to exceed a certain stage of capacity" (Holly, Urban, NS).*

While all these community workers agree that the State currently impacts negatively on community development, Rachael and Rita suggest that the State can be remade or reformed. For this to happen, the State needs to be made more accountable and democratic. They, along with Holly, acknowledge the contradictory nature of the State and its contentious relationship with community development,

a dilemma also identified by the London Edinburgh Week-end Return Group (LEWRG, 1989) who encapsulated it in the book title 'In and Against the State' and by Newman and Clarke (2014) in the 'Kilburn Manifesto'. However, Ger captures an aspiration of many of the community workers interviewed for this study who want; 'independent spaces'. As the focus groups evolved this was a popular view that workers need spaces to reflect, analyse and formulate alternative collective views, which would assist them in strategising and negotiating with the State.

The LEWRG and others (Hay and Lister, 2006; Pateman, 1970; Shaw, 2011) highlight that the State is a set of dynamic relationships in which we are all entangled. Because the State's strategic capacities, powers, roles and functions are themselves constantly changing, its support for community development will always be conditional and related to broader political and policy trends. This status as a 'moving target' (Jessop, 2001) renders it open to change and constant renegotiation. Participants such as Rita thus perceive the State as implicated in both reinforcing and addressing the inequalities of everyday life. This is why she and others, e.g. Rachel, who are committed to challenging inequalities and disadvantage, regard the State as a target for change also. However other community workers were more pessimistic in this regard: they argued that community workers and communities are being managed and controlled by the State (e.g. Pauline page 136, Lilly page 142-143, Holly page 151). Indeed, Rita herself acknowledges:

> "*I do think the State, very much in the last six years I would say, has really moved to harness community work, community development, pull it in, tame it" (Rita, Urban, NS).*

However, these generally critical appraisals were not expressed unanimously by participants in this research. Judging from their reactions and responses, it seems

that a minority of community workers are not so critical of their working relationships with the State. Notably, two workers accepted that the State, as opposed to the community, is their 'real' employer and the ultimate director of their work:

> *"But I just think at the end of the day, all, well most community workers, I mean even community workers that don't work for a State agency, like I work for a Family Resource Centre, it's still, I'm not working for a non-government organisation, I really don't think they exist anymore, we're all funded by the government"* [and work for the State] *(Darina, Rural, NS).*

> *"But they're my employer and the State would tell me that they're my employer. And at the end of the day they have the power and they pay my wages. Right, so the buck stops there" (Janette, Rural, S).* [Janette is indicating her surprise at resisting any instructions by the State as her employer].

These two workers, both present in the same focus group, accepted that because they work for the State - albeit in an indirect relationship - they should comply with rules and regulations that the State imposes on community development. They saw this as inevitable, the way things are. Interestingly, there was one other worker (in Urban 1) who shared similar views, though expressing them with less ease and less compliance. Her responses evoked a sense of resignation that she felt she had little 'real' choice.

However, against this sense of acceptance or compliance, the majority of workers negatively evaluated the recent structural changes to the national Community

Development Programme as evidence that the State is reducing both their professional autonomy and that of their projects. For example, Jane (Rural) explained;

> [The recent structural changes] *"have resulted in a certain level of autonomy being taken away at local level. As community development projects and workers will be strongly sanctioned if they do not conform to the funder's* [State] *agenda. What* [Darina] *said there is so true, none of us are sort of independent anymore. We don't have that level of autonomy that we might think we had, or we have, that you are subject to the constraints that are put on you by your funders, and a lot of organisations have seen that, like the Equality Authority and the N.C.C.R.I.*[29] *And you know, a lot of organisations were out there trying to change stuff and their funding is just pulled if you don't fit into the kind of agenda that the government have set out, or you're not agreeing with their* [agenda]*, you know if you dare to challenge that's how they'll disarm you, you're disabled" (Jane, Rural, NS).*

Again there was some consensus – albeit expressed with regret - among those community workers who self-identified with a more critical tradition of community work practice, that recent programme changes have resulted in them working more directly on behalf of the State according to prescribed programmes.

The question that emerges from the data above is whether the State has become more 'disciplinary' (Meade, 2012; Jones and Novak, 1999) or has moved into a stronger 'steering' role as suggested by Osborne and Gaebler (1992). All workers above clearly articulated that the State has become more dominant and directive in

[29]National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI).

its dealings with projects, with significant consequences for non-compliance. The distinctly neo-liberal aspect of these changes is reflected in the new managerial techniques recently introduced into community development and the reshaping of community development language by the State, issues already covered in previous sections. Lilly summarises how the State's role has evolved and her own efforts to move outside its orbit of control.

> *"The State is keeping a lid on [community development] by appropriating it"* [community development language and the meaning of community development]. *I'm looking at ways of how the community can be sustainable away from what's being pushed on them like: 'neighbourhoods',* [which is a recent title given to community areas by local government authorities] *so let's look at how people can be self-supporting and self-sufficient as a community and maybe in that sense that will generate from it a place of dialogue"(Lilly, Urban, NS).*

At this time of upheaval with CDPs, Lilly was setting up an independent community Allotments' project in a large urban estate. Her aim in setting up an independent project was to create a community-owned space, whereby some residents might obtain paid work and many other families would benefit from the produce – thereby becoming more self-sufficient and autonomous. She hopes that in time such a space would facilitate independent thinking, critiques of policies that affect local residents' lives and discussions of alternatives (structures and policies) among residents.

The above data highlights that for the majority of community workers, although not all, the 'State' in its many guises is both an important and negative controlling force in directing their work and work relationships. For all community workers, the State is regarded as an important player to be engaged with seriously – particularly for

policy purposes. For a few community workers, relationships with the State are not described in this critical way - and they present themselves as compliant with or accepting of State oversight - although they also refer to the implicit power imbalance associated with 'keeping the funders happy' (Janette, page 153). However, it must be conveyed that the workers who spoke most strongly about the issue of State control were the urban based community workers, those who self-identified as critical community workers and those who worked with Traveller projects. As noted already, three did not identify with these sentiments and they were largely silent as the groups debated the political consequences of the new relationship between the State and community development.

6.2.4 Conceptions of Resistance

Establishing an understanding of the concept and practices of resistance was the primary focus of my research, therefore I expand more on this data in the remaining sections. When asked about their understandings/definitions of resistance, community workers gave a variety of replies:

Ger (from Urban 2) co-ordinates a Traveller Health Unit for a State agency but has many years' experience of working in Latin America and Africa as a community development worker. She explains:

> *"Because it's a concept about reacting to something, say resistance can't really exist unless you've something to resist against. Whether it's the State or the system or a political view you know, resistance defines how you understand what you're against. I worked in different countries and one of the things that always struck me when I go from Ireland/England to Latin America or Africa, you have to understand first how people define what they think is wrong, and resistance to that. So you know, I had the privilege of working in Latin America where resistance is a good word or it used to be" (Ger, Urban, S).*

Ger thus links practices of resistance to the object of that resistance; this resonates with Hollander and Einwohner's (2004) account of resistance as always being linked to that which is being opposed. It is therefore part of the same power relationship and it is tied to the system or processes that it resists. For Ger, resistance is therefore a relational concept which potentially can determine the outcome of power relations (see also Barbalet, 1985).

Ger also links resistance to what communities think is 'wrong', arguing that identifying what is wrong collectively is itself an essential process in community work. She continues that agreeing strategies of resistance and agreeing what you are against, can be a very empowering experience for community workers and communities. While Ger suggests resistance helps you define what you are against, it could be argued that it simultaneously helps define what you are for and what you and your work is about. Such collective processes, are referred to by some authors (Hardt and Negri, 2004; Wilmott, 2006; Raby, 2005; Mumby 2005) as central to the creation of alternative subjectivities, i.e. the self-conscious knowledge of who we are.

There is a hint in Ger's commentary that resistance is seen as a negative word or practice in Ireland; other community workers across the group concurred that this is true, particularly in this period of austerity. Ger also suggests that the viability or popular resonance of resistance has a cultural dimension to it, potentially linked to the place and context in which it is operating. Raby (2005) echoes this observation of the cultural context of resistance. She (Raby, 2005) notes, that subjects are dynamic and respond to changing discourses, structures and practices, some of which are popularised or demonised at various times and places. It would appear that, depending on the cultural context, there may be more popular support for or acceptance of displays of resistance than at other times or in other places. Thus Ger contrasts resistance from her community work experience in South America with her experiences of resisting now in Ireland. This finding is also identified by

Foweraker (1995) and Koopmans (2007) when analysing the factors that might be conducive for successful social movements.

This idea of resistance as negative, troublesome or obstreperous is also raised by Philippa. Philippa is a self-identified feminist community development worker who works with and on behalf of Travellers living (officially and unofficially) on a designated local authority halting site. Philippa previously co-ordinated a lesbian project in Urban 2, of which there are very few in the country. She emphasized the centrality of resistance in her own work practice;

> *"But I think that even though resistance has been couched as being oppositional, being obstreperous, being difficult, being overly challenging, actually … I think life affects how you are and how you interpret what resistance is ..... it's an assertion of who I am as a person, my own values and beliefs. It's an assertion of the organisation that I work with at any given time and their ethos and practices and principles. I think maybe I would nearly change the definition now of resistance because it really means responsibility. So every single one of us, I believe, has a responsibility to carry our value system forward but maybe it needs to change a little bit in how we do it. I mean it's an internal process but it's also an external action, so if I'm in my values resisting you know I'm standing firm". (Philippa, Urban, NS)*

Philippa spoke very passionately about the importance of resistance and what it represents. Echoing the analysis put forward by Scott (1985), and Giroux (1983) in Chapter Two, who acknowledge the close relationship between resistance and personal experience/consciousness, Philippa sees her resistance as an assertion of her values. They in turn reflect the core values of the community development

organisation she works for. In this instance resistance is a positive expression of one's personal and professional identities that necessarily come into conflict with structures and processes that create or maintain inequality. Resistance in Philippa's account is thus seen as a personal and public responsibility, and not just a reaction to something external. It emerges from efforts to reflect and assert who you are or what your project is in the world, through your work, possibly by building solidarity. This view of resistance makes it a positive expression of values and resistance may therefore become internalised as part of one's identity. Barnes and Prior (2009) and Hughes (2009) in Chapter Two also highlight the agency of workers who resist, what they perceive as conflicts between their values/commitments and the demands of managers, employers or State agencies.

According to Scott (1990) resistance can arise from an inherent or essential rage at one's subordination; subordination that has come to be understood through experience or consciousness-raising, as expressed by Philippa above. Consciousness-raising may therefore give workers a language through which to express their resistance or new resistant identities. This would appear to be true in Philippa's case as it is for other community workers, e.g. Una (Urban 1), Eileen (Urban 2) and Jane (Rural County), whose views I will refer to later in this Chapter.

In addition, Thomas and Davies (2005) refer to women in particular having multiple identities, and commonly being interpreted as resistant agents, due to their multiple subjugated positions. Such multiple standpoints can in turn lead to women being more reflexive community workers in negotiating power on behalf of various communities. Una, a self-identified feminist working in a women's centre, claims:

> *"I got involved in community development myself as a woman experiencing isolation in a rural community, from a working class background and you know having young kids, I didn't know where I*

was going. I think I come from a particular position because I suppose I often say I am that woman. I am all the one [with the work]*, it sometimes feels like that so it's a bit hard for me to separate that. I am passionate about the work and sometimes I take it personally you know so it's hard. I realize that everything like I suppose from being involved in community work for the last 25 years, everything I do is about resistance* [because I am a woman and a community worker]*" (Una, Urban, NS).*

In her contribution Una suggests that community workers build on many life experiences, personally and professionally, which in turn inform how they perceive or assert resistance. In this research, as confirmed by Philippa (page 158) and Una above, where a large majority of community workers are women, this could potentially be a positive contribution to community work and resistance, as women are reflexive, knowing subjects as argued by Thomas and Davies (2005) .

The next example shows how resistance is understood by a community worker who works in a Family Resource Centre (FRC), in a small provincial town:

"To me resistance is linked a lot with change, because I think a lot of change is resisted, e.g. resist the vibe or the energy that's coming from a group, or resist that kind of [negative/prejudice] *feeling that's coming from people or groups" (Darina, Rural, NS).*

Darina is referring mostly to small local groups that meet in the FRC on a regular basis. These local groups are generally made up of residents, men and women from the local housing estates where the FRC is located. She indicated that group members have expressed prejudicial views and discriminatory attitudes towards minority groupings; Travellers, migrant workers, foreign nationals, lesbian or gay people. Consequently, Darina talks about resistance in community work as being

connected with challenging such attitudes and thinking. Though she couches her account in very uncertain language, with a high degree of sensitivity to other research participants, she appears satisfied that resistance is focused on raising awareness or altering mind-sets so that communities see things differently or re-consider their established views and prejudices (referred to as social change work by many community workers). This example does indicate that some community workers may view resistance as an action to be taken internally within their own organisation or community, rather than externally on behalf of their project against overarching structures or powers. It also highlights another issue of contention in community development, i.e. where workers claim that they work to a community-led agenda but where, in this case, it is the community worker who may lead the agenda for change.

Below are additional responses which reflect how other community workers in the Rural focus group understood the defining features of resistance:

> *"When I see resistance I always think of the word politics. I think the bigger picture, I always think something global, national and then down, that's the way I go. It's funny it's not local and down. I link resistance very much with politics" (Janette, Rural, S).*

> *Resistance "is a physical manifestation of something. I think of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement, you know, you think immediately of things happening in North Africa, and I was even thinking of you know when the N.R.A. were building the motorway between Cork and Dublin, you know I saw the resistance in my own local community to compulsory purchase orders, where there was nearly all out war, you know. So it can be a physical manifestation of opposition" (Darina, Rural, NS).*

> *"If we're talking about inequalities, resistance is a function of community development work. Yes, absolutely resistance and challenging I'd say is fundamental to community development work. It's sort of going against the norm…… but then the norm depends on who is the dominant group.* [When I think of resistance], *I think of push you know, the word push comes to mind, pushing against…." (Jane, Rural, NS).*

Resistance in the above examples is portrayed as explicitly political, sometimes physical, a conscious public expression of opposition against dominance, and as occurring in more medium to large scale social contexts than suggested by Darina's earlier account (page 160). These latter examples imply a public mobilisation of opposition and collectivised forms of organization, where opposing power-holders are clearly identified, e.g. dominant views, political office holders, National Roads Authority. Scott (1990) argues that such collective and public forms of resistance, as embodied by revolts or social movements, while highly visible may in fact be quite rare. Instead more covert expressions of resistance may be more pervasive. The participants who presented these examples seem able to talk about resistance more definitely and confidently with reference to such cases because the targets are identifiable and there is a clearer 'political' and 'power' hierarchy in operation. In contrast the more 'hidden' or subtle forms of resistance, to which Scott (1990) alludes, may be more difficult to identify, even for those practising them.

Shaw, (2006, 2008, 2011) confirms that community development, and by implication resistance as a practice in community development, must be politically informed if it is to redress inequalities and social injustices. This view is shared by the research participants cited above, and their extracts also resonate with Giroux (1983) who claims that resistance as a concept recognizes and values oppositional behaviour, which can be political and informed. Notably, all of the community workers who adopted more critical perspectives on community development's role and its

relationship with the State assented with understandings of resistance as political and focused on addressing inequalities or oppressive power relations. Significantly, however the examples provided by Janette, Darina and Jane (page 161), while large-scale and publicly political are not those practised by themselves directly in their community work.

