AFTER INDUSTRY — THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF DEINDUSTRIALIZATION

EDITED BY: Jon Warren, Carol Stephenson and Jonathan Wistow

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Editorial on the Research Topic

"After Industry" the Economic and Social Consequences of Deindustrialization

Since the 1960's the UK, Europe and the US have undergone rapid and traumatic changes as major industries have contracted or disappeared altogether—the process of deindustrialization. Employment in manufacturing industries in the UK reduced from 8.9 million in 1966 to just 2.9 million in 2016 (Beatty and Fothergill). The world's first industrial society is now a post-industrial society, and although the UK is an extreme, it stands as an example for a global phenomenon. Deindustrialization has consequences beyond economic organization and workplaces themselves (Walkerdine and Jimenez, 2012). This matters most for how people construct their own identity. Industries change, develop; adapt and sometimes disappear altogether. However, it is clear that the ways of life, attitudes towards work, family and community; practices and expectations for both men and women, they helped to establish, endure. They remain as "industrial structures of feeling" Williams (1973). For good or ill they persist and that persistence is significant. Understanding "Post-industrial" places is not just a matter of charting economic change. To meaningfully understand we have to explore processes of social and cultural transformation.

The theme of transformation and how ideas about class and identity have changed runs through a number of the contributions to the collection. David Byrne asks how it is possible for social scientists to "do class" in a post-industrial world which is very different to the one in which our core ideas about class were forged. Starting from the premise that interaction between theoretical framings and empirical investigation is at the heart of social science Byrne explores how this can be done and argues that it is essential if we are to make sense of class in a post-industrial world.

Jon Warren approaches the changing nature of class and identity over the period 1969–2019 from a different angle. Reflecting on his personal biography, the biography of North East England and the temporal biography of deindustrialization, this piece uses the lens of Clement and La Frenais well known situation comedy "Whatever happened to the Likely Lads?" (1973) to look at how opportunities for social mobility, and the narratives and expectations that went with them have both changed and, to some extent, endured over the course of his lifetime.

Katy McEwan picks up on the theme of social mobility and what that means in the 21st century. She also offers an insight into how we both conceptualize and research class in a post-industrial setting. Focussing on Teesside's Ingelby Barwick, the second largest private housing estate in Europe, McEwan explores how the residents of the estate attribute their social mobility and their ability to live on the estate to meritocratic ideas about individual self-reliance, whilst in reality this their lifestyle is often built upon highly precarious economic foundations.

The papers by John Tomaney, Jean Spence, and Carol Stephenson and Fiona MacPherson explore the representation and legacy of past industries in the contemporary era.

Tomaney examines the ongoing importance and vitality of the Durham Miners' Gala despite the demise of deep coal mining. Drawing on a range of sources he charts the shifting cultural and political meaning of the Gala over time. The Gala, he argues, is an example of an intangible cultural heritage through which knowledge of previous class-based ways of living are reproduced and reimagined.

Spence's examination of the unrecognized, but accomplished, coal miner-artist Jimmy Kays casts light on the exercise of class-based power in the production, consumption, and range of meaning inscribed within popular mining art: marketability in mining art depends on palatable, often romanticized, representations of mining life in preference to those that connect past and contemporary social and political struggles. As a consequence, Kays, she argues, will always be an 'outsider'.

Stephenson and MacPherson's paper explores the potential of cross-disciplinary approaches for community-led creative representation of shared industrial heritage in a post-fishing community. The application of the principals and practices of dialogical discourse, and the sociological observation and analysis of the negotiation of the creative performance provides a new methodological research approach to working with and for divided communities.

The papers by Beatty and Fothergill, Bennett, and Emery are all concerned with place-based consequences of deindustrialization in the UK. In, "The long shadow of job loss", Beatty and Fothergill draw on their extensive research at the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research to provide a long view of economic change in Britain's older industrial towns. Their research demonstrates how the trajectories of particular kinds of post-industrial places share characteristics in the current labour market. The title of the paper captures the cumulative effects of deindustrialization in these place. Bennett's paper is also concerned with the trajectory of place and focuses on life histories in a post-industrial town, Wigan. Through exploring decisions people have made through their working lives a changing landscape is identified through biographical narratives across four generations of families. Changes to employment opportunities across genders and parental influence over career choice emerged as important findings from this study. In, After Coal, Emery explores belonging and alienation in the Nottinghamshire coalfield as a deindustrialized place. Through a range of qualitative methods he draws out the significance of space and place to class-based experiences through intergenerational transmission and shared declarative memories contingent on living through and with deindustrialization in terms of place histories.

This diverse and thought provoking collection of articles explores the economic social and cultural impact of de-industrialization which draw upon a wide range of perspectives whilst utilizing a multiplicity of approaches and methods. In so doing it offers an integrated understanding of the spatial, economic and cultural socioscapes in post-industrial regions and the lives of those who live within them.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

JW, CS, and JW wrote this editorial together.

REFERENCE

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After Coal: Meanings of the Durham Miners' Gala

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The annual Durham Miners' Gala (or "Big Meeting"), first held in 1871, was a distinctive feature of the coalfield throughout its productive life. It became an important date in the calendar of national labor movement. But it was also a festival of music and banners. The Durham Miners' Association represented a crucial component of the British working class and a cornerstone of Laborism. But its distinctive class practices also marked out a region (see Cooke, 1985) with particular political traditions. The last mine closed in 1994. Yet the Gala has survived the demise of industry and the conflicts and struggles which it produced. In July 2019, the 135th Gala attracted tens of thousands of people. This paper reviews the existing academic literature on the Gala and draws on a range of sources (including memoirs, novels, paintings, films, and biographies) to chart the shifting cultural history of the Gala. I show that the form and content of the Gala has changed throughout its history and has been freighted with a range of meanings. The Gala can be seen as an example of "intangible cultural heritage" in which knowledge of the past aspects of working class and communal life are reproduced and reimagined even when the material basis for them has apparently disappeared.

Keywords: coal mining, place, class, Durham, miners

PROLOG

The Durham Miners' Gala presents a contemporary paradox. Established by the Durham Miners' Association (DMA) in the nineteenth century, during the twentieth century it became one of the largest annual trade union demonstrations in Europe, attracting hundreds of thousands of people. By 1994, in the aftermath of the bitter 1984/5 miners' strike, all the coalmines in County Durham had closed. Declining attendances had been a feature of the Gala since the 1970s as employment contracted but, by the first decades of the twenty-first century, it was resurgent, attracting tens of thousands of participants. Originating as a political demonstration, at the heart of the Gala is the parading of banners and bands. Traditionally, the members of each DMA Lodge (union branch) and their families walked alongside their banner and band, through the streets of the city of Durham, to a great gathering by the River Wear; a format that, in its essence, remains unchanged. This performance inspires the Gala's popular appellation, "The Big Meeting." In 2019 the Gala attracted its biggest crowd for decades. The mines have gone but rituals associated with mining life linger.

The Gala today appears to some as an anachronism. The journalist James Bloodworth, who visited in 2016, saw it as "a carnival of nostalgia," functioning "as something like a historical re-enactment society," highlighting how "when the past becomes an obsession it can act as a dead weight on meaningful action in the present" (Bloodworth, 2016). Celebrating a dead industry and its way of life is backward-looking. Nostalgia signals a failure to adapt. But from the beginning, the

bands and banners, and the parade itself, represented not just the occupational power of the miners but also a particular form of localism: "they marched through with friends and family as a village" (Beynon and Austrin, 1989, p. 80). Jack Lawson (1881–1965), Durham miner and later Labor MP and minister in the Attlee government, claimed that for the people of the Durham coalfield, the Gala was less a political demonstration than "the spontaneous expression of their communal life" (Lawson, 1949, p. 161). It is this aspect that has gained greater prominence in recent years and helped to transform the Gala.

Bloodworth's arguments bring to mind the long history of efforts to erase the past in the name of progress and modernity. In a debate in the House of Commons in 1879 that concerned early efforts to preserve the megaliths at Stonehenge, the Tory MP Francis Hervey dismissed them as "absurd relics of our barbarian predecessors" (quoted in Bender, 1993, p. 113), although this disavowal failed to stem the tide of conservation nor, much later, the emergence of an entire heritage industry. As early as 1974, the then director of the Northern Arts Association, responding to claims that cultural policy should reflect regional identity, declaimed:

> I'm not from these parts. I'm from the Home Counties. I regard my mission as bringing the arts to the North. Northumberland is dead, and so is its so-called folk culture. So are the pits' (quoted in Quartermain, 1990, p. 10).

The death knell of the Gala has been sounded periodically over recent decades but, so far, it has refused to die. It proves impossible to draw a neat line under the past but the question here is, what is the meaning of the Durham Miners' Gala after the end of coal mining?

In this paper I consider why the Gala persists despite the demise of the coalfield. The paper proceeds inductively. I explore the anthropology, historical sociology, cultural history, and political philosophy of the Gala. I use secondary data in the form of novels, song, poetry, paintings, film, journalism, memoir and biography. I draw from the cultural record to show how the Gala has been a forum for shifting and complex identities which are explored heuristically in relation to themes of work, community, and place. While the Gala began as a place for the representation of industrial and political power of the miners, it always expressed much more than this. I show how, more recently, the communal aspects of the Gala have come to the fore as the industry has vanished, while its performance gives expression to a *genius loci*. Among the several ironies that emerge is how nostalgia for an earlier, better, nobler Gala is observable almost from its birth. In light of this account, I set out a framework for interpreting the development of the Gala, investigating arguments about nostalgia, collective memory, and intangible culture before concluding with an assessment of the contemporary meanings of the Gala.

To dismiss the Durham Miners' Gala as mere nostalgia is to misunderstand the occasion and misinterpret nostalgia itself. The Gala expresses a collective memory of the coalfield and the ways of life its supported. It represents intangible cultural heritage. It is living history. It expresses an identity located in

place. These are not static. The historical evolution of the Gala reveals that its purpose and role have been perennially contested but essential aspects, notably the parading of bands and banners, as an expression of identity, forms its essential core. The Gala began as a manifestation of the growing industrial power of the Durham miners, but from the beginning it was also a gathering of the diverse communities that formed around the pits. Its enactment in Durham symbolized a reordering of regional life and still signals the complex relationship between the city and surrounding towns and villages that mirrors broader social divisions between cities and towns. It was both a demonstration and celebration that gave expression to the particular political traditions of the coalfield, notably the moderate Laborism embodied in the practices of the DMA. An extraordinary range of artifacts record, emplace, and reflexively interpret the Gala and shed light on its history and shape its meanings. These are examined below in relation to work, community, and place.

INDUSTRY, COMMUNITY, AND PLACE
Industry

The original purpose of the Miners' Gala was to express the nascent power of the Durham miners. That power grew and became politicized during the twentieth century and the Gala's form and content shifted accordingly. The Durham miners fought epic struggles in the nineteenth century to form a union and advance their interests in the face of brutal repression by the coal-owners (or "masters"). The formation of the DMA, at the Market Tavern in Durham in 1869, represented a great victory. At same time, though, the coalfield was characterized by paternalism on the part of owners and conciliation on the part of the miners (Beynon and Austrin, 1994). It occurred alongside the "canceling of the bond," which overturned the system of annual servitude under which the miners had labored since the eighteenth century. The first act of the new union was to commit to the holding of a "Yearly Demonstration" (Wilson, 1907, p. 31) which symbolically replaced the annual hiring and expressed the rising industrial power of the union.

The first Gala was held on 12th August 1871. The prospect of thousands of miners from surrounding villages arriving in the city filled the local bourgeoisie with trepidation. Although surrounded by the largest and most productive coalfield the world had ever seen, Durham was an Anglican ecclesiastical and university citadel, its skyline graced by a magnificent Norman Cathedral and medieval castle. The DMA was led by Primitive Methodists whose religious traditions were a rebuke to pretensions of the Church of England. The first Gala was held tentatively in Wharton Park, then on the edge of the city. Thereafter, subsequent Galas were held on the Racecourse within sight of the Cathedral, signaling the miners arrival at the center of the region's cultural and political life. Although it drew on a "well-established pattern of mass assembly" (Moyes, 1974, p. 26) stretching back to the great gatherings that greeted John Wesley across the county in the eighteenth century and which accompanied efforts to establish a union earlier in the nineteenth century, the first Gala inaugurated a new era.

The Gala originated in the assertion of the "rights" of the Durham miners to adequate pay, fair terms and conditions. It was a demonstration of the potential power of the miners, but it was far from a riotous assembly. On the contrary, the DMA leaders wanted their members to display sobriety, responsibility and restraint in their behavior and demands. And indeed, they did. Reporting on the second Gala, which took place on 15 June 1872, the *Durham Advertiser* praised the discipline and respectability of the event:

> As they left the field there was one striking circumstance, in connection with which was apparent to everyone, as these men – some of them far advanced in life, others in the prime of manhood, and young boys who could not have been long from school – passed through crowded thoroughfares, and that was their orderly conduct throughout. A more well behaved body as they appeared on Saturday could no well be found. There was an entire absence of all drunkenness and no ill-spoken word never offended the ear of the spectators in the streets. This indeed speaks volumes for the class of men who occupy such an important position in connection with our northern trade and commerce. It is evident that the pitmen are looking to higher aims and objectives than the groveling practices and pursuits of previous generations – practices which still linger in some of our pit villages and mining districts among the less educated. As the miners entered the city so they took their departure. Their conduct producing a most favorable impression and demonstrating beyond dispute that even in such a large number of men, whose lives are devoted to incessant toil, they may be benefited and improved by a closer union with their fellows to attain the common objects by fair and legitimate means. The pitman has become a respectable and peace loving citizen and his conduct proved so on Saturday (quoted in Temple, 2011, p. 17).

Early Lodge banners attested the moderation of the miner's cause, their willingness to compromise with the coal-owners for better pay and conditions. Primitive Methodists were disproportionately represented in the leadership of the Lodges and the early officials of the DMA. Many banners contained religious allusions and Biblical references (Moyes, 1974). Sacriston Lodge banner enjoined, "Do ye unto all men as ye would they should do unto ye," after Matthew 7: 12, *KJV*. The Monkwearmouth banner bade, "Come let us reason together," after Isaiah 1: 18, *KJV*. The leaders of the DMA appealed to reason and the better Christian nature of the coal-owners. Strikes were to be avoided. The tone of local politics was set for a century. Reporting on the 1872 Gala, the *Durham Chronicle* described how,

> The display of banners was a very prominent and pleasing feature of the demonstration. Altogether there are were upwards of 70 flags on the ground. They were ranged round the full length of the field near the water's edge and thence across the field opposite to that on which the platform had been erected and it is hardly necessary to state, composed as they were of every imaginable color and hue, that they formed as they fluttered in the breeze a very pretty and imposing spectacle. The greater proportion of them were indeed artistic productions both in design and

execution whilst a few owed a great deal of their beauty and attractiveness to elaborate trimmings with which they had been adorned. Nearly all of the flags had been specifically provided for the occasion and in nearly every instance the representations as well as their spirit of the various mottoes, sentiments, couplets, etc., were creditable alike to the heads and hearts of the colliers evincing as they did a fair, conciliatory and even kindly feeling toward their employers (quoted in Moyes, 1974, p. 34).

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Gala was a place to air the great political and industrial issues of the day, including the relationship with the Labor Party, the advancement of trade union rights and the case for the nationalization of the coal industry (Temple, 2011; Mates, 2016). Before the 1890s speakers included radicals such as Joseph Cowen (1873), Peter Kropotkin (1882), Annie Besant (1884), and Tom Mann (1887). The atheist MP Charles Bradlaugh spoke 10 times at the Gala. In 1888, the Fenian John O'Connor Power was speaker. In 1887 Tom Mann used his speech to attack the opposition of the DMA leaders to parliamentary legislation to create an 8-h day, returning in 1899, 1900, and 1901 to repeat his. Later speakers included James Larkin (1914) and the Communist MP Shapurji Saklatvala (1928). While the presence of radical speakers enlivened the Gala, they did not shift the traditions of moderation of the DMA as a whole.

Tensions between the rank and file and union leadership—personified during this period by John Wilson, simultaneously General Secretary of the DMA and Liberal MP—were played out at the Gala. Lodges nominated speakers for the Gala who were chosen by ballot. In particular, it became a battleground between the aging union leadership which had advocated conciliation and was attached to the Liberal Party, and the rising Independent Labor Party, which attracted younger members and wanted a more assertive union that advanced its sectional interest. This drawn out process lasted until the First World War when the DMA shifted its allegiance from the Liberals to the nascent Labor Party. The shift was reflected in the changing content of banners from a Liberal-Methodist influence into a discernibly Labor-Socialist form and more secular images became the norm (Beynon and Austrin, 1989; Wray, 2009a,b). In his novel, *The Big Meeting* (1967), David Bean evokes the scene at New Elvet, stressing the centrality of the parading of banners,

> Banner followed banner. Some were militant, with nineteenth century allegorical pictures of miners and their families before and after union, of noble-looking miners besting tyrant top-hatted coal-owners looking like Sir Jaspers. There were others with portraits of miners' champions – Nye Bevan, Keir Hardie, Arthur Cook, local lodge heroes too, even one with Marx and Lenin and the slogan Workers of all Lands Unite!
> One or two [banners] were draped with black crepe … that meant during the past year a man, or possibly a number of men, had been killed down that lodge's pit (Bean, 1967, p. 232, 233).

Over time, political tensions and contradictions were resolved on the banners. Speaking at the Gala in 1952, Nye Bevan told how he had observed a banner earlier in the day which bore images of Peter Lee (1864–1935) and Arthur Cook (1883–1931),

two Miners' leaders who "used to quarrel like Kilkenny cats" (quoted in Temple, 2011, p. 125). The banners contributed to an understanding that, over time, contested positions could be incorporated in a broadly-based labor movement.

The defeat of the General Strike and the year-long Miner's Lockout in 1926 led to the marginalization of radical politics in the Durham coalfield. Erstwhile left-wing Lodge leaders such as Will Lawther (1889–1976) and Sam Watson (1898–1967) abandoned their previous militancy to join the ranks of the moderate officials, reinforcing the DMA's reputation as bastion of the right-wing in the labor movement (Garside, 1971). After serving in other official positions, Watson became General Secretary of the DMA in 1946, swiftly centralizing power and seeking, among other things, to exercise greater control over the Gala speakers. Watson's rise to power coincided with the nationalization of the industry in 1947 and the Gala, according to the miner-historian, David Temple, was transformed into a "state occasion" (Temple, 2011, p. 116). The high demand for coal to fuel reconstruction meant the DMA held extraordinary political clout in the new post-war political settlement and Watson saw the Gala as a means to both display and exercise the power of a free trade union. In Watson's words, the Gala was "an anvil upon which the purpose and meaning of the union could be hammered out" (quoted in Beynon and Austrin, 2014, p. 479). Intimate links with the Labor Party meant that leading politicians were prominent among the speakers, but Watson also extended his patronage beyond the Labor movement. The US Ambassador, Averill Harriman, was invited as guest to the 1946 Gala and successive Israeli and Yugoslav ambassadors became regular attenders (Temple, 2011). According to Watson's widow, Jenny,

> The Gala was the highlight of the year. It was the highlight of my husband's life. It was a fantastic political platform. It was faithfully recorded in all the newspapers and the radio. There was only a small platform before Sam became General Secretary; but it grew and it was deliberate. The men in the coalfield, at the coalface, picked the speakers, of course, but Sam was forever asking around for the guests. As I say, it was a major political platform, and Sam realized that (quoted in Beynon and Austrin, 2014, p. 478–479).

For 20 or 30 years, the Gala became critically important in the calendar for leaders of the Labor Party. Hugh Dalton, MP for Bishop Auckland and Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Attlee Government, was a regular attender (Pimlott, 1985). Recalling the 1947 Gala, Dalton wrote, "Never in all the years had there been such a rally of bands, banners and sturdy and confident humanity in this old city" (Dalton, 1962, p. 143). For Dalton (1962, p. 238) the Gala was "always a deeply moving performance." Michael Foot, who was later to become leader of the Labor Party but then a left-wing firebrand recalled,

> I started there in 1947. That's when I shared the platform with Arthur Horner. It was strange because the Durham area emerged as a right wing within the union and the Labor Party, but I was elected to go there regularly. The Durham Miners' Gala is a fine occasion today, taking place as it does in that beautiful city. But in those days it was absolutely sensational. There were so many lodges you see and they had to start bringing them in at half past

eight in the morning. The whole city absolutely throbbed with the thing from early in the morning right through until you left. And you left absolutely drunk with it – the music, the banners and all in that beautiful city. It overwhelmed you really. In those days it was, far and away, the best working-class festival that there was in this country. Far and away the best. It was just marvelous (quoted in Beynon and Austrin, 2014, p. 478–479).

By the time Sam Watson retired from his position in the DMA in 1963, however, the coalfield was already facing decline. Shifts in energy policy in the 1960s led to large-scale colliery closures and associated job losses. The Gala during this period became a place to mourn the death of pits as banners were paraded ostensibly for the last time. David Bean's novel, *The Big Meeting* (1967) concerns the final Gala for the "Sharlstone" miners whose colliery is slated for closure. The Durham coalfield played a key role in the English folk revival during this period, notably at the Birtley Folk Club (Mitchell, 2014). Harraton colliery—known local by its nickname "Cotia" pit—produced two of the great songsmiths of the era in Jack Elliott and Jock Purdon. Their most famous songs lamented pit closures and the perceived betrayals that accompanied them (see Lloyd, 1978). In "Farewell to 'Cotia," Jock Purdon sang bitterly of the pit's impending demise,

> Ye brave bold men of 'Cotia,
> The time is drawing thus,
> You'll have to change your banner, lads,
> And join the exodus.

In "The 'Cotia Banner", Purdon sings,

> Unfurl the 'Cotia banner, boys! Where are the rebels bold
> That marched behind the banner on Gala days of old?

