

Lund University
Sociology Institute

”With their clothes in a bag”

- Social exclusion and criminality in the
welfare state



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Abstract

Noting an inattention to the actual individuals who are impacted by drug policy in the public discourse, this thesis was written to examine the Swedish civil service's role in creating and maintaining social exclusion. It is a qualitative exploration of the processes of exclusion in a western welfare state and its effects on individuals. Drawing on interviews with four members of KRIS with a criminal background as well as a probation officer, I examine the similarities as well as the dissimilarities in their experiences. The focus is on how a notion of the "other" influences policy and how socioeconomic differences determine whether or not an individual will become subject to the criminal justice system. I found that social exclusion is not a process which begins in adolescence but rather, much earlier in an individual's childhood. Furthermore, I found that the processes of social exclusion are the result of complex interaction between parental influence, school personnel, the criminal justice system and other aspects of the civil service. I argue that some individuals are put on the path to further exclusion and criminality already as school children as a result of stigmatizing treatment. While the research recognizes the ability of the Swedish welfare state to act as an agent of inclusion and to promote personal agency, I argue that a civil service built to shield the most vulnerable in society from the adverse effects of a market economy often ends up further excluding and harming the very individuals it was meant to protect.

Key words: Social exclusion, criminality, welfare, civil service

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1. Background

The idea for this thesis came from the global war on drugs and its manifests in Sweden today. Despite the adverse effects and the questionable results (The Economist: 5-3-2009), the war on drugs seems to not only be relentless but politically and socially mainly unquestioned. One of the reasons behind this is certainly the stigmatization of addicts. The consequences of this stigmatization are varied, from social exclusion and harsh punitive efforts to lack of proper health care. Despite the fact that clean needle exchanges are proven to be a valuable tool in combating HIV and hepatitis among the addict population, these programs are currently only offered in four cities in Sweden today (Socialstyrelsen 2013). The reason for which is often that politicians are concerned about “what kind of message” a needle exchange program would send. The stigmatization of addicts naturally becomes a stigmatization of criminals since around 70 % of people who are incarcerated in Sweden today have some kind of substance abuse problem (SOU 2011:35). Furthermore this stigmatization makes it possible for politicians to win support for being “tough on crime” although there is little empirical evidence supporting the claim that more and longer prison sentences would reduce crime (Lilly et.al. 2007:263). Recently, Sweden’s prime minister as well as Attorney General have derided courts for sentencing offenders to the lowest possible punishment and called for harsher sentencing for both violent – and narcotics related offences (Sydvenskan 5-11-2013). I believe this view of the criminal and addict as simply just that: a criminal and not also a human being to be very harmful. The fact that certain groups of people are portrayed in a grander narrative as something slightly different than the rest of us - in combination with their often low socioeconomic status - I would argue leads to misguided policy decisions. I therefore wanted to examine the Swedish civil service’s role is in producing and maintaining social exclusion. The purpose was to give those who are often marginalized and depicted as “the bad guys” in the public discourse a chance to tell their own story and to enhance understanding of how social exclusion comes to be in Sweden.

Plenty has certainly been written on the matter of social exclusion and criminality. Melossi has examined how anxieties about deviance and crime have come to occupy centre stage in the public and political discourse (2013). He argues that there is an ongoing battle in society between two orientations: one which strives to control crime and one which views controlling crime as secondary to managing wider social control. There have also been recent contributions to the matter in Sweden. Karlsson et. al. have written about why it is that the individual’s responsibility is emphasized in the public discourse about exclusion and

marginalization (2013). They examine how vulnerability can not only be understood but also managed in relation to social work. Lalander has written about the effects of social and economic exclusion on the lives of young Chilean heroin addicts (2009). He argues that selling drugs becomes a way to assert ones status in an exclusive and consumption driven society. This thesis in many ways takes its starting point in the work of Lalander and Karlsson et.al. While Lalander mainly writes about the Chileans' subculture and the motives and influences of the young men, I want to shift focus to the meeting with the civil service. Rather than looking mainly at the effects of social exclusion, I want to examine what role the civil service plays in creating it and how one can understand the participants' behavior in relation to the civil service. I believe this has been a somewhat neglected area of study and I hope to make at least a small contribution to the understanding of these processes in Sweden.

I will begin by presenting the aim and questions of the thesis before moving on to the methods chapter. There the reader will find a description of how the material was gathered as well as a short discussion about the merits of qualitative research. I will then present the results of the interviews, divided into sections according to which part of the civil service that is being discussed. The analysis follows and is similarly divided into sections in which different aspects of the participants experiences are analyzed separately before the common red threads are summarized under "Main findings". The thesis ends with a conclusion which summarizes what has been learned from the material and as well as briefly touching on the results' policy implications.

2. Aim and question

The aim of this thesis is to twofold. Firstly, I want gain a deeper understanding of how the processes of social exclusion operate in Sweden. Secondly, I want to give a voice to a group of people who are most often portrayed as "the problem" in the public discourse and give them an opportunity to tell their own story. Thus, the questions are: What is the role of the civil service in creating and maintaining social and economic exclusion? How can criminality and drug addiction be understood in relation to the civil service? What do the participants perceive as the effects of crime prevention and rehabilitation?

3. Method

3.1 Introduction

This is a qualitative study of how people with a criminal background experience – and have experienced – their situation in contact with certain facets of the Swedish civil service. The focus is mainly on schools, social services, the criminal justice system and the national work center (Arbetsförmedlingen). I have interviewed four members of local chapters of KRIS in the south of Sweden, which is an organization who supports people trying to leave a life of crime and substance abuse. It is run by volunteers who themselves have a criminal background and their main purpose is to support and help people after they have been released from prison or youth detention centers (Statens intstitutions styrelser). In order to gain a different perspective on the subject being studied I also interviewed a woman at Crime rehabilitation (Kriminalvården) in Malmö who works mainly with probation. To ensure the participants anonymity, names, exact ages and locations of their stories have been changed or omitted.

3.2 The participants

Stig is in his sixties and ethnically Swedish. He has been living a life without criminality and drugs for about 16 years. Amanda is in her mid-twenties, ethnically Swedish and left crime and drugs behind sometime in the past couple of years. Erik is in his mid-thirties and has been drug- and crime free for the past couple of years. He is ethnically Swedish. Amir is in his early twenties, he has been drug- and crime free for about a year. He was born in Sweden but his parents are from Iran. Jennifer is the correctional officer; she has worked within the social services and correctional system in Sweden for over 10 years. As mentioned she works mainly with clients who have been given probation.

3.3 Qualitative vs. Quantitative methods

In social science research, positivism and the interpretive paradigm are the two dominant paradigms, i.e. perspectives of looking at reality. The interpretive paradigm is what underlies qualitative research while positivism is the basis of quantitative research. The positivist paradigm places an emphasis on objective measurement as it assumes that reality consists of facts. Contrary to this, the interpretive paradigm, assumes that what we call “reality” is actually a social construct and instead places emphasis on the need for observation and interpretation in order to understand the social world (Hennink et. al. 2011:8). In line with the

interpretive approach, I argue that it is necessary to study people's actions within their lived context and that there is no such thing as a universal truth since people have different perspectives and experiences and thus multiple perspectives on reality (Hennink et. al. 2011:15). The downside of qualitative methods is that due to the sample's size, it is not representative of the entire population of former criminals and thus it is difficult to make generalizations which apply to the whole population from the participants' experiences. However, I was not concerned with creating a randomized large sample since I was not trying to uncover statistics or facts about social exclusion, as for example what the correlation is between dropping out of high school and later criminality. I chose to use a qualitative method for this research since I was doubtful that there is one universal truth that explains how social exclusion comes to be. Instead, I wanted to highlight an example of how this process can unfold in Sweden today. A quantitative questionnaire given out to a larger sample population might have provided me with information about general trends and correlations, however I argue that when studying a subject such as this, questions in the form of "How stigmatized on a scale of one to five did you feel upon your release from prison?" would not be able to sufficiently show the very complex and personal nature of the participants' experiences. Instead I would like to argue that as the participants are a part of a larger population of former criminals who all have to interact with the same civil service, it is still possible to extrapolate their experiences in order to learn something about the system as a whole.