In my research with the three groups of community workers it is worth noting that on posing the question "what is your definition or your understanding of the concept of resistance in community work" most groups' initial reaction was one of silence and very slow response. Indeed, for two workers, it was an uncomfortable question and they were ambiguous about whether or not resistance as a concept related to their work practice. However, as the conversations developed within the groups and as the term resistance was claimed directly and strongly by some workers as familiar and important, others in the group began to discuss the concept more easily and interchanged the word resistance with other terms that were more acceptable to themselves, e.g. to challenge. For at least two community workers in every group a level of despair was expressed about the lack of scope for resistance. This reflected a level of hopelessness about the situation community workers collectively found themselves in at that time.

In addition, the age and level of experience of individual community workers seemed to influence their responses to the questions on resistance (95% of the workers were aged between 40 and 60 and had an average of eighteen and a half years' experience each – see Appendix 5B). In the focus groups, all of the community workers who have been involved in community work for over ten years seemed directly familiar with and espoused collective forms of opposition or resistance as still being relevant for community development. Their colleagues with less experience and time spent doing community work did not sound as confident or clear on the role that such collectivized forms of resistance might play in the contemporary context. However, some despondency was also discernible among

the experienced workers: Lilly has been working in community development for over 20 years, and works for a CDP in a local urban estate where there is a high level of poverty and deprivation. Recently, that CDP project has been integrated into the Local Development Company (LDC) under the National Local and Community Development Programme[30]. At the time of the focus group Lilly was very disillusioned and disheartened about the potential of the community development sector to engage in effective collectivised opposition; consequently she presents an alternative conception of what resistance might mean in today's context.

> *"I'd say resistance is challenging something ….. if you don't fully understand what is being proposed, e.g. integration by government. Sometimes it's almost like actually holding back the tide, actually taking a breath and stopping for a moment so that you can actually consider things, do you know what I mean. So there's a resistance, you're not going to go with* [what is mandated] *straight away, there's something saying, hold up now we need to take time to think and take time out and deal with this, so you're kind of holding back the tide" (Lilly, Urban, NS).*

Resistance for Lilly is as basic as having the right to take some time in order to reflect, consider and form an analysis of a proposal that is been put forward by government. But what she describes as "holding back the tide" is a very strong visual image of the policy and procedural approaches being adopted by the State and their dominance over her as worker and citizen. Resistance in this case is about not conforming immediately, resisting the pressure to do so, and asserting a democratic right to form your own position as a worker/citizen. Lilly's commentary proposes that in hard, compromised times, resistance as a practice and a strategy might also be understood as being embodied in what are ostensibly 'passive'

[30] See Chapter Four for more details on the LCDP integration process.

responses. Such forms are explained by Scott (1990) (see Chapter Two) who identifies four categories of resistance. One form which he calls 'acquiescence', is where subjects appear to comply with the demands of the powerful but do not do so genuinely or voluntarily. These subjects do not internalize the hegemonic ideologies that are being imposed upon them. Lilly's statement suggests that in work conditions that are tightly controlled, restricted or heavily surveilled, workers may seek to protect themselves against reprisal yet still signal dissent by adopting more subtle forms of resistances. Scott (1985, 1990) and Barnes and Prior (2009) argue that the 'hidden' and informal nature of such resistances does not render them less valid or politically meaningful.

On a more optimistic note, Una (who has been working in women's community development for over twenty years) works for an urban-based community development project, which is a women's centre. This project too has been a target of the national integration process but it resisted the mandated integration of CDPs and remained independent of the local development company. This experience of successful resistance clearly informed Una's understanding of the concept itself.

> *"Ya, I think resistance is about not complying. That's what struck me when we decided not to go with the* [integration] *programme. It was actually just saying 'no, we're not doing it' and the way it* [the integration programme] *was presented* [by the Government Department with responsibility for implementation] *as there's no alternative, was a load of rubbish" (Una, Urban, NS).*

Una's interpretation of resistance coincides with more critical expressions of community development where resistance is about not complying and saying 'no' but doing so in a public and clear way. Scott (1990) calls this form of resistance 'overt' – see Chapter Two. Resistance for this community worker was about being

collectively strong, courageous and defiant. Una notes that while the State claimed there was 'no alternative' to what was on offer, the project's successful resistance illustrated that this was not the case. Her analysis resonates with Gramsci's (1971) interpretation of the State's varying use of force and consent in order to establish hegemonic authority; with force becoming more pronounced as consent fails. What is also notable in this case is that the local project was successful in its resistance to this coercive power. This was partly due to some of the conditions, as identified by Koopmans (2007) and Foweraker (1995), as being conducive to successful resistance, being present, i.e. that of having allies and taking decisions collectively, thereby building solidarity (see further details of Una's resistance on page 167-168. See also Chapter Two for a list of conditions that potentially contribute to successful resistance practices.

6.3 What Do Community Workers Resist, Why and How?

There were many examples of resistance given by the participants within the research field work. In this section I concentrate on specific examples under two different categories because these were the most prominent contributions and also because they absorbed significant discussion time due to the immediacy of the issues and concerns at that time:

6.3.1 Resistance (successful and unsuccessful) to the integration of local Community Development Projects into the national local and community development programme under Local Development/ Area Partnership Companies.

6.3.2 Everyday resistances by community workers as part of their work and in particular their resistance to managerialism.

6.3.1 Resistance to Integration of Community Development Projects into Local Development/Area Partnership Companies

Background details of the integration of local Community Development Projects (CDPs) into the National Local and Community Development Programme (NLCDP) managed by Local Development Companies are given in Chapter Four. All of the six CDP workers who participated in this research stated that they attempted to resist integration: two projects successfully resisted integration, two projects integrated into their local development companies and two aligned with a State agency, i.e. the Health Service Executive (HSE). The integration process and workers' resistances spanned two years on average, requiring almost constant attention by community workers. CDP workers explained that they were fearful of a loss of local autonomy and that their work conditions and job specifications were being changed radically in line with managerialist practices and State determined agendas (as explained in Chapter Four).

6.3.1.1 Successful resistance to integration

This section looks at two cases of successful resistance to the integration of local Community Development Projects into Local Development Companies as described by Una (Urban 1) and Paddy (Rural County).

When Una tells the story of resisting integration, it is uncomfortable for some focus group members because they have been unsuccessful in their own resistance to this same national directive. As highlighted by Pauline (below) some of these community workers feel they have personally failed or let their projects down. This is noticeable both from their demeanour and from informal conversations during coffee break. While I discuss these unsuccessful attempts in more detail later, Pauline summarises this feeling of failure and is supported by Holly, which sets the tone in the group:

> *"I think, there is a sense for some people, well we went* [into the Local Development Company] *we've gone in to another structure and you know we're kind of almost embarrassed about it, you know we went into another structure and* [the question is] *did we go easily and if we had done more, if we had all actually sat down in a square and said now fuck off we're not doing it, would we have been better off?" (Pauline, Urban, NS)*
>
> *"Ya maybe, maybe we're too accommodating. Ya" (*Holly, Urban, NS).

Below is the first of two examples:

Urban 1: Women's CDP (community worker: Una)

Una has been working as a feminist community worker and was a founding member of the women's centre in Urban 1. The views she shared in the focus group suggest that she is committed to a critical form of community development, which emphasises collective action and collective decision making. Una illustrates this commitment through one particular example of the project's resistance to the integration process. After various attempts at negotiations failed, the Women's Centre sought out alternative agencies or networks to host their project and secured an arrangement with other women's projects who formed a national collective, supported by the National Women's Council of Ireland. As Una explains:

> *"In terms of resistance to integration, I think that it brought us back to our roots – resisting something that was imposed on us. We said from the beginning we don't want to do this and we weren't listened to and by actually resisting – it enabled us to take back a bit of power – it really did" (*Una, Urban, NS*).*

As a consultant working in the community sector at this time I was well aware of the Government's opposition to any project remaining 'independent'[31]. This included regular letters and phone contact by senior officials to explain in unambiguous terms that projects were not allowed to remain independent and still receive core funding (for staff salaries) from the relevant Department. There was a clear message that if any project wanted to remain autonomous – they needed to "go it alone" (DECLG, 2010).

Against such coercion Una explains why her project felt it could resist, which it did in a collectivised and public manner:

> *"There was a lot of stuff that allowed us to take that stand* [resist]: *the fact that everybody in the project was consulted about it and everybody agreed on a final decision. It was a unanimous decision to resist integration to the LCDP and that included 3 people who were going to lose their jobs. There was a lot of work went on, in order to facilitate everybody coming to that conclusion …. it gave us energy … and I suppose it's not the first time that we've done something like that collectively. We would have history of resisting" (Una, Urban, NS).*

Una's account of resistance in this particular example suggests that it can be empowering and energising, as argued by Glavenau (2009), Thomas and Davies (2005) and Giroux (1983). Those authors also suggest that practising resistance can create the conditions necessary for broader social transformation and change. In addition, Koopmans (2007) and Foweraker (1995) identify 'a prior history of resistance' as one of the conditions that contributes to successful resistance, an argument which is also borne out by Una in the above account. She suggests that

[31] As noted already, 'independent' is often used to describe projects' separate legal, governance and local management structures though core funding comes from State sources.

because the project made a decision to resist collectively, and had prior experience of successful resistance, they were not so fearful of the consequences if they were unsuccessful. In addition to resisting, Una and her project were also strategic in forming new alliances and seeking alternative solutions, not just accepting the one option presented by the Department.

The second example of successful resistance to integration is from Rural County CDP (community worker: Paddy)

The CDP that Paddy works for is located in a provincial town, working with both urban and rural communities. The town is designated a RAPID town (Revitalising Areas through Planning, Investment and Development – a national programme under the Department of Environment and Local Government – where designated areas are to be given priority in government spending decisions). This town has high deprivation levels across several key social measurements, e.g. educational attainment, lone-parent households, unemployment (Community Consultants, 2008). The CDP has been in existence for 18 years and is considered by other community workers to be highly successful. It focuses on adult education, childcare, back-to-work programmes and services for the unemployed. Run by a management committee drawn from local residents, it has a project manager and up to 30 part-time staff across its programmes.

Below, Paddy explains the CDP's strategies to resist integration. There had just been a general discussion in the focus group about retaining the independence of projects and how difficult this had become for all of them in recent times.

"It's hard to remain independent, keep that independence because we're funded by the department, but at the same time we are technically [legally] *independent.*

Initially, we resisted a lot with the other projects in the region, and we tried to work closely on it, and had a kind of a strategy [but that didn't work out].

We decided ourselves that we were going to resist. This was a major decision over the future of the organisation and whether we would remain independent or not. We worked with the community, we had consultation meetings and we worked with obviously the board and in the end we decided that we were going to resist and wanted to remain independent. And we basically told the Department that. We more or less said that we were remaining independent full stop, whether they liked it or not. I suppose we were lucky in the sense that a lot of our funding came from non-CDP sources; about eighty five per cent. I think that was one of the key arguments I suppose. Basically there was a bit of, maybe a bit of a bluff in it. We said "look, whatever happens, if you decide to cut our funding and we remain independent we can survive without your fifteen per cent, obviously we would have to make changes but that's the bottom line".

[In relation to Department officials], *"we were hearing mixed message, one message from the Minister, he was kind of going "oh it'll be OK, it'll be OK" and telling us how it would be OK and the civil servants were saying "no, no, no you still have to merge, you still have merge. So we didn't know what was going on".*

Over the last few years was there anything that helped you do that resisting? (Maria - interviewer).

"I suppose the fact that we were all unanimous in what we wanted to do. All staff, you know, we had lots of staff meetings about it and all the board, there was really, there was nobody who disagreed, you know we considered all the options but at the end of the day everybody was in agreement. I mentioned the community as well, they were really behind us and our participants, and you know we had open meetings in the town and we got a lot of support. So that all helped. That was all very important obviously.

We also canvassed, or lobbied our local politicians, mainly the two that were in power at the time, let me think now, that would be Mattie McGrath and" ... "Martin Manseragh"[32] [Molly assists Paddy to remember]. (Paddy, Rural, NS).

I will discuss some of the key characteristics of resistance that both examples share later, but a couple of observations are interesting about Paddy's story: firstly, the point Paddy makes about the project being and remaining independent is noteworthy, given that this CDP, like most others are almost totally funded by public funds, i.e. CDP, Childcare Programme (NCIP), VEC (now ETB), FÁS and grants from other public bodies. While a small amount of funds are raised through fees, e.g. for childcare, in most cases this accounts for less than 1% of the overall budget (as confirmed by Paddy). Given these operational circumstances, being

[32]In 2007- 2010, Fianna Fail were in government and both Mattie McGrath and Martin Manseragh were members of this government which were elected from this rural county.

'independent' sounds contradictory. It is likely that what Paddy is referring to is that the local management committee, which is a separate legal entity, makes the decisions on what funds to apply for, based on locally identified and prioritised needs. This 'independence' is clearly very important to those CDPs that resisted integration. They also were able to access diverse forms of (albeit State) funding and this reduced the overall influence of the DECLG[33] within the organisation. The data collected via the focus groups highlights how dependent community projects are on State funding and the impacts this may have in terms of influence on their work agendas. 'Independence' must therefore be seen as a 'relative' rather than 'absolute' status.

The varying and sometimes contradictory roles the State plays, see Rhodes (1997) and Jessop (2001), through the operations and interventions of different government departments and agencies, elected representatives and officials, is illustrated by Paddy's account. He shows that there is no single unified State position with regard to the community sector; in this case government department officials and elected representatives contradicted each other and different departments funded projects under different conditions. It was within the spaces created by these contradictions that resistance was able to emerge and gain traction. However, there were also examples of these contradictions causing confusion and disagreement for projects that were trying to resist integration. Miriam who works for a Traveller CDP claims:

> "*Because a lot of* [the information] *was contradictory, you know you're being told for example by the Department that you will close down as a CDP,* [the opposite by our local representatives] *and yet by the time that's unravelled, say as a forum we realize that actually legally nobody can tell you to do*

[33]Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

that. I think it's a campaign of disinformation and confusion" (Miriam, Urban, NS).

The ambiguous behaviour and contradictory responses of elected representative's vis-à-vis the policy of their own political parties seems to reflect the dominance of clientelism in the Irish context. Clientelism involves the promise of favours by political representatives in exchange for political support and votes. Many community workers identified similar interventions, when local politicians up to and including the Minister of the Department with responsibility for integration, were approached by the local CDPs. Elected representatives gave positive encouragement to local projects, i.e. they did not need to integrate, that "they would be ok", while civil servants from the same department insisted there was no leeway. These examples also suggest that 'successful' resistance may itself incorporate and reflect elements of the clientelist relationship – again this is borne out in Paddy's description of the project's resistance strategies where politicians were consciously and strategically lobbied for support. Resistance may assimilate aspects of existing power relationships and thus may maintain or reinforce existing, but problematic, forms of decision making (see Weitz, 2001; Kondo, 1990; Scott, 1990; Barnes and Prior, 2009 in Chapter Two).

Finally, another tension for community workers resisting integration on behalf of their projects, is that they are utilising State funds to oppose the State. As Jessop (2001), LEWRG (1997) and Marinetto (2007) assert, the State is fluid, complex, non-monolithic and capable of being influenced and shaped at various points of intersection. Clearly, this is borne out in Paddy's account.