Ed Pickford's song, "A strange lover is a coalmine", is infused with nostalgia for lost work, camaraderie and bygone Gala days,

> Joe survived 'til he grew old
> But he never did forget about the coalmine
> He loved the coal and the Union too
> He had a miner's pride about his own time
> I remember the hot Julys
> The banners that flew in the Durham skies
> I remember the hopes and the fears and the lies
> What a strange lover is a coalmine.
> (http://www.ed-pickford.co.uk/strangeloverisacoalmine.html).

In his song, "And I Shall Cry Again," Alex Glasgow evokes the feelings of a generation which would not go down the mine but nevertheless felt moved by the spectacle of the Gala,

> And I shall cry again, and not know why again.
> The silken banners summon up the tears,
> The men who march beneath them touch the soul.
> I have not known the pitmen's hopes and fears,
> I learnt them from the books I read at school.
> But I shall cry again, and not know why again.
> (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qs3759NSP14).

By 1973 only 27 banners were paraded at the Gala and its future began to be questioned. The DMA, however, doggedly stuck to the idea that the Gala was principally an occasion for miners. In 1979 the Durham County Association of Trade Councils wrote to the DMA asking if other unions could be included in the Gala. The DMA official replied,

> I need not remind you that the Big Meeting is uniquely a Miners' Gala … As you will gather, we are jealous of our traditions and our Big Meeting … If you understand our traditions you will have half expected a 'no' (quoted in Barron, 2010, p. 267).

The Gala entered a limbo until the 1984/5 miners' strike which signaled the beginning of the end for the coal industry, but also created the conditions for its reinvention.

Community

According to Cohen (1985, p. 118), "People construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity." There are two spatial scales at which community operates in relation to the Gala. At one scale, the Gala gives expression to the County as a focus for identity, but villages were the base communities of the Durham coalfield. Collieries also existed in large urban settlements such as Sunderland and South Shields but, at the time of nationalization in 1947, production was decentralized in 234 collieries (https://www.nmrs.org.uk/mines-map/coal-mining-in-the-british-isles/durham-coal/) mainly located in small villages hastily constructed in the second half of the nineteenth century. Warnings against the romanticizing community are commonplace in the academic literature (e.g., Bourke, 1994; Amin, 2004) and Gilbert (1995, p. 51) argues that mining communities should be seen as "constructed and contested places." Conflicts in the mining industry were always embedded in communal contexts (Smith, 1980; Barron, 2010). In the Durham case, particular forms of communal life were constructed to which the Gala gave expression.

Although the Gala was held each year by the DMA, the union's authority lay in the hands of its Lodges which, in some cases, had preceded the formation of the union itself. Lodges operated as "a pit level parliament," presided over by the elected Lodge secretary (Brown, 1987, p. 139, Moyes, 1969; Douglass, 1977). Decisions were taken collectively by ballot of members. In relation to the workplace a key activity was the organization of quarterly ballots ("cavils") that determined the allocation of workplaces underground, and hence miners' earnings potential, that were a unique feature of the Durham coalfield. Although the mono-industrial structure might be seen as giving rise to natural solidarities, the Lodge was a place in which sharp differences were reconciled. Crucial cleavages formed that lasted well into the twentieth century notably around religion—between Anglican, Methodist (Primitive, Wesleyan, etc.) and Catholic— and attitudes to temperance: "While other institutions, such as chapel, church, Co-operative Society and the workingmen's club, provided rival foci to the union, the lodge provided a point of unity amidst a complex network of influences" (Brown, 1987, p. 147; Tomaney, 2018).

Election to Lodge office was to assume a leadership role in the wider community. The Lodge involved itself in the activities of the village such as the allocation of housing, the supply of coal or the provision of water, managed the distribution of welfare benefits in relation to unemployment, sickness or compensation for industrial injuries, and the levies which supported the Durham Aged Mineworkers' Homes Association. As the franchise was extended and the role of local government grew at the district and county level, representatives of the Lodges began to play a leading role in electoral politics. In many villages Lodge officials also controlled the local Cooperative Societies. Peter Lee, the last of the great Primitive Methodist leaders, held the position of checkweighman at Wheatley Hill colliery, membership of the Parish Council, Easington Rural District Council and, later, chairmanship of Durham County Council, DMA Agent and President of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, leading Lawson (1949, p. 130) to describe him: "chief of the civic life of Durham and leader of its people."

In 1934 in *An English Journey*, Priestley (1934) painted a memorably grim portrait of village life in Shotton but his account overlooked the forms of self-organization that shaped these communities. In his account of the Durham village, "East Tanthope," the sociologist Benney (1946, p. 56) noted that, "wherever, by chance, the eye rests upon some building more attractive than its neighbors, one almost invariably finds that it owes its existence to the organized efforts of the miners themselves. Their clubs, welfare institutes, and co-op stores are outstanding institutional buildings." For the miner turned novelist, Sid Chaplin (1916–1986), the Gala was the place where the villages came together to honor a sense of social achievement. Reflecting on his first visit to the Gala in the 1930s, he wrote,

> In those days there were about 150 pits, of course, 150 bands, 150 banners, and it was a great and glorious sight. Each one represented the village, and each village was, in fact, a sort of self-constructed, do-it-yourself counter-environment, you might dub it. The people had built it themselves" (Chaplin, 1978, p. 80–81).

Chaplin acknowledged the imperfections of the society in which he grew up, such as the gendered nature of opportunities they offered, and admitted that his greatest ambition as a youth had been to escape, but he insisted, "their achievements cry out for celebration" (Chaplin, 1978, p. 81, 71). For Benney (1946, p. 122), as far as "East Tanthope" was concerned,

> Nothing has come easily to this village. When it felt a need, it had tried to supply it for itself, and if anyone opposed the effort, the village had fought. Every institution in the village with the exception of the cinema, the post-office and the church, the people had built themselves or struggled for through their union. Their community, forged deep underground in dark stony places, drew on elemental sources of strength and discipline. Personal ambition was tamed to the Lodge office, the committee table, the pulpit and the craft of the pit.

The banner was a crucial mode of identification because, it "provided the unifying element through which the village life became established as 'community.' It had to embrace all the

village; this was its purpose" (Beynon and Austrin, 1994, p. 224). The Gala was "patterned in the village life and custom" (1989, p. 71). According to Chaplin (1978, p. 81),

> So the banner, which was so beautiful, represented something very solid and very substantial indeed. And while one recognizes that all things have to go, and mining as it was in the North East has gone, and in many ways gone for good, one also has to recognize that there was a great achievement and the greatest of these achievements was that with the poorest of materials, in the poorest of circumstances, fighting a battle underground and fighting a battle against bad housing and bad sanitation on the surface and poor wages, people banded together and built in their villages little communities which were quite something to live for.

In his memoir, *A Man's Life* (1932), Jack Lawson offers an exhilarating account of a city bedecked in banners carried like regimental flags. For Lawson, while the Gala was created to advance the political interests of the miners, by the 1930s, it had been transformed into a festival of a proud culture in which families played a central role. In *Peter Lee*, his biography of the interwar miners' leader, Lawson suggested that great political speeches were now less important than the celebratory aspects of the Gala,

> It is to gather round these platforms the vast mass is supposed to have come. The meetings play a great part, but to tens of thousands they are merely incidental, for it must be confessed the Big Meeting means much more than that. It is now more an institution than a meeting: more social than economic. It is a combination of all the Miners' Lodges, but the vast family eclipses everything (Lawson, 1949, p. 163).

Lawson (1932, p. 240) described the Gala as "a kind of social baptism." The pageant introduced each generation to its history and identity. Years later, the Durham miner, Dave Douglass, recalling the Galas of his youth in the 1950s and 1960s, saw the occasion as "a living museum" that provided lessons in the history of struggle and reform:

> Year after year at the Durham Gala since boyhood you watched the epic stages of our history parade by on magnificent banners. Each scene was explained as the banner came up, and then again as it did rounds of the big field, then again as the banner marched away – and this every year from the shoulders of your dad through to adolescence, year after year this kind of thing was reinforced (Douglass, 1981, p. 62).

The Gala as carnival was a theme from the earliest times. A lyrical and nostalgia-infused account of the Gala held on July 28th, 1923 appeared in the *Durham Advertiser*.

> "The hail-fellow-well-met atmosphere introduced by these bright-eyed lights, these comfortable dames, these men of mature ways, yes, and even the really old men, was a delight never to be forgotten. As they pushed and danced their way through the narrow streets they glowed with the very spirit of carnival, living for one short day in the world of forgetfulness. The cares of home were left behind and only the joys of the moment reigned

supreme. The good many hands lent an air of gaiety and yet perhaps an air of sadness to the proceedings, for who can hear good music and not be compelled to look back down the vista of years and feel just a tinge of longing? And the banners, to the passers-by just a pretty, painted piece of silk, but meaning so much to those who follow them, standing for unity and comradeship, and all that unity and comradeship means. Some of these colors were draped as a gentle tribute to some fellow man who would never again partake of the joys of the Gala; and who could look upon the old men laughing and dancing without realizing the singular appropriateness of such institutions as the aged miners' homes, just a something which will help to keep the light of laughter in those eyes? Just a something which will help to bring some measure of comfort to those old heroes. Yes it was a carnival – just a carnival no thought or word of strike, of blood, or revolution, just a carnival" (quoted in Temple, 2011, p. 80).

In such accounts, the Gala resembles more the Mardi Gras in New Orleans, or the fiestas which honor the relics of Catholic saints which occur in the Mediterranean or Latin America.

The communal aspects of the Gala grew in importance after the 1990s and resulted in the very obvious growth in the visibility of women at the Gala as organizers and participants, as musicians and bearers of the banners. The gendered nature of participation in the Gala was taken for granted by many of those involved for much of its history. Dave Douglass recalls:

> …once a lodge reached a meeting place, the mams picked a corner of the field which was theirs, and picnics were begun, and throughout the day it was a rallying point for the dads coming back from the pubs and the committee men coming back from the speeches (Douglass, 1981, p. 62).

It is the proliferation of banner groups across the county which underpins the resurgence of the Gala. Notably, women take a prominent role in these Groups. In 2019 there were 60 banner groups in Durham. While they incorporate a range of views regarding their role in the community, they share a common aim of maintaining the Gala and "keeping the show of nostalgia on the road" (Ross Forbes, personal communication, December 2019). The effort that goes into this is considerable, not least in raising money to refurbish and maintain historic banners and to create new ones. Banners themselves have always tended to be commissioned from professional makers. There has also been a revival of the brass band culture, previously associated with the Lodges. There are 27 bands across the county that parade regularly at Gala. Strikingly, while the earliest photos of the Gala show the bands as entirely male, today they often led and dominated by women and have a marked intergenerational character. In the aftermath of the death of the coal industry the community aspect of the Gala has grown to become its critical component.

The Esh Winning Colliery Banner Group was formed in 2005. The group sought to retrieve the original banner from Beamish Museum. It worked with professional conservators to restore the banner, seeking Heritage Lottery Funding, with the aim of displaying it in the local social club. At the same time the group commissioned a replica banner to parade at the

Gala. In 2006, local clergy blessed the new banner the evening before it was paraded. In the account of Rendell et al. (2010, p. 126): "the banner was the heart of their community and a physical representation of the pride in Esh Winning as a place." In the case of the New Herrington Banner Group, a diverse membership, including people with no direct links to the coal industry, saw their activity not as act of remembrance or heritage, but as a way of maintaining community identity in a period of uprooting. The Group, its banner and its participation in the Gala contributes to "emotional regeneration"; memories of the past provide succor and inspiration for a community seeking a post-industrial future (Stephenson and Wray, 2005, p. 87). Bennett (2016) identified similar ambitions in the village Gala held in Wheatley Hill in 2007, albeit in ways that marginalized some stories and experiences in pursuit of a collective identity.

Scott (2009, p. 67) claims that, historically, the banners were concerned with "the representation and symbolization of the working man as hero, and if this was not delivered through male figures it was expressed in a catalog of other symbolic images designed to appeal to this sentiment." But this presents a partial image of the iconography of the Gala. As Wray (2009a) shows, lodge banners reflect a range of representations of occupation, community and trade union that make overlapping, and even contradictory, claims about politics, industry and welfare and memorialize the struggles for improvements in each field. The "red banners" of Chopwell, Follonsby, and Bewick Main present images of Marx and Lenin, but these were unrepresentative of the majority, which typically called for reform and nationalization of the industry rather than the overthrow of capitalism. Welfare demands figured prominently. The Rainton Adventure Lodge banner carried an image of the Durham Aged Miners' Homes, the housing association established by workers' subscription. Some banners carried images of the colliery itself but typically in its wider setting, signaling "the symbiotic relationship between community, mine and trade union" (Wray, 2009a, p. 160). Nevertheless, the new generation of banners gives greater prominence to images of community (Scott, 2009). The DMA itself is seeking to transform its purpose from an industrial to community union in which the importance of place looms large (Wray, 2009a), albeit a community identity "based on a shared industrial past" (Mellor and Stephenson, 2005, p. 343).

Place

An important dimension of the performance of the Gala concerns its siting in the city of Durham. Although generally overlooked in academic treatments, the theme of place emerges strongly from the range of artistic production inspired by the Gala. In his memoir, *A Man's Life*, Jack Lawson locates the spectacle in the topography of the landscape and the morphology of the city

> Above the fluttering banners, the old square Castle, on its foundation of rock, rises clear cut against the sky. seeming to block further passage that way. But the procession moves on. and as it passes slowly over the bridge one can see the tree shadows like etched pictures in the seemingly still waters of the river below. Gradually the marchers wedge themselves into the narrow

street which is called Silver, and past the might squat Cathedral, 'Halfchurch of God, half' castle 'gainst the Scot', standing there so gray and quiet in its own grounds. Turning and twisting round narrow hairpin bends, the procession sweeps into the broad street that leads past the handsome red Shire Hall and the great gloomy prison, until it finally reaches the wide, spacious racecourse by which the River Wear runs (Lawson, 1932, p. 126).

A corollary of the resurgent interest in the Gala is the growing attention given to the miner artists of County Durham. The two greatest of these, Norman Cornish and Tom McGuinness (McManners and Wales, 1997, 2006; University Gallery Northumbria University, 2010) were concerned mainly with rendering the lives of the communities. Much of Cornish's work focus on his hometown of Spennymoor, while McGuinness' work paid special attention to the experience of underground work but ranged across subjects, themes, media. But both artists produced epic paintings of the Gala (McManners and Wales, 2002). Cornish was commissioned in 1962 to produce a mural for the newly opened Durham County Hall (see **Figure 1**). It depicts the scene on the Rcecourse, framed by the castle and cathedral. The mural itself measures 30′ 9″ by 5′ 8″, but Cornish also produced many accompanying sketches and studies. According to McManners and Wales, Cornish,

> saw the banners as the sails of a galleon with three 'waves' in the sea of people below them – the young people in the wave to the left represent and look toward the center, the future. The elderly folk to the right having deposited the past and they turn to the bold central banner bearing the slogan 'Unity is Strength' – a symbol of the future (McManners and Wales, 2002, p. 120).

In 1968 McGuinness painted the Gala, representing the scene in front of the Royal County Hotel in Old Elvet, with the Labor dignitaries watching the passing bands and banners. He painted the Gala again in 1976 (**Figure 2**) capturing the scene as the Boldon banner and band leave the Market Place and wind through the narrows of Saddler Street toward Elvet Bridge and onto the Racecourse.

The poet Mary Wilson attended the Gala several times from the 1950s to the 1970s, accompanying her husband, the leader of the Labor Party and Prime Minster, Harold Wilson. Her poem, "The Durham Miners' Gala," denotes the occasion in its post-war heyday. From her vantage point on the balcony of the County Hotel, where political dignitaries surveyed the parade, evokes the drama and its setting.

> Suddenly we can hear the drums
> Banging down the street;
> And the brassy roaring of the bands,
> And the rustle of marching feet,
> And, with steadfast hands to hold them high
> The silken banners go swaying by.
> Bygone leaders and Bible scenes
> Are woven on either side,
> And the miners' lodge walks on before
> Each banner, with solemn pride;
> And the windows are full to see them go
> And the cheers rise up from the crowd below.

FIGURE 1 | Norman Cornish, A Durham Miners' Gala Day Scene (1963).
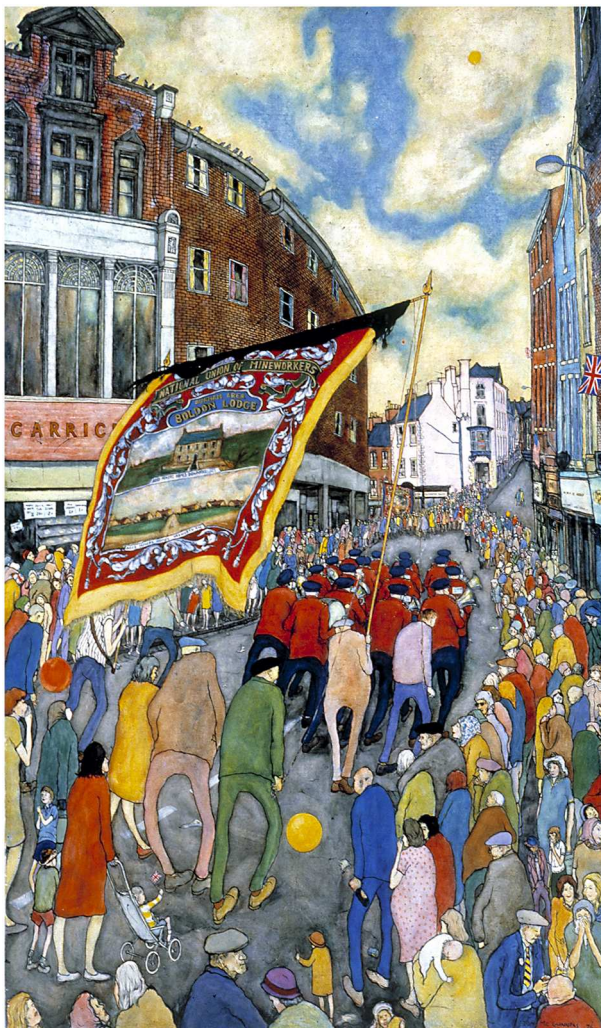
FIGURE 2 | Tom McGuinness, Miners' Gala, 1976 (1977).

…
Above the city's winding streets
The Cathedral stands alone,
And the sound of the bands is almost lost
In the lofty arches of stone.
The banners are blessed in the slanting sun –

And one more Gala Day is done.
(Wilson, 1970, p. 54–55).

Recalling the 1919 Gala in his unpublished memoir of 1971, *From Tyne to Tone* (Heslop, 1971), Harold Heslop (1898–1983), the Durham miner turned novelist, and a committed atheist and Communist (Fordham, 2009), suggests its location in Durham endows the event with a sacred quality:

In those days the Gala was a sight for all men to witness. The enormity of the proceedings outstripped the imagination. Perhaps it was the setting that lent privilege to the proletarian display. Maybe the vast mustering of the colliery tribes under the arches of the massive brick-built viaduct that spans the yonder part of the city and carries the great railway grants a piquancy to the subsequent proceedings. The booming of the drums provoking the attention of the tribes and then the double tap which unleashes the brazen sound into an almost dreamlike unreality and sets men and women marching. Repeated almost two hundred times, the resultant noise and slashings of color provoke an almost spiritual aura that hangs like a proud destiny over the immense beauty and rich dolour of the city.

The narrow streets – that were then – forced an intermingling of marchers and amused watchers. The crossing of the bridge over the Wear, that cowers like a coward within the ample shade of the great cliff that holds both castle and cathedral up to the arms of God, was always a strain lain upon the carriers of the banners. The passing over the bridge beneath the lovely scene evoked by tree-clad heights and glory-crowned buildings always evoked for me some strangely murmured benediction wailing softly into unreality. There is nothing so magnificent within Christendom that compares with the loveliness of Durham's cathedral. Ordinary vision, for they left it where it stands encompassing and encompassed by, its own earth, rising upwards to immortality like a prayer passing the lips of a woman suckling her babe.

It is in this cathedral which has softened the harsh lines of the men of coal every time they have ventured into the city to listen to the orators. It is never forgiving, never minatory. It watches them marching to their venue, and when all is over it beckons them back to their possession of their own lives. It is this half-church, half-refuge that softens the spirit after the pains of unremitting toil, and tempers the thundering of exhortation into croonings and beliefs (no page given)

Another version of the scene appears in his novel, *Goaf*, about the miners of "Darlstone" (a lightly fictionalized Durham),

"This day they had been to Darlstone. Wonderful old city! Glorious Vista! One day every year that gray old city is lit by the people. The miners. Their wives. Their children. To taste the deep drafts of endeavor one must journey to Darlstone on the day of the Gala. It is the day of the mineworkers. They come in their hundreds of thousands. They come as the people of separate villages, separate pits. They clutter proudly about their banners and follow their brass bands with a willingness born of great love. All the morning they march through the city, beneath the shadow of the cathedral that has gazed down from its heights to the silky-breasted river at its feet for centuries" (Heslop, 1935, p. 11).

The relationship of the city and the Gala is a recurring theme of the poet William Martin (Campbell, 2016). For Martin, the miners form a cohort of the *haliwerfolc*, the "people of the saint," symbolically the followers of medieval St Cuthbert, whose remains are housed in the Cathedral. Cuthbert was a symbol of the region's identity and autonomy in the Middle Ages and responsible for numerous miracles. In "Durham Beatitude," which memorializes the mining disaster at Easington in 1951, religious and mining language are interwoven,

> What Kingdom
> Without common feasting?
> When they were seated
> Silk banners on fellside
> Friends after nettle-broth
> Turned slogans into bread
> By the poor for the poor
> They taught themselves
> …
> Street children cry Cokerooso
> Generations hop across
> Spuggie-chorus crack
> Cathedral-choir sing anthem
> "Our feet shall stand
> In thy gates O Jerusalem"
> Larks rise with brass
> Big Meeting last one for Eden.
> (quoted in Durham Cathedral/Durham Miners' Association 2019).