3.4 Approaching the field and the interviews

Since I did not have any personal contacts within the field that I wanted to study, I had to approach the participants in a somewhat formal manner. I contacted one adult chapter of KRIS and one Young KRIS- chapter, which works with young people between the ages of thirteen and twenty five. First I contacted the president of the youth chapter who agreed to act as a "gatekeeper" and introduce me to other members who had agreed to be interviewed. I then contacted the head of operations of the adult chapter directly and asked if he knew anyone who might agree to be interviewed, at which point he offered to do it himself. After having completed interviews with four members of KRIS I contacted the Crime rehabilitation office in Malmö to ask if any of the correctional officers would agree to an interview. I was put in touch with a woman who works mainly with probation who had agreed to be interviewed. The interviews were conducted over a three week period in November 2013 and lasted approximately one hour. I interviewed the three members of the youth chapter in the same day and then at later dates the head of operations of the adult chapter and the probation

officer. The interviews with the KRIS members were conducted at their offices, I was offered to come there and it worked very well since it is a relaxed and familiar environment for the participants and I was able to sit down in a private room with each one of them individually which offered privacy. The interview with the probation office took place at one of Crime rehabilitation's offices in Malmö and was also a good location since it was familiar to the participant and we could speak undisturbed. In order to ensure that the material consisted of the participants' own thought and perspectives rather than my own contracted cliff notes, the interviews were recorded and later transcribed. The transcripts were then translated verbatim into English. To ensure that the research was ethically conducted, I reiterated the purpose of it, how the material would be used and published and emphasized that names and specific locations would be changed in order to ensure the participants' privacy before turning on the tape recorder.

Before the interviews with the KRIS-members I was quite nervous. I was worried that I might be perceived as a naïve school girl with my big pile of books coming to study the "real world" and thought much about both how to avoid this but also where this fear came from. I came to the conclusion that because of the perceived distance between a university student and a former criminal, it was doubly important that I was aware of how I presented myself. Hennink et.al. write about how to establish good rapport in order to produce the best possible material, I thus took care to wear clothing that looked neat but relaxed and to not seat myself in a way that implies distance. To make them and myself more comfortable we started off with a little bit of small talk before I turned on the tape recorder. I was sincerely interested in hearing their stories and empathetic to their experiences and tried to make this come across as clearly as possible during the interviews through my body language and small comments. This, combined with the fact that I had strived to design open and unthreatening questions I think motivated the participants to tell their stories in such detail as they did (2011:123-4) The KRIS-members all seemed happy to share their stories and experiences, since it is a part of the organization's mission. The conversation with the probation officer also flowed well although she was perhaps a bit more guarded. I think this was because as an employee you feel like you have to take care not to accidentally misrepresent your co-workers or your organization.

3.5 Analysis and writer bias

Prior to starting the research, I had planned to use mainly left-realism theories by Christie and Young for the analysis but after having finished the interviews I realized that a combination of these with social bond-theories would be the most helpful in enriching my understanding of

the subject. In line with the interpretive paradigm, I question the positivist assumption that research is or can ever be value-free. I and the study participants are inherently subjective and thus my analysis is naturally influenced by my preconceived notions and political opinions. This must be made explicit in order to legitimize the research (Hennink et.al. 2011:20). Acknowledging this, I have however strived to view the material objectively since I wanted to avoid my preconceived notions causing me to refuse any new or contradictory information. I wanted to avoid a situation where I have conducted research only to find exactly what I was looking for. While much of the material seems to confirm some of my preconceived notions, I also feel that I have discovered new things about the impact of social bonds and personal agency.

4. Theory

As mentioned, mainly social bond and left-realism theories are used in order to analyze the material. Social bond theory was first presented by Travis Hirschi in 1969. He writes that social bonds are constructed by attachment to families, commitment to institutions and social norms, involvement in pro-social activities and the belief in the importance of these things (1969:18-23). According to social bond theory, weak bonds to conventional society increases adolescents' susceptibility of delinquent peer influence and weaken self-control (Hirschi 1969:16). Works that build on Hirschi's theories are also used (Sampson&Laub 1993; Thornberry&Krohn 2003). Left-realism criminology developed in Britain in the 1980's, the most famous of criminologists being Jock Young. While the tradition traces its heritage back to Karl Marx, left-realism claims that it is not simply poverty, but instead relative deprivation that breeds crime, which is why the western world saw an increase in crime despite gaining a higher standard of living during the 20th century. In an unequal world, the socioeconomically disadvantaged are subsequently further marginalized by punitive measures by police and the justice system (Young 1999; Christie 2005). Excluded groups are subject to essentialism, the stereotypes applied to them allows for legitimization of inequality and strengthens the in-group's security in their sense of identity while the excluded become essentialized "others". (Young 1999:104) The combination of social bond theory and left-realism might seem counterintuitive. Yet I argue that strong social bonds to parents and schools can explain why the vast majority of people experiencing relative deprivation still do not commit crimes. The obvious lack of strong social bonds in all participants was what prompted the selection of these theories after the research had already been carried out. Left-realism theories are highly

applicable to the participants' experiences since the concept of relative deprivation gives us a tool to understand crime in relatively equal societies with a high standard of living such as Sweden. Based on both the demonization of the criminal in the public discourse as well as the participants' stories, there was also a need for this thesis to question what purpose the idea of the deviant has in society. Durkheim writes that even a society consisting only of saints would produce a certain numbers of sinners, to act as a sort of moral compass to the rest (1982:100) Marx, on the contrary, propose that punitive measures by the criminal justice system works to reinforce the ruling class' position (Marx 2000:200-1). Certainly, there is not one theory which can adequately explain the participants' experiences, which is why a combination has been used in order to gain the deepest possible understanding. Some might argue against this approach to theory but I would counter that trying to fit too complex personal experiences into a certain theoretical framework would cloud the actual results.

5. Results

5.1 The school years

Although their school years were turbulent for all the participants, their experiences are not all the same despite them having many common features. Stig and Amir both struggled with very traumatic childhood events. Stig had an alcoholic father and started running away from home and abusing drugs at a very young age. At age eleven he was sent to a youth detention facility in the north of Sweden where he received training in carpentry and stayed until he left for military service. Even though he clearly must have had traumatizing experiences behind him from living with an alcoholic father, there seems to have been little emotional help or support available at the detention facility.

Yasmine: "When you lived up there, did you get to speak to a councilor or therapist or did you get any help besides..."

Stig: "Yeah we went to school and stuff right, that was the only thing that we got."

Yasmine: "It was like that?"

Stig: "Yeah it was that simple. And... of course you found, someone who you liked more than the others and of course you would talk more with that one but..."

Yasmine: "But it was nothing that was...?"

Stig: "No, nothing at all." (Interview Stig (Malmö 12-11-2013))

It is interesting to note that despite his young age, because his behavior was deemed as deviant, Stig was treated similarly to a criminal rather than as the victim of an unstable home that he actually was. Instead of counselling or other types of support he was essentially locked away for six years at a youth detention facility. Amir had a very turbulent childhood as well, his father was absent for much of his life and he has lived in numerous foster homes. He would often act out his insecurities in school.

“I was really unsafe as a child but I didn’t want to show it so I put on a mask, I was the class clown, both troublemaker and protector too to get attention and stuff... So my schooling, it was... it was a lot of fights and arguments with the teachers and stuff, at the same time I kept this... I passed the test and had the highest grade in more or less everything.”

Amir’s story also gives a clear example of how some individuals are labeled as troublemakers at an early age and how this creates a different set of expectations for them than for other children. Amir’s turbulent home life caused him to act out at school but because of the teachers’ low expectations of him it also became difficult for him to be anyone else than whom they had decided that he was. He explains how he was often blamed for things he was not responsible for.

“Yeah from teachers and it was, for me it was really hard because, many times when I tried to fix things and wanted, then I was met with this “you’re like that” and they come and tell me, I was blamed for stealing bicycles and destroying a bunch of things at school that I hadn’t done and when there was fights (they said) that it was me who had been involved. It could be days where I had been at home called in sick and they said “no but we’ve seen you.” – Interview Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Thus we can see that teachers and other school personnel seem to have a significant influence in shaping how young people come to look at themselves and their understanding of who and how they are. Both Erik and Amanda had trouble in school at an early age and were subsequently put into special education class (OBS-klass). Amanda would get into fights with teachers and students, skip school and steal in the locker rooms. Her story clearly exemplifies how stigmatizing being put in a special classroom or in other ways singled out can feel to a child.