6.3.1.1.1 Supportive Conditions

As noted in Chapter Two, Koopmans (2007), Foweraker (1995) and Giroux (1983) argue that the following conditions can contribute to the emergence of successful social movements or expressions of resistance: where space is made for critical reflection on hegemonic views or ideologies; where resistance is agreed in the context of collective action and decision making; and where there is a history and prior experience of organising and resisting. All of these conditions were present in Una's and Paddy's description of successfully resisting integration.

Both projects have strong local participation on their management committees, the members of which worked alongside and with the support of the community workers. This suggests that clear and unified leadership and strong organisational capacity are important for resistance to succeed, a point emphasised by Koopmans (2007). When these community workers identified a threat to the project they brought their concerns to the attention of the management committee immediately, mobilising a range of allies around them and ensuring an ongoing presence and communication with members of their community constituency. Koopmans (2007) and Foweraker (1995) agree that such forms of internal and external mobilisation are conducive and even essential to the emergence of successful expressions of collective resistance.

According to their own accounts, these community workers strategised around how to remain independent, considered several options, putting realistic and sometimes difficult options on the table. Resistance tactics included: forming alliances with other workers, volunteers and with local politicians to build support - thereby utilising resources within and outside their organisation. Again based on their accounts, it appears that all stakeholders agreed that they wanted to remain independent and were prepared to lose paid staff and cut programmes if necessary. Therefore their strategies were well processed, by those concerned and affected:

consequently resistance was clear, focused, agreed unanimously and collectively expressed.

Both workers and projects have a long experience of community work, critical analysis and collective action. Both workers are confident in their leadership roles and have experience of successful and unsuccessful resistance work in the past; notably they agree that resistance is inherently part of community work. Finally, both projects as organisations place a high level of trust in their key co-ordinator/community worker as can be seen in the lead role that each of these workers were allowed to take.

In the Rural County, the focus group discussed additional conditions that may be conducive for resistance, as they reflected on Paddy's narrative of success. This also shows how the focus group contributed to the germination of new ideas:

> *"Before you can really engage in resistance you have to develop your credibility as a worker and as an organisation or as a service, whatever field, so when they made the decision to resist, the powers that be were forced to listen, but that didn't happen overnight" (Molly, Rural, NS).*

> *Jane agrees; "the power-base matters ….. there's a lot of integrity that has been built up over the years, and that I think would offer a lot of support, that people would be more willing to support their* [Rural CDP] *resistance than they might be for other projects" (Jane, Rural, NS).*

In closing the discussion on successful resistances, workers reflected briefly on why other projects were unsuccessful at resisting integration or why the CDPs collectively failed to reverse this policy change. Una identifies the lack of agreement

and analysis within the projects or a shared counter-hegemonic ideology among workers to face down neo-liberalism and managerialism. As noted earlier, Paddy also confirms this lack of consensus and solidarity at sectoral level despite his efforts to work collaboratively across the region (see page 170). Una and Lilly sum this up as follows;

> *"I suppose what was obvious was that all these CDPs had been set up separately and had, a lot of them had different ideologies, different notions about what CDP projects were, what community resistance is, what community development is, and that I think weakened the national collective stragtegising* [of resistance]" *(Una, Urban, NS).*

> *"There's no alternatives in terms of collective resistance and there isn't any leadership" (Lilly, Urban, NS).*

These statements would suggest that the conditions identified by Koopmans (2007) and Foweraker (1995) for successful resistance (in Chapter Two) were absent and therefore some potential resisters observed the situation as too risky and their actions unlikely to succeed (Scott, 1990).

While I do not provide additional data to this effect, in the interests of keeping this chapter focused, many of the positive characteristics outlined above were also present for the CDPs who did not integrate with their Local Development Companies but realigned themselves within the Health Service Executive (HSE). Notably these projects consider themselves successful in resisting integration also.

6.3.1.2 Unsuccessful Resistance to Integration

For some projects, remaining autonomous or re-aligning with another agency was not regarded as a workable possibility. Based on the focus group discussions, some projects (not all) that finally conceded to integration within the national LCDP were small in size and had limited recourse to alternative funding sources. Some CDPs did not have sufficient local support for a campaign to remain independent or to continue the arduous fight of resisting the threats and impacts of funding cuts and closure.

The time-period from 2009 to 2011 was very difficult for the CDP sector and in the absence of a shared collective analysis and vision nationally, as contended by Una and Paddy in the previous section, it appears that project survival was fought on a case by case basis. While all CDPs wanted to remain local and independent, very few remained so. The following discussion relates to the experiences of community workers whose projects resisted integration but who were not successful in remaining autonomous:

Lilly and Pauline work with two urban CDPs both of which were merged with the Local Development (Partnership) Company. Both workers and their projects engaged in several strategies to resist integration. They included: a street protest, meeting with local politicians, seeking a meeting with the Minister, and obtaining agreement from the local partnership company to collaborate across the region with other projects to remain autonomous. Explaining what she perceives as the rationale behind integration, Lilly also offers insight into the changing relationship between the State and the community sector. What is particularly significant here is that integration is seen as a counter-resistance by the State, in reaction to the resistant actions and ideologies that characterised aspects of community work.

"I think the community development programme and certain individuals within it were seen to be much more, were seen to be radical. And there was that sense of needing to quell that..... in terms of our organization, I have never experienced such a closed door before. I have never experienced the extent that you won't even get a response from a Minister anymore. You won't even get a reply to a letter, not even the usual ..... there's a complete brick wall now and I think there has been a concerted attempt to break down that kind of ideological base that has grown up within communities in terms of radicalism and resistance.

As a [collective] *voice, I think maybe that lack of homogeneity was why there wasn't a great you know ....national campaign. I think the State has been very successful in just breaking people off, and has been so successful in doing that that..... it's very hard to get people to come together.*

And you know some people have moved very easily into new structures, some people are continuing to resist, some people are kind of half and half, but I suppose in terms of resistance my experience of it is, it's just you really are up against a brick wall. There's really, you don't have any friends anywhere" (Lilly, Urban, NS).

From the above, one can see Lilly's frustration with the lack of collective resistance and organisation nationally. Interestingly, Holly makes a similar observation on the historical strength of community development but now the lack of solidarity and

mutual support within the community sector, though she works for a Family Resource Centre which was not a target of integration:

> *"The strength that was there within community development, in terms of you know the government not being happy with that. I think that any kind of dissent or rebellion, even on a lower level, I think it's all being diluted, so that a community development movement or you know community activism is kind of fragmented. And it will take a long time for people to come together again. I think because there was power and there was strength in what was there. I think people at the top* [Holly is referring to government officials] *were afraid in a sense because you know the country was coming to a point where people were having a bigger voice I think, and I think it's all after being slapped down now again.* For example the funding cuts to *.... the Community Workers Co-op [CWC], the Combat Poverty Agency, all of this you know is coming with the last while, and I think it is about keeping people in their place and keeping them down, so that you know the powers that be stay in power*[34]*" (Holly, Urban, NS).*

These were commonly expressed views, and workers in all of the focus groups argued that there was a deliberate strategy put in place by the government of the time to silence and marginalise more critical expressions of community development (See comments by Lilly (page 142), Rachael (page 151) and Rita (page 152). Such counter-resistances by the State are confirmed by Barnes and Prior (2009), Hughes (2009) and Barnes, Newman and Sullivan (2007) when examining case-studies in the UK.

[34] Holly is referring to existing government parties i.e. Fianna Fail staying in government.

At the time of the focus groups Pauline had left her employment at a local community development project (that initially resisted but ultimately made a collective decision to integrate) and now works for the new local Partnership structure[35]. She is concerned about the loss of ownership over programmes for local people and the groups who met in her project. She too reflects on the State's resistance to the resistant ideologies and identities being generated via community development processes.

> [In recent times] "*In the Project a lot of the programmes were taken away from us. I would certainly see it as resisting, to make sure that we allowed the space and* [provide] *the support to let those* [existing community] *groups do their thing. Because I would see it as just completely wrong to just get rid of entire programmes and groups* [and close down the project].

> *The resistances I still feel now – right – fuck this you're not doing that, you know that somewhere in my own head I don't feel that I can let go of the community development programme and I almost feel like I'm now working for the resistance [laugh]. You know, so that somewhere I have to play my part somehow, whatever big, small part it is, in trying to keep the whole ethos of community development alive and kicking, and in my role going forward in working for the Partnership, I still have to have that platform to jump up and down and resist what I'm being told to do if you like" (Pauline, Urban, NS).*

Although unsuccessful at resisting integration, Pauline argues that she is bringing her broader conception of resistance into the newly integrated Partnership

[35]Now called Local Development Companies.

structures. Pauline suggests that she has internalised the values and principles, i.e. 'ethos' of community development, which she presents as foundational to her identity as a worker (as did Philippa on page 158). The positive expression of those values in an inhospitable context thus represents a kind of resistance; an argument that has also been made by Freire (1973), Thomas and Davies (2005) (see Chapter Two). She also feels a duty to continue to work with the community groups she worked with in her previous role, thus resisting efforts to circumscribe or transform her everyday practice as worker.

Finally, Lilly also confirms her intention to continue resisting as an employee in the new structures:

> *"Resisting the structure that you're pulled into as well, there has to be a certain amount of resistance there too. And I mean we would still be resisting"* (Lilly, Urban, NS).

Pauline and Lilly's framing of resistance as 'holding on to your values' is also observed and analysed by Barnes and Prior (2009) and Hughes (2009) when exploring youth work practices, where workers justified their non-compliance with national policy objectives or targets, by asserting that such policies were not reflecting real 'youth work' as they understood it.

The next and final conversation in this section is presented to show the contrasting interpretations by workers within the same focus group. The converation is between a community worker from an FRC (Holly), a former CDP worker (Lilly), and Miriam who works with a Traveller Men's Community Development Project. This dynamic is very interesting as while most CDPs failed to remain autonomous, FRCS were protected and realigned with a new government ministry, and Traveller CDPs (similar to the Women's CDPs) coalesced nationally under the National Traveller

Partnership. While they were all experiencing significant changes in their work contexts, they were being realigned in different ways. In the focus group workers perceived that differential treatment as reflective of government efforts to favour or demonise particular projects.

> *"I think people felt that if you* [as an FRC] *aligned yourself with the CDPs and given what had happened to them that we* [the FRCs] *would suffer the same fate" (Holly, Urban, NS).*

> *"Would you not think that, because the FRCs were perceived differently you know by government structures and that, that it* [FRCs] *would fit more into the right wing model of family support services, the nuclear family, and all the structures that go in there, whereas community development" …* [was seen as too radical] (Lilly, Urban, NS).

> *"Holly, sorry can I just question the futility of resistance. Now I've only been in community development in Ireland for about three years but if you look at, say the CDPs and that whole merger, takeover by Partnerships, and all of the resistance that was shown, it was futile at the end because it was pre-destined ....and maybe in time the FRCs are maybe just on a longer leash" (Miriam, Urban, NS).*

> *"For now it's working for us, we're still independent" (Holly, Urban, NS).*

"Is that due to resistance or is that just due to good luck" (Miriam, Urban, NS).

"I think it's a bit of both. I think if we weren't as well organised as we are, I think it would happen sooner rather than later and you know as regards funding, and touch wood, you know the FSA[36] *has been cut, but our* [local] *programmes haven't been cut to date" (Holly, Urban, NS).*

"*There was all sorts of things going on* [when we were trying to resist] *like I wouldn't want people to think that the CDPs struggle was for nothing. I think it did, it did shift things, it did move things and you know there were some gains ....and these new changes force us to think again" (Lilly, Urban, NS).*

This exchange illustrates some tensions between workers from CDPs and FRCs because it was interpreted that the latter were being privileged over the former. Earlier Lilly (page 136, 142 and 178) claims that, the CDP programme and some of its workers were perceived as being too radical and standing in the way of emergent political and policy agendas, i.e. the managerialisation of community development. Holly (page 179) concurs suggesting that the State was involved in a form of 'counter-resistance' against advances that had been made by CDPs (and see also quote by Rita on page 152). Chapter Three draws on Barnes and Prior (2009) who suggest that managerial changes in the UK's public sector can be considered counter-responses, moves or resistances; they seek to counteract aspects of worker agency and shore up managerial control. This further illustrates arguments made by Scott (1985) and Giroux (1983) that resistance is itself a form of power that can be used by both power-holders and the powerless; it is not inherently progressive or

[36]Family Support Agency (FSA)

egalitarian in intent. Furthermore, this discussion takes us back to the increasingly central place of the State within Irish community development and how it is variously regarded as an ally; the central actor or relationship that is to be influenced with regards to social policy and resources; the dominant enforcer of right-wing ideology; and as a fragmentary force that in turn fragments community workers into distinct and isolated silos as explained in Chapter Three by LEWRG (1979) and Newman and Clarke (2014).

Within the focus groups, the anger of some community workers comes through regarding how they were treated throughout the integration process. The process was very top-down, prescriptive, with little or no room for negotiation and with very real financial and personal consequences for those not compliant. Interestingly, Miriam who had only been working in community work in Ireland for three years wonders if resistance was futile even though it was clear in the group discussion that some resistances were successful and others not. In addition to the personal consequences Miriam interpreted the directive from the Department as mandatory and her project as having little choice in the matter.

Lilly's closing remarks highlight that the process of resistance was valuable in itself. She points to some gains, even though her project was unsuccessful in achieving its ultimate objective. In her longer account she explains that: staff and members of the community worked collectively to tease out issues and options; they reflected critically on relationships including those between employer/employee; and developed a deeper analysis of the structural-power-relationship with the State. Her account echoes Giroux (1983) when he argues that resistance, which is an active expression of agency, has a 'revealing' function and helps to unleash critiques of domination whilst at the same time providing opportunities for self-reflection and struggle in the interests of social and self-emancipation. This is possible even when resistance is seen to fail. Nonetheless, Lilly's account also reveals that the demands associated with active public resistance were very challenging and costly

for CDPs, which were made up mostly of voluntary committee members. Lilly's focus group interventions propose that these processes of personal and collective transformation may in some way facilitate the creation of alternative views, identities and perspectives, an analysis also shared by Giroux, (1983) and Thomas and Davies (2005). Simultaneously, such processes uphold some of the key principles of community development, namely, participation, democracy and promoting the right to self-determination by citizens around their futures.

Nonetheless, the focus groups reveal that integration was emotionally challenging as local committee members and workers had to take significant decisions about employment conditions in the interest of their projects and communities, whilst balancing these with their duty of care to employees. All involved were challenged as to how far they would go or hold out in their resistance. Processes like these are fertile ground for learning in community development but they may generate significant personal and financial costs.

In addition, projects themselves may be divided in their responses and there may be different perspectives from employees and the project's management committee, which ultimately makes the final decisions in relation to the project's future.