The relationship between the mining communities and the ancient city, however, customarily was ambiguous. Leading families in the county who were coal owners traditionally had homes there. The Church of England was itself a major coal owner, although typically it leased its mineral rights. The relationship was signaled by the naming of the mine at Ferryhill, "Dean and Chapter". Beynon and Austrin (1989) suggest that the decision of the DMA to hold the first Gala in the city was an act of resistance to the exclusion of working people from "Durham society." Alongside the demands for material improvements was a "psychological dimension to Labor representation" and "an assertion of working-class self-respect" (Hayhurst, 2019, p. 3, 4). Thereafter, annually, the miners "occupied" the city each July. The slow accommodation of the Gala on the part of local elites was signified when in 1896 the DMA was invited by Bishop Westcott—"the Miners' Bishop" (Patrick, 2004)—to

participate in a Cathedral service. The invitation established an annual tradition and became another part of the performance. According to his biographer, Peter Lee, the Primitive Methodist preacher who simultaneously presided over the Durham County Council and the DMA, fell under the spell of the Cathedral, "that magnificent thing of stone, oak and towers, built in old times when men would make a thing beautiful even if it took centuries to express their vision" (Lawson, 1949, p. 210).

In David Bean's novel, set in the early 1960s, the miners of "Sharbottle" gather at the Gala for the final time before the closure of their pit. The novel deals, among other things, with questions of industrial change, "modernization" and the fate of the Gala itself after the industry has gone. Ikey, the Lodge secretary and main character, has a love-hate relationship with the city at the center of the coalfield,

> … because it had no pits of its own. A Cathedral and University city. A middle-class city looped off on three sides by a meander of its river, insulated from the world of miners by that same water and by the steep rocky banks which in its ancient founding time has insulated it from raiding armies. The place the monks bore St Cuthbert's corpse to for safety against the Danes. A more spectacular city than Heidelberg or Avignon, some had said. Well, Ikey had never been to either, had never set foot outside his own country, hardly outside his own county if it came to that, but he took the second-hand comparison for gospel and loved the tumbling, winding street and the stone bridges and the little sudden darting alleyways and flights of steps which would snatch you up from the main streets, from the traffic of the twentieth century, and wind you, fling you, up and up and up in spirals, back into the Middle Ages. But most of all he loved it on Gala Day, Big Meeting Day, because than the city was thrown open like a secret and the miners marched in and took over, made it their own (Bean, 1967, p. 59).

The recent rapid growth of Durham University has produced new local tensions. In November 2017, a University rugby club advertised a social event that required students to attend dressed as miners with "flat caps, filth and a general disregard for personal safety" and to "think pickaxes, think headlamps, think 12% unemployment in 1984." Others were asked to dress as members of Thatcher's government, or as "working-class-beating-bobbies" to inject some "variety" to the event. The DMA objected. The event was canceled following media coverage and Durham University promised to enforce a code of conduct for students living in the local community that "aims to enhance students' sense of belonging" (Northern Echo, 2017). More broadly, the university's expansion plans generate tensions with the local communities that feel their needs are being overlooked (Northern Echo, 2019).

The Gala is deeply emplaced in Durham. It cannot be relocated in the way that investment, jobs and even people can be. To have meaning it can only take place within the confines of the medieval city. It has come to symbolize place and give expression to the identity of the communities than live in and around the city and to conflicts that are attached to these.

NOSTALGIA, MEMORY, HERITAGE, PLACE

This essay has adopted an inductive approach in which the cultural record has been quarried in order to identify meanings of the Durham Gala. The central question has concerned why the Gala persists as a social and cultural phenomenon long after its apparent material basis has vanished. The preceding account has highlighted the complex, mutable and contested nature of the Gala. The Gala has been reinvented several times and has been dealing with the reality of industrial decline for half a century. The most recent reinvention—and resurgence—of the Gala signals another chapter in an ongoing story. Making sense of it requires us to think about the sociology of nostalgia, memory, heritage and place.

For some observers the Gala is an exercise in nostalgia for a world that should be left behind. It performs an outmoded ritual that should be laid to rest. But this is to misunderstand the nature and importance of nostalgia. Nostalgia affects longing for a home that no longer exists (Boym, 2011) and is a response to the pain and isolation produced by modernity. It is universal and permanent. Progressive critics conflate nostalgia with conservatism and display hostility to signs of yearning and loss and counterpose it to the values of cosmopolitanism. In the contemporary west, lines are drawn between the mobility and openness of progressive cities, with their "tropes of rootless reverie" (Bonnett, 2010, p. 172) and regressive "left behind" former industrial communities hampered by outmoded and insular attachments. Nostalgia, however, is not the antithesis of progress but its twin; it narrates modernity (Fritzsche, 2002). Sociology as a discipline has its origins in the search for lost organic communities. Modernity affects a more intensive and urgent relationship with loss (Davis, 1979). Nostalgia emerges from awareness of new eras, lost pasts, roads not taken. A yearning for better pasts recurs across times and cultures. Nineteenth century English radicals such as William Morris, Thomas Spence, and Robert Blatchford promoted, above all, a patriotic politics of conservation and resistance in the face of disruptive modernization that had far greater contemporary appeal than Marxism (Bonnett, 2010). Spence called for a return to the parish as the focus of a politics of mutual ownership (Knox, 1977). Twentieth century post-colonial struggles similarly focused on the rediscovery of traditions that had been swept aside by a western project of modernity (Nandy, 2011). Nostalgia is a social emotion, typically the product of current fears and anxieties, a way of maintaining solidarities in the face of disruption and pain and the erosion of hard-won social gains; economic dispossession "is the begetter of nostalgia, disenchantment the handmaiden of escapism" (Samuel, 2012, p. 261).

Dismissing the value of local attachments, (Amin, 2004) proposes, "a new politics of place" free of fixity and boundedness that recognizes the porosity of territories in the face of intensifying material and cultural flows." Local cultural attachments are disparaged for promoting "a politics of local regard and local defense" and "a conservationist regional identity that can be profoundly closed and exclusionary" resting on "the

scripting of a regional folk culture" (Amin, 2004, p. 35, 37). But the local struggles that are dismissed as regressive may also be in defense of hard-won, if partial and limited, social achievements (Tomaney, 2012). Across the Global North, as Seabrook (2005) has argued, the pain of passing of provincial life has been denied, "because everything that succeeded it has been tendentiously and insistently portrayed not as a mixture of the gains and losses that accompany all social change, but as irresistible progress toward a beckoning future over which dispute is not possible" (Seabrook, 2005, p. 237–238).

For the Left, according to Bonnett (2010), failure to acknowledge the power of nostalgia underlies its inability to connect with ordinary life and its concerns. Nostalgia gives expression to a sense of loss in communities that have experienced the demise of their traditional industries, loss of civic infrastructure and deteriorating social conditions. The decline of utopian visions in the twentieth century redirects attention to collective pasts that serve as repositories of inspiration for repressed identities and neglected claims because, the civic resources we need to master or contend with structural change, "are still to be found in the places and stories, memories and meaning, incidents and identities, that situate us in the world and give our lives their moral particularity" (Sandel, 1996, p. 349). The failure to grasp these insights underpins the crisis of left-wing political parties across the Global North and the rise of the populist Right.

Collective memory is crucial to the mobilization of civic resources (Olick et al., 2011). It is a social construction, shaped in part by the concerns of the present, and involves both continuity and change. Forgetting and erasure form components of the process. While it is individuals who remember they typically draw upon the social context to recollect and recreate the past. Hwalbachs (1992) asserts that it is in society that individuals recall, recognize, and localize their memories. Collective memories are emplaced and kept alive through activities that reproduce social bonds (Hebbert, 2005; Rowlands, 2007; Bennett, 2014, 2016). Periodic celebrations serve as focal points for the drama of civic remembrance. Rituals and representations establish connections between individuals and their cultural history and help form attachments to earlier periods (Davis, 1979). As autobiographical memory fades, historical memory involving reading, listening, and commemoration becomes more important. The past is stored and interpreted by social institutions with each generation counterposing its present to its own constructed past. Commemoration imaginatively enacts divergent historical paths. Anthropologists show how the past is employed by people to create a sense of identity (or identities) linked to myth and legend within established places in the landscape partially to legitimate the present, or "to mask change by stressing continuity" (Bender, 1993, p. 66). The way the past is memorialized is always changing. Durkheim (1995) understood that collective memory has a life of its own. Individuals cannot escape its consequences, hence the persistence of myth, ritual, tradition, heritage, although these rituals express exclusions and conflicts as well as organic solidarities.

Heritage conventionally is conceived in terms of physical objects, and academic debates have concerned the processes

by which it is commodified. But underpinning the interest in heritage are basic human concerns. Hewison (1987, p. 45) notes that the urge to conserve the past reflects the impulse to preserve the self; "Without knowing where we have been it is difficult to know where we are going. Heritage is the foundation of individual and collective identity. Objects from the past are the source of significance as cultural symbols." More recently, originating in the Global South, and reflecting the claims of indigenous peoples, attention has turned to the importance of intangible cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2003; Vecco, 2010; Lenzerini, 2011). "Authorized heritage discourses," promoted by governments and their agencies, typically value artifacts, monuments and the nationally significant (in North East England, heritage artifacts for the era of coal is collected and displayed in museums at Beamish and Woodhorn; Vall, 2018). The worth of heritage is determined by cultural elites that value objects, while popular understandings are more likely to value memories, occasions, traditions. The promotion of intangible cultural heritage is often freighted with insurgent ambitions. Here the interest is in the safeguarding and management of a heritage that is mutable and part of "living culture." But the task is to preserve cultures in ways that do not fossilize or trivialize it (Smith and Akagawa, 2009). Attachment to heritage, then, is not a form of "false consciousness" but a field of ideological, cultural and political conflict (Samuel, 2012). The notion of a living culture is captured in Williams (1978) elusive but fruitful notion of "structure of feeling," which calls attention to how existing and new meanings of cultural formations coexist. The intangible aspects of a social formation have an evanescent character, traces of which linger long after the material basis for them has apparently disappeared.

Intangible cultural heritage is tied up with a sense of place. Place attachments—affective connections to a particular place— are a source of meaning for individuals and groups. Emotional connections invest meaning in places and shape behaviors. Place attachment reflects less longevity of residence and more the intensions to which a place gives rise. A sense of local belonging can be expressed individually or collectively but affects commitment to place. It can be attached to narratives of identity, but it may reflect practical commitments, investments, as well as longings and aspirations. Expressions of local belonging may embody a performative dimension which links individual and collective behavior and contributes to the formation of narratives of identity and the realization of attachments. Place is implicated in the formation of belonging in both its affective and political dimensions and is a focus for mutually constitutive relationships of attachment, loyalty, solidarity and sense of affinity which frame the processes by which a person becomes included in (or, excluded from) a socio-territorial collective and identified with it. Belonging affects matters of place through modes of boundary making, interwoven with symbolic and material spatialities (Tomaney, 2014). There are structural constraints on placemaking, so, "ordinary people seek to remake place and spatial relations to some extent, but not under conditions of their choosing" (Chari and Gidwani, 2005, p. 269). People work with the historical and cultural materials and the rituals that

are at hand to enact a "performative discourse" that promotes a particular identity, although this can take diverse forms (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 233).

CODA

The Gala speaks of a sense of loss on the part of communities in Durham in the aftermath of the end of coal mining. Communities can experience the loss of their traditional structures as a form of bereavement—"intense, deeply felt, and at times overwhelming" (Fried, 1966, p. 151). As Gordon (2008) attests, sociologists reckon with ghosts whose presence is painful, difficult and unsettling—the former coalfield haunts contemporary Durham. Losses go beyond immediate material dispossession to the realm of affective absences. The Gala exhibits many of the features of all popular fiestas, carnivals fêtes. Culture and heritage are retained in the process of staging them. The Gala gives expression to communal identities at the scale of the village and the county. The city of Durham provides the stage for the performance of this identity. The identities of Durham were always complex, contested, and subject to continuous transformation. Hard won solidarities and attendant social gains were challenged by the contraction of the coalfield but also by broader social changes, including shifting gender relations. Much of the nostalgia associated with the Gala concerns not so much the loss of industry and political power but a broader way of life and attachments that formed an affective infrastructure and imply cultural resistance in the face of processes of individualism, atomization, and privatization. While the Gala is typically understood through the lens of class, it speaks also of "vanishing grail of modern life: belonging" (Jones, 2019, p. 70). The search for community rather than a stage for revolutionary politics has always been the more important theme of the Gala.

What is the future of the Durham Miners' Gala? Its cultural afterlife is evident but the political context in which it occurs has changed radically. Once an arena for the Laborism of the Durham coalfield, this politics is in crisis. As a region which voted strongly in favor of Brexit, in the General Election of 2019, traditional Labor-voting seats in the heart of the former coalfield returned Conservative MPs for the first time. Explaining this outcome is beyond the scope of this paper. Structural and contingent factors are both important to any credible account, but it is clear that the old Labor tropes are losing their electoral appeal. The political infrastructure built up in villages over generations has gone, while social conditions have worsened for many. What is left of Laborism in County Durham draws on diminishing moral and civic capital accumulated during earlier generations. Yet, the contemporary political offer from a radicalized left-wing politics appears to have limited appeal in these communities. Today, the region abounds in unmet human needs and there is a yearning for community and belonging, and a space for a politics that recognizes this. The extraordinary contemporary revival of the Miners' Gala is powerful testament to this, even if its future is far from assured. The world that created the Gala was more divided internally, along religious, cultural and material

lines, and more susceptible to competing narratives, than we realize today. Workplace solidarity and community cohesion were not bequeathed but were hard won, fragile, and partial. The achievements celebrated at past Galas were the product of compromise about political priorities that reconciled different interests and identities. The Gala, whatever its future, symbolizes almost 150 years of working-class endeavor in Durham.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

All datasets analyzed for this study are cited in the article/supplementary materials.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

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Understanding Class in the Post-Industrial Era - Thoughts on Modes of Investigation

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The essential character of social science is that is founded around an interaction between theoretical framings and empirical investigation. Class is one of the most salient framing concepts of the discipline, always central even if somewhat pushed into the background in an era when identities not founded in economic relations seemed to take priority. Recently in an era of austerity and economic crisis class is very much back front and center. The issue addressed in this article is how can and should we investigate class in the societies in which classes emerged from industrial systems when those societies are now not only post-industrial but also to an increasing degree post-welfare in consequence of the retreat of a coherent class based politics. Traditionally there has been a distinction between studies which used primarily qualitative styles—ethnographic and at the interface of history and sociology—on the one hand and quantitative studies based on the analyses of large data sets on the other. It has to be said that many of the latter used linear modeling approaches which were of questionable value, particularly when the only dynamic element in them was the exploration of just two time points in the life course in relation to social mobility. What will be proposed here is the value not only of studies which deploy ethnographic/historical and related qualitative modes but also of quantitative work, including in particular quantitative histories, which break with the linear model and deploy dynamic modes of investigation across a range of social scales from the individual life course to the whole global social order. One central proposition in the article is that in order to grasp the nature and potential of class after industry we have to engage in *meta-interpretation*—that is scholarly, we might say hermeneutic, reflection on multiple studies conducted in all appropriate modes of social investigation.

Keywords: class, post-industrial, methods, place, state, work, dynamism

INTRODUCTION

This article is written in the frame of complex realism, that synthesis of critical realism as a philosophical ontology and complexity theory as a scientific ontology proposed by Reed and Harvey (1992). A primary task is the establishment of the context in which the discussion is conducted—context defined and delimited in terms of time and space. The focus is on what used to fifty years ago be called the "Advanced Industrial Societies"—that is on the set of nation states which had economies dominated by the industrial production of material commodities and which generally had some form of welfare capitalist organization of state activity. This set included most of Western Europe, Canada, the USA, Australia, and New Zealand. There were some outliers—e.g., the

Republic of Ireland which was not predominantly industrial and states of Southern Europe were less industrial at least in part than say the UK or West Germany—but this was the predominant form of the core capitalist democracies of the North. By the 1970s many of the states in the European Soviet system including the Slav republics of the USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Hungary had much in common with this set. In all of these countries both the proportion of the population engaged in or dependent on wages from industrial work and the proportion of economic output (Gross Value Added) generated from industrial activity has declined dramatically. In the UK which in the middle 1960s was probably the most industrialized society there has even been the proportion of the workforce engaged in industrial production broadly defined declined from 45% in 1970 to 18% in 2015. Elsewhere deindustrialization was not so severe but even unified Germany, the industrial powerhouse of the European Union, now has 28% of its workforce in industrial jobs in 2015 compared with 41% in West Germany in 1970 and almost certainly a higher figure in the then East Germany. So industrial employment and the mechanisms through which class was lived in an industrial society no longer predominate in the old heartlands of the industrial working class. There is still an enormous global industrial working class but it is now predominantly located in East and South Asia and other parts of the global south.

The formerly advanced industrial countries continue to have economies organized on the basis of market capitalism and that is now also unequivocally the case for the former soviet system European states. So what exists in these places now is post-industrial capitalism. In realist terms the generative mechanism for the social order remains capitalism with a central element being the wage labor relation. We should also note that the kind of Keynes/Beveridge forms of economic and social policies—in Germany described by the ordo-liberal term the social market economy—which constituted what we might call "welfare capitalism" have also gone into retreat across post-industrial capitalism. Austerity and privatization, most notably in the UK but also in former Soviet style states, have made severe inroads into welfare provision and—this is very important—have changed the nature of employment in health, education and welfare particularly but not only for professional groups in those areas. "The New Public Sector Management" has largely eliminated professional autonomy. Coupled with privatization this has considerably eroded the working conditions and remuneration of many welfare state workers. Things are not what they were. So how do we as social scientists engage with understanding what is going on through empirical social research?

The first necessary element in that programme of understanding derives from the complexity element in the complex realist framing. We need to think in terms of interwoven systems operating at a range of different levels from the global to the single individual and recognize that these systems are dynamic. They can and do change—they have trajectories through time and space—and that grasping and representing the character of the system trajectories is one of the crucial tasks of the social scientist engaged in empirical work. These systems are complex which means that they have emergent properties—they cannot be understood properly by a reductionist programme of explanation in terms of their components. That complex character means that methods of representation which assign causal powers to models constructed from variables are mostly useless. They are dynamic and change but as complex systems generally do not change incrementally but rather by changes of kind rather than degree. They are non-linear. We require modes of representation and exploration of causality which can cope with non-linearity.

And they are interwoven. The word interwoven is a somewhat better description of the relationships among the complex systems of the social—of individuals with households, of both individuals and households with local spatial systems at every level from the neighborhood to the nation state and beyond, of the state as a system with many aspects of individual and household life courses, of all social systems with the generative implications of the capitalist mode of production AND of all social systems with the ecological and natural systems of the planet on which humans live. – than the more commonly employed intersected. Interwoven describes a more inter-related style of relationship among multiple systems than intersection because systems are mixed at every level and have potential causal powers in every direction. All complex systems can be regarded as cases and methods which start from cases as the real objects addressed by scientific inquiry are the appropriate way to engage with them. That means that a range of approaches from case based quantitative methods such as the generation of numerical taxonomies (clustering) and Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) through the intensive ideographic and ethnographic exploration of particular social contexts and systems of relationships are appropriate but other approaches, particularly those which abstract "variables" from the cases themselves, are not.

THE ROLE OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH IN UNDERSTANDING CLASS

"It is very striking that the classic technique developed in response to the impossibility of understanding contemporary society from experience, the statistical mode of analysis, had its precise origins within the period of (early nineteenth century) of which you are speaking. For without the combination of statistical theory, which in a sense was already mathematically present, and the arrangements for the collections of statistical data, symbolized by the founding of the Manchester Statistical Society, the society that was emerging out of the industrial revolution was literally unknowable." (Williams, 1980, p. 170).

Williams should have said description rather than analysis and statistical theory in the sense of probability based sampling theory had little to do with that description then and only contributes to it now on the basis of inference from samples but the point about the centrality of statistical measures as the mode through which we can see the general trajectory of social systems is absolutely and fundamentally correct. The data on the shift from societies in which class relations were founded on

the centrality of experience in industrial production of material commodities to the post-industrial present constitutes precisely such a description of trajectory and radical change. At that level we dealt with class in relation to the productive systems of nation states but people are what matter. (Thompson, 1978, p. 85) famously and correctly asserted that class is not a thing, it is formed through relationships and manifests as a happening. That said we can use measures, understood as Byrne (2002) has argued not as variables with causal powers which can be abstracted from the real cases but rather as trace descriptions of those cases at points through time, to say something about the nature of the entities at multiple levels through which class relationships are actually constituted.

Let us start with individuals. The conventional mode of assigning class as an attribute to individuals is on some sort of occupationally derived basis. Generally insofar as this is justified by any connection to a broad theoretical framing of class, this is done by reference to Weber and based on the contention that occupations are relatively stable throughout a life course and therefore are a better guide to life chances than say incomes which can change radically over short time periods. Rose and Pevalin (2003) go so far as to assert that income is merely epiphenomenal to occupation. If it was ever the case that occupations were stable through a life course, and there is considerable evidence that this could be challenged even in the era of industrial capitalism, then in post-industrial capitalism this is manifestly not true. Moreover, in societies where the great majority of women of working age in couple relationships are in paid employment the significant unit for income and even more for wealth, particularly housing wealth, is the household, not the individual. Individual occupation is a relatively poor indicator of household income, even at a single time point and it is not a good indicator of household wealth. Of course individuals move through households in a life course. That is why panel studies based on households have to use individuals as the constant cases across the waves at which data is collected. Certainly material circumstances as measured by income and wealth matter when we are exploring class and they matter in dynamic terms and need to be described as trajectories. The emphasis on occupation as the attribute through which class can be assigned is fatuous. Of course occupation is one aspect of assigning class and certainly we need to take note of it but the significance of occupation for class as a relation can and does change.