Yasmine: “Did you, did you think it helped, how did that feel?”

Amanda: “Naah, or you were just like even more placed into a category then. It always

turned into that you had to live up to something, it's hard as hell to explain.” – Interview Amanda (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

In junior high Erik describes himself as being very bored and absent during class and that he would often talk back to teachers, for which he was put in a special education class. He often felt like he was treated unfairly by the teachers, he would get low grades even in subjects such as art and music despite the fact that he had clear artistic talent and was always present in those classes. Erik also exemplifies very clearly how damaging for ones' self-image the use of special education classes can potentially be when asked if he felt like he was treated unfairly by school personnel.

Erik: “Yeah absolutely! Of course, especially this with locking in a bunch of annoying students in a special ed-class, like already in seventh grade I remember, like I sat there with 8:ths and 9:ths, like it was no serious lessons, some got to sit and build with LEGO in there, aaand... there was no one who held in any teaching, like we just got to sit in there so it was pure containment... Like, there you really started feeling this exclusion... the others went to class and I went to this fucking prison essentially (...) Most of them I've met many years later in criminal circles.” – Interview Erik (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Not to say that there is necessarily a direct correlation between being put in special education classes and later criminal activity, however this is a clear example of how children who might be in need of further assistance or support are instead in practice shoved to the side. This effectively marks them out as different and gives a message to some children than adults have lower expectations of them than their classmates, that they are not as talented as the others.

Amanda and Amir dropped out of high school. Amir became witness to an incredibly traumatic event when his mother was stabbed by her husband who is not Amir's father. When his mother came home from the hospital she forgave her husband who was released and moved back in with her. Amir had already started to become heavily involved in drugs and other criminal activities and ended up dropping out of high school as a result of all of these things.

“And... I was really angry, I was fucking pissed, I felt like stabbing him like... every time, every day and that I went around with and it was really hard, I didn't want to be home like. And that affected school too because, I felt so bad there I didn't to be Amir, there I just wanted to disappear and be something completely different... I wanted to be

everything except myself you could say, so that was that like, fought (...) I got by pretty easily in this criminal environment so to say so it was pretty obvious that like I would continue.” – Interview Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Amanda ended up dropping out of high school because she had started doing drugs and crime and felt like there were a lot of other things which were more fun than school. When asked if there was ever any attempt from school personnel to pursue her to stay or come back to school she does not recall any.

Amanda: “Yeah no but that’s like what I remember, now I don’t have such a great memory but there was nothing like that there was talk about coming for some meeting or to go back in school again, that didn’t exist.”

Yasmine: “You didn’t feel like that was something they put time on, getting you to stay in school?”

Amanda: “Noo like, so it was pretty, I chose to drop out and then there wasn’t much more with that.” – Interview Amanda (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

This is noteworthy since both Amir and Amanda have simultaneously been pursued extensively by the police, while not much support or help seems to have been given in order for them to stay in school or to deal with traumatic experiences.

5.2 Contact with police and criminal justice system

The participants all have differing experiences with the police. Some have a positive opinion of them and some a more negative. Regarding their experiences within the criminal justice system as a whole, it’s noteworthy that being arrested or even sent to prison does not seem to have been a deterrent. Once the participants did leave a life of crime and drugs, there were other driving factors behind their decisions as well. Three of the participants describe the sentiment that while they were still living their old life, they viewed the police as “the enemy” and a couple of them have experienced police brutality.

Stig became a large-scale drug dealer in the 1970’s and spent a total of 18 years in prison. He says he was never offered to speak to a councilor or anything of the sort while in prison but that he also didn’t want any help, until his last stay when he learned that his mother had passed away. After this, an employee of the prison became a kind of father figure for Stig and helped him move to a newly founded motivational department at the prison and also helped him get into treatment for his addiction after his release.

“... So I came in contact with one who I had met many times in prison and stuff right, and... who really helped me and I got the help I needed... and it is a lot because of him that I’m sitting here today. Because he became, like a father to me, a father that I maybe never had.” – Interview Stig (Malmö 12-11-2013)

Stigs story clearly exemplifies how emotional problems are often behind criminality and drug abuse as well as the positive influence that dedicated and educated personnel can have in correctional facilities. Stig has a very positive view of the police force in Sweden, despite having experienced some police brutality. He underscores his own personal responsibility in those situations, while acknowledging that at the time he viewed them as the enemy.

“Yeah I’ve never had any problems with the police, absolutely not. Sure you’ve gotten a slap but you’ve been spitting on a stone until it’s wet right, so then it’s gonna slam of course, I take that completely on myself, I have friends who are police and things like that right, they’re really good (...) So I have only good to say, but of course, they were my enemies.” - Interview Stig (Malmö 12-11-2013)

Amanda describes how during the time she was a known addict by the police and living in a small town in the south of Sweden, she felt like they would harass her with the sole purpose of bothering her, such as searching her house or stopping her on the street to confiscate her drugs.

“Yeah, like I think it was either that they didn’t have that much to do or to bother you. So eh... and sure, it hasn’t been totally like, like there has been reasons for it but not so much that it has been, I thought they should put, and I can still think this to this day, they can put those resources on something else, it wasn’t like I was sitting and pulling in millions per month (laughs). Like I was just an addicting who, yeah, was supporting my addiction sort of.” - Interview Amanda (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Amanda also describes being treated poorly by the police and the sentiment that the police are your enemy when asked what she thought about their treatment of her.

“Eh... Like, then I thought, like lously (laughs). Like I still think that, come there and like rummage through the entire apartment, everything is laying spread everywhere and like that. But then it’s like that when you’re out there that “it’s us against them” so regardless of how they had treated you I still think I would’ve thought they were douchebags.” – Interview Amanda (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Amir describes how he was arrested and put in jail with full restrictions during an emotionally very difficult time in his life when he was about seventeen years old. “Restrictions” refers to the client’s contact with the outside world and access to information being significantly diminished (Kriminalvården 2013).

“So I was in jail, came to jail and that was like... (laughs). Hard situation, rough situation, then I had all these thoughts with everything happening so quickly, there was no school, my dad is alive, my stepdad has stabbed my mom and they still live together, I couldn’t put it together, I couldn’t understand it like... and then the drugs and... it was so much at once. – Interview Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013).

Amir also describes how he hates the police and was targeted by them whenever he would come to visit in Sweden. Even when he was living in Denmark, the police would routinely visit his mother’s apartment to conduct searches and ask about his whereabouts. Amir has experienced police brutality, both as a victim of it himself as a young adult following an arrest and as a witness. His story clearly exemplifies how damaging being subject to misconduct like this can be to an individual.

“But the police I didn’t have anything against and it, it’s pretty messed up like, the police is supposed to be, they’re supposed to be those you ask for help, they’re supposed to be those who like stand up for justice and... When things like this happens it makes you lose trust in society, lose trust in authorities, lose trust in all of these things, there is... there’s no help to get, fuck them, they don’t know how it is being brought up with shit and stuff like that... So that was one of the times that I was victim of it the most, then I’ve seen friends being beat up as children, 13-14, no, not even that, 12-13, 12-13 years old. I was with my friend and then you’re like pretty small (...) Look, but a large full-grown man it’s not enough to hold by the wrist you can’t control him but a small child like, that’s... You don’t have to stand and punch or push his head into a brick wall and... it’s messed up, it’s really messed up but... that’s how it is.” – Interview Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Erik claims he has never had any issues with the police. His description of his experience in jail exemplifies the seemingly arbitrary use of full restrictions in Sweden.

Yasmine: “How come they had restrictions on you?”

Erik: “I actually don’t know.”

Yasmine: “There was no one who said...?”

Erik: “No no, it wasn’t about any like, serious crimes, it was a fucking theft.” –
Interview Erik (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

It seems as though some individuals are deemed by the criminal justice system to have forfeited their right to information about what is being done to them and why.