> *"I think one of the differences* [between CDPs] *here is you have your own project, you have a board that are very much aligned with you in terms of resisting. There's a number of CDP's whose boards' view differ totally from their staff" (Pauline, Urban, NS).*

While all projects resisted initially, over time some of those represented at the focus groups – approximately three – decided to integrate fully with the Local

Development Company. A common contributing factor in such cases was the position taken by their management committees, who estimated that compliance might be less problematic and costly in the longer term. These projects continue today under the new structures. However, at least two of the community workers interviewed as part of this study claim that they still resist the erosion of community development's independence and values from within these new employment spaces; see Pauline's comments (page 192) and Lilly's (page 178, 180-181). This is referred to by Barnes and Prior (2009) as 'being subversive', where individuals, both as workers and as citizens, remain loyal to their principles even if those principles come into conflict with the objectives of their employer organisation or their newly prescribed roles as workers. According to Barnes and Prior (2009), workers make their own situated judgements about what action to take and this can be based on their values, past experience, tacit or local knowledge. This can result in different interpretations and forms of action other than those mandated (by employers or government) and can therefore contribute and open up spaces for the development of resistance.

6.3.2 Everyday Resistances by Community Workers

All community workers who participated in this research were clear that they practised resistance as part of their work on an everyday basis, although in the literature some of their practices would be referred to as social change or consciousness-raising work. The majority of workers agreed readily that resistance was an integral part of community development work and it included being non-compliant as referred to by Sharon who is a State community worker:

> *"Resistance and challenging I'd say is fundamental to community development … I think in relation to resistance as well it's just about not complying" (Sharon, Urban, S).*

Sharon goes on to talk about some of her work in supporting the resistances of local projects:

> *I'm not sure how I do it, but* [recently] *I did assist one rural project to find alternative solutions. I did actually, I did provide a bit of resistance there. But how my sanity is still intact after that one .... I just don't know" (Sharon, Urban, S).*

Sharon does not explain all the detail as most participants in the room know that behind what Scott (1990) might call the 'official transcript' of her mandated role as a community worker with a State agency, Sharon negotiated with the Local Development Company (LDC) the transfer of various programmes (those that wanted to go) and the retention of other aspects where this was requested. This was despite Sharon having no official role in the transfer process, her organisation being represented on the management of the LDC and where officially no negotiations were allowed.

In many instances, and as already suggested, resistance was rationalised with reference to workers' understandings of the role and purposes of community development work: to challenge inequalities, often by targeting policy makers; to uphold community participation in decision-making, the right to self-determination and collective action (see Chapter Four). The accounts from the focus group suggest that because these principles are not widely accepted or enacted within Irish society, particularly in relation to disadvantaged/marginalised communities, resistance happens every day for community workers when they seek to give life to these principles. What follows are two examples – both from State agency community workers in two different counties. Rachael talks about resisting managerial procedures or aspects of decision making by her employer organisation that may negatively impact on the community groups with which she engages:

"I think I have resisted, but it would be very invisible to anyone else, but it's internal resistance, to am - I suppose to ways of doing things. I would always resist any attempts that I see by the agency trying to control how voluntary community sector organisations run themselves. I believe in the autonomy of the groups that are funded through the agency" (Rachael, Urban, S).

Rachael then provides an example where her resistance took a more overt form.

"There were changes happening [internally in her organisation] *in a certain way and there was no transparency at all, and as far as I'm concerned, I think we're out there working with the community sector and part of our job is that we have to ask for the community sector to be transparent among other things, so it's just not on then for it to be not transparent in the way we're working. So I advised our administration department of this on several occasions and was effectively ignored, so I voiced it again and just said I would be stepping aside from a particular area of work unless there was the governance put in place and I put it in writing, and that was my way of feeling well, it may not change but it's on record, I did try. I did everything in my power and I stepped aside, and I suppose, to a certain extent I could have been told you can't step aside. But it can be quite lonely trying to do it* [resistance] *and the difficulty is as well we can't talk about it because .... you know you can't - if you breach the confidentiality of the organisation that you work for - that's a serious offence"* (Rachael, Urban, S).

Below is a second example where a State agency community worker is supporting local residents at an external agency meeting:

"I think it's, it's a bit like what I was saying earlier about community voice and giving people a voice, I have an experience I suppose of bringing the two community reps to the management structure of the (HSE) primary care team, and the discussion is very medically orientated, and then they start talking about building a new primary care centre, and a couple of heads of discipline would have been talking about where it would be built and it was around [a named] *area, and it was like way out of town, no public transport, and I'm sitting there holding the table, thinking, trying not to say anything until everyone had a speak, hoping the community reps would say something,* [against this] *and they did.*

For me that's resistance, and all they were doing was making people aware that not everybody in the community has a car. Not everybody can access the building if you put it in that location. And the people, the staff, the agency staff were totally shocked to hear a community perspective. And that amazed me that they would be that shocked to think that not everybody could access a building in that area if they built it. You know you'll get the disability access, you'll get all that, but people can't actually walk to it. And I was sitting there and to me that is resistance if you like, but it's raising awareness as well, but it's a resistance, it's creating the environment of resistance. I was hoping that the community reps, you know if they didn't say it I would have said it, but then that would be my experience of it [not theirs].

Ya. And there was silence. The reaction was complete silence. It was like [pause], *because it was coming from where it needed to come from - the community*" (Aine, Rural, S).

Significantly, when community workers gave tangible examples of their resistant work practices, it was typically with reference to the past. Aine and Rachel's narratives also show, that despite rhetorical commitments to participation, State agencies and policy makers seem unwilling to cede the associated power. It is this perpetuation of hierarchy that prompted the resistance described by Aine and Rachel and again this could be described as being subversive as outlined by Barnes and Prior (2009) and Hughes (2009) in Chapter Two. These examples also highlight characteristics identified by Hollander and Einwohner (2004) that resistance can be practised internally within organisations as well as it being externally actioned; and (Aine's) practices of resistance might have gone unnoticed by the community representatives, thereby showing that some resistances may not be recognised by those whom it is intended to benefit or indeed in this case may not be recognised by the target of resistance either?

6.3.2.1 Resisting managerialism?

Resistance to the integration process has already been described in detail in 6.3.1. All community workers, whether from State agencies, Family Resource Centres or Community Development Projects, were involved to varying degrees in resisting such processes. These processes lasted for between two and three years and in general took significant time and energy away from direct community work (see quote by Janette on the next page). Partly informing the resistance to integration was a concern with the new and ever growing managerial demands being placed upon community workers as part of their work. Across the three focus groups, community workers saw the new managerial requirements as attempts to re-orientate their work, reduce their political impact and take time away from working directly with and for communities. In the following discussion, examples are given whereby resistance to managerialism is framed as an effort to do real community development work, i.e. work directly with people, support community-led change and not be distracted by paperwork, although as will be seen, most of these resistances are individualised.

The first conversation, from the Rural County focus group, involves four community workers: Jane from a Traveller project, Janette from the Local Development Company, Jo from a Community Enterprise Centre and Aine from a State agency. They were discussing how community work has changed in the last few years and explicitly referenced the growing impact of managerialism and its consequences for their work.

Janette: *"I also think community work is so much more than ticking boxes. And counting numbers and KPIs, I hate that term.*

Jo: *Ya, Key Performance Indicators and management!*

Janette: *It drives me crazy.*

Maria: *Why?*

Janette: *Because it just dehumanises community development, you know it really takes the meaning away, because community work is about the changes you cannot document a lot of the time.*

Aine: *It's about the tiny things, small changes too, you know.*

Jo: *It's all about the ultimate power at the end of the day which is government.*

Jane: *Absolutely, but that's where the challenge comes in, you know, there's working towards overcoming some of that, or to hoping that people will take back some of their power you know, by whatever way, and maybe that's where resistance comes in?".*

These concerns echo those raised in the other groups, as presented in section 6.3.1, where managerialism is seen to erode the integrity of community development

practice. In Urban 1, and reflecting a widespread view within the group, Holly says "we are bogged down in paperwork, reporting and finding funding for survival" (Holly, Urban, NS), while in Urban 2, workers discussed and queried the need for "more compliance to rules and regulations" (Rachael, Urban, S). There is deep concern across all three groups about how community work is being redefined and the agendas and assumptions that are informing such changes. However, it also became apparent that resistance as this point appears to be mainly discursive and ideological, i.e. workers not wanting to comply with new managerial requirements but feeling they have little or no choice. Furthermore, at the time of carrying out this research there was deep shock at the level of interference and large-scale decisions taken unilaterally by the State in restructuring community workers' roles and their employment status. Though there were attempts made to develop collective resistance, the immediacy of this large-scale restructure appears to have hampered community workers capacity to resist collectively and strategically – at least in the short-term. Thus much of the discussion centred on the difficulties in practising resistance even if workers believed policy-led changes were undermining community development. Accounts thus draw attention to workers' perception of a lack of choice, for example Pauline explains:

> "*You've just been hit with so much paperwork and - I need this, I need that and it's almost as if, and the time lines are so tight, you've no choice but to jump in there and get it done and you're not really looking and thinking what am I doing here* [She is simply completing lots of forms and boxes]. *And we were told that, you know in the Partnership we've been told drop everything else and do this* [paperwork]. *And we can't drop everything else, we can't say to all the groups don't come in any more we're closing for six weeks! And that just shows on the first step that lack of understanding of what we're doing" (Pauline, Urban, NS).*

Clearly Pauline enacts a kind of resistance, although she does not describe it as such, when she continues working with local groups in defiance of orders and completes paperwork in a cursory way. Pauline's commentary, which resonates with the opinions of other group participants, demonstrates that because of the circumscribed nature of community work in Ireland today there is little time to analyse, respond to or publicly and strategically resist managerialist demands. Indeed, and as mentioned earlier by Jane on page 176, significant sanctions can be applied if managerial tasks are not completed, i.e. core funding (and thereby salaries) would be withheld from the project. Pauline's superficial engagement with technical exercises, which she is highly critical of in private and her continuing engagement with communities off-site seems to reflect what Scott (1990) calls a 'hidden transcript' of resistance. Resistance is not made apparent to power-holders and the illusion of acquiescence (Scott, 1990) is maintained. But behind this public transcript of co-operation and work being done according to State agendas, counter hegemonic views and practices are sustained.

Perhaps worryingly, given the degree of discontent generated by managerialist demands, there was little evidence from the focus groups that there is any large-scale[37] organised collective analysis of these changes. One of the reasons for this might be the structural shift in the employment of community workers, away from more local community contexts to the more prescribed, controlled and bureaucratic environments of Local Development Companies. This is exacerbated by the speed of implementation of such large-scale structural changes, and the associated impacts of new systems of accountability, measurement protocols, restrictions on time and reduced resources for networking or travel, all of which were described by the focus group participants. This prevents workers from carving out the kinds of independent or 'sequestered spaces' (Scott, 1990) that would host and foster more resistant discourses and actions. Scott (1990) argues that, in times when surveillance is pervasive and oppressive, the forms that resistance take will

[37] Large-scale here means beyond local geographic areas to more regional and national levels of organising.

often be 'hidden', 'covert' and 'informal' as open resistance could potentially be counter-productive and unlikely to succeed. Other reasons which may account for a lack of organised collective resistance and referred to earlier in section 6.3.1, is the lack of leadership and varying analysis (see page 176,178) held by community workers operating out of different models and approaches to community work as described in Chapter Four, thereby making reaching agreement on large-scale collective resistance strategies difficult.

The next conversation is between me and a community worker from a Community Development Project located in a provincial town in the Rural County:

> *"And we're still independent, and we're hoping that we will remain independent. We make our own decisions as regards to the work that we do - not obviously one hundred per cent. You know we might have to do a little bit of 'creative tweaking', but by in large I don't think* [all the changes in relation to integration and the new national programme] *are going to affect us that much.*

> *It might affect other organisations and I know it will, but as things stand we're relatively independent, our board makes the decisions of what kind of work we want to get involved in and what we don't and ....we get a bit of interference every now and again from certain agencies, for example FÁS. They* [the agencies] *might like us to do this or that, but we actually feel that we're strong enough to say no, and that's happened on a couple of occasions" (Paddy, Rural, NS).*

Paddy's example highlights again the importance of being a comparatively 'independent project', which they accomplished by not being exclusively reliant on one source of funding. Being in this position allows community workers to resist a single funders' agenda more easily, sometimes ignoring it, saying 'no' or even 'creatively tweaking' reports to respond to both the funders' and the projects' identified needs. By 'creatively tweaking', Paddy is implying that funding requests or reporting on such can be manipulated to support their existing programmes of work. This seems to resemble what Scott (1990) calls a "politics of double entendre", where Paddy gives the impression of compliance to the funder but in reality he is more concerned about delivering on his projects priorities and agenda. Scott (1990) uses this category 'double-entendre' to identify resistance as public messages which can have double meanings and where the same message can be read differently by different audiences, as expanded upon in Chapter Two, and can be observed in Paddy's account of resistance above. Practising such covert forms of resistance indicate that 'overt' resistance might be too risky, unlikely to succeed or that the prevailing environment is heavily monitored. Double-entendre facilitates an expression of resistance though it goes unnoticed by those at whom it is aimed (Scott, 1990).

The data confirms that almost all community workers continue to work directly with communities, despite being told to "spend time completing paperwork and drop everything else" (Pauline, Urban, NS). The problem, however, is that this form of resistance work may not be sustainable as two jobs are being completed simultaneously, the one that community workers believe they should be carrying out and the one that they are being instructed to carry out.

Clearly these resistances by Pauline and Paddy point to more indirect forms of resistance that are practised under the radar as argued by Scott (1985) when he discusses the wide-spread practice of everyday forms of resistance by subjugated groups. The more subtle or hidden forms of resistance, which he refers to as

'hidden transcripts' and as a politics of 'double entendre' are reflective of the requirement to be seen to comply while wanting to resist. What is absent from the above accounts is a public and collective articulation of that resistance to power-holders and decision-makers.

The next and final intervention is made in the Urban 2 focus group by a community worker employed by the State, who summarises both the extensive changes community development has undergone as well as the factors that may be undermining the possibility of public, strategic and effective resistance.

> *"And I also think when the CDP programme started say in the early 90s, we weren't in a managerialist society you know. For the first 8 or 9 years, certainly the priority was 'process' – it wasn't procedures, it wasn't a procedural type day-job, do you know - it was all about getting people together, you know supporting them to form groups, and to respond to the issues that really affected them. And I feel that what's happened is that 'effectiveness' in inverted commas has replaced 'justice' as the fundamental value of what community workers are about.* [As I see it] *you're effective if – to me you're effective if you can show that you've followed all the rules that are being set down somewhere or other.*

> *And all the regulations and all the procedures and it's not that I'm against trying to do things right and properly and you know but I just think it becomes, it just becomes a way of being then, that you feel you know you're almost made feel you're doing your job well if you're very good at the regulatory stuff.*

People have said to me in jest, and I don't think it's very funny [giggle], about the days of past community development – every now and again I'd be saying ah well you know community workers by their nature are subversive, I mean that's what we're here to be and should be. And people say to me "ah do you know those days are gone, there's no subversives any more, we're all the same now, kind of like we…. we're all in the same boat", there's no kind of power agendas or inequalities or anything and it's sort of a neutralizing thing.