We can see this very clearly if we consider the changing nature of the work relationships of what Goldthorpe has called "the service class" differentiated from a working class and an intermediate class.

"the salariat (or service class) of professional and managerial employees are associated with the regulation of employment via a "service relationship": i.e., a contractual exchange of a relatively long-term and diffuse kind in which compensation for service to the employing organization comprises a salary and various perquisites and also important prospective elements— salary increments, expectations of continuity of employment (or at least of employability) and promotion and career opportunities. The service relationship will most fully realized with higher-level

professionals and managers (Classes I/1), while modified forms will be most common with lower-level professionals and managers (Classes II/2)." (Goldthorpe and McKnight, 2004, p. 5).

In a book published in 2017 (!) (Evans and Tilley, 2017, p. 4) asserted that: "Compared with the working class, middle class workers occupy relatively secure salaried positions, often with occupational pensions and other benefits." Really? Under the impact of the new public sector management even in the public sector senior professionals are subjected to intense control and work discipline, and this is not least true of academics. Public sector pensions are being cut and the final salary schemes which offered security on retirement have been almost eliminated from the private sector. Things change! Many UK academics, most of those delivering the bulk of undergraduate teaching, are temporary employees at best and many have 0 h contracts. Occupation matters but, in terms of day to day lived experience, so do wealth and income and these are attributes of households rather than individuals.

Let me illustrate this by the result of a cluster analysis of the UK Wealth and Assets Survey's most recent wave. This study is based on a sample of some 19,000 households in Great Britain excluding Northern Ireland, Scotland North of the Caledonian Canal, and the Isles of Scilly. The survey has very extensive data in detail on forms of wealth and income for households rather than individuals. This is important because in contemporary post-industrial societies given the significance of multiple—usually couple—earners in households, it is the household which is the most significant unit for the possession of the kind of resources which constitute class in Weber's sense, that is to say the resources which can be used in market relationships. Moreover, the data includes detailed measurements of wealth in terms of the overall components of physical wealth, property wealth, financial wealth and pension pot assets, not just in terms of these broad categories but also of sub-components within them, and detailed accounts of the sources of household income. This means that it is not only possible to construct classifications based on the simple possession of income and wealth in relation to market power- the Weberian frame—but also to explore sources of "unearned" income in the form of rent from property (as opposed to simple owner occupation) and income derived from financials assets. That is to say the data gives us a view of the possession of assets which represent command over the labor power/wage incomes of others and thereby allow a first order account of distinctions in the Marxist frame. Despite considerable efforts made in the design and management of the survey data, particularly through weighting and imputation, survey data sets of this kind are generally understood to under-represent households with very large assets. They do not address at all the assets held by UK citizens and members of their households which are located in other tax regimes and much of the beneficial ownership of very large wealth is located in tax havens e.g., Monaco. Neither do they address the way in which very wealthy families use discretionary trusts to avoid taxation[1].

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[1]National Accounts aggregate data generally gives totals for wealth which exceed that produced by aggregating sums from the micro household level data generated

TABLE ONE NEAR HERE

Table One shows the pattern of wealth by forms and total and incomes generated by a hierarchical fusion clustering approach using wealth and income components as the classifying variables[2]. This clustering generated five interesting clusters which were sufficiently different. Table One shows the characteristics of the clusters in terms of the variable values used to construct them and of the medians for each component of income and wealth. Both wealth and income are unequally distributed but wealth is much more unequal than income with just over 10% of households holding more than 40% of wealth and with the least wealthy nearly 60% of households holding <20% of wealth.

Table One also shows how wealth and income are related in relation to the categories of each. The high wealth and income and very high wealth and income clusters (just over 10% of cases) hold more than 55% of financial wealth, more than 40% of pension wealth and nearly 40% of property wealth whereas the bottom two clusters (nearly 60% of cases) hold <10% of financial wealth, <15% of pension wealth, and <20% of property wealth. The top two clusters containing just over 10% of households receive more than 60% of unearned income from investment and rent and more than 40% of private and occupational pension income. The middle cluster receives income and holds wealth somewhat above its proportion in the population but at nothing like the scale for the high and very high clusters. Table Two shows the forms of wealth held by the respective clusters as percentages of the wealth held by those clusters. What is particularly notable is the importance of financial wealth as a form of wealth for the very wealthy cluster where it is of the same order as property and pension wealth whereas these categories far exceed financial wealth for all other clusters.

TABLE TWO NEAR HERE

In quantitative in investigations which can inform our understanding of class two key issues are what we measure about our cases and the nature of the cases for which those measurements are made. The review of household level data covering both income and wealth in relation to the forms of both enables us to say something which relates to both of

the real dominant framings of class—Weberian in terms of life chances and Marxist in terms of control over the labor power of others. This is in marked contrast to the construction of classes as what purports to be a class theory on the basis of occupational data for individuals. Table Three shows that the relationship between individual occupational class and household income and wealth is not particularly strong. The Spearman R2 for the relationship between occupational category and cluster is just 0.21 i.e., the relationship accounts for about 20% of the variation. More importantly the lowest cluster by wealth and income contains nearly seven times as many respondents or partners who are in managerial or professional occupations as the very high income cluster and nearly 80% as many as in the high income cluster. When we are interested in inequality as a basis for class in post- industrial capitalism occupational categories are not particularly useful.

The quantitative exploration—note that word exploration—of class in post-industrial capitalism is primarily about the actual data but we also have to pay attention to the statistical methods deployed in research. Let me be blunt. Conventional regression based models which seek to assign causality in relation to class position, primarily the position of individuals but sometimes of households, are as much use as a chocolate fireguard. This applied not only to basic regressions but also to complex econometric style developments of regression. The fundamental problem is the ontologically invalid reification of variables outwith the cases themselves. There are alternatives and Ragin and Fiss (2017) examination of *Intersectional Inequality* using the figurational technique of Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) which allows for both complex and multiple (equifinal) causation is a particularly interesting study which should be replicated using other data sets. Another approach which was the basis of analysis of "The Great British Class Survey" (Savage et al., 2013) is Latent Class Analysis, a development of Factor Analytical approaches which permits the deployment of non-scalar data. This is different from cluster analyses approaches, particularly hierarchical clustering which generated the clusters described in this paper. Hierarchical clustering is an agglomerative approach in which cases are compared to find the most similar pair which are then conjoined and resulting clusters are constructed in sequence until all cases are in the same cluster. The method is one based on comparison. It starts from the characteristics of cases rather, than the approach of Latent Class Analysis which assumes that the measured variables indicate the existence of an underlying set of categories for a categorical variable.

Latent Class Analysis, like Factor Analysis, is a variable centered method. Agglomerative fusion is a good method for as Tukey (1977) prescribed: seeing what the data are telling us.

In all work exploring class it is essential to make a heuristic distinction between class position and class identity. The first is a relational description of cases of whatever form which is best made in relation to an clear conception of the underlying generative mechanisms which express class in the actual social world and which we can measure empirically. Class identity is

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by surveys of the kind of the Wealth and Assets survey. There is a literature on this issue of coverage which is summarized in Chakraborty et al. (2019) who ask the question: Is the Top Tail of the Wealth Distribution the Missing Link between the Household Finance and Consumption Survey and National Accounts?

[2]The indicators chosen were simply Gross Household Income and Total Household Wealth as defined by ONS together with the percentages of the value of wealth in the forms of physical, financial, property and pension AND of the forms of income as earned (employment and self-employment), unearned (rents and financial asset incomes), pensions and benefits held and received by the households in the sample as cases. The percentages were percentages of the total value of wealth and income for each element rather than percentages of wealth and income as held by each case. Since these are monetary measures at a scalar level their operationalization is a function of the mode of data collection and the simple arithmetic division used to construct them from the monetary measures.

what people think about themselves. This is formed by social relations as expressed in class position but is engendered by the agentic reflection of the person framing their own identity in time. Quantitative survey work can be used to explore class identities as well as class positions. We can ask people about these things and should do so. Of course both the way in which we articulate a framing of class in relation to topics covered in a survey and the actual detailed form of both the questions asked and the coding scheme deployed in relation to those questions shape the data generated in a survey. The "Great British Class Survey" used Bourdieu's conception of capitals as things possessed by individuals and interacting in locating the class position of individuals to frame the study. Lui(2015, p. 484) commented accurately: "… when we turn to examine the class model proposed by Savage et al. it looks very much like their descriptions of the seven classes are mere reiteration of their operationalization procedures." Capitals were defined as measured variables without, as Lui notes, any understanding of this variation as engendered by social structural forces. There was no real sense of generative mechanism, not even through a deployment of Bourdieu's own way of handling this through the notion of fields.

Individuals and households are not the only cases relevant to class which can be explored quantitatively. It is useful to look at spatial units in class terms and to construct socio-spatial mappings of class by area. In England this can be done using census data for Super Output areas. There are also spatial data sets available which describe small areas by various formulations of the Index of Multiple Deprivation which can serve as a useful proxy in exploration of how classes are located in space. These techniques can be used at any spatial level but are perhaps most valuable when used to describe the spatial distribution of class within city regions since the city region is a particularly meaningful spatial unit for so many aspects of social life. Usually the data which is aggregated is from censuses and based on occupationally defined class. The only data about wealth which is available at these spatial aggregate levels relates to housing tenure, form and numbers of bedrooms along with data about car ownership by households. There is very limited data available which describes income at small area levels, usually only if there has been an extensive local social survey for administrative purposes. Social Geography studies typically explore variation through space. An excellent example is (Hamnett, 2003) *Unequal City* which examined change in the socio-spatial structure of London over a 40 year time span. The existence of small area style census data means that the spatial aspects of factors relevant to an understating of class can be described dynamically. We can see how things change. In the UK one aspect of such change is the radical shift in the relative social location of the populations of social housing areas, particularly of the very large council housing estates built in the years from the end of the second world war up to the 1970s. These estates, particularly but not exclusively the housing in them built as semi-detached villas in quasi garden city layouts, were occupied by household which were "respectable"—a crucial expression describing the cultural and reputational aspects of class position in an industrial social order,

The combination of "right to buy" by existing tenants[3] and more importantly the deindustrialization of industrial city regions (to an extreme extent in London) has led to the dispossession and marginalization of these areas. In the twenty-first century post-industrial UK the "good life" [for the working class] as lived in the third quarter of the twentieth Century' is now found in speculatively built owner occupied estates. Many of the residents of such locales are the children of the council tenants of the earlier period (Banim, 1986; McEwan, 2018). This spatial change matters and quantitative dynamic trajectories describe it.

The best way to sum up the value of quantitative, and especially quantitative descriptive, work in relation to class is to return to Williams assertion that the industrial word was unknowable without counting. So is the post-industrial world. To say this is not to privilege the quantitative over the qualitative but rather to recognize that quantitative description, especially description of change, is a way both of setting the context for intensive investigative qualitative investigation and provides a basis for generalizing claims for the findings of ideographic studies. To understand class we need to both count and explore in qualitative mode. To that assertion this paper will return.

THE ROLE OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN UNDERSTANDING CLASS

Class has to be understood, whatever mode we employ in developing that understanding, in dynamic terms and as an emergent phenomenon at every level of its manifestation. That means that narratives, accounts of how things develop through time, are central to any understanding. The use of data series to describe change through time is no less a narrative than any textual account. Here the focus is on such textual accounts beginning with the role of historical methods developed as historical sociology/sociological history. E.P Thompson's two great books *The Making of the English Working Class* and *Whigs and Hunters* provide a model for the kind of history of classes in creation (*The Making*) and under assault (*Whigs and Hunters*). In the era of the *Unmaking* of the old industrial working class historical studies have a crucial role to play. One very important point to make here is that the role of the state in many forms and at many levels is crucial to any historical account of these processes. The creation of disciplinary silos in academic work means that sociological discussions of class are very poorly informed by reference to or understanding of the role of benefit systems in relation to both class location and class experience. Thompson very well-understood the significance of the New Poor Law of 1834. The investigators associated with the Great British Class Survey paid no attention to the emerging significance of Universal Credit in the twenty-first century UK for households which contained paid workers. Likewise urban planning policies which subordinate local government to the

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[3]Over the years the sale of properties purchased under right to buy, usually to divide an asset among the children of the purchasers, for whom the creation of an asset to pass on was an important motive in purchase, has transferred much, in London most, of these dwellings to private landlords who bought to let.

logic of a secondary circuit of accumulation and the interests of speculative development capitalists—capitalists because agency matters (Fitch, 1993) are important not only in terms of the constitution of space. Labor and Social Democratic parties, the political representatives of the industrial working class, have embraced a "necessary pragmatism" and abandoned the interests of the class which founded them, We need histories which incorporate state actions and note the role of political actors.

And we need histories which address the role of the collective organizations of the working class, Labor and Social Democratic parties, trade unions and cooperatives not just in terms of the formal institutional development and often transformation, but also with a focus on how they relate to the lived experience of class on a daily basis. One of the most depressing aspects of the way class is lived after industry is the extent to which such organizations have a much reduced (trade unions and cooperatives) or even antagonistic (most European Social Democratic parties) relationship with how people live class. In the era of austerity the role of formerly class oriented parties in governance has been almost wholly negative for many people. The key elements in this have been the subordination of municipal governments to capitalist developers and the privatization/quasi privatization of public services, notably social housing. The way in which English social housing has been transferred to quasi private Arms Length Management Organizations (ALMOs), often against substantial resistance by tenants illustrates this very well. Local histories of organizations like Gentoo which took over the housing operations of Sunderland Council and now manages nearly 30.000 homes are absolutely necessary to framing a historical formulation of class experience now. The actual character of local governance and in particular the organizations identified by Stewart (1994) as components of the new magistracy play a crucial role in how the state relates to people in class terms. These organizations, for example in the UK Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), give elements of the bourgeoisie a crucial role in areas where they could not be elected public night soil remover in a democratic contest. Sometimes these people are real industrial capitalists but more often now they come from real estate capital or the lawyers, consultants and financial professionals who service capital. Senior public managers from quasi privatized public sector bodies, notably in education, are also present. If we are to understand class we have to understand classes in the plural and these are locales in which elites are to be found. We need to identify and describe power elites at every level. Here Mills (1956) approach still works but we can also use techniques like social network analysis to refine the way in which relationships exist. The inter-linkages can be identified not just from official documents but also from press coverage[4]. Here the necessary qualitative skills are those of documentary analysis and interpretation.

There is an enormous amount of documentation, most current material online, which gives an insight into how

governance works. The tools of the historian are entirely appropriate but there are particular practical tricks which are worth learning, although the only way to really get to grips with this material as with any qualitative work is to dive in and engage. A good starting point is always the minutes of meetings when researching a specific issue. Minutes are supported by documents referenced in them and sometime these are not publicly available at first try. Documents which are held back from public view are always especially interesting. Researchers need to know how to use Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and how to be persistent in pursuing these. The cover often deployed to circumvent releasing material in the UK is commercial confidentiality. This should always be challenged but the very assertion of it is indicative of class relations and connections. Campaign groups, for example groups campaigning about planning decisions, are often both skilled in these forms of research and well-informed about issues which matter. Groups, entirely properly, are concerned with specific issues (although planning issues are often general in their implication) so if researchers investigating how class interests of elites are enacted at the level of the locality/city region need to be able to synthesize across a range of issues to develop a comprehensive account of what is going on. In the UK at least the traditional role of the local media in scrutinizing local governance has been almost completely abandoned. The coverage even of the operations of elected local bodies is minimal and the only way in which the unelected governance agencies ever appear in the media is on the basis of their own press releases, although even these can be useful as a starting point. Investigating the local state in all its forms is crucial for class focused research and is not done anything like enough, particularly as the basis of Ph.D. studies.

On reflecting on this discussion of the importance of historical investigation of the state at all levels, it is evident that the experiences which form class locations and identities are not just experiences which derive from work. Throughout modernity, and to an increasing degree in late modernity, relationships with the state in all its forms also have constitutive power. That said work and work relations also matter and here historical work, including the collections of oral testimonies either describing individual life courses or more collective forms of historical construction, have an important role to play. Examples of collective construction of experience include (Byrne and Doyle, 2005) use of focus groups stimulated by visual elicitation to reflect on the meaning of the coal industry and its termination in South Shields and (Warren, 2018) similar deployment of the method on Teesside. Warren's study was particularly interesting because many of his informants were reflecting on their work experience in relation to life experience in what might be considered as a paradigm of organized capital, ICI. Moreover, this study incorporated the experiences of women, and very interestingly women who were part of the significant in status terms industrial middle class. The industrial middle class, the staff as opposed to the shop floor, were a crucial component of the class structure of industrial capitalism. Historical work on class has to address their experiences too.

All the techniques of qualitative work are valid in investigating and understanding class. These techniques are best understood

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[4]Award ceremonies are particularly interesting here. In the past linkages could be established posthumously by attendance at Masonic funerals. Now look who is giving each other awards at black tie dos.

as fuzzy sets which intersect with each other. So qualitative interviews can be used to explore all aspects of class, not only in relation to situating respondents themselves in terms of local and identity now and through their life courses but also as sources of information about other people and as descriptions of institutional and political forms and processes. Ethnographic observations, at whatever location on the continuum from complete observer to complete participant, construct descriptions of class as it is lived in action in all ways. For example participant observation in planning inquiries (although often closer to complete observer role) yields very valuable information not only about the formal outcomes of such processes but of the way powerful actors, both individual and institutional, relate to and interact with each other. Any open venue of governance, but particularly those in which there are disputes informed by evidence, lets the researcher see something of how class is lived as power by the powerful. One form of ethnographic work which was very evident in the industrial era is participant observation in work contexts. This has not gone away altogether, and remains a very important and useful mode, but such ethnographies, particularly participant ethnography by those who themselves work in the context being studied, are now more likely to come from health contexts than from manufacturing. This is not to devalue them at all. Health work is one of the most important forms of work in post-industrial capitalism and ethnographies of how class is lived in that kind of work are enormously useful.

There are a number of ethnographic or quasi-ethnographic- a term used to describe studies which whilst including an element of direct observation are also reliant on interviews—of work in a range of post-industrial contexts. Examples include (Warren, 2011) exploration of "Living the Call Centre," and a number of studies carried out within the frame of reference of what Burawoy has called "the extended case study," for example (O'Riain, 2000) Ethnographic investigation of how work hierarchies actually play out in terms of lived experience is crucial to understanding class at any time and in any place.

Likewise ethnography of all lived experience, buttressed by whatever complementary approaches are deployed (e.g., interviews), is not only legitimate but necessary as a mode of understanding class. In post-industrial and post-welfare capitalism ethnographies of how people relate to the state in terms of any aspect of state provision, but in particular in relation to the operation of income maintenance systems, tell us a great deal about what class is and how it is lived. The ways in which people experience the different modes of conditionality attached to the receipt of Universal Credit in the UK are ways in which class is lived and the more we know about them the better. Ethnographies necessarily include representations in modes outwith that of traditional academic writing. So novels, plays, poetry songs, films, cartoons, any form of representation, is valid and informative. Ken Loach's films *I, Daniel Blake* and *Sorry We Missed You* are ethnographies of living on benefits and working in the gig economy. They have rightly been praised as Art but they are more than Art—they are representations of how class is lived. This is in marked contrast to reality TV Poverty porn, exploitative, selective, and deeply offensive. Richard Dawson's

songs and music stand at the other extreme from that exploitative rubbish—pointing up for example the intersections between class and disability as he has lived them. This is life history as music.

Here a cautionary note is appropriate. Many ethnographies of class have focused on what Byrne (2005a) called the "dispossessed working class." But important though the dispossessed are their experiences do not constitute the whole set of working class experience in post-industrial capitalism. There are more who belong to what Byrne (2005b)called "the missing middle," people living in households in the middle of the income range, in the UK owner occupiers although usually not outright owners, with now at least secondary and often University levels of educational qualification, and often working in semi-professional or even professional roles. Many workers in education, health, the emergency services and so on, along with IT workers and what remains of the highly skilled technical working class, for example instrument artificers—tiffies—the key skilled trade of many process industries, belong to this category. There is a tendency in working class studies to look only at those who have been absolutely immiserated, particularly in work done in the United States. The US is an outlier. Its working class has never had any real direct political power, was always smaller proportionately than European working classes, was much weaker in terms of cultural class identity, and was uniquely affected by the continuing significance of racial division based on a history of chattel slavery and miscegenation laws[5]. This is not to say that ethnicity does not always matter in relation to class and that there is not racism in other post-industrial societies but the US is a special case. In many ways the UK stands at the other extreme, not least because by far the largest post-colonial population is the invisible minority of the Irish descended who in any event have been massively inter-married with English, Welsh and Scottish people for at least 200 years. It is notable that inter-marriage between "Brits" and those immigrant post-colonial populations "of colour" who arrived in the industrial era is very common indeed.

STUDIES IN AND OF PLACES – MIXING UP METHODS

To understand class we need more than one method. To say this is not to insist that every individual study is multi/mixed method, although there are always advantages in going that route if possible. However, social scientists should always embed their own investigations both in design and in interpretation in relation to the broad range of work dealing with their topic of interest. The scientistic format of the literature review serving only the purpose of detailing the findings of existing work so as to identify the new contribution of this work is not appropriate for us. We need to engage in meta interpretation—to draw in an explicitly synthetic fashion on as much material as we possible

[5]Brazil is the other great, although not only, post chattel slavery society in the Americas and the world. The one drop of blood rule does not seem to have had the same salience in Brazil where economic location was very intersectional with ethnic background.

can and enter into a dialogue with it in the exposition of the actual specific research exercise we have carried out. Beyond this there is an absolute necessity for synthesizing scholarship, not based directly on any research exercise but drawing on as many studies as possible in relation to explicit theoretical framingS (the plural needs emphasizing).