5.3 Treatment for addiction

The participants have received different types of treatment for their addiction. Most have gone through publicly administered programs but Stig went to a privately run treatment center after having been referred there by his contact in prison. Stig explains that he initially asked to leave the treatment and be sent back to prison both because of the posters on the walls about having faith in God but also because they were asked to do assignments which dealt with guilt and shame, which Stig felt didn’t concern him since he had only sold drugs. He describes the importance of the therapist’s response when he asked to be sent back to prison.

“‘Sit down’ he said and he opened a drawer and pulled out a bag of candy and threw it to me and then he said ‘hey Stig put that in your mouth’ you’re crazy I said. Put it in my mouth? ‘Yeah the bag too’ he said. ’so you for fucking once can shut up and start listening to what other people tell you to do, and then do as they tell you. Grow up, dammit’ he said. And after that conversation I understood what I was doing there.” –
Interview Stig (Malmö 12-11-2013)

Eric has come in contact with social services during the course of his addiction on a few different occasions. The first time he was arrested he received a letter from social services saying they wanted to speak to him about his addiction. He ignored the letter. In 2006 while he was living in a small city in the south of Sweden, he sought help from social services for his addiction. His experience clearly exemplifies the fact that access to treatment varies greatly between counties (kommuner) in Sweden, as shown in one of the State’s Public Investigations from 2011 (SOU 2011:35 page 110). He was told that his only option at the moment was to commence a 28 –day open care treatment.

“And they ‘yeah, we can’t admit you here now’ because a treatment was already underway, ‘so you’ll have to wait for the next one in six months’. What the hell, are you stupid, if I can stay drug-free on my own for six months then I wouldn’t need your fucking treatment.” – Interview Erik (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

A few years later he decided to seek treatment from Social Services in a larger city and was put into a program the following Monday. Amir received treatment from a psychotherapist

during his last stay in prison. He describes the importance of having someone to talk to about his emotional baggage with his family and how the therapist helped him see things in a different way.

“We could talk for 3-4 hours... about... yeah, about myself and I was, I didn’t get it, how do you do when you’re not a criminal, what do you talk about, how do you act, how do you solve conflicts? It’s... if you’re angry with someone you hit, you need money you go out and sell drugs, it’s... Like I didn’t get this, it was this I would talk to them about, what’s important (...) I had to work on feeling, it’s completely ok to have made mistakes, it’s completely ok to have the background that I do, it’s completely ok to have sorrow, it’s ok to be angry and when you’re angry you’re angry for a while and then you let it go, you forgive... and move on. I don’t get this... Then, now I’ve started to understand I think (laughs).” – Interview Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

This shows how the institutions of the welfare state also can help promote personal agency.

Amanda describes how she was apprehended under the Care of Addicts Law (LVM) after a period of serious drug abuse. She was in very bad physical and emotional shape when the police came to pick her up. She describes LVM as essentially being in containment for six months, only sporadically would they be offered “treatment” in the form of group discussions about their addiction.

Amanda: “Yeah it’s detox and then... Yeah then it’s absolutely nothing else! (laughs) So it’s completely locked first of all, you can’t go outside, you get to go outside maybe for the first time when you’ve been there for maybe two months you get to go outside if you’re lucky, like if they think there’s not a risk you’ll try to escape, 20 minutes a week maybe with... someone who works there” - Interview Amanda (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

According to Amanda, she was not offered any treatment during the six months of LVM, nor was she offered any follow-up support or treatment after her release and soon went back to using drugs.

5.4 Life after prison and reaching out for help

The participants’ stories show that life after prison comes with its own very distinct challenges, especially for individuals who want to leave their background of crime and addiction behind. Stig talks about how he was happy he received a job offer from KRIS since he didn’t expect anyone to want to hire a person with his background.

Yasmine: “Did you get any help when you came out of prison to look for a job?”

Stig:

“No no no... yeah I could’ve gone myself to the national work center but there was no point with the background I had, I realized that, of course. Who would want to hire me?” – Interview Stig (Malmö 12-11-2013)

Interestingly, Stig explains that he has not experienced any difficulties with finding employment for their members during his work at KRIS. He emphasizes the availability of treatment in prison today and individual’s personal responsibility to use them. Furthermore, he explains the difficulties regarding debt which faces many people being released from prison today and the need for reform in this area.

“See this with crime rehabilitation, it’s become, when I started doing time in prison, there was nothing. But today there is. Today there’s different programs, activities – which are great, absolutely. Nothing to hesitate about, *if* you want help (...) But if you have 2-3 million in debt, what do you do? Then you keep going with this life and it costs more than it tastes.” – Interview Stig (Malmö 12-11-2013)

Amir’s story clearly exemplifies the difficulties facing many being released from prison and how lack of support from society’s institutions can contribute to individuals going back to their old habits. He completed treatment during his stay and contacted social services while he was still incarcerated to let them know that he wanted a change and needed a place to live. Once he was out, social services had no apartment for him and he had to move from hostel to hostel. He found a job on his own and describes how he was very motivated at the time to stop doing drugs but the uncertainty around his living situation made it difficult. He ended up moving in with an old friend and finally contacted a broker on the black market in order to get an apartment because he felt like social services weren’t going to help him and his huge debts made it difficult to get a regular apartment.

“I thought, I’ll deal with a black-broker and for that you needed about fifty thousand. I thought ‘yeah so I’ll pull together fifty thousand’ and I did... But yeah, I’m addicted... So, with... with having the addictive personality you’re never happy. Got fifty thousand and I kept going. Instead of getting an apartment I went and invested in buying more drugs and there somewhere in between I was caught.” – Interview Amir (5-11-2013)

Amir explains how compared to the difficulties of dealing with the outside world, being in prison becomes something familiar which you know how to handle.

“It’s hard, it’s hard – it’s easy to do time, it’s a hard rough environment and there’s fights all the time and it can cost you your life if you make a mistake in there but (...) It’s a rough-as-shit environment but I’m like used to that environment so it wasn’t that, that hard after a while.” – Interview Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Amir also describes how damaging for an individual’s sense of trust it can be to be faced with rejection or prejudice when calling out for help. It also implies the negative impact of racial and ethnic inequality in Sweden.

“It also has to do with this part with trust, you don’t trust... people, that’s the part you don’t trust, it gets taken really far, you don’t trust people who don’t have an immigrant background who themselves understand. And you don’t trust people who, authorities, social services, work center and... above all the police. You don’t trust them, you trust the boys and... that’s how it is.” – Interview Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Erik describes who he received help to find employment by KRAMI, a collaboration between Crime rehabilitation and the national work enter. When his employer had to let him go due to budget cuts, he was told that he was no longer “KRAMI-material” because he had been previously employed. He also describes being scuttled between case managers and a general impression of ineffectiveness, although he had a friendly and positive relationship with a couple of case managers.

“So it’s the world’s chaos down at this fucking work center. Then it’s like that, what the hell is it that they help, four percent, out of everyone who gets a job get it through the work center so, and that they’re happy with (laughs). It’s frightening.” – Interview Erik (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Erik also describes the role of KRIS in Sweden today. His statement clearly exemplifies the perceived lack of cooperation between society’s institutions and the difficulties this causes for individuals trying to leave a life of crime and addiction.

“Like they are, they make a huge difference in society. Especially this with the extremely bad, or yeah, if it even exists, cooperation between social services and crime rehabilitation. Like it, it almost never works. Just yesterday we went to pick one up who was released from the B-institution, who otherwise would’ve just stood outside the gates with his clothes in a bag... And not had anywhere to go. It’s social services fucking duty to take care of them, but they don’t (...) Like most people really want to do it (break with their old life) when they’re doing time. But then so many other things

happen along the way and above all when they get out, they don't have anyone who can take them in, they don't have anywhere to go and stand with their clothes in a bag and a phonebook – with all the wrong phone numbers – it's just to the old friends.”

– Interview Erik (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

5.5 The probation officers' perspective

The probation officer who was interviewed for this thesis described their work as involving both control and support and explained that it is up to the client and his or her own behavior which of those aspects will be most pronounced. She explained that their work is guided by the “normalization principle” which means that there is not much extra being offered their clients but that rather their job is to guide them into mainstream society's institutions such as social services and the national work centers. She describes a close cooperation between Crime rehabilitation and these institutions.