Everything's been neutralized by the guys in regulation, managerialism, and I really think the only hope is for us to form or find independent spaces [like we did in the past] *where you'd have a lot of conversations, but they were good conversations. And they were sustaining, you know you felt you belonged to a group of people of like-mind, whereas we don't even – we never see each other, I mean Ger, I never see, I hardly ever see Rita. We don't, we're all very set apart in our appointed spaces" (Rachael, Urban, S).*

From what Rachel says it appears that the extensiveness and pervasiveness of managerial power erodes the possibility of resistance despite it being even more necessary in the current policy context. For Rachael the managerialist demands are so overwhelming and all enveloping, that the only outlets for resistance lie in the creation of independent spaces. Again this returns us to Scott's (1990) conception of 'hidden transcripts': where the development of such transcripts are only possible outside the gaze of the powerful. Resistant discourses and ideas can be fostered, developed and sometimes practised through the creation of private or sequestered spaces in contexts where oppression is acute. According to Scott (1990) sequestered spaces are crucial for the development of 'hidden transcripts' that sustain resistant ideas and values, even when it is appears very difficult or impossible to practise resistance more publicly.

Finally, it should be noted that while worker frustration with the impacts of managerialism was almost universal, two workers (Janette and Darina, page 152-153) stated that they were not alarmed by the new requirements. They saw their responsiveness to managerial demands and systems of accountability as an inevitable aspect of their role as employees.

6.3.2.2 Observations by the researcher

At the time of the research, community workers were in the 'eye of the storm' in terms of the new demands being placed upon them – both structural and managerial. The large-scale re-orientation of community work was immediate and the practices of resistance by community workers at this time were primarily focused on these new restructuring demands and what this shift represented.

While the majority of participants identify and talk about their ideological opposition to an increased level of managerialism, they do not appear to resist these techniques overtly. While I attempted to explore this lack of resistance, it did not emerge strongly as a theme from the data; it seemed that community workers at that time felt confused, overwhelmed, unsuccessful and under siege. As noted in Chapter Three, Clarke (2000, 2007) and Newman (2001) claim that one of the key agents for introducing managerialism to public services and community development has been the use of a 'transformational discourse' (see page 66), which involves the adoption of community development language by statutory agencies, albeit for different purposes, resulting in confusion for community workers. This is confirmed by many community workers in this research (see page 143 and 147). Irish community workers at this time were trying to continue their direct work with communities, respond to the new demands being placed upon them, whilst at the same time resist, raise objections to or at the very least understand what was happening.

Rita summarises the cumulative effects of these changes on community development.

> *"I would say the State has really moved to harness community work, community development, pull it in, tame it and I do think one side of resistance to this is apathy and there has been a certain taming, there's been a definite push against what seems to be undefeatable neo-liberalism .... going without sayingism".*

> *"I think a lot of community development work has got to the stage where it is not interested in change or civil society – I do think people have been battered down ... and* [community development] *conversations are less and less frequent and now you're careful who you have them with" (Rita, Urban, NS).*

The environment described by Rita is redolent of Scott's (1985) descriptions of the kind of controlled spaces or relationships, where resistant views or perspectives can only be articulated 'off stage'; sometimes only to friends or close confidants or via what he calls a politics of 'double-entendre' or 'apparent acquiescence'. Indeed a comment from Sharon draws attention to how circumscribed work environments have become, so that that even apparently benign actions can be framed as resistance.

> *"It could be like being here today and not telling them at work ..that's resistance too"* (Sharon, Urban, S).

It could be argued that such resistance is difficult to trace and its political impact is questionable as put forward by Contu (2008) who claims that such resistances are ineffective and can undermine critical social analysis aimed at progressive social change.

However, Rita also proposes that where a project has influential allies within the State sector, workers can be stronger and by implication more public in their resistance:

> "Y*ou have the HSE self-negotiating for an alternative arrangement* [for our CDP], *that comes with a certain degree of clout*" (Rita, Urban, NS).
>
> Ger and Philippa agree: "*You have State community workers – I think you know the community work department in the HSE can be really good allies. And mainly because many people who work in them, this is just a personal opinion, would be – have a commitment to the core values of community work"* (Ger, Urban, S).
>
> "*Absolutely"* (Philippa, Urban, NS).

6.3.2.3 Other Resistances Practised by Community Workers

While the dominant concern and (discursive) practice of resistance was against the impacts of State managerialism and neo-liberalism, e.g. the requirement for a high level of accountability and less emphasis on working directly with communities using community development principles, there were alternative accounts of resistance, which illustrated how central and fundamental it can be to community development practice. The account highlighted is from a community worker who co-ordinates a well-known and respected Traveller project and who is herself a Traveller. She gives several examples of how she has to practice resistance in her work and in her personal life on a daily basis:

> "*I face resistance and carry out resistance type work every single day of my work and my life. Without ever thinking about it as resistance but there is so many strands of resistance, it is a very difficult job,*

and it's very wearing. Like you go into the City Council and you come out and some days I feel like I should wear armour going in there ....you know you'd be washed out because you are taking all this [negativity] *on constantly you know, and so now you pick your battles in terms of resistance.*

I suppose in our work everything is about resistance almost. I suppose the biggest example of that is accommodation [public housing policy] *you know, it's a daily resistance, in terms of the struggle for people to retain some aspects of a nomadic life and even if that's only a notional thing for some people. People are resisting anyway by their very actions, moving into bays and not moving into standard houses on estates that they just couldn't see themselves living in.*

But our work is trying to ensure that the conditions people are living in at that time is of some quality, and there is a huge resistance within the [Traveller] *community and a denial that there is a segregation policy operating, segregated-integration you know, I suppose 'assimilation' is the word I'm looking for.*

I suppose in terms of the national struggle at the minute there is a huge resistance within the government and within you know powers that be in terms of acknowledging Travellers Ethnicity. So we resist resistance too!

I mean there's so many examples of resistance you know and people don't see it as that. You know if you ask the person, any of the

> *families about that* [resistance] *very few of them would be able to say well I'm resisting by being here. I'm eating, sleeping, and walking resistance. Actioning and being resistant is absolutely exhausting you know, it really wears you down" (Eileen, Urban, NS).*

Clearly, as shown in the above example resistance is not always recognised as 'resistance' even by those who are practising it. Travellers who live 'illegally' on the side of the road and choose not to move into a house do not necessarily frame their behaviour as resistance. Instead it is an active expression of their Traveller identity, which comes into conflict with the 'settled' ideology of Irish society. Nonetheless, theorists such as Hollander and Einwohner (2004) identify such everyday choices as resistance, because they are expressions of alternative values and lifestyles that operate against dominant cultural norms or social regulations. Eileen's narrative suggest that community workers' working with minority groups, particularly those such as Travellers who experience acute forms of discrimination and exclusion, must constantly resist the 'counter-resistance' of State agencies, public officials and legal structures or institutions. Such agencies do not comply with equality legislation or resist their own responsibilities to accommodate Travellers, and again we see that resistance is not only a tool of the comparatively powerless but also of the powerful (Scott ,1985;and Chapter Two).

Another issue, which is borne out in Eileen's comments, is that community workers, in some instances, are forced to challenge the mind-sets and perspectives of the communities with which they work (as reflected in Molly comments on page 139). In Eileen's case it relates to the unwillingness among some Travellers to acknowledge or recognise the structural or political dimensions of the exclusion they experience. A similar issue has also been identified by Darina (on page 160). As community workers attempt to name and challenge issues of injustice they may, in turn, become targets of resistance by State agencies or department officials, but also the members of the communities with whom they work. Resistances are,

therefore, multiple, dynamic and exercised simultaneously from various points within the community work relationship (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004), i.e. resistance may be practised against the State – agencies, government departments, community members or management committees, employers and these same targets in some circumstances can be allies also. Eileen also infers that her identity is informed by her resistance work, which in her world is a wide-spread, everyday practice.

Finally, while there is a considerable amount of literature on work-place resistances that are centred on mitigating or improving immediate work environments (Prasad and Prasad, 1998, 2000; Fleming and Spicer, 2003), the community workers in this study did not frame their own resistance in this way. Interestingly no focus group participant referred to resistance that was focused on community workers' working or employment conditions per se despite these being systematically undermined during the period under review. Notably, the community workers did not present themselves as workers within a classic employer/employee binary. This may reflect the comparative absence of worker organisation or strong trade union activity within the sector. It may also reflect the character of the community sector itself. Community workers, within the focus groups, represent themselves as working for or on behalf of communities and in solidarity with them. There is a strong value base to the work and this combined with the dispersal of staff across geographical areas and the apparently limited scope for employment security in a changing policy context, acts against such forms of worker self-identity.

6.4 Is there a Value and Future Role for Resistance in Community Work?

While there are examples in this research which highlight that resistance can be very effective, both as an educative process and as a strategy to achieve certain goals, measuring 'success' is difficult, not least because the after-effects of the

integration process continued to be felt at the time. Workers were still uncertain about the scale of changes being experienced in the sector and their long term impact. However, below is a tentative review of some of the impacts of resistance by community workers, which is organised under three key headings.

6.4.1 Gains from Practising Resistance

6.4.1.1 Community development projects remaining autonomous, community-led and managed

As has been shown two Community Development Projects in this study successfully remained outside of the Local Development Companies (see accounts by Una (page 167) and Paddy (page 169)) in spite of the Department's demands that they integrate. Their comparative 'autonomy', in terms of funding and support from management committees and constituencies, allowed these projects greater scope to pursue their own locally identified agendas. This might be seen as a successful struggle to protect the relative independence of the projects and to assert the importance of community-led development work. However, it should be acknowledged that following my own checking-back with projects after the research process was concluded, the projects that stayed outside the integration process are operating on significantly reduced budgets and are more isolated, i.e. some projects are not invited to regional or national seminars on new community development programmes[38], while others are not included in the area-based work of local development companies.

In some cases, where local projects opted for a different alignment, e.g. joining the National Collective of Women's Networks or the National Traveller Partnership, the potential for winning new advantages at policy level through collective action became more possible. For example, with Traveller projects coming together under one national organisation, collective forms of resistance in relation to funding cuts,

[38] For example, the new Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) 2014

anti-racism work, etc., were initiated. This positive finding was confirmed subsequent to the data collection phase when I had the opportunity to meet with many of the community workers again and heard how the new national networks were developing.

6.4.1.2 Influencing the policy process

From the examples presented earlier, i.e. Molly's attempts to influence local elites (page 139) and Aine's challenging of Primary Care policy (page 189), it can be said that at a minimum resistance that is expressed against prejudicial attitudes at local level can raise the awareness of minority groups, their rights and needs, and create space for their participation in the development of relevant social policy. This has the potential to alter the culture of policy making so that it becomes more broad-based and inclusive of those who are the intended recipients of those policies (Barnes, Newman, Sullivan 2007). While, this may change policy in time it is a very slow process and the examples presented suggest that resistance and related success may appear small or localised (Ledwith, 2011).

There are difficulties implicit in such work with the possible emergence of counter-resistances as reported by Eileen (page 201). Traveller community workers aim to secure a housing policy that is inclusive of Traveller nomadic culture and responsive to Traveller needs. As community workers such as Eileen pressurise State institutions to take equality seriously, they are in turn resisted by those institutions. This is an on-going struggle and reflects how entrenched discrimination and exclusion may be and therefore resistance work may require long-term and multiple approaches in order for it to be sustained and successful.

6.4.1.3 Social change: increased skills, awareness of rights and entitlements among community members and community workers

Almost all of the community workers reported feeling a sense of empowerment when they engaged in resistance. I have already presented many examples of workers feeling personally empowered or more resilient as a result of actioning resistance (see Una on page 168 and see quote below). Glavenau (2009), Freire (1973) (see Chapter Two) highlight that resistance can positively shape identities, because it simultaneously operates at both the personal and political levels. In the focus groups community workers agree that significant learning experiences and new skills were gained, both for themselves, their management committees and their communities, as they practised and strategised resistance. Benefits include practical organisational skills and a deeper level of critical social analysis; significantly these were achieved even where resistance was not successful in its overall goal. Such practices can build identity, open up alternative views and challenge dominant power-holders, assumptions and views. As Lilly explains:

> *"There's the drama of resistance, it enables you, it gives you a place to critically analyze, it gives you a place to develop ideas and to sound out and try ideas" (Lilly, Urban, NS).*

That the resultant sense of empowerment is both real and important while still being hard to quantify is encapsulated in an exchange that occurred in the Rural focus group:

> *Aine:* *"But sometimes there's an inner power that you get by resisting"*
>
> *Paddy:* *"Ya"*
>
> *Aine:* *"By standing up for yourself, or a project"*
>
> *Darina:* *"Ya, that's true"*
>
> *Aine:* *"That you can't measure".*

But Jane, in the same group, notes a word of caution and highlights the dialectical character of resistance:

> *"It's a gamble. You don't know how things are going to turn out. You could lose a lot of power by resisting. You could lose everything"* (Jane, Rural, NS).

Barnes and Prior (2009), Thomas and Davies (2005) refer extensively to the importance of the personal and professional satisfaction that can derive from resistance. Gaining a sense of personal power through resistance is a necessary boost particularly in disadvantaged communities where members' own sense of personal disempowerment may be acute. It can also support particular actions to continue in the face of counter-resistance. However, like Jane, these theorists also observe that, because resistance may bring activists and workers into conflict with power, it generates risks. These are discussed in more detail in the following section.

6.4.2 The Personal Cost of Resistance

While many of the participants in this research talked about the cost or toll of resistance, the personal cost is most evident from the account of unrelenting struggle described by Eileen (page 201). She is a Traveller, woman and community worker. Similarly for Una (page 159) as a feminist worker; resistance is internalised via their role as a community worker and as a member of a marginalised community, which makes resistance very personal. In addition, both Miriam (see quote below) and Lilly (page 178) discuss the erosion of solidarity that occurred as the resistance strategies became fractured and resulted in the loss of friendships.

> "*It's broken the spirit really hasn't it? Somebody said to me the other day who is involved in a CDP, she said like there's friendships that have broken all over the place" (Miriam, Urban, NS).*

It should be noted here also that some community workers resigned at this time of change (in a personal display of opposition to the proposed changes) though there was also a minority of community workes who seemed to lack awareness about the significance of such changes.

The personal cost seems especially acute when workers are themselves members of oppressed communities, and they must practise resistance simultaneously with and on behalf of communities, and on their own behalf. As Rita points out "*resistance on a regular basis is exhausting and wears down your capacity to resist".* Scott's (1990) argues that even for the most subordinated groups there are pressure points of injustice or lines that cannot be crossed without prompting a strong reaction, i.e. a resistance to that injustice (See also Glavenau, 2009; Martin and Pierce, 2013). This would suggest that resistance is triggered when a certain tolerance level of domination, e.g. insults, material appropriation, management or autonomy has been breached. Those tolerances may be different for different workers but it is an insight worth considering when identifying conditions, e.g. timing, that might be conducive to developing resistance strategies.

6.4.3 Future Role of Resistance?

Each of the focus groups finished their final session with a brief look to the future and in particular considered the potential role and value of resistance in community work. All community workers across the three focus groups who identified with more critical perspectives agreed that resistance is essential to future community work. Here are a range of views;

> *"By the very fact that the people who are putting out* [prescribing] *these structures are sitting in offices in Dublin and the people who are expected to do the work are sitting in the communities, so you know what works on paper up in Dublin does not work in a community setting where you're actually dealing with real people. You know so there has to be a role for resistance because it's not necessarily going to work. And inequality is always going to exist" (Pauline, Urban, NS).*

> *"We have to work together to resist. And it is about, and it will be about resistance, you know. Because either we accept everything, accept the pill with the money, or we say we're entitled to that money for those people that we're working for, for the communities we're working for. It's not our money and it's not their money, you know the Government's. It belongs to the community, and we should be able to have some input into setting the terms for how, you know, the decisions are made and how the money is spent, that we shouldn't just have to sit back and say "because we're taking the money we're going to sort of play the game with you" we need to resist"* (Jane, Rural, NS).