One set of studies provides an example of how research of this kind can be done in a multi- disciplinary and mixed method style. Class is lived in places. The ways in which class is lived at work, in domestic life, in relation to the state, all play out in spatial locations. People move around in space at every spatial level up to an including trans-oceanic migration. However, there is a particular value to studies which look at class as lived and class as a set of relations in particular places. There is a role in understanding class for what Sociology and Social Anthropology call "Community Studies" and Social Geography calls "Locality Studies." The usual spatial range of the latter in the urbanized world of post- industrial capitalism should be something like a city region as was done by (Beyon et al., 1994) and Byrne (1989). That range is big enough to explore most but not all of the relational processed which determine (in Williams, 1980 sense of that word determine as setting limits rather than exact specification) both class location and class identity. Plainly there are social forces which operate beyond the spatial level of the city region in the form of trans-national and finance capital but even they are expressed in and through lived experience on the scale of the locality. To explore how class is lived at this scale it is absolutely necessary to deploy a mixed methods approach to investigation. The best way to explain what this implies is by taking a real example and working through how class can be investigated in that place.

My example is the Leicester city region in East Midlands of England. The consists of the City of Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland and has a population of just over one million. There are three first tier local government entities—Leicestershire County Council with a population of 650 thousand distributed across seven district councils, Leicester City itself with 330 thousand people and Rutland with 37 thousand people. The local health economy—a very important term in relation to the governance of the UK National Health Service (NHS)– is managed in a variety of ways but of crucial significance are the clinical commissioning groups with three covering the city and two parts of the county plus Rutland. This part of the East Midlands was very heavily industrialized with coal mining, textiles especially in knitwear, shoe manufacture and a range of engineering plants. It is particularly interesting because it is very multi-ethnic, at least in Leicester City itself, with a large South Asian population primarily of Gujerati background coming from East Africa and Gujerat itself. There are also significant Afro-Caribbean, African (including Somali), and European accession state populations, particularly Polish. My former partner lives in this city region and my younger daughter is Leicester girl born and bred and lived there until going to University.

This area is very much deindustrialized. Just over 12% of jobs are in manufacturing and all coal mines have closed. In 1981 over 45% of workers were employed in manufacturing and

mining. There was a very substantial female industrial labor force. The ethnic composition of Leicester City in 2011 was 45% identifying as White British, 5% as White Other, 28% as Indian, and 21% as other ethnicities including Afro-Caribbean, African, and Pakistani. For the County area the figures were 89% White British, 3% White Other, 4% Indian, and 4% all other ethnic groups. The 1981 Census did not record self identified ethnicity but rather country of birth. Then in Leicester City 82% of the population were UK born and 13% were born in East Africa or India. In 1981 Leicester was still very much industrial and it is important to note that many of the Indian population were engaged in industrial work, particularly in knitwear. This was also true of the Afro-Caribbean population but the African population arrived "after industry" although the EU accession state migrants often do work in what remains of the city region's industrial base. Plainly any study of how class has been and is lived in this area has to take account of the intersectionality of all of class, ethnicity, and gender. Moreover, that complex intersectionality has itself been dynamic over time.

Already I have started to use data series derived from the decennial censuses and other sources to provide a quantitative narrative of this place. Other data which would be relevant includes patterns of housing tenure, patterns of residential location, educational backgrounds, and information on the detailed patterns of employment in the post-industrial service centered economy. Using available secondary data sources all of these can be mapped through time, across quite fine grained spatial locations, and to a considerable degree across time at that fine grained level. Aggregate spatial data is enormously useful in providing trajectories of differentiation. It is possible using local election results to provide a somewhat coarser but still useful account through time of class as expressed in political preferences, although the low turn out in UK local elections means this might often be about how class is not expressed. Note that almost all this data takes the form of spatial aggregates. Micro data might be available from dedicated surveys or, possibly with considerable and reasonable difficulties of access, from administrative data sets. However, the aggregate data very much helps in telling the story. In an ideal world it would be possible to commission a large scale sample social survey investigating elements of both class position and class identity—and do this in with reference to multiple framings of both. This would take the form of a more extensively informed—that is informed by reference beyond a single class framing—local version of the Great British Class Survey, although ideally this would be a survey based on a household case base rather than simply collecting data from individuals.

When we turn to the qualitative the starting point is historical work on the documents. Here the terms "document" needs to be understood as broad and general. For example images, both still and moving, form part of the documentary record. In principle the most easily accessible documents are documents produced as part of the processes of governance. The activities of the state are recorded and these records include important sets of administrative documentation describing the actual way

in which things are done. Certainly any attempt to grasp how the state has played a constitutive role in the class position of working class people will necessarily involve a careful review of the history of social housing as represented in the documentary record of the local authority and other housing bodies. Of course the paper (although often now web based) trail is by no means the whole story. There is a necessary role for interviews—both of political and administrative actors and of local residents (where focus group discussions can be very productive)—as a means of generating an oral history to set against the documentary record. The same combination of documentary based investigation and the generation of oral testimonies can be deployed in constructing other historical records. These might include a history of planning and development policy in association with local industrial and enterprise support policies, an area which can show the character of local power elites and how they seek to influence policy in their own class interest. In relation to the class aspects of austerity and the role of the new public sector management in relation to workers' experience, policy developments in the health, and education systems are of considerable interest. Archives can be accessed to examine local industrial histories, for example of GEC which was enormously significant in the Leicester Urban area but also of the knitwear industry. No single researcher or even research project will have the time and resources to cover all these fields and materials but an important skill is the competent meta interpretation of secondary sources. Use other people's work, ideally discussing your interpretation of their findings with them, in synthesizing a general historical narrative.

That kind of work is retrospective and when it moves into causal accounts retroductive. How can we look forward to see how class relations will develop and class will be lived in the future? We might use data about a place as the basis of a simulation to project possible futures in which we use different values of key control parameters to see what different futures might emerge. The approach developed by Allen (1997) could be adapted as a basis for simulations of this kind. Such simulations have a political potential because they enable us to show how the adoption of different policy positions would have consequences for the future socio-economic-ecological[6]- political context. Probably the most useful approach to envisaging futures is to ask people and focus groups are a particularly good method for doing this. (Tukey, 1977) asked children in Dijon and York to envisage the futures of the places in which they lived. This approach can easily be adapted to explore how people see their futures in relation to living class and seems particularly appropriate as a method to deploy with young adults who will live that future.

CONCLUSION

Let me return to the crucial assertion made in the abstract to this article. Social science as an empirical (not empiricist!) programme is always about developing knowledge on the basis of

the interaction of theoretical framing and empirical investigation. Merely empirical work, like much of that conducted using trivial linear methods by the Nuffield school, tells us almost nothing worth knowing about class as it is and as it is lived. Abstracted theoretical assertion by victims of what Thompson called "the French flu"[7] is if anything even more pointless and offers nothing to any programme of class based radical social change. What has been attempted in this piece is a review of how we can do research on class in ways which integrates theoretical framing—which plainly for the present author is based on Marx's original conception as that has been developed by others over nearly 200 years—and investigation of how people live class, how the class structure determines—(again in Williams, 1980 sense of setting boundaries to possibilities)—they live class, how they understand class as they live it, and how social structures, institutions and above all relational class affects all of these. Above all else without that kind of understanding we as social scientists will not have much to say to the emancipatory programmes of class politics. If there is one point which I would assert as strongly as possible in this conclusion it is that whilst work relations continue to be enormously important in relation to class, so now are relations with the reproductive aspects of capitalism as these are manifested, largely through agencies of the state. This matters in relation to experience since so much of life is actually lived in relation to and through administrative and institutional structures which are part of state system. It matters in relation to how class works out in terms of power. That is why it is essential to explore the way in which elites function. Political history does this primarily at the level of national states and policy formation. That level has direct effects particularly through income maintenance systems which in most post-industrial states are national functions. But what matters is not just policy formation but also implementation. It is at the level of the city region that we an explore the intersection of policy and implementation Local governance, and the bodies of the new magistracy in the form of unelected state agencies such as Local Economic Partnerships, are just as important here as elected local government itself. Likewise in relation to how health is lived health systems are enormously important, not just as major employers, but as major determinants of how life is lived and how it is experience. The state matters in all its forms and it is often through examination of the local state forms that we can see the relationships between class and power. And understanding must address the dynamism of every aspect of class at every level in relation to all the complex systems with which class relations are interwoven[8].

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[6]Many of the simulation models for this kind of work are located in the ecological literature. In a context of climate crisis incorporating an ecological component into Modeling is essential.

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[7]And dealt what should have been a death blow to that style of work in *The Poverty of Theory* (1978).

[8]Including of course intersectionality with gender and ethnicity although both kinds of intersection are very much context dependent. This is not just a matter of national level differences. Local differences can be profoundly significant. Leicester and Bradford both have very large South Asian originating populations but the interaction of locale of origin, specific ethno-religious identity, and industrial structure means that the intersections of ethnicity, gender, and class work out very differently in these places.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Publicly available datasets were analyzed in this study. This data can be found here: https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue/series/series?id=2000056.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

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After Coal: Affective-Temporal Processes of Belonging and Alienation in the Deindustrializing Nottinghamshire Coalfield, UK

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This article advances conceptualizations of belonging and alienation among deindustrializing people toward (i) pluralistic temporal and (ii) affective processes. The focus is on belonging and alienation among a deindustrialized generation in the Nottinghamshire coalfield, UK, exploring how various affective-temporal processes mediate capacities, claims, and senses of belonging and alienation. Extant studies suggest that multiple temporal processes constitute deindustrialized places, particularly intergenerational transmissions, declarative memory, and place-histories. Recent work has explored the affective, emotional, and embodied dynamics of these temporal processes. While these literatures are insightful in locating affective and temporal processes of belonging, studies do not have much to say on the relational dynamics of affective-temporal processes in everyday becoming lives and experiences of deindustrializing places. The significance of foregrounding multiple affective-temporal processes of belonging and alienation is because of their relational nature. Advancing understandings of belonging is critical as a coherent sense of belonging is fundamental for individual and social well-being, and the loss of belonging, namely, alienation, informs how former industrial places are lived. Based on autoethnographic, interview and Observant Participation research with participants born between 1984 and 1994, I use ethnographic vignettes to delineate multiple relating affective-temporal processes of belonging and alienation of a generation that came after coal. The first vignette concerns the embodied and affective relationalities of intergenerational transmission and becoming in a deindustrialized world through the lens of masculinity, place and belonging. The second vignette examines nostalgic and traumatic shared declarative memories contingent of living through and with deindustrialization. The third vignette looks at intersections of place histories, silenced memory and local pride and shame, drawing out the significance of space and place to class-based experiences. Weaved through the stories are thematic threads of class, place, alienation, belonging, and temporality. Bringing these threads together, the paper then discusses the relationalities between issues covered, emphasizing the mutual contingencies between affective-temporal

processes of belonging and alienation. I end by calling for shared affective-temporal processes of belonging and alienation to form the basis of a renewed solidarity, attenuation of alienation and a means to belong.

INTRODUCTION

This article investigates temporal and affective processes of belonging and alienation under conditions of deindustrialization. The focus is on formations of belonging and alienation among a generation born between 1984 and 1994 into mining families and communities in the Nottinghamshire coalfield, UK. This ten-year period began with the fractious 1984–85 Miners' Strike, which preceded and precipitated the terminal decline of the British coal industry and led to the industrial ruination of the British coalfields. Memories and legacies of everyday life ordered around coalmining endure beyond colliery closures, evoking ambiguous, and conflicting affects in transforming deindustrializing presents. Although not fully understood, it is clear that temporal and affective dynamics are fundamental to senses of belonging (Game, 2001; Fenster, 2005; May, 2011; Nagel, 2011; Tomaney, 2015).

Literatures primarily focus on personal declarative memory—experiences that have been lived first-hand (Nagel, 2011; Lewicka, 2014; Lähdesmäki et al., 2016; May, 2016; Fivush et al., 2018). Declarative memory is but one, albeit multifaceted, temporal process that produces and mediates belonging. As an overarching temporal concept, memory itself involves multiple shared, intergenerational and personal processes and practices, ranging from the declarative and representational to the affective and embodied (Edensor, 2005; Degnen, 2016; Baraitser, 2017; May, 2017). These memory processes converge in the self to produce an individual's autobiographical narrative which has "functional significance" in producing and maintaining belonging, identity, and senses of the self (Brown and Reavey, 2015, p. 132). However, each of the myriad temporal processes are inherently contingent of spatial and social contexts that the individual finds themselves. In this important sense, certain temporal processes gain affective significance within certain spaces and times.

Studies of deindustrialization and social class have identified complex temporal processes mediating spaces of industrial ruination that are critical to the production and loss of belonging (Mah, 2012; Strangleman and Rhodes, 2014; High, 2018; Preece, 2020). Studies have acknowledged the affective dynamics of memory in the context of deindustrialization, drawing attention to the emotional intensities of loss, nostalgia, and bitterness attached to memories embedded in and evoked by landscapes and topographies of industrial ruination (Mah, 2012; Emery, 2019b). Relatedly, emphasis in recent years has been on what can be collectively termed "intergenerational transmissions," past formations of everyday life that shape the present for those that lived those pasts as well as those that came after (Gordon, 1997; Mah, 2012; Meier, 2013;

Walkerdine, 2015; Bright, 2016). Ambiguous in nature, emerging research concerns how intergenerational transmissions relate to affective dynamics of temporal processes, namely absence, embodiment, and the more-than-representational (Reay, 2005; Muehlebach and Shoshan, 2012; Degnen, 2013).

Similarly, there have been repeated calls to foreground affect in the study of belonging. Belonging is recurrently referred to as a state that "quivers" (Thrift, 2004, p. 57) with affective intensities, involves a range of emotional attachments and elicits myriad feelings (Mee and Wright, 2009; Wood and Waite, 2011; Yuval-Davis, 2011; Wright, 2015). The absence of belonging is also often expressed in negative affective terms as "feelings of loneliness, isolation, alienation, and displacement" (Antonsich, 2010, p. 649), and, following, I refer to loss and refusal of belonging as *alienation* here (Seamon, 2014). A coherent and stable sense of belonging is, thus, fundamental for individual and social well-being.

This article makes a conceptual contribution to belonging and alienation among deindustrializing people by advancing understandings in two interrelated directions. As signaled above, the first conceptual advancement is toward a pluralizing of the temporal processes bound up in the production and loss of belonging. Belonging is produced and mediated by myriad temporal processes, including intergenerational transmission, declarative memory and becoming, among many others (Rogaly and Taylor, 2009; May and Muir, 2015). The second conceptual advancement is an emphasis on the affective and embodied dynamics of these temporal processes. The importance of temporal processes to belonging is not so much their presence, accumulation or even contents, but the emotional attachments, bodily feelings, and affective meanings enlivened by encounters with them. The justification for proposing two advancements conjointly is the relationally constitutive nature of temporal *and* affective processes in the production, mediation, and attenuation of belonging. Apprehending affective-temporal relations is critical to understanding belonging and alienation among a deindustrialized generation as it is through these relational processes that we come to conceive who we are, the places we are from and where we belong and do not.

Approaching the affective, embodied, and emotional dynamics of temporalities as *affective-temporal processes*, this paper investigates the relationalities between intergenerational transmissions, declarative memories, place-histories, and becomings in the production and mediation of belonging and alienation. I suggest that these four relational affective-temporal processes, which are variably unlived, lived, and being lived through, deeply condition how belonging is claimed and denied for a generation that came after coal

in the Nottinghamshire coalfield. Emerging from a focus on relationalities of affective-temporal processes is the fundamentality of place, class, and affective forms of experience, knowledge, and apprehension. In the Nottinghamshire coalfield, intergenerational transmissions manifest in a deindustrialized generation through embodied and affective intensities as pained and disdained bodies. Deindustrialization and neoliberal regeneration—individualizing discourses of social mobility, neoliberal regeneration programmes and austerity—has disrupted the capacity to fully adhere to our intergenerationally transmitted forms of belonging and identity so that we "become" in a transforming world that fragments our experience and trajectories of work and place (Brown and Reavey, 2015; Pain, 2019). Living with and through these socially fragmenting sociopolitical phases has led to competing claims over space and belonging, articulated through localized systems of knowing among bodies embedded in the histories of the coalfield. The capacity to anchor belonging in shared declarative memories as a strategy to cope with becoming in a fractured class landscape is obfuscated by the vulnerability of those memories, a consequence of growing up in conditions of deindustrialization. Moreover, use of the unlived past to produce autobiographical narratives is often occluded due to place-specific histories. A regime of silencing contentious pasts surrounding the Miners' Strike 1984–85, and the trade union splits and colliery closures that followed, prevails among the generation that directly experienced them (Paterson, 2014). These aspects of shared place-history are emotionally complex and difficult to communicate. They are, thus, regularly confined to personal memory without being declared or shared (Emery, 2019a). Such regimes of intergenerational transmission and silencing place-history can either enable belonging through the production of autobiographical narratives or inhibit belonging through gaps in autobiographical knowledge.

Critical for other deindustrialized areas, and research of them, the interrelations of these four affective-temporal processes sum up to a complex formation of belonging and alienation among a deindustrialized generation that is contingent of place, is multitemporal and evades easy recognition. Conceptualizing belonging and alienation towards a pluralized temporality and affect precludes simplistic explanations that solely highlight industrial job loss as the basis for loss of belonging and alienation. Deindustrialized spaces across the UK, Europe, and United States are continually linked with feelings of alienation and loss of belonging, not just in coalfield areas but in geographies previously dependent on, for example, fishing, steel, and many other forms of industrial production (Walkerdine and Jiménez, 2012; High, 2018; Silva, 2019; Preece, 2020). As the next section delineates, in former industrial areas the effects of deindustrialization unsettle and attenuate formations of, and capacities to, belong (Wacquant, 2016). Alongside alienation, the struggle to claim belonging when it is felt to be denied manifests in broader emotional intensities of bitterness and anger, operating at both personal and collective scales (Thorleifsson, 2016; Mishra, 2017; Harvey, 2018; Silva, 2019). Moreover, many deindustrialized geographies have received masses of targeted funding and initiatives,

the British coalfields included, and, yet, belonging remains absent and alienation endemic. It is apparent, then, that the concept of belonging is both that regeneration policies toward social well-being have failed, and that belonging is deeply ambiguous. I propose that such future policies must first apprehend the complex relationships between temporality, affect and belonging.

Departing from Wright (2015, p. 392), I approach the affective-temporal processes of belonging through weak theory, which "sees things as open, entangled, connected, and in flux." Remaining open to the potentialities of affective and temporal interrelations intends not to overdetermine conceptualizations in an emerging and interdisciplinary field of enquiry. Following, research involved complimentary methodologies associated with the study of affect and embodiment in Human Geography, where the impetus is "to get involved, to feel and care and be moved by what we are studying in the hope that our abstractions will be 'less' abstract" (Spinney, 2015, p. 242; see also Hayes-Conroy and Hayes-Conroy, 2010; Dowling et al., 2017a,b). Principle among these are critical reflexive autoethnographies and using the researcher's personal histories and sensing and emoting body. Autoethnography is also common within studies of belonging, used to convey the deep emotional contradictions and intensities of belonging and alienation (Probyn, 1996; Butz and Besio, 2009; Hooks, 2009). As I am constituent of the generation under enquiry—born in 1986 into a mining family in the Nottinghamshire coalfield—I draw on my own experiences to document how affective-temporal processes intervene and mediate personal belongings and alienations. Toward a more representative analysis, I include data from 10 interviews and extensive Observant Participation collected as part of a larger project.

Following the explication of methods, I then use ethnographic vignettes to communicate (some) of the complex ways affective-temporal processes of belonging are lived for this deindustrialized generation, covering broad experiential contexts, and lived histories. The intention is not narrowly-focused, fine-grained analyses, but to disentangle affective-temporal processes of belonging and alienation at the same time as retaining, and emphasizing, their relational and everyday contingencies (Stewart, 2007; Cameron, 2012; Lorimer and Parr, 2014). The first vignette concerns the embodied and affective relationalities of intergenerational transmission and becoming in a deindustrialized world through the lens of masculinity, place, and belonging. The second vignette examines nostalgic and traumatic shared declarative memories contingent of living through and with deindustrialization. The third vignette looks at intersections of place histories, silenced memory and local pride and shame, drawing out the significance of space and place to class-based experiences. In the section that follows the vignettes I will discuss the relationalities between issues covered, emphasizing the mutual contingencies between affective-temporal processes of belonging and alienation. I first want to articulate further what I mean by affective-temporal processes and their importance to understandings of belonging among deindustrialized generations.

AFFECTIVE-TEMPORAL PROCESSES, DEINDUSTRIALIZATION AND DEINDUSTRIALIZED GENERATIONS

Studies of deindustrialization have recently centered on "intergenerational transmissions," "social hauntings," "legacies," and "half-lives" (Mah, 2012; Walkerdine, 2015; Bright, 2016; Linkon, 2018; Warren, 2018). Although more particularized in their individual compositions, these concepts all index how industrial pasts condition how the deindustrialized present is experienced and encountered. Walkerdine (2015) suggests:

> We can consider the intergenerational transmission of class as an interlinked set of hauntings in which discourses, practices, policies, and events are experienced and felt in the bodies of both those who experienced them *as well as those who followed them* (p. 172, emphasis added).