“It probably looks different in, eh, different free care units, how it's done... but Malmö is a really large free care unit and work is a precondition to be able to stay away from criminality so we've established that, we have a good cooperation.” – Interview Probation Officer (Malmö 19-11-2013)

When a client is released from prison, they have in general been drug-free during their entire time. The probation officer sees a problem in the fact that this is often not capitalized on through further treatment, either by social services or by the clients themselves because they are tired of having to deal with the authorities. Another issue is that clients are often not aware that they need to contact social services while they are still in prison if they want help to find a place stay once they are released.

“If you go there the same day you're released to get a place to live, that doesn't work, it doesn't work like that. And I think that, I can't say if it is like this but that I think personnel at the correctional facilities should know, I can't say if they do or not, I suppose they do, so... so that planning is started in time.” – Interview Probation Officer (Malmö 19-11-2013)

She also mentions the fact that there is a shortage of rental units in Sweden in general as a problem which particularly affects people with a criminal background. When asked about whether she has any concerns about the rehabilitation system in Sweden she describes the institutions which are already there as fully adequate but that a structured cooperation between them perhaps is missing.

“It is this once again with the cooperation. Eh... And there I can see for myself as someone who has worked for social service that... In good places, there it works well. But now that I work here and am in contact with tons of different social services where it works well to very differing degrees. Eh... and with other institutions that you have contact with. Eh... yeah maybe it should be done more structurally... A regulation in some way how the cooperation is supposed to work with... I don't really think there should be any problems with responsibility because that's already made explicit in our different assignments but that... It doesn't always work the way you wish it would, so it would be that.” - Interview Probation officer (Malmö 19-11-2013)

Based on this, the various offices which people being released from prison have to navigate seems to allow for some individuals to fall in between the cracks.

6. Analysis

6.1 Schooling and exclusion

From the participants stories it seems as though the process of social exclusion seldom starts in the upper teenage years or in young adulthood, but rather, begins as early as in elementary school in some cases. All of the participants' stories of their experiences in school included some form or another of (negative) special treatment, by being put into separate classes or even a youth detention center or singled out as a “troublemaker” by the teachers. Judging from the participants stories, it seems as though when some individuals who exhibit behavior which society deems as deviant, they are subsequently further singled out and excluded from the mainstream by the school system. The experiences of receiving this special treatment seem to have created in the participants already at a very early age a sense of being different or a failure. Thus, individuals who have problems at home or other emotional problems and who act out at school are in effect taught to regard themselves as “bad kids.” The consequences of this self-image should not be underestimated in my opinion.

Two of the participants, Amir and Stig, come from troubled family backgrounds. Amir's father was absent, he had to witness his stepdad's abusive behavior towards his mom and he was shuffled between numerous foster families. According to Thornberry, weak parental attachment in childhood can cause a similarly weak attachment to school and increases the likelihood of association with delinquent peer groups. (Thornberry&Krohn 2003:12) As Amir described, in order to hide his insecurity he would put on a mask and instead act out in school,

causing teachers to label him as a “troublemaker” and always assume the worst. This can be seen as an example of what Thornberry writes, how adolescents exhibiting antisocial behavior are put on the path to criminality since they are rejected because of it by parents, teachers and prosocial peers (2003:13). Sampson and Laub also write about criminogenic effects of weak social bonds. They make an important point which is very much relevant in Amir’s case, the fact that what goes on within the family is shaped by structural factors and that structural inequality such as differences in socioeconomic status are mediated through the family. Thus the fact that Amir comes from an immigrant background, a group of people more vulnerable to the harms of unemployment or poor economic circumstance and the weak social bonds which are often a consequence of this should not be disregarded. Of course, Hirschi has also written extensively on the effects of weak or broken bonds to society. When individuals have weak relationships in the family and perceive themselves as lacking legitimate opportunity in society, combined with little involvement in activities such as hobbies or work and lack of strong beliefs in conventional morality and authority figures, they will develop low self-control (1969:16). Similarly to Amir, Stig lacked strong social bonds to his parents, his father was an alcoholic and Stig started running away from home and committing crimes, for which he was sent to youth detention centers. This can be understood as society rejecting the child and using stigmatizing punishment (Sampson&Laub 1993:122), instead of recognizing where this behavior was coming from. In effect, all of Stig’s social bonds to the regular school, his parents or possible parental figures were severed; he was left at the youth detention center with only other delinquent young boys to develop bonds to and thus had few possibilities of escaping a life of crime (Thornberry&Krohn 2003:14).

While Erik and Amanda do not mention a difficult emotional background or troubles with their parents, they too exhibited antisocial behavior in school which elicited harsh response from the school personnel. They were both put into special education class, which can be seen as poorly delivered attempts of exercising social control. Erik often felt like he was treated unfairly by teachers and they both felt as though they were put in a separate category than the other children. The stigmatizing effects of this very likely decreased their attachment to school and thus, according to social bond theory, made them more perceptible to the influence of delinquent peer groups. While I do think social bond theories have plenty to offer in terms of helping us understand the participants’ school years, there are some major questions left unanswered. Mainly, why is it that weak social bonds make individuals turn specifically to crime, why are they selling drugs or stealing instead of simply being reclusive or angry?

Young sheds light on the fact that in a capitalistic society where security and financial stability has been denied a person, theft or drug dealing is a way to reclaim ones status, to be “someone” through material things (1999:93). When met with this denial, young men such as Stig och Amir will often turn to the only resource left available to them; physical strength and thus create macho cultures where one can regain some sort of status (Young 1999:12; Lalander 2009). With this in mind I question the assertion of social bond theory that it is not only a lack of attachment but also a lack of self-control which are criminogenic as a result of weak social bonds. It assumes that we all have an innate desire to commit crimes and the only thing stopping us is self-control, without questioning where this desire would come from. It also implicitly deems this self-control to be something positive. I would instead argue that it can be questioned if law-abiding citizens are simply just accommodating an unjust world-order?

6.2 Criminal justice system and exclusion

While not necessarily always hostile towards law enforcement officers, the participants describe a feeling of “Us against them”. Stig and Amir have experienced police brutality and both Amir and Amanda described being profiled and having their homes searched on a regular basis. Actions by law enforcement did not cause the participants to eventually leave a life of crime and drugs. Rather, it was personal events, such as the death of his mother in Stig’s case and access to treatment from professionals such as psychiatrists which helped the participants change their lives. Thus I would argue based on the results that persecution by police and other harsh treatments such as being put in jail with restrictions does not have the desired effect.

I now wish to leave behind the analysis of the participants’ behavior for a moment and instead discuss why they are being arrested in the first place and why it is that society directs such isolating and disapproving reactions towards certain groups of people. Most of the participant’s offences were related to narcotics in one manner or another, which leads me to question what we label as “deviance” in Sweden today. Despite us all knowing the adverse effects of alcohol, no one seems to be engaging in a similar moral witch-hunt after liquor store employees. Thus, I would agree with Becker when he writes that what determines whether or not an act is deviant is how other people react to it (1997:10). Quinney argues that crime is a definition of certain behavior that is created by the individuals in a politically organized society who have the power to determine what - and perhaps more importantly *when* - something is a crime (in Lilly et.al 2007:169). With this in mind I want to strongly emphasize

the need to question why the participants were arrested for certain crimes in the first place and why it is that *they* were arrested and not the bankers of Stureplan in Stockholm. In line with the question, Marx and Engels propose that capitalism produces an unequal world order, where people faced with the alternative of starvation or suicide naturally turn to crime. Surely the situation is not that bleak in Sweden today, however there is merit to their suggestion that rather than benefiting society as a whole, punishing offenders is an integral part of the repressive state apparatus which maintains and reinforces the position of the ruling class (Marx 2000:200-1). If relative deprivation is an engine of crime then the criminal justice system is simply reproducing this inequality.