These quotes simultaneously affirm the importance of resistance and acknowledge the vulnerability of community work itself. There is also a note of optimism that resistance can and must be practised, although these accounts do not move into a consideration of how such resistance can be nurtured, supported and made public. Many of the community workers in the focus groups may appear, in line with the 'public transcript', to be 'acquiescent' and 'compliant' in the face of significant structural changes. However, they are resistant at the level of discourse and ideology and thus are beginning to develop 'hidden transcripts' of resistance.

Other contributors were more pessimistic about the future of a critical and independent community sector, as Eileen and Ger from Urban 2 suggest:

> "*Well that's the future,* (as prescribed by the Department) *so we're all fucked!" (Eileen, Urban, NS).*

> *"Will there still be a community sector? I mean it's not as if I'm saying I don't want it but it's been eaten away, undermined, savagely attacked, and it's awful what's happened, apart from the actual cuts, the disrespect, but …. we haven't given up, I mean we may not be clear about how we are going to fix it. But I don't think people, I hear some, but all these people still aren't giving up, isn't that true?" (Ger,Urban, S).*

6.5 Conclusion

There were a range of purposes identified by the three groups of community workers as they considered 'what community development means'. Nevertheless, despite variations in approach and perspective, the values/principles underpinning community development are broadly agreed - i.e. participation, collective action and equality - even if they are practised or defined differently. The focus groups suggest that many workers are both personally and professionally aligned with the principles of community development i.e. those principles reflect their own personal politics. This potentially deepens their commitment to understanding and practising these principles and can result in resistance that is deeply personal and transformative also.

As was anticipated in Chapter Three, the State is understood as the significant player and mediator of relationships within community development. The State is

the sector's primary funder and it plays a key role, particularly in recent years, in formulating social policy that directs community development's agenda. Community workers unanimously see the negotiation of relations with the State as central to their work, although views range from those (two) who perceive these as comparatively unproblematic relationships to those who see them as constant and even intensifying sites of struggle.

The evidence presented in this study suggests that, conceptually at least, community workers recognise the intersectionality and multiplicity of resistances. When asked to define resistance their responses pointed to a continuum of practices from overt to hidden actions, confirming both Hollander and Einwohner's (2004) broad interpretation of resistance and Scott's (1985) emphasis on a range of everyday forms, which can be either 'public' or 'hidden'. Resistance therefore, is understood as a dynamic, flexible and relational concept in community work. While there is a general acceptance of the centrality of resistance for community work and its role in negotiating power, it must also be acknowledged based on the content and tone of the focus groups, resistance was not a deeply understood concept for some participants.

Chapter Three, Four and Six confirm the move towards managerialism, under neo-liberal influences, within community development in Ireland. While only a few participants talked in theoretical or academic terms about the dominance of the market, managerialism or neo-liberalism, they did enumerate many changes in language and policy that reflect the move towards what Clarke (2005) calls the responsibilisation, individualisation and self-regulation of citizens and workers. These changes have in turn shaped the form and focus of community workers' resistance.

Two key insights emerged from the focus groups as to why community workers engaged in resistance: (a) to protect CDPs independence and autonomy and (b) to defend community work values and principles – both interpreted as attempting to resist State managerialisation of community work.

The first theme, i.e. to protect CDPs independence and autonomy, links to the values/principles underpinning community development, but also relates more directly to the crisis that integration created for the sector, i.e. projects being taken out of local community ownership to become increasingly subject to corporate style governance. Secondly, many workers claim that the changes in community development are a direct attack on the principles of community development. For most community workers, their understanding of and commitment to the core values underpinning community development informs a willingness to validate both the concept and practice of resistance. For many who participated in this research, this means resistance is seen as an essential aspect of community work because community development itself is seen a political project. Arguably, in this context continuing to carry out community development work according to its values and principles, is an act of resistance in itself, and it is claimed as such by many of the contributors to this research.

As can be seen from the various examples presented earlier in the chapter, targets of resistance vary and includes: individuals in group settings, management committees, employers, programmes or State agencies, local government or Government Departments, with these latter three often being described as the 'State'. In addition, community workers themselves can be targets for resistance, in particular from local State agencies or local government departments, and community members. Resistance prompts counter-resistance and resistance is as much a tool of the comparatively powerless, e.g. community members, or power-holders, e.g. the State. In these circumstances resistance is understood as a form of power as advocated by Scott (1990) and Barnes and Prior (2009).

The focus groups as a process were seen as a type of 'hidden space' where potential resistance (opposition) could be articulated safely and which may lead in time to the creation of a 'hidden transcript' as proposed by Scott (1990). In the meantime, many community workers are responding to their employer's agenda while also attempting to respond directly to communities. Scott (1985) refers to this type of resistance as an expression of 'acquiescence' where the image you are presenting of compliance is not necessarily a true one: therefore the distinction between conformity and resistance can be difficult to trace. Resistance is therefore practised by community workers in a variety of forms.

There are some examples in this research of resistance being successful, i.e. achieving its ultimate goal. There are also examples of where the overall objective of resistance was not achieved but community workers still claimed that there were gains made from resisting even in these circumstances, e.g. new skills and knowledge gained from the process.

Resistance is often a highly personal experience and one which can enable learning and personal growth. Therefore resistance is not just a reaction to something, resistance can be informed by your life experience, can assist with informing and defining who you are, and be an empowering experience (Freire, 1973; Thomas and Davies, 2005; Barnes, Newman, Sullivan 2007). This process of empowerment or negotiation of power can be particularly significant for marginalised communities who often experience a high level of powerlessness (see also Glavenau, 2009). However, as noted in the data the personal cost of resistance for many workers was high, e.g. resulting in friendships being lost, and a sense of isolation, abandonment and exhaustion.

While all community workers agree that resistance has a definite role in community work, workers are evolving new understandings and practices of resistance in response to their new environment, especially the rise of the managerialist State. Resistances are provisional and partial, and community workers are currently struggling to articulate new resistances collectively. The future of community development and resistance lies where it has always lain, as Shaw (2011) puts it, in that contradictory space between being part of the problem and part of the possibility for change. At its best, community development, including the work of resistance, represents a continuing search for new forms of social and political expression in response to new forms of social and political control (Shaw, 2011: 143). Community workers cannot lose sight of the principles of community development to which they are strongly committed, both personally and professionally. However, according to Shaw (2011) these principles which can transcend time, do need to be reclaimed, collectively expressed (again) but in a new context and era of community development. Community workers who participated in this research may have the capacity to redefine their environment, even in small ways, identify oppressive factors and articulate alternative views but will need to find 'safe spaces' in order to develop responses to the barriers and limitations being imposed upon them by managerial processes.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter I reflect on the research process and findings of my study which was carried out with community workers in southern Ireland. I organise this chapter by initially presenting an overview of five main research findings, i.e. the managerialiation of community development; the role of resistance in community work; community workers' practises of resistance; conditions conducive to resistance; resisting dominant ideologies and other findings.

This is followed by a review of the research process itself and I conclude this chapter and this study with a look to the potential future of community work and resistance as a practice in community work in Ireland.

7.2 Overview of the Research Findings

7.2.1 The Managerialisation of Community Development

According to the data presented in this study and, as confirmed by writers such as Gaynor (2009) and Meade (2012), the interventions of the State within the community sector over the years 2000 to 2010 have served to depoliticise community development in Ireland and to re-orientate national (community-based) programmes towards the pre-determined agendas of central government. This can be seen in the large-scale structural changes that have been imposed on the community development sector, such as the transfer of the Community Development Programme out of local community management and into area-based

Local Development Companies[39], before its proposed inclusion into local government structures in July 2014. These structual changes included the wholescale transfer of employment contracts for all workers, previously employed by local Community Development Projects (CDPs), into corporatist style organisations (see page 153). These changes have led to the departure of some disaffected community workers from the sector and also contributed to the assertion of a new managerial-led programme of community development, one that is prescribed by the State, funded by the State and monitored by the State, using centrally determined, key performance indicators. In addition to these changes and as mentioned by the community workers in the context of the focus group discussions, new budgetary restrictions imposed on travel and networking, have reduced opportunities for workers to meet and collectively analyse their changing work environments. The accounts of these community workers show that worker autonomy has become increasingly circumscribed, with one worker commenting on how her employer told her to "drop community work" and complete the paperwork instead (see page 215).

These policy changes have resulted in almost all community workers now working more directly for the State, according to a State-led agenda which represents communities as either a 'resource' or a 'problem'; in effect communities are to be directed, mobilised and responsibilised. The significant changes that were discussed in Chapters Three and Four, and which were evoked by the community workers' own accounts in Chapter Six, have also weakened the collective identity of the community work sector, with an evident absence of national and even local forms of shared analysis, organising, strategising and resistance. Arguably, this re-orientation of the sector commenced in the early 1990s, with the roll-out of local partnership structures, and with the State's increasing involvement in and promotion of community development (Crowley, 2012; Meade, 2012; Forde, 2009). However, it seems that during the 2000s, with the Government commissioning three separate reviews of the Community Development Programme, and with an

[39] In many areas Local Development Companies are known as Area Partnership Companies.

emphasis on austerity and spending retrenchment after 2008, State policy took a more disciplinary turn and became more obviously directive. By 2014 we can now identify the effective abolition of the Community Development Programme and the absorption of community development workers and discourses within an agenda of local government reform.

Community workers in this research (page 178-179), in addition to writers such as Barnes, Newman, Sullivan (2007); Newman and Clarke (2014) examining similar situations in the UK, claim that such moves by the State may be an expression of counter-resistance by the State to block the advances, achievements and progress made by community workers on behalf of marginalised communities. However, as the State re-orientates community work in the service of local government reform or job activation programmes, the State appears to recognise and value some forms of community action, where it provides voluntary labour, local services or where communities take responsibility for maintaining their own neighbourhoods.

7.2.2 The Role of Resistance in Community Work

This study shows that community workers have a broad, flexible and relational understanding of the concept of resistance. Community workers use the term to reference large-scale or public forms of collective action, e.g. national street protests in relation to funding cuts to community development or their organised responses to changes in the Community Development Programme. They also use the term 'resistance' to describe more everyday forms of resistance such as challenging the discriminatory attitudes of community members, management committees and public institutions. Within the focus groups community workers were highly critical of the impact of managerialism on their work, and discursively countered aspects of managerialism alongside neo-liberal ideology. For some, but not many, this critical stance led them to resist what they see as nonsensical programme guidelines or reporting, tweaking reports or not giving due attention to

filling in forms. However, while most community workers seem comfortable with the concept of resistance and assert that it has a central place in community work, the tone and content of the focus group discussions suggest that the concept is under-analysed and the actioning of resistance is heavily constrained. What might be seen as the social change agenda of community work, that is inherent to its meaning and purpose, was framed by some participants as an expression of resistance. Such examples of resistance by community workers give some insight into the challenges now impacting on community workers. As Scott (1990) argues, resisting in a dominant or heavily monitored environment can be difficult, risky or unwise and claims that 'sequested places' and 'hidden transcripts' are often the only options available to those that are subjugated to such dominance. However, while there was little evidence of such 'hidden spaces' being created by community workers, their desire and willingness to travel and participate in this reserach could be interpreted as an attempt to create an alternative space and transcript, and was referred to as such by Sharon (on page 200). It is also noted in this study that there were some community workers (two) who did not relate as easily to the concept of resistance as a practice in community work, particularly against the State or related agencies as their salaries are funded by the State and it is the State who directs their work.

From community workers' perspectives the centrality of resistance in community work appears to be linked to a commitment to community development principles[40], such as participation, equality and the right to collectivise/self-determination. Because such principles are not widely practised or fully accepted in Irish social policy, community workers thus see themselves as resisting dominant forms of power, ideology and policy, by holding on to or re-affirming community work values. In some instances where those principles are being actively undermined or reframed by the State, related agencies or employers, some workers have attempted to combine their officially sanctioned workload with an

[40] Principles and Values referred to interchangeably.

on-going commitment to work directly with communities, described by by Barnes and Prior (2009) and Hughes (2009) as being 'subversive'. There are also examples where State agencies pursuing more progressive/egalitarian policies are allies of community workers thus reminding us of some of the contradictory roles and many faces of the State (LEWRG, 1979).

The more critically reflective community workers understand resistance as a negotiating tool in determining the outcome of power relations and that resistance can negate or reduce the power of dominant power-holders or elites. Even when resistance does not achieve its ultimate goal, almost all community workers believe that there are other gains from practising resistance: it has an intrinsic educational value; supports the development of critical reflection skills; and facilitates the creation or claiming of alternative identities and visions. For those community workers who are more confident in describing and practising resistance, resistance is seen as vital for the political relevance of community work; it reflects the agency of community workers and communities, and allows for the assertion of difference, dissent or the promotion of alternative views. Again, it must be emphasised, that this resistance is not always expressed openly or publicly, collectively or directly, but may incorporate varying forms such as, e.g. everyday 'hidden' expressions, appearing 'acquiesent' or being expressed as 'double-entendre' when form filling and has two different objectives simultaneously, all of which were explained in Chapter Two as argued by Scott (1985, 1990). While many community workers expressed resistance comfortably at a discursive level, particularly against ideologies such as neo-liberalism and managerialism, this study suggests that community workers' expressions of resistance are restrained and that the current community work environment inhibits such expressions (see page 136 and 153).

What is clear from this research is that resistance can be mobilised by power-holders or by those subject to power, in a number of different ways, strategically or locally and can be seen or actioned for or against a particular view/understanding.

For example, the State can resist the agency of community workers who are representing the views and experiences of particular marginalised communities or workers can resist the implementation of a particular social policy by the State. However, as highlighted earlier, the State includes a wide range of actors, policies and practices, and State agency community workers along with other State representatives, e.g. elected public representatives (on page 172) can be allies of or the target of community work resistance.

7.2.3 Community Workers' Practises of Resistance

There is a spectrum of resistance work practised by community workers and the form that resistance takes can be discursive, ideological or action orientated. It can be practised on a large-scale, e.g. the public protest mentioned on (page 99) or on a small scale, as in 'everyday' forms of resistance practice, e.g. against public housing policy (see page 202) (Scott, 1990). It can be overt, e.g. outright resistance to project integration, (see page 166) though it must be noted that this type of resistance was mostly undertaken at a project level, as national and regional collective resistance appeared to break down when pursued. Many authors (Raby, 2005; Scott, 1990; Mumby 2005; Prasad and Prasad, 1998) refer to 'everyday' forms of resistance across several fields of study.

While examples of various forms of resistance can be found in community work practice, it must be said that most of the resistance is practised at a discursive level, by those workers who take a critical approach to community work. The rationale for these resistances include workers' opposition to particular ideologies, e.g. neo-liberalism by Rachel and Rita (on page 197 and 200) respectively, and opposition to community work being managerialised and re-orientated away from core community development principles. Almost all workers were willing to articulate their resistant views and thoughts but only in a 'safe' space, i.e. spaces away from their employer or funder – as explained by Scott (1990). While most examples of

resistance given in this study were focused on the State – in particular those aspects of the State that promote or support discriminatory and/or neo-liberal values, there were other examples where the target of resistance was a community worker's own organisation or community members, making the concept of resistance mobile and one which can be practised by community workers inside or outside their organisations. Some workers tried to develop resistance strategies by building relationships with allies outside their work place, e.g. through *National Collectives, Claim Our Future* social movement and the *Critical Thinking Network* though these relationships were under-developed at the time of the study.