Research has identified various means that the intergenerational past—unlived for the generation in question for this article—emerges and is transmitted (Mah, 2012; Walkerdine and Jiménez, 2012; Hill, 2013). For instance, the industrial past emerges through testimony, declarative and collaborative remembering, landscapes, cultural representations, and practices and material cultures (Emery, 2019b). Emergences of the past are always relational and constitutive of each other, whereby, for example, landscapes evoke memories in older generations that then form the basis for collaborative remembering with their children (Walley, 2013; Pasupathi and Wainryb, 2018). As well as representational forms, there are affective and embodied dimensions to intergenerational transmissions in deindustrializing spaces, operating relationally with representational forms (Edensor, 2005). Material cultures from past industrial communities stimulate affective atmospheres, sensory memories of taste, smell, sound, touch and sight and evoke embodied, and emotional memories of past ways of being (Lucas and Buzzanell, 2011; Hill, 2013; Meier, 2013). Further, vivid and imagined sensory memories of erased industrial workplaces, despite material absence, are still very much present in the geographical imaginations and spatial memories of long-term residents. Imaginaries of erased or repurposed landscapes and topographies are superimposed on the new economies that replaced them. Erased material forms also remain present through the embodied practices and performances they helped engender, as former industrial communities navigate deindustrialization (Blokland, 2001).

Generations growing up in deindustrializing spaces seek to resist and make sense of industrial ruination through reference to intergenerational transmissions, with values, performances, behaviors, and social relations being historically constituted by industrial formations (Rhodes, 2013). The unlived industrial past mediates experiential contexts of employment (McDowell, 2003; Nixon, 2009; Walkerdine and Jiménez, 2012; Bennett, 2015b), education and school (Bright, 2012; Bathmaker et al., 2013; Ward, 2014), place (Nayak, 2003, 2006; Bright, 2016), and identity (Rhodes, 2013). A focus of the literature has been on how valued male occupational identities remain rooted in industrial forms of labor (High, 2003; MacKenzie et al., 2006; Walkerdine, 2010; Ward, 2014; Clarke, 2015, 2017). With labor market shifts from industrial work to service-based employment "industrial citizenship" has been fractured and men from industrial families struggle to form coherent senses of identity and belonging around what are considered locally to be feminine jobs (Strangleman, 2015). Lack of opportunity to perform masculinity through heavy labor employment has led to expressions of manhood to (re)center on excessive drinking, football and distinct gender significations (Nayak, 2003, 2006; Ward, 2014; McIvor, 2017). Little work has been conducted on women from industrial families, however, young women's socioeconomic experiences are also shaped by industrial legacies by circumscribing "what can be thought, said and done" (Bennett, 2015b, p. 1290; see also Taylor, 2012).

While conditioned by intergenerational transmissions, we must not overstate the hysteresis of deindustrializing places. Deindustrialized generations, and the spaces they occupy, are in continual everyday processes of becoming, evident in the material decay and regeneration that has taken place since the closure of industrial workplaces and production (Stewart, 1996; Whatmore, 2006; Pink, 2012; Hill, 2013; Degnen, 2016). For a deindustrialized generation, encounters with pasts that predate them happen at the same time as we become through sociopolitical policies, events, and transformations. For the deindustrialized generation in the Nottinghamshire coalfield, their "historicity of lived experiences" (Tilley, 1994, p. 23) has been shaped by several sociopolitical policy phases. First among these is the neoliberal discourse of individualized aspiration that has dominated Western societies since the 1980s (Bright, 2011; Ingram, 2011; Bright, 2012a, Bright, 2016b). Additionally, from 1998 to 2010—when the deindustrialized generation in this article were transitioning to adulthood—Labour Party governments initiated a programme of neoliberal regeneration in the coalfields areas involving replacing lost relatively high paid, stable industrial employment with low paid, precarious, and menial jobs in service industries (Shildrick et al., 2012; Foden et al., 2014). Finally, austerity measures over the last decade have disproportionately impacted former industrial areas, eroding further social support systems and entrenching social inequalities and its consequent material and environmental decline (Beatty and Fothergill, 2016).

These sociopolitical policies amount to a sustained process of dispossession inflicted on deindustrialized places and people, that has led to fragmented relationships between people and place. The narrative instilled into deindustrialized generations over successive sociopolitical phases is that we should reject the deindustrialized places and class we are from and should strive for individual social and spatial mobility (Tyler, 2013; Wacquant, 2016; Crossley, 2017; Nayak, 2019). Notwithstanding the punitive and stigmatizing measures facing deindustrialized people who "fail" or reject this agenda, upwardly mobile individuals with working-class backgrounds can experience intense feelings of "unease, anxiety, and dislocation" (Friedman, 2016, p. 130) engendered by social mobility and dwelling within middle-class spaces such as university or workplaces (Ingram, 2011; Taylor, 2012; Bathmaker et al., 2013).

Moreover, the affective-temporal process of becoming through these phases has been encoded in declarative memories of a deindustrialized generation (Pain, 2019). While declarative memory is critical to belonging, it is contingent on the histories available to remember and construct autobiographical narratives. Through processes of becoming under a regime of neoliberal regeneration, decline and false social mobility deindustrialized generations accumulate experiences that translate into declarative memories, emotional repertoires, and bodily dispositions that can alienate, as well as anchor belonging (Anderson, 2014).

Not all deindustrialized people have been maladaptive to recent transformations and many navigate tensions between pasts and presents successfully (Bathmaker et al., 2013; Loveday, 2014; Roberts, 2014). Place and place-histories have proved restorative where deindustrialized generations can draw upon proud histories to sustain themselves in uncertain or fractious times and place remains a primary attachment for belonging (Walley, 2013; Bright, 2016; Emery, 2018; Preece, 2020). Stephenson and Wray (2005) have documented "emotional regeneration" in the north eastern coalfield of England, achieved through engaging with cultural inheritances, specifically by the commissioning, display, and maintenance of union banners, which act as the "symbolic and representational heart of [their] village" (Ibid, p. 180). More broadly, it is often suggested that historical awareness and heritage has a therapeutic capacity to enhance belonging and process change in deindustrialized communities (Linkon and Russo, 2002). Walley (2013, p. 22) describes this process, from a personal perspective, as like "scratching an itch, or salving a wound." This also has a clinical basis, with social and cognitive psychologists arguing that practices of collaborative remembering—the co-production of shared narratives on the past between active participants—facilitates senses of belonging and shared identity (Fivush et al., 2018). However, as will be revisited, how place and place-histories are (re)produced, communicated, and curated is important in places where the past is deeply contested, such as the Nottinghamshire coalfield.

Collectively, the above literatures have been useful in evidencing the relational dynamics between industrial legacies and memories of deindustrialization. In summary, the lives of a deindustrialized generation are experienced through multiple and relational affective-temporal processes converging in and evoked by places, bodies, and materialities. Apparent is the extent in which affective-temporal processes are embedded in practices, performances and embodiments of everyday life, imbuing experiences of work, education, place, and social relations (Blokland, 2001; Connerton, 2011; Baraitser, 2017). However, studies of belonging do not have much to say explicitly on how affective-temporal processes relate and entangle to mediate senses of belonging and alienation (Degnen, 2013; May, 2016; Baraitser, 2017). As will be documented, everyday exposures to relational affective-temporal processes of intergenerational transmission, becoming, declarative memory and place-history constitutes and intervenes in the capacity to belong and be alienated (Bennett, 2014b; Emery, 2019a). First it is necessary to detail theoretical and methodological approaches taken.

CONCEIVING AND APPREHENDING AFFECTIVE-TEMPORAL PROCESSES OF BELONGING

Couched in the affective turn, belonging is a constellation of emotional attunements, affective attachments, and embodied feelings, and there is increasing awareness of the affective and emotional relationalities of belonging and temporality (Bennett, 2009, 2014b; Mee and Wright, 2009; Jones, 2011; Wood and Waite, 2011; Brown and Reavey, 2014). Not seeking to reify concepts of belonging, or its affective and temporal contingencies, following Wright (2015), I propose a weak theory approach to belonging (see also: Sedgwick, 1997, 2003; Anderson, 2014). Weak theory resists strong theory's "tendency to beat its objects into submission to its dreamy arguments" (Stewart, 2013, p. 284), allowing room "to wonder where [objects of study] might go and what potential modes of knowing, relating, and attending to things are already somehow present in them as a potential or resonance" (Stewart, 2008, p. 73). Further, "weak theory also points to the affective domain, to the myriad more-than-human processes of attunement and attachment through which belongings are constituted" (Wright, 2015, p. 392). Approaching belonging through weak theory means attending to the sometimes amorphous aspects of affective life, particularly the affective atmospheres or "structures of feeling" (Williams, 1977) that envelop and constitute spaces, localized systems of knowing and relating and the embodied, non-declarative, spaces inherent in human and more-than-human interactions (Anderson, 2014).

I do not, however, conceive affect as some purely non-representational or unreachable other (Anderson, 2014; Fox, 2015). Rather than an overdetermination of its uncanny dimensions, affect frameworks allows us to consider several interrelated and relevant conceptualizations of embodiment, emotion, and the atmospheric. In my reading, affect is part of wider flows of signification within recognizable socio-spatial processes (Burkitt, 2019). Affect and emotion, much like memory, are personally intimate, but are also socially produced, felt in common and rendered intelligible by social systems of knowing. A room can be characterized by tension, a nation can be in mourning, ages of anxiety, paranoia and emergency periodize history, and institutions can manifest cultures of hate or fear. Further, evidenced below, shared affective conditions also take place at localized geographical levels and spaces can be occupied by competing senses of atmosphere that evoke disparate emotional states. As Burkitt (2019, p. 55) argues, emotions "are part of human activity and are experiences that emerge out of specific situations in which we are related to other people and things in a socially meaningful way." Shared affective conditions that exist outside human bodies, such as atmospheres, collective moods or structures of feeling, manifest in the emotional, and embodied registers of the human (Anderson, 2014). And human bodies, in turn, produce those shared affective conditions, co-acting relationally with their human, material, symbolic, and representational geographies. Social scientists concerned with emotion and affect engage with the social, material, discursive, and atmospheric through closer attunement to the sometimes

hidden, yet fundamental, aspects of experience (Wetherell, 2012, 2013; Wetherell et al., 2015). For me, "becoming sentient to a world's work, bodies, rhythms, and ways of being in noise and light and space" (Stewart, 2011, p. 445) merely involves recalibrating existing methodological approaches toward more embodied, emotional, and critically reflexive research sensibilities (Hoggett et al., 2010).

The use of the critically reflexive self and the emoting, sensing body is central to affective methodologies, although is particularly open to claims of self-interest, indulgence, and atypicality (Jones, 2011, 2015; Horton and Kraftl, 2012; Mah, 2014; Shaw et al., 2015). What this work achieves, however, are substantive accounts of how temporal processes—particularly remembering declarative memories—are deeply affective and emotional and a practice tied to landscapes, materialities, and other evocations, and situated within contemporary and changeable moments and contexts (Ellis and Bochner, 2000; Butz and Besio, 2009; Moriarty, 2013; Bondi, 2014a; Jones, 2015; Wylie, 2017). Relatedly, declarative memories emerge from *shared* spatial, temporal, and affective processes (May, 2013). Being from a mining family in the Nottinghamshire coalfield, I am from the same intergenerational shared spaces as those under enquiry. Drawing on the concept of habitus, Ingram (2011, p. 289) states "when people share similar life experiences by, for example, growing up in a particular working-class neighborhood, they acquire dispositions in line with those of their families and neighbors. Moreover, scholars have recently sought an "expanded view" (Brown and Reavey, 2015) of memory, thinking more relationally between personal, familial, and social memory and highlighting the collective nature of emplaced recollections of shared pasts (Hoskins, 2016, 2018). Returned to in the final discussion, there are limitations to autoethnographic enquiry, both applicable to all social research and specific to this study. In a general sense the ways that affects and emotions are experienced, condition, and read is affected by various other subjectivities, identifications and lived histories of the body. My emotional and lived experiences have been conditioned by my white male positionality, and this positionality will also impact my capacity to interpret others" emotional and lived experiences. More specific to this research, there are also concerns that my enhanced knowledge of local histories, and my position to that history, renders me unrepresentative of others from the same generation. However, as will later be argued, individualized trajectories in a deindustrialized geography make everyone unrepresentative to some degree. As the vignettes detail, my declarative memories and becomings are regularly aligned and entangled with those of my generation who all share experiences structured by deindustrialization and the histories of the Nottinghamshire coalfield. Autoethnography is used here to elucidate emotionally difficult experiences from these shared pasts and presents that are often withheld in interviews.

There are limits to what is retrievable through interviews, especially given the emotionally intense subject focus here which can be difficult to express authentically (de Boise and Hearn, 2017). I do, however, draw from interviews conducted between May 2016 and March 2018 with five women and five men born between 1984 and 1994. The participants all have genealogies embedded in the Nottinghamshire coalfield and the coal industry, yet, all have different experiences of place, becoming, work and social relations. Questioning involved aspects of life-history and psychosocial interviewing, both premising that our present-day affective selves are products of our histories and memories (Wengraf, 2000; Jackson and Russell, 2010; Walkerdine, 2010, 2016; Hollway and Jefferson, 2013). Analysis paid close attention to the whole of the interview as a relational and situated process, foregrounding the atmospheres, contexts, and emotional dialogues of the interview setting beyond solely speech (Hollway and Jefferson, 2013; Bondi, 2014b; Dowling et al., 2016). Collaborative remembering was a notable feature of the interviews. Although I did not know the participants prior to research, during interviews we would arrive at shared experiences of the communities we grew up in and developed dialogues around familiar subjects, such as school, stories our parents, and grandparents told us and nights out in our localities and in Mansfield, the main urban center in the Nottinghamshire coalfield. In some instances, sharing reminiscences of growing up and experiencing the Nottinghamshire coalfield put participants at ease, but also made some wary of elaborating on emotive subjects. I propose that this reticence came from a supposed likelihood that we may have mutual friends or acquaintances and was evident in the persistent questioning into my own past, where I grew up and what schools I attended.

In addition to interviews, I engaged in 2 years of Observant Participation alone or with friends in Mansfield and its surrounding former coalmining villages. An explorative and reactive Observant Participation replicates how life is lived and seeks to capture some of the temporal and affective encounters that take place in everyday life (Law, 2004; Stewart, 2005; Pink, 2012; Plows, 2018). Similar to Participant Observation, Observant Participation aims to "move beyond surface appearances and study what they, rather than their informants, think is important" (Moeran, 2007, p. 14) and is well-suited for researchers with pre-existing knowledge of the research field. Observant Participation was conducted day and night and took place in streets, public houses, cafes, Miners' Welfares, football matches, takeaways, restaurants, shops, and nightclubs and involved a focus on everyday processes, interactions and performances of people around me, noting what was being said and what was not (Bennett et al., 2015). It was sometimes a confusing experience shifting positionalities from being of somewhere, and embedded in its spaces, to conducting research of them, leading to conflicts of belonging and alienation that were representative of the effects of deindustrialization itself, and explored in the first vignette.

INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSIONS, PAINED BODIES AND PAINED PLACES

My dad used to have a swelling of fluid below his proper knee, prepatellar bursitis accumulated from sustained kneeling. As kids, my siblings and I called it his third knee and took grotesque pleasure in poking it. I can still sense the texture and sponginess of it now. My grandad's body, too, seemed totally inscribed

by physical labor. He wore a cervical collar most evenings to ameliorate the piercing pain of arthritis acquired by years of climbing through dark underground tunnels. My siblings and I liked to wear my grandad's collar, finding it hilarious to walk around pretending to be Frankenstein's monster. He also had the end of his finger chopped off at work so that his nail grew over the top. Although my grandad died some years ago, I can still picture the curve of his nail and the sound it made tapping on his cup of tea.

Laboring bodies hurt. Often because of accidents, but just as much as an unavoidable consequence of the contortions, abrasions, and erosions that they must do to perform their job. Women in the Nottinghamshire coalfield are not excluded from this injurious process, but it is the stories and bodies of men— of miners and mining—that dominate. The injured bodies of our male family members are fundamental to how we perceive them: physical, laboring, marked by arduous work. Participants all had dads or grandads who had impairments from their labor, and they have affective and embodied childhood memories of being fascinated by coal tattoos, or intrigued by missing fingers or limbs, or empathetic to wheezing lungs. Injured men and women surrounded us beyond the home and family as well. It seemed ordinary to see middle-aged men using walking sticks, for instance. We were habituated in home and community to occupational afflictions and stories about accidents suffered within the harsh conditions of the colliery. Miners and ex-miners would sit in homes, pubs, and Miners' Welfares tapping parts of their body that had befallen some excruciating incident or pulling aside trouser legs, shirt sleeves, or collars to reveal scars. As they spoke, we would be surrounded by material reminders of the mining days. Commemorative plates, coal carvings, ornamental miner's lamps, and pin badges acted as memory prompts and symbolic reminders for more remembering. We came to know where we were and from through these materialized and embodied intergenerational stories, gifted to us as transmissions of how work should impart itself on us and others, and how our bodies should feel to belong (Bennett, 2014a, 2015a,b).

For 5 years before going to university, and in the summers as an undergraduate, I worked in the construction industry. On one occasion my right leg slipped through some scaffolding while I was carrying some building materials. The severe pain was temporary, however the numbness continued for several weeks after and, when the gashes healed, a slight indentation was left on my thigh. Sometimes, when I am thinking about the different type of work I do now, how different it is to the physical labor I did before and that most of my male family members and childhood friends do, I feel a sensation where my injury had been. I have a conflicting desire for the indentation to be bigger, for the pain to still be present, so that I can share in the telling of stories and memories that men I know engage in, sat trading stories of injury, pain and labor. It is a sensation I felt while talking to Stephen and Simon about their jobs.

Stephen is a plasterer and, since the 2008 financial crisis, has been employed by "six or seven different firms," as the companies either went bankrupt or had to lay-off workers. Nonetheless, Stephen sees his job as a "proper job." It is physical, regularly hurts him and after work he feels physically drained. It is how

his dad and grandfather would have "felt after a shift at the pit," and, in managing to align with intergenerationally transmitted valuations of meaningful work, these embodied lineages connect him to male ancestors. Stephen's body feels as if it belongs within space and time. There is a cognitive and affective barrier between Stephen and me as we speak. I know that Stephen does not think my job is a "proper job," and I know that if I mentioned that I once had a "proper job" it would only intensify Stephen's disdain for me. I received a similar reaction from Simon, a warehouse operative at a large company built on reclaimed land where the colliery once was.

Simon hates his job. It is boring and he "don't get paid much." If the colliery was still open he would be "down there in a shot." His dad, grandad and, maybe, his great-grandad (Simon's not sure) all worked there but Simon was disinherited from his patrilineal tradition when the colliery closed in 1989 (Preece, 2020). He must work though and would never go on benefits or join the "Bad Back Brigade"—former miners who are suspected of feigning bad backs in order to avoid work and live on incapacity payments. Fear of joining this dishonorable "brigade" ensures that Simon works through illness and injury in a job that alienates him daily. It is clear that Simon is resentful, probably of me. He mentioned three times during our hour-long interview that I was exempted from the alienations he was struggling to articulate because I, in Simon's words, "went to uni."

Higher education is indeed a tangible route for a deindustrialized generation and three participants, additional to me, had attended university. However, intensities of alienation were continually forced to the surface for those that attended, in moments that stick with them (Massey, 2011). Lauren still remembers vividly and affectively the "chav nights" at her university when fellow students came to her room to ask if she had any "chavvy" clothes they could borrow: "I just thought, 'What, cause I'm from Mansfield and I've got this accent?' I mean, who d' they think they are? I jus' felt so awkward for ages after that. I jus' thought, 'aww God, where am I 'ere?" I, too, had similar experiences. In my first year at an "elite" university I attended a varsity rugby game. The atmosphere was quite good-natured as we squashed together on the benches, until it transformed, as the chants from "our" side began to rouse. Those I was sat with, that I had lived with for the previous 8 months, joined in as a chorus started: "Your dad works for my dad! Your dad works for my dad!" The next: "We pay your benefits! We pay your benefits!" Surrounded by the voluminous noise, the feeling of alienation swelled. The felt intensity derived from the unexpectedness, and the speed in which an affective atmosphere can change in an instant, from one imbued and facilitative of communal belongings to one that excludes. The chants continued throughout and each time the feeling of alienation, lingering in the background as a knot around the stomach, loosened and tightened along with chants. The memory is still drenched with conflicting emotions—resentment, defiance, shame.

Simon and Stephen are justified in their assessments though. I am symbolically, if not economically, distanced to them as a result of our different deindustrialized trajectories. After our interviews, I wondered if either Simon or Stephen are "typical

Mansfield lads."[1] I knew exactly the type of man who Lauren, Kate and Claire meant when they each, in separate conversations, mentioned "your typical Mansfield lad." But when we tried to articulate him, to flesh out the typical Mansfield lad's character, the way he looks, his disposition, his behavior, and opinions, we could not quite pin it down. He evaded us although we knew him so well and we laughed together about how a character so known to us could simultaneously be so elusive. The same phenomenon pervades conversations in the Nottinghamshire coalfield all the time. People flippantly state that someone is just "your typical Mansfield lad." We are all convinced of the meanings contained in these shorthand phrases. We are certain that there is a shared understanding, although this must be taken-for-granted as we cannot put it into words. We just feel as if we *know* because we all grew up there or in nearby mining villages.

Claire is married to someone who she describes as "just your typical Mansfield lad." Claire says this with a sense of uncertainty, absent of pride, and understating her own love for her partner. It is as if she expects me to think less of her and her husband and is insulating herself against stigmatizing evaluations. Claire quickly backtracks and qualifies previous statements by suggesting that "other people could think he is [a 'typical Mansfield lad'], but he in't really." It seems that no one is, at the same time as them existing in droves. The "typical Mansfield lad" is a term used to deride and alienate, to signify negative masculine attributes and performances, that induce negatively valenced affects, to make you feel disdain and discomfort. He is perhaps someone "still lives with their mum but has this 'amazing' car on finance" (Lauren). Or he is misogynistic, "grabbing your arse on a night out" (Kate), wears designer clothing associated with football hooligans, has his priorities wrong and fights a lot. These embodied performances generate Mansfield's volatile affective atmospheres, atmospheres that alienate and make people feel anxious and wary of violence and abuse.