In his theory on relative deprivation, Young argues that the post-modern society is one where we are all taught to desire the materialistic standards of an upper-middle class life, but where certain groups are excluded from participating in the labor market and the consumption that comes with it. These groups, faced with relative deprivation and the seemingly arbitrarily way in which rewards are handed out in society, are at best trapped in endless dead-end jobs and at worst they compose an underclass marked by desperation, idleness and thus, criminality (1999:13). Certainly, after dropping out of school and developing problems with addiction, the rewards of the market were not available to the participants. Essentialism then provides a basis for the demonization of the excluded, which is what makes it possible to blame the problems of society on a troublesome “other”, often portrayed as being on the “edge” of society. The main issue here is that instead of recognizing the fact that there are problems in society because of core contradictions and inequality in the social order, the narrative becomes that the problems themselves are the cause. If we could just rid ourselves of the problem, e.g. criminality, then society would be problem free, or so the thinking goes. Thus, instead of acknowledging that addiction and criminality is caused by exclusion and inequality, we adopt a policy of zero tolerance and aggressive policing, mistakenly thinking that if we just get rid of drug use we won’t have any problems (Young 1999:chp. 110-1). I argue that these processes become visible through the participants stories. Instead of recognizing the childhood trauma and exclusion behind Stig and Amir’s situation, they are further excluded and demonized as drug dealers by law enforcement. Similarly in the case of Erik and Amanda, instead of recognizing the main motivator of their criminality, addiction, the essentializing image of the “other” on society’s edge allows for persecution instead of the offer of help. Especially in Amanda’s case, the fact that she was apprehended and essentially put into confinement for her addiction under the Law of Treatment of Addicts (LVM) starkly

shows the consequences of essentializing the “other”. In a society which normally prides itself on its transparent justice system, it’s acceptable to lock up an adult human being for six months without trial, simply because she is a drug addict and therefore different from the rest of us. The consequences of the Law of Treatment of Addicts (LVM) and the demonization of addicts can also be viewed from a functionalist perspective. In a society that is perceived as undergoing rapid changes in the form of e.g. globalization, the collapse of the “nuclear family” and social media, do we need certain individuals to embody what is wrong or “bad”? Perhaps we need punishment to create social solidarity? Durkeim argues that in order for our societies not to descend into chaos, we need preferences for certain behaviors and values over others. Just as the conception of “good” cannot exist without “evil”, so justice cannot exist without crime. Thus, deviance needs to be created in order to create the process by which morality is generated and sustained (1982:101). However, despite the fact that criminality might serve as a tool of social cohesion, the inherent conservatism in Durkheim’s theory implies – contrary to Marx and Engels – that the social order being preserved is something positive. There are some questions left unanswered by Young’s writings as well. He is a British sociologist writing from an Anglo-Saxon perspective. His theory doesn’t explain why the attitude towards drugs is stricter in Sweden than in other Nordic countries such as Norway or Finland where needle exchange programs for example are much more wide spread. Christie writes about how in Sweden, the tradition of liberalism has traditionally been quite weak. This, combined with the socialist tradition of siding with the weak he argues created a society where harsh punitive measures became a misguided attempt to protect the youth and other vulnerable citizens (2005:72-73). An example of this is the lack of access to needle exchange programs in most Swedish counties (Socialstyrelsen). Further, I would argue that Young’s theory on social exclusion fails to shed light on the processes through which this exclusion manifests. If it was simply that socioeconomic inequality breeds crime we would probably have a much higher crime rate, since everyone in the working class would be a criminal. Rather, the interviews have shown that socioeconomic inequality is mediated through weak social bonds between parents and children or weak attachment to school, causing some individuals to turn to a life of crime and drugs.

6.3 Life after prison and reaching out for help in an exclusive society

The participants all describe various difficulties in facing life after prison. Stig emphasizes the problem with massive debt and how this makes many not see the point in taking a low-paying job. Erik and Amir also found jobs at KRIS and both describe the somewhat chaotic situation

at the national work center facing people with a criminal background. Amir describes the difficulty in getting help from social services to find a place to live and the prejudice he was often faced with when seeking help looking for jobs. I would argue that all of these experiences are symptoms of an exclusive society. As is apparent from the participants' stories, individuals being released from prison can face dire economic circumstances, they have lost everything they own and are often in debt. Ordinary things such as finding an apartment, a job and paying ones' bills can often be a great challenge. I would argue that what we see is people being excluded from an early age, either because of childhood trauma or failure in school, for whom the late modern pathway to (material) success is not available (Young 1999:82). Once they have been punished for reacting to this exclusion, they are put in an even more vulnerable and excluded position than before. It's against this background that Amir's statement about how prison becomes familiar and that it's the outside world that's difficult should be understood. Erik laments the lack of cooperation between the criminal justice system and social services. His statement about how individuals released from prison often stand outside the gates with just their clothes in a bag is a stark example of how an exclusive society, with a sense of righteousness since the criminal is essentialized as a bad person, strips the deviant "other" of essentially everything that is necessary to live a normal life. If he or she then relapses into criminality and addiction, they are further stigmatized and penalized as a failure and thus further excluded as they are seen as "incorrigible". Erik's statement further shows the possible correlation between Young's theory and social bond theory. While social exclusion is indeed mainly based on economic factors, we can also see that contact with pro-social peers or relatives are of great importance in terms of helping individuals out of criminality (Thornberry 2003:14). Perhaps the gravest consequence of social exclusion is that it diminishes the individual's access to the social connections often needed today in order to find employment.

6.4 From the point of the civil servant

The female correctional officer interviewed for this Bachelor's thesis seemed highly knowledgeable and emphatic. I do not doubt that this is indeed the case with most people working within Crime Rehabilitation today. However, despite everyone's best intentions I would argue that the Crime Rehabilitation Unit in some ways furthers exclusion. What stands out most starkly is the fact that the work is guided mainly on the "normalization principle", meaning that clients should be guided into society's preexisting institutions instead of receiving anything "extra". Seeing as two of the participants come from highly emotionally

unstable upbringings and the other two have dealt with long term addiction and the stigma that comes with that, I would argue that it's hardly surprising if these individuals would need "something extra" in terms of assistance from the civil service. It is precisely the same society and its institutions which have excluded an individual that we then ask them to turn to for help. Amir's description of prejudice and lack of help from social services and how this eroded his trust for these institutions clearly shows how troublesome this relationship can be. A society from which one was excluded at an early age, either through penalizing measures or stigmatizing treatment in school, is now explicitly trying to control them. As Rantakeisu writes, there is a clear power structure at play in the meeting with the civil service (Karlsson et. al.: 2013:147). Despite the best intentions of correctional officers, it's easy to see how the relationship between clients and Crime rehabilitation would be poisoned by the clients' previous experiences within the civil service, especially when the cooperation between the Crime Rehabilitation unit and the various other institutions does not always work as intended and some clients risk being left behind.

6.5 The welfare state and the promise of inclusion

All of the participants have had positive and productive experiences with various forms of treatment. What seems to be the common denominator is that there was another person, or persons, who invested their time and interest in helping them. Amir describes how meetings with a psychiatrist helped him deal with his emotional baggage and made him reevaluate what is important in life. Erik managed to stay drug-free when he finally received treatment and Stig credits a contact he made in prison as the reason he is here today. This makes the case that the welfare state does indeed have the capacity to act as an agent of inclusiveness as well, but that much of the resources are in effect wasted on punitive measures. Christie writes that what makes us use punitive measures with such ease is the fact that we live in a modern society amongst people we will never know much about. This makes use more dependent upon authorities in times of crisis, it's much easier to label someone we don't know as a thief or a criminal (2005:20,131). The participants' positive experiences with treatment show the power in approaching criminals and addicts not as such, but instead as human beings among others. It shows the effects of using civil servants to get to know their clients instead of simply punishing them. It also proves that when given the right circumstances, the personal agency of individuals is a powerful tool for change, something which is perhaps neglected by leftist theories. The participants strongly emphasized the importance of personal responsibility and will in order to change one's life and would perhaps not always agree with this thesis'

depictions of structural inequality. While I certainly do not wish to neglect their interpretations and am deeply impressed by the changes they have made, I do agree with Karlsson et. al. when they write that the tendency in the cultural narrative has become to individualize structural problems (2013:27). Young would surely question treatments such as therapy since you are essentially attempting to socialize anyone deemed deviant into behaving like everybody else, without addressing the larger issue which is that our unequal society is criminogenic at its core and simply socializing people into accepting this (1999:194). While I personally would agree and would like to see our capitalistic and consumption-driven society undergo much more massive changes, I can't help but to think - perhaps cynically - that this wish will remain a utopia and that it's more realistic to seek change within the world order we have.