While there are many examples of resistance practice offered by community workers, overall, these practices are not large-scale or collectivised across projects. Workers are more isolated and individualised in their practices and making resistance more public seems very inhibited.

7.2.4 Conditions Conducive to Resistance

Research by Koopmans (2007) and Foweraker (1995) (discussed in Chapter Two) draws attention to factors which may support the collectivisation of resistance. These are: clear leadership with prior experience of resistance; collective decision-making where decisions and strategies to resist are taken, understood and shared by a range of stakeholders and not simply taken individually; consultation with local constituents which could be members of the management committee, local community groups, service users; and finally networking and/or working with allies which can include co-workers inside/outside State institutions and other social movements. All these characteristics were evident in both Paddy's and Una's cases of successful resistance against integration of their projects into Local Development Companies. Barnes and Prior (2009) confirm that greater exposure to constituent and target communities can inform and build resistance work and practice, and more importantly, identify what is needed in relation to overarching policy and its implementation. This was the case for those community workers who practised resistance and who were clear and comfortable about the role of resistance in their

work. It must be noted also that these workers have been involved in community work for more than twenty years and are located in the communities with whom they work, therefore they share a broadly agreed value base with their constituents and allies – thereby strengthening the opportunities for collective resistance.

An interesting finding from this research is that in many instances strategies of resistance are frequently supported by elements or agents within the State, even against itself and perhaps inadvertently. For example, some State community workers described how they resist the policies of their own organisation, (Rachael, page 189), or assisted the local community project to resist integration even though their own State agency was on the board of the Local Development Company (Sharon, page 188). Community workers in this study also described instances where elected public representatives seemed to oppose their own Government party policy by affirming the resistance being practised by community projects. See Paddy's example (page 172), where local politicians offered support to the local project against the mandated changes required by government. This reminds us of the dominance of 'clientelism' in Irish political life, how it can be harnessed in support of community demands but how it can also confuse community members regarding the scale and impacts of policy changes.

7.2.5 Resisting Dominant Ideologies

Chapters Three and Four detailed the growing influence of neo-liberalism and managerialism within both the community and public sector in Ireland. While a few workers expressed their resistance to neo-liberalism, despite being exercised by a new performance monitoring process and quantitative accounting methods, the focus group findings suggest that there is limited overt resistance to such managerialism in (community work) practice. The large-scale structural changes being imposed at the time of this research appeared to render some community workers angry, but for many they were in a state of shock and paralysis. Part of the

reason for this confusion was the mixed messages being delivered by government officials and elected representatives (see page 96), the reframing and misappropriation of language as cited by several workers (see page 147 and 155) and this, coupled with the lack of a national collective organising platform, resulted in community workers and their projects remaining individualised, struggling collectively and often silent and unclear about what to do.

When we discussed resistance to managerialism, many workers seemed highly sceptical that one could resist from the inside, i.e. from within the new organisational structure it would be possible to resist national directives – as workers would risk losing their livelihoods, see Jane comments on (page 154). This predicament is a familiar one in community development. Shaw (2011) refers to this situation for community workers as being 'stuck in the middle' between marketised State policy, delivered through Local Development Companies via community workers and local democratic community work – where workers work directly with community members and residents. However, collective and shared analysis across the sector was limited and not widely available for workers to consider and potentially develop responses.

Through this research process, workers are beginning to analyse and articulate the situation they find themselves in, although collective strategies for actioning resistance have not yet been identified. However, what has become clear is the need for 'hidden spaces' and 'transcripts' (Scott, 1990) in order to develop resistance, i.e. alternative views and collective identities. Safe spaces are required so that arguments and analysis of the various influences and new policy directions can be offered, shared and alliances created or nurtured. Such spaces will need to be critical and tolerant of the different experiences and backgrounds of workers who now inhabit the community work sector. What this also tells us is that such spaces, public and hidden, have become marginalised and that dissent/resistance is hardly tolerated let alone encouraged as part of community work practice.

7.2.6 Other Findings

For some community workers the personal cost of resistance can be very high. For community workers where resistance is integral part of their work, they spend a significant amount of their personal and work time, 'fighting against' oppressive forces: be they representatives of State services or policy makers, local power-holders, management committees or even community members and most are aware that in pursuing a common good or resisting oppressive forces, resisters are often labelled 'troublesome' or 'obstreperous'. This can make the on-going work of resistance personally wearing over time. Furthermore, it may also generate countervailing forms of resistance from the State, which may close down and restrict further community workers' space and opportunities for resistance. Therefore, thought needs to be given to the potential costs of and reactions to resistance work, including unintended outcomes as argued by authors such as Barnes and Prior (2009) and Weitz (2001), prior to or while engaging in such strategies. This may help community workers and their allies to mitigate or overcome some of the negative and challenging aspects of resistance.

For identity-based community workers, e.g. Travellers, resistance work is often internalised, "part of who they are" (see page 158 and page 201), as well as being expressed through external actions. These workers practised resistance both on a personal and a professional level and they also argued that they had greater critical insight into the uses and possibilities of resistance, which were then operationalised in their work practice on behalf of other marginalised communities. Such instances of resistance highlighted how resistance can contribute to identity formation and the creation of alternative subjectivities for community workers or activists alike, as suggested by Freire (1973) and Thomas and Davies (2005). This is particularly important given the reductionist and narrow identities that may be imposed on both workers and communities via current social policies, dominant discourses and structural forms of inequality (Lynch, 2013; CWC 2008). As I mention later, I feel more research into the experiences of identity-based community workers and

related literature would greatly enhance our understanding of identity-creation and its relationship to resistance.

7.3 A Review of the Research Process

Conducting this research has been an enlightening experience for me, as I hope it has been for the participants. In particular, the research process required an extensive litearture review and enabled me to put a name on some of the changes currently taking place in community work. Prior to commencing the research I was aware and concerned that community work was being reorientated and depoliticised, but I did not appreciate the extent of such changes. While I feel the introduction of new theoretical concepts to my understanding of the work will assist my own professional analysis, I did hope to discover more practical and collective responses to State managerialism and neo-liberal policies.

The research process itself led me to examine prevailing ideologies, in particular neo-liberalism, managerialism and their impact on community development. This pathway was not fully anticipated by me at the outset but I was led there by the data provided by community workers, who articulated in detail the significant changes taking place, e.g. accounting for their work according to externally set key performance indicators, the impacts on them both personally, i.e. change of employment status and their work, i.e. removal of funding from local community development groups – resulting in their work being directed by nationally set agendas.

In this study, I made every effort to critically reflect on every step of the research process as I carried it out; from design, to gathering the data, data analysis and presentation. I chose methods that I believe were best suited to eliciting data from community workers and I made every effort to be transparent about my own values

and assumptions, including any ethical issues that I identified. Clearly my research is committed to supporting critical reflection by community workers and it affirms a social change agenda. I was committed to a participatory, discursive and dynamic approach to data gathering, which is in keeping with community development principles and practices.

I had hoped to supplement my focus group sessions with one to one in-depth interviews, but time and resources did not permit me to use a second method, which I believe acts as a limitation to this study. Such in-depth interviews might help to illuminate questions such as: how overall resistance strategies were negotiated and sharpened; what compromises were made or willing to be made; how collectivities across difference are built and how resistance contributes to identity formation? I believe that combining these two methods would deepen the research work further, provide additional insights, and suggest new areas of focus for community development. On reflection I also wish I had more time to explore in greater detail the barriers to resistance; who blocks resistance (including dissent), why and why are these barriers not being analysed, challenged vigourously and collectively.

I would like to mention the timing of this research which resulted in experiences that were both challenging and positive. Given the level of upheaval being experienced in the community development sector, particularly all the changes taking place during the period 2008 to 2010, almost all community workers and community development projects were under significant stress and duress. Most community workers had not anticipated the force of the new State role in community development. This rendered their analysis at times very pessimistic as they were stuck in survival mode, rather than providing critical analysis for social change purposes. This in turn made the research process somewhat difficult, as community workers wanted support rather than to be confronted by challenging questions about their identity, their values and their role.

However, on the other hand the positive potential of this research is apparent in a number of ways. As a new field of research it may offer community development new ideas about the value of resistance and how it might be protected and reclaimed in discourse and in practice. This research process facilitated the provision of some practical and intellectual support through the use of focus group discussions where issues and concerns were shared. The groups may also have stimulated some new analysis and insights into the current community work environment, through the consideration of overarching influential ideologies and concepts. This research process may help community workers to consider and critically assess the reach of both managerialism and neo-liberalism and for others help them put a name on some of the prevailing ideologies that they have been subjected to. In addition, the new location of community workers, i.e. in the State, may also provide the motivation needed to collectivise, share analysis and concerns in order to build a platform to respond?

Community development as an explictly political practice has been almost totally eradicated and where it is practised, it is under the radar and based on the enthusiasm and committment of individual community workers. While most community workers seem despondent, and I can identify with why this might be so, there is some potential to develop new resistances. For example, community workers from their different backgrounds could seek to create autonomous spaces in which they share diverse experiences and perspectives. This new environment might also offer the community work sector an opportunity to consolidate, analyse and develop its own independent strategic thinking in the current context of community work.

7.4 The future?

To conclude, neo-liberal ideas and practices appear wide-spread in Ireland, in the community work sector and in the public sector. While many community workers may see themselves as opposed to such ideologies and approaches, even when not naming them as neo-liberal, there is very little collective, public and organised resistance being expressed by them to these forces. Resistance is expressed as high levels of dissatisfaction and disenfranchisement, as community workers perceive that community work principles, values and skills are being undermined, re-orientated or reframed. Perhaps as the new structures and programmes settle, there will be more opportunity for real debate about what it is community workers really want for themselves and community development. Civil society is where the vast majority of people live and spend their lives, it is where the numbers lie and where people-power could be harnessed, if real and substantive alternatives were imagined and articulated through participatory processes. I hope that my research will contribute to such a developmental process. I also hope that having completed this research process, it will positively influence my work as a consultant and that where opportunities arise I am now in a better position to offer up-to-date, contextual critical analysis to those communities, community workers, agencies and organisations that contract my services.

It would appear from this research that many community workers are not clear or confident about why or how to use resistance as a strategy in community work. In recent years little time has been given to such critical collective analysis and the contribution resistance can make to community work and to community workers. Resistance as a practice and a concept could be reclaimed by community workers, albeit requiring an energy and commitment beyond their current work environment, but it may free workers from the binds of State community work and facilitate them in gaining a critical analysis of community development once more. This research confirms that resistance can be an empowering and transformative

experience and if the right conditions exist (see page 38) – it can result in success and gains on many levels.

In addition to resistance strategies, carrying out more community-based research, using participatory 'bottom up' approaches, could contribute to the development of a more empowered and critical community sector. While it would be difficult to organise initially - not least because of the absence of funding for such research projects or the difficulties in capturing the diversity and scale of the sector – the creation of literature and research that documents the experiences and perspectives of community workers could help strengthen their collective voice. It might ensure the public articulation, representation and value of resistance experiences and views that are being increasingly marginalised in the face of State power and policy agendas. This may in turn help to protect both the identity and values that are associated with community development. Perhaps the provision of support and the development of closer ties between a relevant department at one of the Irish universities and community work practitioners might create the conditions conducive for such research. Attempts at establishing a *Critical Thinking Network* are a step in that direction. The network members who are linked to local communities have the potential to disseminate learning, e.g. about resistance, inform the design and focus of new research, contribute to academic thinking, build collectivities and operationalise strategies. However, the fledgling '*Network*' needs the contribution of theory, academic thinking and the credibility that an academic institution can bring to such a partnership, showing a real commitment to on-the-ground, politicised, social change and to the serious consideration of resistance as a concept, strategy and practice to be utilised in community work.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Brief explanation of Logic Modelling

A complete logic model provides a graphic representation of a programme showing the intended relationships between a series of organized activities and resources aimed to help people make improvements in their lives. Logic models are most useful for graphically expressing the essential elements in any systematic attempt to organise resources around achieving particular goals and objectives. They provide a summary and overview of these elements. LDC's may feel that a logic model can provide a tool to graphically represent the strategic planning process and first year annual plan in a simplified way. The model can be used internally, for example as a tool for monitoring the work, and externally as a way of summarising the overall purpose and associated activities to outsiders. The logic model can also be a useful document in discussions with funders and others commissioning work.

Key elements in a logic model are described below:

Element Description

Assumptions - The suppositions made about a range of contingent factors (likelihood of success, stability of the situation, possibility of support, theory of change) influencing planning. Assumptions are the basis on which the logic model is developed and are identified in the needs analysis and planning stages of intervention.

Baseline statements - Information about the trend, situation or condition prior to a programme or intervention. These can be both quantitative and qualitative and identify the 'starting point' for work.

Inputs - Resources that go into a programme of work including staff time, materials, money, equipment, facilities, volunteer time.

Activities – Are what are delivered by way of actions, services or products including 'process' functions.

Outputs – The direct effects from the actions that can be specified and monitored. Outputs are what the activity results in that can be measured (more or less immediately)

Outcomes - Results or changes from the programme such as changes in knowledge, behaviour, practice, decision-making, policies, social action, condition, or status.

Outcomes may be intended or unintended, and positive and negative. Outcomes fall along a continuum from immediate (initial; short-term) to intermediate (medium-term) to final outcomes (long-term), often synonymous with impact.

Impact - The long-term social, economic, civic and/or environmental consequences associated with the goals of the programme. Impacts may be positive, negative, or neutral, intended or unintended.

Indicator - A set of measurements of a specific variable over time (and or location). Indicators are an expression of outcome in the form of evidence that the outcome has or is being achieved.

Measure - Either quantitative (data in numerical format)or qualitative (data in a narrative or text format)information that expresses the phenomenon under study (such as an indicator).

Evaluation - The systematic collection of information about activities, characteristics and outcomes of programmes used to make judgments, improve

effectiveness, add to knowledge, and/or inform decisions about the work, and be accountable for positive and equitable results and

Monitoring - The ongoing monitoring and reporting of work, particularly progress towards achievement of output targets and outcomes.

Logic models are not reality, and should be understood as a way of representing best intentions, and as a guide to activities. Neither are they straightjackets, and practitioners must also be free to take up unforeseen opportunities where these enhance the original goals of the Programme. In short, the realities of practice are never neat. Never the less, the difference between intention and actuality should be cause for discussion and learning.

LOGIC MODEL TEMPLATE FOR:

The current situation that needs changing	
Title of Programme /Project or Intervention	
Overall Aim	
Objectives	• • • •
Needs of the group?	
How were these needs identified?	

How were young people involved?	
External influences (+ & -)	
Assumptions	
The research / evidence i.e. what the research or best practice says	

LOGIC MODEL FOR:

INPUTS **(RESOURCES)**	**SUPPORTS** (*Who in the HSE can you support you to do this work?)*	**OUTPUTS**		**OUTCOMES** ***(Changes for participants /target groups as a result of these activities……)***			**OVERALL IMPACT**
		ACTIVITIES	**PARTICIPATION**	**SHORT-TERM**	**MEDIUM-TERM**	**LONG-TERM**	

Appendix 2

Key features of the White Paper on a Framework for Supporting Voluntary Activity and for Developing the Relationship between the State and the Community and Voluntary Sector (2000).