Participants squirmed when probed on their feelings toward "typical Mansfield lads." They felt a bit "judgy" (Lauren), as if they were displaying some prejudice and breaking an invisible code of solidarity with a place they know has suffered and that they have suffered with. Mansfield used to have a thriving nightlife, but people have stopped going out in the town. Partly, participants claimed, because the presence of "typical Mansfield lads" puts them off. Prejudice toward people from similar class backgrounds and places rankles with me, but I am just as bad (Wacquant, 2016). I did not particularly want to go on nights out in Mansfield for this research because I knew what to expect, and sometimes think Mansfield is, like Dan says, "a shithole." Yet, certain men adopt embodied behaviors and dispositions associated with "typical Mansfield lads" partly because the resources to belong are severely lacking in other contexts—particularly, as with Stephen and Simon, employment and work. The more nuanced mimetic performances and behaviors that Lauren, Kate and Claire dislike so much are attempts to claim spaces to belong. Through doing so the "typical Mansfield lad" and those from a similar class and family background exclude each other based on feelings evoked in and by each other and the atmospheres

they generate in the spaces they occupy. Places such as Mansfield then become contested spaces with competing claims over who belong in and to them by opposing sides both comprised of a same deindustrialized generation. These conflicts have troubled relationships throughout our lives and compromise declarative memories, with impacts on formations of belonging.

LIVED MEMORY, LIVING TRAUMA AND MISRECOGNISED NOSTALGIA

Matt thinks that he was in a minority in his school year, so he was surprised he was not bullied as a result. He was into different things—skating culture and the clothes and music associated with it. There were enough of these types around to form their own small group. They were marginalized from the more dominant majority, and regularly felt threatened by them, but this marginalization, for Matt at least, stopped short of "out-right bullying." It helped that his father was quite well-known in the colliery village where they lived and had taught Matt how to handle himself in a fight. Matt, hungover, being interviewed by a relative stranger, strikes for balance and reflects that "everyone got bullied a little bit in schools like ours though, didn't they?"

"What schools are they?" I asked. Even though we went to different schools, I already had a sense of what Matt's answer was to be.

"Schools 'round Mansfield. They were all a bit … tough, I guess," replies Matt.

Secondary school was certainly tough for Laura when she was bullied in the late 1990s. She still remembers vividly the beating she endured on the playing fields on her way home one day. Her bullies thought she was "stuck up," convinced that Laura thought she was better than them. They were wrong on all counts. Laura's dad was a miner at the nearby colliery and her mum worked a service job. Laura just stood out because she was a twin, studious, and her parents allowed their daughters to pursue hobbies different to the hobbies of other students at her school.

I was interviewing Laura in London, where she now lives. Unbeknownst to us, we were from the same village and attended the same secondary school several school years apart. We made connections to mutual acquaintances and joked about the idiosyncrasies of our home village, exchanging memories of strange occurrences that, we proposed, could only happen there: the incompetence of the teachers, their disinterest in stopping the terrible behavior, certain characters. Laura does not carry the bullying with her in everyday life. In some ways, she is thankful for it. It forced her to leave the village as soon as possible—shortly after leaving school at 16 years old. Laura goes back from time to time to visit her parents but does not venture out to any of the local shops or pubs. She does not feel as if she belongs there.

A few days before the interview with Laura, a social media group had been unexpectedly created specifically for my school year. The group started out as a humorous space as more and more people were added. Comment threads were started remembering unrequited loves and lusts, favorite teachers, least favorite teachers, funny things that happened. People delighted as partially forgotten events or nuances were recalled: nicknames,

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[1]"Lads" is a slang term for young men.

sayings, fights, clothes, haircuts. Recollections evoked further memories in others in a collaborative remembering of who went out with who, what outrageous thing someone did, what sport they were good at, and so forth. Replies sought to convey the embodied and emotional evocations that remembering had affected, laughter and warmth, embarrassment and discomfort, all imbued with nostalgia. Affective reactions were impulsive, and expressions were presented as unproblematic (Hoskins, 2018; Pasupathi and Wainryb, 2018; Wang, 2018). People responded to others' recollections, proclaiming how they had uninvitedly evoked sensations. The group could smell the glue in technology classrooms, hear the school bell and teachers shouting their familiar chastisements, feel the itchiness of the polyester uniform and the cheap hair gel that the boys soaked into their hair every morning. Soon enough, copies of photographs were being posted, group members grimacing in horror at the sight, posting emoticons to express their emotional responses.

Transportation back to that time and place rendered a romantic yearning among lives continuously becoming, still precarious and in flux. Like in the previous vignette, the absence of the coal industry, and other forms of industrial employment, as a post-education route, and neoliberal employment in their place, had fragmented our trajectories. And, from people posting about their post-school lives, it was clear that there were varying degrees of disconnection, uncertainty, and insecurity. School life seemed like a safer place to return to than the unknown future. A fond place to anchor communal temporal belongings.

It was unnerving then when the online atmosphere transformed from good-natured to more problematic themes. Comments began appearing from individuals who still carry resentments from their school years. They intended to correct the nostalgic narrative that was forming, seen as a distortion of what school was really like. Many others followed, sharing their own traumatic memories of bullying, name calling, physical violence, and abuse. The dominant memory for these former students was that they could not wait to leave that school, that those years had scarred them in ways still apparent. The group suddenly fell silent, comments were no longer forthcoming. I imagined people gripping their smartphones with apprehension, like I was. For a moment, it felt as we were all in that school again, facing a reckoning.

People began to send consoling messages to those expressing traumatic memories. Some grew anxious, worried about what bad thing someone else would remember, or, rather, what someone cannot forget, an event or feeling of exclusion that is not so much a memory, but a constant living with, a persistent unsettling presence. Absenting physical violence, at times I engaged in the exclusionary practices being documented by my peers. I am bound up in the traumatic experiences of others in my year group and my younger and present self appears in affective memories of those experiences. Outside the online group, my friends and I reassured each other that we were not as bad as we individually might think we had been. We remembered much worse things perpetrated by other individuals, people we now realize had much worse historic adolescent family situations than our own.

Although I had reasonably fond memories of school, I also remember the anxiety, necessity and struggle to belong, as we all did. There were very few strategies available to do this (Bright, 2011). Some carved out their place through sport, being attractive, or being funny. No one achieved a sense of belonging by being discernibly clever (Ingram, 2011). Belonging was sacrificed by those who sought academic achievement and earmarked them for bullying, as did, seemingly, anything else. Difference was policed, and normative embodied performances instilled, not because dominant groups were so sure and certain of themselves, but because they were not. We were all anxious to get by in ways available to us and deflected attention from our own struggles and anxieties by placing it on more disadvantaged or vulnerable others. It is only since leaving school that former students from the year group have begun to make the correlations between many of those that were bullied and the poverty and hardships that they endured at home.

These lived historicities problematize nostalgic memories of school and adolescence. To what extent you can blame the behavior of teenagers on the teenagers themselves is negligible. I could, of course, be seeking to absolve myself for past behavior, to reconcile memories. I do not want to use deindustrialization or social inequality as exculpations, however, they are explanatory. A few years after we left, my former school went into "special measures" and many others in the coalfield—an area of nationally low educational attainment—have been under special interventions. Like most in the Nottinghamshire coalfield, then and now, ours was a tough, low performing school at a tough, low performing time in a tough, low performing place (Gore and Smith, 2001). Our futures were forestalled then, but our declarative memories can also alienate us from place and time. Declarative memories of industrial ruination insist us, and will forever insist us, to come to terms with our deindustrialized pasts. As the collaborative remembering of the social group attests, this is a process that persists over time. This mediates productions of belonging through autobiographical memory. However, the autobiographical self is also contingent on making sense of historical narratives and historicities that predate us (Preece, 2020). From a place-specific perspective, these too are problematic in the Nottinghamshire coalfield.

"SCRATCHING AN ITCH OR SALVING A WOUND": PLACE-HISTORIES OF NOSTALGIA AND TRAUMA

Lodge banners of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) from collieries and coalfield communities across Britain are marched to the annual Durham Miners' Gala every July to congregate in a mass demonstration and enaction of trade union solidarity, coalmining culture, and communal class belonging (Mellor and Stephenson, 2005; Wray, 2009). Now that all the collieries in Britain have closed, the contemporary Durham Miners' Gala emphasizes the cultural and class heritage of mining and community as a commemorative act of strength and endurance. When the majority of the Nottinghamshire coalfield's

miners continued working during the 1984–85 Miners' Strike and subsequently left the NUM to form the Union of Democratic Mineworkers, they were forever banished from the Durham Miners' Gala. Conversely, since 1985 the Nottinghamshire coalfield's striking miners have received a special welcome at the Durham Miners' Gala in acknowledgement of their solidarity despite marginalized status in their own coalfield (Wray, 2009; Emery, 2018).

When my wife and I attended the 134th Durham Miners' Gala in the summer of 2018 we walked alongside an NUM branch from the Durham coalfield. When their brass band played *Gresford*, the Miners' Hymn, tears ran uncontrollably down my wife's face. Her maternal family are from the Durham coalfields. Her grandfather was a staunch striker during the 1984–85 Miners' Strike. The tears were triggered by both pride and mourning. She grew up with intergenerational narratives of the strike and her family's role in it. Much like other striking families I have interviewed, the 1984–85 Miners' Strike is a part of their everyday lives and used to contextualize and explain many local and national sociopolitical developments, particularly the decline of local mining communities. The strike and its constant remembrance plays a critical role in the construction and foundation of who these families collectively are and have been.

Throughout our day, I could not shake a sense of shame. I am from a scabbing family, both on my dad's side and my mum's. I am not wholly proud of my own place histories, and shameful of the role that family and place ancestors played in the 1984–85 Miners' Strike and wider narratives of deindustrialization and trade union history. While this research has helped me understand why miners from my home place and own family did not strike in the 1984–85 Miners' Strike, I would prefer them to have done and envy my peers from striking families who hold a sense of pride from this ancestry (Wray, 2009; Bright, 2016). With an increased historical knowledge—gained from a wider research project—evocations of this place-history, inescapably *my* place-history, seem to leap out from landscapes, books, songs, films, and so forth, that previously laid anonymous and taken-for-granted.

On my drive into the Nottinghamshire coalfield I pass through Ollerton, a former mining village. There is a bench there that commemorates David Jones, a striking miner from Yorkshire killed in March 1984 during running battles between police, pickets and working miners. Every March, David Jones' family and friends, come to the bench to lay flowers and post pictures of David so that Ollerton never forget his face or what occurred there that night. The bench's inscription reads that David "lost his life at Ollerton … in the fight to save jobs and communities." When I approach this unassuming bench, I cannot help but look, and seeing it unavoidably evokes feelings of shame and alienation from histories that I belong to and am entwined with.

Previously, I might have passed David's bench hundreds of times and not given it a thought. Neither did Gary and Sarah and they are from Ollerton. Their dads spoke "all the time" about their mining days and Sarah's dad often mentions how the colliery closure "killed the village." The logo of Ollerton Town Council, like others in the coalfield, features a colliery headstock and Gary and Sarah both spent much of their childhoods in the now demolished Miners' Welfare building with other mining families. Gary "used to have a great time in there" and the Miners' Welfare was where Sarah learnt to dance and met her best friend. Yet neither Gary or Sarah knew much about the 1984–85 Miners' Strike, the violence that ripped through their village during those 12 months, or the bitter cleavages left in its wake.

I realize now that our ignorance resulted from a sustained and ongoing process of silencing and social forgetting (Hirst and Yamashiro, 2018). Some Ollerton residents objected when the bench was proposed, arguing that it should be placed in Yorkshire where David was from. My historical geographies, along with Gary's and Sarah's, and others, were primarily presented to me in ways that my family and older generations wanted them to be, as nostalgic recollections of a time that we should mourn. When I asked friends and participants what they know about their shared place-histories they were convinced they were fully aware of their parents' and grandparents' lives, that memories were always passed down to them, that they knew where they were from through these stories. Though, apart from members of striking families, they did not know about the 1984–85 Miners' Strike. They did not know about the split in the unions or know much about colliery closures or the contextual underpinnings of our deindustrialized lives. In particular, the 1984–85 Miners' Strike in the part of the Nottinghamshire coalfield we are from takes the form of a collective place secret, lingering underneath, but never explicitly spoken of.

On the odd occasion that anyone from the deindustrialized generation reflected on or questioned things transferred to us, we filled in the interstices with assumptions and inferences. Laura decided to write a play about the Nottinghamshire coalfield inspired by conversations with her father. She knew of the 1984–85 Miners' Strike but did not want to write a play about it, believing that no one would want to watch it. It was only from delving into the history of the strike that she realized the significance of the industrial unrest to the area and the wider story of deindustrialization and changed her mind. When Laura told her parents that the play was to be about the strike, her mum warned her off. Laura had one conversation with her father on the phone about the strike. The conversation developed into an argument and Laura's father got so agitated and overflowing with emotions, that he put the phone down on his daughter. He could not talk about any aspect of the strike without transgressing his own boundaries of emotional expression, so they never spoke of it again. Like Laura, my curiosity into the place I am from has also led to awkward interactions with family and family friends. Ex-miners and wives of ex-miners have started slipping comments about the 1984–85 Miners' Strike and colliery closures into conversations I am within earshot of, comments that they see as exonerating them for past actions and decisions. People have said such things as, "Well, you never hear about the Strike from our side, do you? How we were lied to." Others have suggested that they were excused from going on strike because they were in other unions within the industry and that they were critical to maintenance of the colliery.

The feeling that exposing concealed wounds compounds the confusing sense that I am being alienated from my own place by knowing more about its past. Walley's (2013, p. 22) metaphor of

the need to find out and to understand the causes of industrial ruination being like "scratching an itch, or salving a wound" resonates with me, but any catharsis that scratching the itch has rendered remains unclear. It often feels like in scratching the itch I have broken the skin and the wound has been infected with a bitterness and alienation that was not previously felt so intensely.

DISCUSSION

The above vignettes articulate (some of) the affective-temporal processes operating in spaces, atmospheres, materialities, and bodies with contested pasts and deindustrialized presents. We have seen how intergenerational transmissions, declarative memories, and place-histories are enacted in shared and personal spaces, bodies, and emotions (and this should not be seen as the extent of the myriad temporal processes that intervene in everyday relations in deindustrialized spaces and elsewhere). As we navigate everyday becomings through life courses we encounter affective-temporal processes of declarative memory, place histories, and intergenerational transmissions, each shaping how the others are lived, felt, and transformed. Affective-temporal processes relate, overlap and pile-up (Stewart, 1996). The ways that relational affective-temporal processes emerge and are enacted in formations of belonging and alienation is further contingent on spatial and political contexts of their emergence in the present. These relational encounters, in turn, condition and mediate our attempts and capacities to belong and can alienate us from space and time.

I have contributed to understandings of how past formations of belonging are transmitted and emerge in a deindustrialized generation that had little direct experience of the industries that ordered previous forms of life and place (Nayak, 2003; Walkerdine and Jiménez, 2012; Bright, 2016; Walkerdine, 2016). Coal mining, the coal industry and mining communities in the Nottinghamshire coalfield, that the generation examined in this article knew only as residues and legacies, are traceable in practices, performances, and desired means to belong that emerge in different moments, encounters, and contexts. During the period when coal dominated the socioeconomic and cultural rhythms of the coalfield, intergenerational social reproduction of belonging and identity for men were given clear avenues by the availability of mining jobs, whereby sons of miners could become miners themselves. These affective and embodied ways of being have transferred to a generation that are bereft of the institutional and economic systems and infrastructure to claim belonging in what we see as our legitimate prideful and purposeful heritage. Without mining jobs, formulations of valued work and employment coheres around subsidiary characteristics of physical labor, defined and evidenced by how that work inflicts itself on the body.

Affective intergenerational transmissions do not inform the totality of how people seek to claim, and are denied, belonging among this generation, however. While industrial mining cultures and forms of life continue to make themselves known in discreet and subtle ways, shared experiences of industrial ruination and neoliberal regeneration have created a localized and classed systems of knowing. This spatially and historically specific knowledge is rendered contingent of the historicities of deindustrialized bodies enmeshed in the Nottinghamshire coalfield. Articulating and describing localized systems of knowing proves difficult and we often distil meanings into phrases dense with spatial and embodied intensities, such as "typical Mansfield lad." Inarticulable is the mutuality of deindustrialized spaces, temporalities, and people to co-produce the atmospheres, moods, and feel of places and the types of bodies that occupy them. Disdained bodies and atmospheres simultaneously alienate, exclude, and draw in.

These deindustrializing affective conditions are bound up in the process of lived memories, whereby declarative affective memories of living deindustrialization have begun to problematize the perceptions and imaginaries of the past. This is the case of my school year's social media group. Here, the effects of deindustrialization, for instance, poverty, social inequalities, and familial breakdowns led to difficult experiences of school where bullying and anxiety was endemic. Negatively valenced affective memories of this time contest nostalgic evaluations of the past. Moreover, this contested nostalgia, which could provide a resource to cope with present-day anxieties and precarities, inhibits a temporal belonging through coherent autobiographical memories. Alluding to localized specificities of place, as my generation grow older, we are forced to reconcile memories of industrial ruination with merely fragments of how things came to be.

Importantly, intergenerational transmissions are transformed and obfuscated by the geographical specificities of the Nottinghamshire coalfield's experience of deindustrialization, namely the 1984–85 Miners' Strike and trade union splits. A deindustrialized generation have been bereft of many proudful associations with our histories because of the inabilities of older parents and so forth to communicate useable pasts. Pluralizing forms of temporal processes allows us to consider what histories and historicities are being undeclared or emerge through other forms beyond speech, an undeveloped area of class research, which tends to focus on the clearly apparent and representational (Emery, 2019b). Coal mining culture and heritage is not as palpable in the Nottinghamshire coalfield as that demonstrated by the villages proudly parading at Durham Miners' Gala, for instance (Emery, 2020). Traumatic histories of the 1984–85 Miners' Strike, and its contextualization of subsequent colliery closures, are actively silenced in the Nottinghamshire coalfield resulting in an absence of explanatory frameworks for the industrial ruination experienced by my generation. The participants and friends I spoke with who are from mining families that worked during the strike had little idea of the fractious and violent events that took place in the mining villages they were from or the changes and animosities it wrought. In a similar sense to that which Bright (2012, p. 316) found in a study of the neighboring Derbyshire coalfield, a deindustrialized generation in the Nottinghamshire coalfield are "adrift from 'illegitimate' histories that are [our] legitimate 'heritage' and, at the same time, [are] subject to the traumatic affective legacy of those histories."

Moreover, both Laura and I discovered that uncovering this traumatic past and breaking the silencing that requires continual vigilance can result in unsettling and fractious conversations with family members. Conversely, the two people I spoke with that were from families that went on strike were knowledgeable about the strike and took great pride in their family's action and association. Thus, the capacity to produce autobiographical narratives from intergenerational, unlived history, and use these as a resource in which to claim belonging, is dependent on the specificities of that history and an individual's position to it.

Including autoethnography also opens the analysis to claims of egocentrism, however, I have drawn out distinctions between experiences across and between participants (Bennett, 2014b). Of course, as we have seen, I am somewhat unrepresentative of the wider deindustrialized generation because I am now aware of the fine-grained histories of the Nottinghamshire coalfield. This poses a weakness with the conceptualizations, yet, as has been argued, there does not appear to be a representative individual in the coalfield, and there is no "typical Mansfield lad." We have seen that variegated experiences are a defining aspect of deindustrializing spaces, as the old anchors of work and place are dislodged from each other, life courses and trajectories. Deindustrialization of the Nottinghamshire coalfield has pluralized and fragmented experiences such that former "ties that bind"—the colliery, the mining community and attendant social institutions—have been almost irreparably eroded. Deindustrialization and the detachment of work and community has cast deindustrialized generations out into a neoliberalized and individualized world, leading to problematized attachments and detachments from each other and place (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Preece, 2020). What this research evidences further is that "it is increasingly problematic to clearly define a post-industrial working-class" (Emery, 2019b, p. 3), and I have avoided speaking in exclusively class categories here, preferring to take processual and relational understandings similar to those of Thompson (1963, p. 8) who did not see "class as a 'structure,' nor even as a 'category,' but as something which in fact happens in human relationships." Besides shared childhood experiences and place history, participants suggested that there is little by way of similitude between each other and me with them. I have drawn out distinctions between my experience and that of others of a similar age, illustrating the individuated nature of embodiment and emotional experience. Of course, individuality existed before deindustrialization, but it has been institutionalized and venerated through neoliberalism and regeneration policies, which the deindustrialized generation have become through. The neoliberalization of work, for example, has forced a generation of new workers to follow diffuse avenues in the pursuit of wages and belonging, eroding collectivized senses of similitude. We saw with Simon, Stephen, and me that divergent employment and education trajectories can lead to disdain of those from similar starting points. We also saw how the affective embodiments of this disdain, alienation and shame can manifest in claims over space and resources to anchor and enact belonging, in this case, claims over Mansfield and who belongs there (Fenster, 2005).

Possessing historical knowledge also differentiates me and those belonging to striking families from most of my generation in the Nottinghamshire coalfield that remain solely exposed to the past through positive memories and affective and embodied intergenerational transmissions. Those from striking families are also not vulnerable to the shame and alienation I feel towards my own family and place history. However, they may have senses of alienation to place owing to family-centered intergenerational transmission as opposed to place-history. Additionally, my white male positionality precludes me from personally feeling—in an embodied and emotional form—what it is like, for instance, for Lauren, Claire, and Kate to encounter the masculinities of the "typical Mansfield lad." Aside from the discussion of masculinity, generation, and place, there has not been space to draw out distinctions in how affective-temporal processes intersect with other identifications of gender, race, and sexuality to mediate belonging and alienation—another productive avenue to investigate. As previously noted, shared atmospheres and collective moods and feelings are shaped by other subjectivities.