6.6 Main findings

The material gathered during the interview can be understood in the light of multiple theories. Left realism theories as well as Marx and Engels enlightens us to the problem of why it is that specifically the participants are persecuted and stigmatized because of their deviance rather than the offenders of white collar-crime. Social bond-theories help us understand why, if socioeconomic difficulties are criminogenic, not all economically disadvantaged people turn to crime. Lastly, Durkheim's functionalist perspective shows that the labeling of an individual as "evil" or "deviant" might promote unity in a divided society. I would argue that the main findings of this thesis are that socioeconomic difficulty will keep many individuals in a life of crime and that the demonization of the deviant other allows for punitive measures. While Durkheim would say that we need the constructed criminal in order to have morality and avoid anomie, I would argue that our society is too divided and has too many sources from which people derive their identity from, for the need for moral consensus to be the whole story. Rather, in line with the Marxist and left realism argument, I propose that if inequality is criminogenic, we need to demonize the other in order to legitimize an unjust world order.

7. Conclusion

We have seen that social and economic exclusion begins very early in a person's life, often already during his or her school years. It is a highly complex process involving many different actors within the civil service. The civil service's role can range from a stigmatizing school management to unresponsive social services to being met with prejudice at the national work center. I have argued that the main reason for this is an essentializing of the "other" and the

fact that we perceive certain groups of people as being on the edge of society and thus somehow different from the rest of us. The consequence is a weakening of the individuals' social bonds to mainstream society. Further it's been shown that the state of dire financial difficulty which many find themselves in after being subject to punitive measures by the state causes many to persist in criminality. However, we have also seen the positive effects of treatment and support and discovered the powerful agent of change that the civil service has the conditions for being when clients are treated as human beings with problems instead of simply criminals. As Lalander points out, the drivers behind criminality among the socially and economically marginalized are inherently human, drug dealers are not necessarily monsters set out to destroy society (2009:277). While Lalander's approach is more ethnographic, examining the consequences of marginalization over the life course of a group of young Chilean men and does touch briefly on their meetings with schools and Crime rehabilitation, this thesis has shown more specifically what the civil service's role in this complex process can be. The results have also shown examples of what Rantakeisu writes, how structural power relations influence the meetings between members of the civil service and their clients. Despite their best intentions, stereotypes influence perception and civil service members can thus both act as agents of inclusion and to reproduce inequality (in Karlsson et.al:2013:147-8) .Similarly to Melossi, I propose that the creation of criminals serves a purpose in an unequal society but contrary to his argument that imprisonment is the elite's response to the working class' intolerable level of power (2013:231), I argue that demonization is necessary to legitimize inequality. While it is impossible to generalize about an entire population of former criminals from such a small sample, I propose that we have seen an example of how individuals are caught in the crossfire in the global war on drugs. The social policies this war inspires are often based on notions of the drug addict and criminal as an essentialized "other" and can lead to further marginalization. The question thus becomes: how can the welfare state protect people from the harms of drug abuse without inflicting further damage on already vulnerable social groups? Our society at its core is unequal and this will always create winners and losers. Our best hope to combat this is to allocate resources in a way which ensures that those who ended up with the short end of the stick are treated with as much dignity and understanding as possible.

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Appendix. Original interview excerpts in Swedish

The school years

Yasmine: ”När du bodde där uppe, var det så att ni fick prata med nån kurator eller terapeut eller att ni fick nån hjälp så utöver..”

Stig: ”Aa vi gick i skolan och sånt här va, det var väl det ända som vi fick.”

Yasmine: ”Det var så?”

Stig: ”Ja, så enkelt va det. Och... klart man fann ju, nån som man tyckte mer om än dom andra och klart man snackade mer med den men...”

Yasmine: ”Men det var ingenting som var..?”

Stig: ”Nä. Nä, ingen alls.” – Intervju Stig (Malmö 12-11-2013)

”Jag var jätteotrygg som barn men det ville jag ju inte visa så jag slängde ju på en mask, jag var klassens pajas och clown, både bråkstakare och skyddare också för att få uppmärksamhet och sådär... så min skolgång, det var... det var mycket bråk och mycket tjafs med lärarna och så där, samtidigt som jag höll det här... jag klarade proven och hade högsta betyg i mer eller mindre allting...” – Intervju Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Aa från lärare och det var, för mig var det jättejobbigt för att, många gånger när jag försökt ta tag i saker och ville då, då blev jag bemött av det här ”du är sån” och dom kommer och säger till mig, jag blev beskylld för att stjäla cyklar och förstöra massa saker på skolan som jag inte hade gjort och när det var slagsmål att det var jag som hade varit inblandad. Det kunde vara dagar som jag vart hemma och var sjukskriven och dom sa ”nä men vi har sett dig” – Intervju Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Och... jag var jättearg, jag var skitförbannad, jag hade lust att hugga ner han asså..varenda gång, varenda dag och det gick jag runt med och det var skitjobbigt jag ville ju inte va hemma asså. Och det påverkade ju skolan också för att, jag mådde ju så dåligt där ville jag ju inte vara Amir, där ville jag bara försvinna och bara vara nått helt annat... Jag ville va allt förutom mig själv egentligen kan man säga, så det var ju det som, bråkade (...) Jag hade ju rätt så lätt att

föra mig i, i den här kriminella miljön så att säga så för mig var det rätt så självklart att jag skulle fortsätta liksom.” – Intervju Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Yasmine: "Tyckte du, eller upplevde du att det hjälpte, hur kändes det?"

Amanda: "Nää, eller asså man blev ju liksom egentligen bara ännu mer placerad i ett fack då ju. Det blev hela tiden att man skulle leva upp till något, det är jävligt svårt att förklara." – Intervju Amanda (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Amanda: "Aa nä men det asså vad jag kommer ihåg, nu har jag inte så jättebra minne men det var inget så liksom att det var tal om att komma på något möte då eller gå in i skolan igen, det.. det fanns inte."

Yasmine: "Du upplevde inte att det var något dom la tid på, att få dig att stanna i skolan?"

Amanda: "Nää asså så, det var ganska, jag valde att hoppa av och så blev det inte så mycket mer med det." – Intervju Amanda (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Asså de, där började man ju verkligen känna de här utanförskapet... dom andra gick på lektionerna och jag gick till det här jävla fängelset i princip (...) Men det var ändå de här, vi var ustötta... dom flesta av dom har jag träffat flera år senare i kriminella kretsar" – Intervju Erik (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Contact with the police and criminal justice system

”Så fick jag kontakt med en som jag hade träffat många gånger på fängelset och sånt här va, och... som verkligen hjälpte mig och jag fick den hjälpen jag behövde... och det är mycket hans skull att jag sitter här idag. För han blev, som en far för mig, en far som jag kanske aldrig hade haft.” – Intervju Stig (Helsingborg 12-11-2013)

”Aa jag har aldrig haft några problem med polisen, absolut inte. Visst har man fått sig en lusing men har man spottat på en sten tills den var våt va, så smäller det ju såklart, det tar jag på mig helt själv, jag har ju vänner som är poliser och såna här grejer va, dom är jättebra (...) Så jag har bara gott att säga, men det är klart, det var ju mina fiender.” – Intervju Stig (12-11-2013)