- Formal recognition of the role of the Community and Voluntary sector in contributing to the creation of a vibrant, participative democracy and civil society.
- Introduction of mechanisms in all relevant public service areas for consultation with Community and Voluntary sector groups and to allow the communities they represent have an input to policy-making.
- Multi-annual funding to become the norm for agreed priority services and community development activities. This will mean a major move away from the present unsatisfactory and *ad hoc* funding schemes experienced by many Community and Voluntary groups.
- Designation of Voluntary Activity Units in relevant Government Departments to support the relationship with the Community and Voluntary sector.
- Holding of regular policy fora by relevant Departments and agencies to allow for wider consultation and participation by the Community and Voluntary sector in the policy-making process.
- 'Best practice' guidelines in relation to consultation by statutory agencies with the Community and Voluntary sector and in relation to funding mechanisms and systems, to which all Government Departments and statutory agencies will be expected to adhere.
- A strong Government commitment to follow up and implement all the decisions in the White Paper. An Implementation and Advisory Group, drawn from relevant Departments, statutory agencies and the Community and Voluntary sector itself, is being established to oversee the implementation of the White Paper decisions and to pursue other issues that arise.
- Transfer of responsibility for charity regulatory matters and the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests to the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. I am committed to ensuring that comprehensive legislation on regulation of charities and their fundraising is produced as a priority. The sector will be consulted in the development of the legislation through the Implementation and Advisory Group.
- An ongoing review of funding programmes and schemes, to be carried out by the Implementation and Advisory Group working under the aegis of the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion, to bring about a more coherent and user-friendly system of funding and support. The long-term aim is to change from the existing highly-fragmented funding and support system to one based on the concept of single line funding and single line reporting mechanisms.

Appendix 3

UCC Social Research Ethics Committee (SREC)

ETHICS APPROVAL FORM

Name of applicant	Maria Power	Date 17/3/11
Contact Details	Phone 087-2216106	Email Mariapower.study@gmail.com
Department/Unit	109220502	
Title of project	Community Work: Understandings and Practices of Resistance	

		YES	NO
1	Do you consider that this project has significant ethical implications?		√
2	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	√	
3	Will participation be voluntary?	√	
4	Will you obtain informed consent in writing from participants?	√	
5	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason, and (where relevant) omit questionnaire items to which they do not wish to respond?	√	
6	Will data be treated with full confidentiality / anonymity (as appropriate)?	√	
7	If results are published, will anonymity be maintained and participants not identified?	√	
8	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation (i.e. give them a brief explanation of the study)?	√	
9	Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants in any way?		√
10	Will your participants include schoolchildren (under 18 years of age)?		√
11	Will your participants include people with learning or		√

	communication difficulties?		
12	Will your participants include patients?		√
13	Will your participants include people in custody?		√
14	Will your participants include people engaged in illegal activities (e.g. drug taking; illegal Internet behaviour)?		√
15	Is there a realistic risk of participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress?		√
16	If yes to 15, has a proposed procedure, including the name of a contact person, been given? (see no 23)		√

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

17. Aims of the project

- To undertake qualitative research with community workers in Ireland to explore their understandings and practices of resistance.
- To examine community workers' use of key social science concepts such as community work, governmentality, state, resistance.
- To gain a deep understanding of the purpose and role of community work in Ireland today in relation to the practices and policies of the state.

18. Brief description and justification of methods and measures to be used (attach copy of questionnaire / interview protocol / discussion guide / etc.)

There will be three groups of community workers. My main research method relies on hosting three focus group discussions with each group, with approximately eight to ten community workers in each group. The participants will be selected from three counties. Subsequently, if considered necessary, I will carry out one to one in-depth interviews with approximately ten community workers.

I have attached a list of the questions the community workers will be asked to address and this will be my topic guide for my focus group meetings. My focus group sessions will last for a maximum of three hours and will be carried out in venues agreeable to all participants in a group.

19. Participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria?

There are approximately eight to ten participants in each focus group.

A place will be offered to all know community work organisations/community worker posts in each location. The only criteria for inclusion is that the participants would define themselves as a full-time or part-time community worker.

20. Concise statement of ethical issues raised by the project and how you intend to deal with them?

There are few ethical issues with this project as the participants are all adults and familiar with discussing within groups the areas covered in the research. It is expected that there will be disagreement between participants and I will address this by discussing and agreeing ground-rules for participation at the outset of each focus group session. My ground rules will specifically address the following: confidentiality of the data and discussions, respectfully communicating in the group sessions and the need for freedom/safety to express opinions and views. Each of these rules will be discussed with the group prior to the focus group session commencing.

The focus group meetings and potential interviews will be audio recorded, kept confidentially and be destroyed 24 months after they are created.

21. Arrangements for informing participants about the nature of the study (cf. Question 3)

An information sheet and consent form have been prepared for participants to read and sign. In addition, I have met with all potential focus group participants with the aim of informing them of the process, discussing the nature of the research being proposed, deal with any queries or concerns and get their agreement verbally to joining the focus group formally. See information sheet attached.

22. How you will obtain Informed Consent - cf. Question 4 (attach relevant form[s]).

In verbal and written format – see attached consent form.

23. Outline of debriefing process (cf. Question 8).

I will give a full explanation of the research project at the outset of the focus group session. At the end of each session, we will debrief in terms of checking in how participants experienced the process and how it met their expectations.

If you answered YES to Question 15, give details here. State what you will advise participants to do if they should experience problems (e.g. who to contact for help). N/A

24. Estimated start date and duration of project.

Starting focus group work in March/April 2011 with the aim of all field work being completed by December 2011.

Signed _____ Date _____

Applicant

Notes

1. Please submit this form and any attachments to Dr. S. Hammond, Chair, SREC, c/o Mairéad Mooney, Office of the Vice President for Research, Block E, 4th Floor, Food Science Building, University College Cork, College Road, Cork. Please also forward an electronic copy to m.mooney@ucc.ie

2. Research proposals can receive only provisional approval from SREC in the absence of approval from any agency where you intend to recruit participants. If you have already secured the relevant consent, please enclose a copy with this form.

3. SREC is not primarily concerned with methodological issues but may comment on such issues in so far as they have ethical implications.

This form is adapted from pp. 13-14 of Guidelines for Minimum Standards of Ethical Approval in Psychological Research (British Psychological Society, July, 2004)

Ms. Maria Power,
School of Applied Social Studies,
University College Cork.

ucc
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh, Éire
University College Cork, Ireland

Oifig an Leas - Uachtaráin Taighde agus Nuálaíochta
Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation

Urlár 4, Bloc E,
Áras na hEolaíochta Bia,
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh,
Bóthar an Choláiste,
Corcaigh, Éire.

4th Floor, Block E,
Food Science Building,
University College Cork,
College Road, Cork, Ireland.

T +353 (0)21 4903500
F +353 (0)21 4903506
E vpresearch@ucc.ie
www.ucc.ie

13th June 2011

Dear Ms. Power

Thank you for submitting your revised research (project entitled ***Community Work: Understandings and Practices of Resistance*** #76r) to SREC for ethical perusal. I am pleased to say you have addressed all concerns raised in relation to your original submission and we are now happy to grant approval.

We wish you every success in your research.

Yours sincerely,

S Hammond
pp Maireád Moore

Sean Hammond

Chair of Social Research Ethics Committee

Professor Anita R Maguire BSc PhD CChem MRSC
Vice President for Research and Innovation

Ollscoil na hÉireann, Corcaigh
National University of Ireland, Cork

Appendix 5

Thesis Topic Guide: Qualitative piece of research with Community Workers in Ireland exploring their understandings and practices of resistance.

The key concept being analysed in my thesis is **Resistance.** I have broken down this concept into broad question areas with subsidiary questions attached.

The initial two questions are to set the context as Community Workers see it:

1. **Community Work** – What is your understanding of what community work is about? (What is the purpose of community work).

2. How would you describe the relationship between **the State** and community work is at the minute? As Community Workers, what do you see as the role of the state? What is your understanding of State power, how is it held and utilised?

3. **What do community workers[1] in Ireland define/understand by the concept of resistance?**
   a) What do community workers define as resistance?
   b) What role does "resistance" have in community work? Key, marginal, none?
   c) Is there a spectrum of resistance practice? Is it large scale or small scale? Is it material, physical, etc.?
   d) Is there a value in resistance? Is it symbolic?

4. **How is resistance actioned within today's social policy framework in Ireland?**
   a) In what way do community workers see resistance actioned in Ireland? Who and what?
   b) How? Is it publicly actioned? Is it privately actioned? Is it individualised or collective?
   c) What does it achieve?
   d) What does it not achieve?
   e) How are these strategies of resistance supported?
   f) How are they blocked?

5. **How is resistance practiced, promoted or blocked in your own community work practice?**
   a) What are your practices of resistance in community work?
   b) What are you resisting against? Who and what?
   c) What act as barriers to resistance?
   d) What facilitates resistance?
   e) How does the role of resistance related to your professional role?
   f) Does the work of resistance signal political pessimism or optimism?
   g) Do you need to go beyond resistance?
   h) What would this look like?

[1] Community workers in selected focus group settings.

Maria Power – PhD Research Work 2011 (5A) Profile of Participants					
Location of Focus Group					
Name of participant					
Female or Male	**Female**		**Male**		
Age Range	**18-29**	**30-39**	**40-49**	**50-59**	**60+**
Community Work Location					
Type of Community Work	• Work for local committee • Work for an agency • Work for voluntary organisation				
How long are you involved in community work:					
As a paid worker					
As a volunteer					
Educational Skills & Qualifications. Please List All:					
Secondary Level					
Third Level					
Post Graduate					
Other Training Qualifications					
In your own key words - what is the purpose of community work?					

(5B) Summary of Community Workers Profiles

Total no of participants: 19 = 76% of total pop (25)
Non-attendance 6 (3 men and 3 women)

Total 19
18 female and 1 male

Age Range: 63% age 40-49; 32% 50-59 None in 18-29 and None in 60+ and 1 in 30-39.

68% of participants work for local management committees
32% for agencies

Average length of time as a paid community worker: 14 years (3 did not answer question)
Average length of time as paid and voluntary community worker: 18.5 years.

Education:
Second level: 18 out of 19 completed leaving cert and 1 to junior cert

Third Level: 14/17 who answered have a related social science degree 82% e.g. YCW, SSc, Comm Ed but also one each in business, history/geog, nursing.Other 3 (18%) have ssquals to diploma level.

47% (9) have post grad quals, mostly in social science related areas to masters level.

Many have additional qualifications e.g. facilitation, assertiveness, equality, women's/social studies, mediation and conflict resolution, etc., and a couple named business courses also e.g. database development, management skills.

RAPID individual response to key questions prior to focus group sessions:

1. Purpose of community work?

Variety of responses but they all centred around: mobilising, supporting, giving voice to marginalised Communities and engaging those communities in decisions that affect their lives so that they can engage in responses to self-identified needs and full-fill their right to a self-determined future.

2. Understanding of the term resistance?

Standing up for the values of community development, challenge and resist oppression, discrimination, inequality, injustice.
Challenge decisions that negatively affects communities and that stand in the way of positive social change. Standing firm and sticking to your overall aims.

3. How would you appraise the states relationship with the Community Sector in recent years?

Dominant through the micro-management of funding, dismantling of the community development sector and sanctioning/hostile to those who challenge or resist the state.By turning community development projects into service providers. Recent changes appear to be sudden, drastic and shocking.

4. Role of resistance in community work?

Unanimous agreement that resistance is a very important aspect of community development work: Fuel of social change, important strategy in re-shaping the status quo, res facilitates a challenge to the dominant mind-set. Resistance is very significant in community development work - Can empower communities, can help shape community work going forward and challenge oppressive structures.

Appendix 6

Community Workers' Focus Groups – Information and Consent Forms

Information Sheet

Purpose of the Study: I have been working in the Community & Voluntary sector for the past 20 years. As part of my practitioner's Doctorate in Social Science through the Department of Applied Social Studies in UCC, I am conducting focus group meetings to explore Community Workers' understandings and practices of resistance.

The last ten years in particular have seen unprecedented changes in community work in Ireland. Most of these changes have been imposed by the state as opposed to occurring as a result of community demands, action or social movements. For Community Workers, most of whom have in the past been given their mandate and direction of work from local community-based management committees, these are turbulent and confusing times.

I intend to carry out research work directly with groups of Community Workers across three counties, in addition to interviewing Community Workers on a one-to-one basis if necessary, in order to gain insight into current community workers' understandings and practices of the purpose and role of resistance in community work in Ireland.

Focus Group: What will the study involve? The study will involve focus groups of between 8 and 10 Community Workers in three locations. The focus groups will be held as follows: one each in Waterford and Cork city and one in South Tipperary. All focus groups will be requested to meet three times.

Why have you been asked to take part? You have been asked because your job title/post identifies you as a Community Worker working in your local area. A briefing has been given verbally at local level.

Do you have to take part? No. But if you decide to go ahead I would like you to give your written consent. Even if you agree to participate, you can change your mind and decide to withdraw at any stage before or even during the focus group session. You can withdraw up to two weeks after the focus group meeting by requesting that we destroy your personal data and your input to the focus group.

Will your participation in the study be kept confidential? Identifying details will not be included in the reporting of the focus groups and all data will be anonymised. If, however, the facilitator becomes concerned about any of the data supplied, use of this data will be discussed with the participant before being used. Ground rules for each focus group session will be clearly stated at the outset of each session.

What will happen to the information which you give? The data will be kept confidential for the duration of the study. On completion of the doctoral thesis, it will be retained for a further six months and then destroyed.

What will happen to the results? The results will be included in my thesis for the Social Science Doctorate mentioned above. They will be seen by my supervisor, a second marker and the external examiner. The results may also be published in a peer-reviewed journal article. A summary of the results may be published as a stand-alone report by Maria Power, Community Consultants Ltd., to be made available to all participants and other community work organisations if agreeable.

Ethical Approval for this study? Ethical approval for this research study is being sought from the Social Research Ethics Committee, University College Cork.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part? While I don't envisage any negative consequences for you in taking part, some of the topics to be addressed may be challenging from different perspectives and may be unsettling for a minority of participants within the group.

What if there is a problem? Please come and talk to me and we can agree the best course of action for all concerned.

Any further queries? If you need any further information, you can contact me: Maria Power at: 087-2216106 or email me at: mariapower.study@gmail.com

Consent Form – Community Worker Focus Group

I …… agree to participate in Maria Powers' focus group sessions on Community Workers' understandings and practices in relation to resistance.

The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to me in writing and verbally.

I am participating voluntarily.

I give permission for the focus group to be audio/video-recorded and notes to be taken by a colleague of Maria Power.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating.

I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within two weeks of the focus group date, in which my contribution to the focus group will be discarded.

I understand that anonymity will be ensured in the write-up of this research and all identifying information will be deleted.

I understand that we will agree ground-rules at the outset of our focus group sessions for the safety and confidentiality of all concerned.

I understand that disguised extracts from my input to the focus group may be quoted in the study report and any subsequent publications.

Signed…….. Date……..