”Så satt jag häktad, kom jag till häktet och det var ju... (skrattar till) jobbig situation, tuff situation, då hade jag alla dom här tankarna med allting hände så snabbt, det var ingen skola,

min pappa lever, min styvpappa har huggt min mamma och ändå bor dom ihop, jag kunde inte få det att gå, jag kunde inte fatta det asså... och så drogerna och ... det var så mycket på en gång.” - Intervju Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Men polisen hade jag inget emot och de, de är rätt så sjukt asså, polisen ska ju va, dom ska ju va dom man ber om hjälp, dom ska ju liksom va dom som står för rättvisa och... när såna grejer händer de får en att tappa tillit till samhället, tappa tillit till myndigheter, tappa tillit till alla dom här bitarna, de finns... det finns ingen hjälp och få, fuck dom, dom fattar inte hur de är och va uppvuxen med skit åå sådär.. Åå de va en av gångerna som jag var utsatt för mest, sen har ja ju sett polare bli slagna som barn liksom, 13-14, nej, inte ens de, 12-13, 12-13 år. Va med min kompis å då är man ju rätt så liten liksom (...) Kolla, men stor fullvuxen man räcker inte att hålla i handleden du kan inte styra han liksom men ett litet barn liksom, de är ... du behöver inte stå och boxa eller putta in han eller dra hans huvud i en tegelvägg åå... De är sjukt, de är riktigt sjukt är de men... De är så de är.” – Intervju Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Eh... ja, alltså jag tror att antingen var det att dom inte hade så jättemycket att göra eller för att störa en. Så att eh.. och visst, och det har inte varit helt asså, o-, asså det har funnits anledningar till det men inte så mycket som det har vart, jag tyckte, dom borde lägga, och det kan jag fortfarande tycka än i dag, dom kan lägga dom resurserna på något annat, det var inte så att jag satt liksom och drog in miljoner i månaden. (skrattar till) Asså så, jag var bara missbrukare som, jaa, skulle försörja mitt missbruk ungefär.” – Intervju Amanda (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Eeh.. asså då tyckte jag, alltså uselt (skrattar till) asså det tycker jag fortfarande, komma dit och liksom rota igenom hela lägenheten, allting ligger huller om buller och liksom så. Men sen så är det ju så när man är där ute att ”det är ju vi mot dom” så oavsett hur dom hade bemött en så tror jag ändå att jag hade tyckt att dom var sviniga...” – Intervju Amanda (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Yasmine: ”Hur kommer det sig att dom hade restriktioner på dig?”

Erik: ”Jag vet faktist inte.”

Yasmine: ”Det var ingen som sa..?”

Erik: ”Nä nä... det var ju liksom inga, inga allvarliga brott det handla om, det var en jävla stöld.” – Intervju Erik (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Treatment for addiction

”Sätt dig ner ” sa han så öppna han sin låda så tog han fram en påse karameller så slängde han den till mig och så sa han ”du tommy stoppa den i munnen” du är inte klok sa jag. Ska jag stoppa den i munnen? Ja påsen också sa han, så du någon jävla gång kan hålla truten och börja lyssna på vad andra folk säger till dig du ska göra, och sen göra som dom säger till dig. Väx upp för fan, sa han. Och efter det samtalet så förstod jag vad jag skulle göra där.” – Intervju Stig (Malmö 12-11-2013)

”Vi kunde prata i tre-fyra timmar... om... aa, om mig själv och jag va, jag fattade inte, hur gör man när man inte är kriminell, vad pratar man om, hur beter man sig, hur löser man konflikter? Det är... är du arg på någon slår du, behöver du pengar går du ut och säljer droger, de är... jag fattar inte det här liksom, det var det här jag prata med dom om, vad är viktigt (...)

Jag fick jobba på att känna, det är helt ok att ha gjort fel, det är helt ok att ha den bakgrund jag har, det är helt ok att ha sorg, det är ok att va arg och när man är arg så är man arg ett tag och sen släpper man det, man förlåter... och går vidare, det här fattar inte jag... Då, nu har jag börjat förstå tror jag (skrattar till)” – Intervju Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Jaa, det är avgiftning och sen.. ja sen är det absolut inget mer! (skrattar till) Så det är ju helt låst för det första, du kan ju inte gå ut, du får gå ut kanske första gången när du varit där i kanske två månader får du gå ut om du har tur om dom asså anser att du inte är rymningsbenägen, 20 minuter i veckan kanske med en .. sån som jobbar där.” – Intervju Amanda (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Vad fan är ni dumma i huvudet eller, om jag klarar mig och håller mig drogfri på egen hand i 6 månader då behöver jag väl fan inte eran jävla behandling heller.” – Intervju Erik (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Life after prison and reaching out for help

”Nä nä, nä nä... ja jag kunde ju själv gått till arbetsförmedlingen men det var ju inte lönt md den bakgrunden jag hade, det insåg jag ju, såklart ju. Vem skulle vilja anställa mig?” – Intervju Stig (Malmö 12-11-2013)

”Asså de här med kriminalvård. Det har ju blivit, när jag började sitta på fängelset, så fanns där ju ingenting. Men idag så finns det. Idag finns där olika program, verksamheter – som är jättebra, absolut. Ingenting att tveka på, om man vill ha hjälp (...) Men har man 2-3 miljoner i skulder, vad gör man då? Då fortsätter man ju med det här livet och det kostar mer än vad det smakar.” – Intervju Stig (Malmö 12-11-2013)

”Jag tänkte jag tar tag i en svartmäklare och till det behövdes en 50 tusen ungefär. Tänkte jag, ”aa då drar jag ihop 50 000” och det lyckades jag med... Men jaa, jag är beroende... så, med... med att ha beroendepersonligheten så blir man aldrig nöjd. Fick 50 000 så fortsatte jag. Istället för att skaffa lägenhet så gick jag och investerade i att köpa fler droger och där nästan emellan så åkte jag fast.” – Intervju Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Det är svårt, det är svårt – det är lätt att sitta inne, det är en hård tuff miljö och det är slagsmål hela tiden och det kan kosta dig livet om du gör fel där inne men (...) Det är ju en skittuff miljö men jag är liksom van vid den miljön, så det var inte så, så jättejobbigt efter ett tag.” – Intervju Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Det har också med den här biten med tillit, man litar inte på... folk, de är den biten man litar inte på, de är så långdraget, man litar inte på folk som inte har invandrabakgrund som förstår själv. Och man litar inte på folk som, myndigheter, socialen, arbetsförmedlingen och... framförallt polisen. Man litar inte på dom, man litar på grabbarna och... så är det.” – Intervju Amir (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Å det är ju världens kaos nere på den här jävla arbetsförmedlingen. Sen är det ju så, vad fan är de dom hjälper, fyra procent, av alla som får jobb får de via arbetsförmedlingen så och det är dom nöjda med (skrattar till) det är skrämmande.” – Intervju Erik (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

”Asså de är ju, de gör en enorm skillnad i samhället. Just det här med det extremt dåliga, eller ja, om det ens existerar, samarbetet mellan socialtjänst och kriminalvård. Asså de, det funkar nästan aldrig. Nu igår var vi och hämta upp en som muckade ifrån B-- anstalten, som annars bara hade stått utanför grindarna med sina kläder i en påse... Och inte haft nästan att ta vägen. De är socialens jävla skyldighet att ta hand om dom, men dom gör ju inte de. (...) och asså, dom flesta vill ju verkligen göra det (bryta med sitt gamla liv) när dom sitter inne. Men sen så händer så mycket annat på vägen och framförallt när man kommer ut, dom har ingen som tar emot dom, dom har ingenstans att ta vägen och står med sina kläder i en påse

och en telefonbok – med helt fel telefonnummer – det är bara till dom gamla vännerna ju."
– Intervju Erik (Helsingborg 5-11-2013)

Probation officer's perspective

"Det ser säkert olika ut på olika eh, på olika frivårdar, hur man gör... men malmö är ju en väldigt stor frivård och arbete är ju en väldigt stor förutsättning för att man ska kunna hålla sig ifrån kriminalitet, så då har vi arbetat upp det, vi har ett bra samarbete." – Intervju Frivårdsinspektör (Malmö 19-11-2013)

"Går man dit samma dag man blir frigiven för att få en bostad, det funkar inte, så funkar inte så. Och det tycker jag att, jag kan inte uttala mig om det är så men det tycker jag att personalen på anstalterna ska känna till, jag kan inte uttala mig om dom gör det eller inte, jag antar att dom gör det, att.. så att, den planeringen kommer igång i tid." – Intervju Frivårdsinspektör (Malmö 19-11-2013)

"Det är väl det som vi alltid återkommer till, med samarbete. Eftersom det är så uppdelat, och det måste det ju va för alla kan inte göra allt. Men det är det här återigen med samarbetet. Eh... och där kan jag ju se som själv jobbat inom socialtjänsten att... på bra ställen, där funkar det bra. Men nu när jag jobbar här och har kontakt med massa olika socialtjänster, att det fungerar väldigt olika bra. Eh... om med andra verksamheter också som man har kontakt med. Eh... aa kanske att det skulle göras så att mera strukturellt... avtal på något sätt för hur samarbetet ska fungera med... egentligen tycker jag inte att det ska va nått problem med ansvar för det är redan uttalat i våra olika uppdrag men att... det fungerar inte alltid som man önskar, så det är i så fall det." – Intervju Frivårdsinspektör (Malmö 19-11-2013)