Despite their limitations, however, foregrounding my own experiences also speaks to an ethics of representation not often discussed in work that either fuses autoethnographic accounts with interview testimony or critiques of autoethnography. This paper has documented difficult, traumatic and troubling experiences, memories, and pasts. I share in the broader socio-cultural context of deindustrialization from which they emerged. Histories of deindustrialization are carried with us, worn on and in our bodies, present in embodied performances and affective repertoires. To pretend otherwise would be an abdication of my responsibility to my research participants. During interviews it was made apparent by participants that we should share together experiences and memories, rather than me merely gathering and using their testimony. It was through conversations with research participants and friends that I decided to document autoethnographic testimony in the hope that I could offer something valuable on the intimacies of belonging and alienation. To not share my own stories alongside theirs would be a dereliction of solidarity with them.

I suggest that scholars from and with (de)industrial backgrounds rooted in families and places should stand with their participants to unashamedly communicate our personal and collective narratives in order to correct or explain some of the misrecognition of class and class politics. Through doing so we can begin to unravel the social and academic prejudices toward these demographics that compound the affective intensities of alienation and bitterness they experience, and that we should seek to ameliorate. Although deindustrialization and neoliberal regeneration has split and fragmented the life courses of those with shared backgrounds, by documenting our temporal experiences and struggles to belong in all their difficult, troubling and comforting complexities we may find that our deindustrializing lives are not as heterogenous as first appears. As the narratives shared in this article attest, similitude exists in lived, class-based, affective experiences of alienation contingent of lived, class-based, histories of deindustrialization. For better or worse, our shared lived and intergenerational pasts condition our emotional and bodily repertoires, marking us out and mediating

our capacities to belong in the spaces that deindustrialization has left us. These threads of shared affective-temporal processes of belonging and alienation can form the basis for a renewal of solidarity, attenuation of alienation and a means to belong.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The datasets generated for this study are available on request to the corresponding author.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by University of Leicester. The patients/participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The author confirms being the sole contributor of this work and has approved it for publication.

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After the Storm: Inter-disciplinary Dialogic Discourses With a Post-Fishing Community

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This paper is a critical evaluation of a unique approach to working with disadvantaged communities, which involves inter-disciplinary collaboration between an Applied Theater (AT) director and a sociologist. The application of the approach, in a community disadvantaged by the loss of industry, provides the case study basis for the evaluation. Between 2014 and 2017 community participants from Eyemouth, southeast Scotland, worked with an artistic team led by director Fiona MacPherson[1], and a sociologist, Carol Stephenson, to develop a creative performance of the town's fishing disaster of 1881. This inter-disciplinary project was facilitated through dialogic discourses between community participants, AT director and sociologist in which the equalization of relationships, meaning-making and active listening were established as shared values and processes. The paper makes four claims. Firstly, sociological observation of the negotiation of the creative process revealed previously hidden and nuanced social interactions, which could later be examined in greater detail with the AT director and in focus group discussions with community participants. Second, the use of dialogic discourses in the critical appraisal of AT practice by the sociologist ultimately enabled the inter-disciplinary sharing of practice, ideas and theories that were mutually beneficial. Third, the creative process revealed insights into the lived experience of post-industrial communities and enabled public sociology discourse, which ultimately prompted social activism within the case study community. Last, while the inter-disciplinary approach is labor intensive and demands high levels of commitment to the shared values associated with dialogic discourses, it provides a new and innovative way of working with, and for, disadvantaged communities.

Keywords: public sociology, applied theater, dialogic discourses, post-industrial, inter-disciplinary

INTRODUCTION

On October 14th 1881 the fishing fleet of Eyemouth, South East Scotland, driven by fear of starvation, set out as one. Unbeknown to the crews they were in the eye of a storm that would claim the lives of 189 men and boys. Women and children watched from the shore as their kin drowned in sight of land. The disaster left 93 widows and 267 children without fathers. The authorities sought to support the impoverished town by taking into care the children of those who had died. The collective endeavor of the people of Eyemouth ensured that this harsh charity was successfully rejected: not one child was removed (Aitchison, 2006).

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[1] Including Liz Pavey, Dance Artist and Choreographer and Eleanor Logan, Producer and Musical Director.

Today Eyemouth is a post-fishing community that experiences many of the problems common to such communities.

In 2014, the Eyemouth Church Council made a complaint to the producers of a national tour, Follow The Herring (FTH), that incorporated the play Get Up and Tie Your Fingers (written by Ann Coburn): while FTH retold the story of the Eyemouth disaster, the tour had not visited Eyemouth itself. The decision not to perform in the town had been driven by a number of logistical considerations[2]. Following that complaint, AT director of the national FTH tour, Fiona MacPherson, worked with residents of Eyemouth to support them in a contemporary re-retelling of their story, using narration and song.

This further iteration of the project, Get Up and Tie Your Fingers Eyemouth (GUTYFE) provided a performative context for the inter-disciplinary collaboration of sociologist Carol Stephenson and MacPherson in the application of a unique approach to working with a post-industrial (PI) community, the critical appraisal of which forms this basis of the paper. The project took place over 20-month period and involved over 40 rehearsals and culminated in three iterations of GUTYFE[3].

Stephenson had a long history of research in PI communities in relation to the conditions of their decline (Wray and Stephenson, 2012); female activism during and after the 1984/5 miners' strike (with Spence and Stephenson, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012; Spence, 2019); and the value and importance of the performance of shared cultural and industrial heritage (Dodds et al., 2006; Mellor and Stephenson, 2005; Stephenson and Wray, 2005, 2017).

MacPherson is a theater director and academic whose work is informed by the principles of AT. She consequently values collaborative relationships between theater makers and community participants that are dialogic and democratic. She also recognizes these relationships and processes must be informed by a clear understanding of the socio/political context in which the creative work takes place: this prompted her collaboration with Stephenson.

The pair first collaborated when MacPherson invited Stephenson to support the development of The Awkward Squad (2012), a critically acclaimed piece of popular theater (Williams, 2012). The piece centered on the lives of three generations of women in a post-mining community. Stephenson's early involvement in the development of the storyline and engagement with actors in rehearsals provided sociological insight into female activism. To this point, the collaboration was a conventional arrangement as academic experts are often drawn into creative processes to provide background knowledge based on their own research. However, it quickly became apparent that a new type of opportunity was emerging. Following the knowledge exchange, Stephenson prompted MacPherson to justify creative

decisions and interventions. MacPherson recognized the value of Stephenson's presence in the rehearsal, not simply because of her research-based knowledge but for the sociological skills of observation, criticality and the problematization and theorization of power. Stephenson's role had shifted from expert/information provider to curious critical friend and evaluator of creative process.

That early work, and the collaboration explored in this paper, was founded upon a shared commitment to liberation pedagogies that facilitate collective learning and creativity (Stephenson et al., 2014, 2016). The work in Eyemouth explored here is based on an examination of a series of integrated dialogic discourses between theater practitioners, academics and community participants. The theoretical foundations, explored in detail later, rest on dialogic discourse and pedagogic practices which forefront active listening and ethnographic approaches to the exploration of social meaning, culture and identity. Dialogic discourse refers to exploratory conversations between people of equal status that are characterized by mutual respect, acknowledgment of the validity of the knowledge base of others, intellectual openness and the possibility of critique and creative thought (Vygotsky, 1986; Freire, 2006; Barnes, 2008; Alexander, 2019).

The collaboration between MacPherson and Stephenson examined here is not the first instance of artists and academics working alongside communities in order to facilitate informal education. The Settlement House Movement began in the nineteenth century with similar ambitions and persists to this day. The Movement was founded on Christian principals and saw academics, artists and writers, establish houses where educators sought to "meet on equal terms" with the poor (Gilchrist and Jeffs, 2001, p. 10). While it is undoubtedly the case that working class people excluded from education were given meaningful opportunities and subsequently produced some remarkable work (McManners and Wales, 2008) the Settlement Movement is dogged by charges of paternalism (Popple, 2006, p. 107–121). Many other projects have been undertaken by academics, practitioners and activists motivated by participation in mutually beneficial and facilitated learning—indeed this is at the heart of the applied AT approach. However, the approach explored here is unique in that it *seeks to establish a triumvirate dialogue* between practitioners of two distinct disciplines and a group of community participants *throughout* the creative process in order to facilitate mutual learning, critical reflection and research.

The aim of this paper is to examine the degree to which this unique inter-disciplinary approach has the potential:

- To enable the critical evaluation of the practices and facilitation of the AT director—an aspect of the discipline which is underdeveloped (Mackey, 2016; Readman, 2018).
- To enable sociological research with disadvantaged communities which is beneficial to that community through the interrogation of, and engagement with, the creative performance of shared industrial heritage.
- To facilitate public sociology for social activism in a disadvantaged community.
- To examine the degree to which the approach might be transferable to other settings.

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[2]MacPherson was artistic director of FTH, a multi-arts touring production. The project was funded by the Arts Council England's (ACE) Strategic Touring Programme.

[3]Get Up and Tie Your Fingers Eyemouth: Eyemouth Parish Church April 2016. Get Up and Tie Your Fingers Eyemouth: Performance for the Dedication Service of the Widows and Bairn's sculpture, The Bantry, Eyemouth October 2016. Get Up and Tie Your Fingers Eyemouth: National Storytelling Festival—Tradfest Edinburgh April 2017.

The paper begins with an examination of the ambitions and challenges faced by each discipline. Following this, the problems facing PI communities and specifically fishing communities, is explored along with an examination of the complex potential of the exploration of industrial heritage for such localities. Following that, the application of the collaboration between sociologist and AT practitioner in the development of GUTYFE provides the basis for the critical evaluation of the approach.

APPLIED THEATER AND SOCIOLOGY: COMMON CONCERNS AND NEW ALLIANCES

From its inception, sociology has been concerned with understanding and challenging social inequalities. Wright Mills (1959) conceptualized the sociological imagination as a quality of mind capable of empowering people to make sense of the interconnected nature of agency and wider structural forces: sociological thinking had the potential to be a catalyst for social change. Relatedly, the call for a public sociology (Burawoy, 2005) which connects the discipline and the sociologist to wider public audiences sees value in the expansion of the discipline beyond the narrow parameters of academia. However, public sociology is stymied in the age of neoliberalism where the role of structurally created inequalities are denied and replaced by explanations which forefront individual failings (Lawler and Payne, 2018). The consequence is the stigmatization of the dispossessed "left behind" by neoliberalism (Tyler, 2014; McKenzie, 2015; Thomas, 2015).

A range of sociological research methodologies have been applied to understanding PI communities (Waddington et al., 1991, 2001; MacDonald et al., 2013; Tyler, 2014; McKenzie, 2015). While the insights this research reveal are valuable, the views of those affected by the end of industry are, even with the best and most meticulous of research intentions, prompted, mediated and analyzed by researcher intermediaries. Community interaction and negotiation are rarely directly observed in the moment within which they occur. Activist sociologist (McKenzie, 2015) ethnographic work in a Nottingham housing estate is valuable, but rare given that it was possible only because of her long personal association with the area.

Sociologists face challenges in accessing and gaining the trust of disadvantaged social groups, and concerns about power imbalances and the problem of academic appropriation remain. Accordingly, while sociological research produces insights about the lived experiences of disadvantaged people, even when done with political and ethical sensitivity, the work does not necessarily result in those affected rethinking their social and political situation in relation to the structured nature of that injustice. To that end, sociological research can be politically and socially impotent.

By contrast, AT, which shares with sociology a commitment to social equality and cultural democracy, offers a dynamic and creative opportunity to engage with disadvantaged communities.

For the purposes of this paper, a brief introduction to the wider discipline of Applied Theater is appropriate. Applied theater, although not a fixed term, is broadly understood as an umbrella for a range of performance techniques and dramatic activity (Prentki and Preston, 2009, p. 2) which situates itself outside mainstream theater and performance contexts, located in a variety of "non-traditional settings and/or with marginalized communities" (Thompson and Jackson, 2006, p. 92). It is a field in which the discursive processes of theater making are as important as the product itself: AT "is a way of conceptualizing and interpreting theatrical and cultural practices that are motivated by the desire to make a difference in the world." (Nicholson, 2014, p. 20). Its forms are many, amongst others, theater in education, prison theater, heritage theater, theater for development, theater for health education and, pertinent to this investigation, community based participatory theater.

The directorial practices and priorities of AT practitioners are as varied as the field itself. Each practitioner will adopt numerous "identities" (Readman, 2018). What they share is a commitment to be responsiveness and collaboration in order to enable participants to engage safely in the co-creation of community based participatory theater making. Each community of participants require specific rehearsal strategies and techniques appropriate to them.

Applied theater research (in relation to content, context and inspiration) and analysis of practice draws on a number of disciplines—notably in the social sciences, cultural studies, and education: AT is intrinsically an inter-disciplinary and hybrid practice (Nicholson, 2005, p. 2).

As AT seeks to "address something beyond the form itself in order to promote positive social processes within a particular community" (Ackroyd, 2000, p. 2), concern for community based learning is important. It is little wonder that AT frequently draws upon liberation pedagogies (Freire, 2006), which reject traditional teaching methods that rely upon the hierarchical transmission of knowledge in preference for a learner-centered pedagogy. AT practice embraces co-production strategies in community based participatory theater where community knowledge drives creative content and development. The utilization of liberation pedagogies, ensures that the ongoing negotiation of power, learning and knowledge (between practitioner and participant/performer) remains open to critical scrutiny. Consequently, AT offers participants the opportunity to increase and expand skills and confidence, connect and reconnect with their community, explore the past and/or hitherto neglected debates and to present, though performance, a public expression of place and community. It can shed light on the creative uniqueness of that community, challenging the standardization of cultural products and lastly, agitate for change through collective voice. Applied theater is, therefore, a cultural construct as well as a cultural product (Kershaw, 1992).

Within the practices and performance of AT, performance as research (PaR), offers opportunities for research for the AT practitioner and potentially for others (Kershaw and Nicholson, 2011, p. 63–64). However, PaR presents the practitioner with a number of significant challenges. Applied theater depends upon the practitioner's continual responsive engagement with

the performer and consequently their perspective is reframed because of that interaction, challenge and recalibration. Applied theater often takes place over the course of long periods during which the practitioner, immersed in their work, is not easily able to reflect on or record practices and outcomes. Viewing a practical community theater project from a researcher perspective, the AT director is both the subject of the research, the analyst and the knowledge creator. Relatedly, the process of theater making and facilitation of community performance by experienced practitioners may come to be seen as "second nature." Consequently, directorial processes in AT practice have rarely been the focus of systematic research (Mackey, 2016; Readman, 2018).

As the AT practitioner faces the challenge of how to evaluate critically his or her own practice, a research collaboration with a sociologist is a useful/logical step. After all, the work of the AT practitioner involves the engagement of social groups willing to discuss, explore, and evaluate social and political issues in a dynamic and creative manner. This offers opportunities to sociologists who face issues in engaging with disadvantaged social groups and non-academic audiences. There have been collaborations between the two disciplines in the past and these have tended to involve analysis of the emergence and nature of the theater form (Kim, 2019), the establishment of ideas or knowledge exchange (as in the Case with the Awkward Squad) or the evaluation of AT. Consequently, the role of the social scientist has been frequently confined to the evaluation of the impact or meaning of performance on the participants/audience, *outside of, prior to or after the event* rather than as part of an investigation into what *the creative process itself* might reveal about the lived experiences of social groups. A case in point is Walkerdine and Mackey's collaboration, Performing Abergavenny (Mackey, 2016, p. 6). Here, the social science contribution usefully validates a project in terms of the value of Arts funding, however the social science research analysis gives the AT director few, if any, insights into their practice and any wider sociological insights, which emerge in the creative process, go unrecorded.

A recognition of both the limitations and opportunities inherent within the two disciplines prompted MacPherson and Stephenson to investigate the potential of inter-disciplinary collaboration based on a common commitment to dialogic discourse through collaboration on GUTYFE.

POST-INDUSTRIAL FISHING COMMUNITIES AND THE PROBLEM AND POTENTIAL OF SHARED HERITAGE

Post-industrial coastal communities in the UK have seen the loss of key industries of fishing, shipbuilding and mining, which has resulted in growing social breakdown. Consequently, they face some of the worst levels of deprivation in the UK, with high unemployment rates, particularly in the North East of England and Scotland (Centre for Social Justice, 2013; Corfe, 2017).

Eyemouth, the focus of this research, has seen a dramatic decline in employment associated with fishing during the past century. In the 1970s, over 50 large-scale boats anchored off Eyemouth harbor. After 2000, trawling for white fish declined dramatically. By 2020 only 20 local boats fishing for prawn, lobster and brown crab remained. (Richard Lawton, Eyemouth Harbor Master, February 2020)[4].

This pattern is repeated across Scotland and its impact is more than economic. Williams (2008) argues that fisher folk conflate the declining health of the fishing industry with the "death" of community: loss of boat- building, empty harbors and the decline of fishermen has led to the subsequent decline in local spending power, an increase in substance abuse, and social isolation. In addition, the pressure to remain solvent and land acceptable legal quotas lessens the pleasure of fishing. That, and the disruption and/or eradication of intergenerational and extended family relationships founded on co-operative fishing practices, have had a negative impact on mental health and sense of identity as small scale fishing gives way to major commercial fishing enterprises.

Despite the stigmatization of PI fishing communities, respect for the "fishing way of life" continues to have resonance (Nadel-Klein, 2003), as mining life does for those living in post-mining communities (Mellor and Stephenson, 2005; Stephenson and Wray, 2005; Dodds et al., 2006; Dicks, 2008). However, a dependence on heritage as a route to community and economic regeneration is fraught with challenges.

Representations of fishing heritage has stimulated regeneration in post-fishing communities (Cornwall Gov Uk, 2018) through the establishment of tourist-based economies. This retelling of the past to external audiences is fraught with potential hazards. A significant issue is whose heritage is to be recognized. Versions of the past "from above" may deny diversity, complexity, and ambivalence (Rowbotham, 1992). Relatedly, if tourists seek to consume "authenticity," newcomers to the community may be excluded from the collective celebration of their home. Far from building cohesion within traumatized communities, heritage may further divide communities. While the notion of hard-work and resilience, which typically defines the heritage industry's version of "fisher folk," is not inaccurate, it depends on the maintenance of a shared identity which may be neither inclusive nor wholly authentic and which Dicks describes as the "view from the hill" (Dicks, 1999, p. 352). Nadel-Klein points to the irony of the survival of former fishing communities depending on their transformation into cultural show-cases of a particular version of heritage which, "selectively appropriates the past for the present providing a legacy of tradition, invented or otherwise" (Nadel-Klein, 2003, p. 174). While such a representation may, for some, reap economic rewards it is unlikely to offer a secure foundation for an inclusive sense of identity upon which a community can build a coherent vision for the future.

Despite these complexities, Nadel-Klein believes heritage is capable of capturing "multiple, contested, and mutually constituted meanings" and therefore heritage-led regeneration "may not exclude the locals after all" (Nadel-Klein, 2003, p. 211).

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[4]The town's fish processing industry (involving the export of live langoustine and shellfish) faces jeopardy as fear of friction in export trading following Brexit has prompted local employers to consider relocation to mainland Europe (Newsnet, 2019, Scotland, 2018).

While she is not specific about what this might look like, she agrees with Stephenson and Wray (2005, 2017) that celebration of industrial heritage can enable PI communities to hold on to a sense of who they are.

INTER-DISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION AND DIALOGIC DISCOURSES

In 2014, MacPherson directed Follow The Herring (FTH) in 12 coastal communities down the East Coast of Britain and, in doing so, sought to enable communities to engage with the collective and creative performance of shared fishing and heritage in a way in which Nadel-Klein and Stephenson and Wray believed possible[5].

The University of Northumbria was commissioned to evaluate FTH for funder Arts Council England. This drew on wide range of methodologies but focused on the impact on audiences and participants after the event, as was the case with Performing Abergavenny (2018)[6]. Follow the Herring was hugely successful, in both the number of people it attracted and in terms of the overwhelmingly positive evaluation that validated the potential for the creative economy (Wilson, 2010). However, the evaluation's focus was on how participants felt about their involvement *separate to or after* the rehearsal or performance event. MacPherson believed opportunities to learn about PI communities, and about how AT worked within them, had been lost. Her close creative involvement with participants from post-fishing communities had revealed a series of social and political insights, interactions, negotiated meanings, and relationships, which she had not been able to capture and/or analyze given the demands of the tour and her role within it. Recognition of this missed opportunity prompted MacPherson to invite Stephenson to collaborate with her in GUTYFE and work with the people of Eyemouth.

GUTYF Eyemouth involved 60 community participants. The oldest performer was in their mid-80s, the youngest was 11 years old. They were residents of Eyemouth, other nearby coastal towns and outlying areas. Participants in the performance met regularly over a 20-month period: their commitment to the

project was considerable. A majority had family connections to the fishing industry; some had worked directly in it. A majority of participants were lifelong residents of Eyemouth and some could trace their families back to the time of the disaster; others were relatively new to the area[7].

From the outset, participants were informed that the project provided a research opportunity for MacPherson, as she would use the views and actions of participants and the observations and insight of the sociologist Stephenson to reflect on her practice. The role of Stephenson in rehearsal and performance was made clear—to act as research collaborator with MacPherson—she would not directly intervene during rehearsal or performance events. However, in the focus groups that would follow the June 2016 performance, there would be an opportunity to talk directly with Stephenson about her observations of their work, the discipline of sociology and her research in PI communities similar to their own.

The principles of dialogic discourse underpinned all the conversations that took place during GUTYFE and in the reflections that followed. Dialogic discourse refers to a form of communication, which involves extended conversations founded on the equalization of relationships. Those involved in these conversations recognize the value of the ideas, knowledge and skills of others. It seeks the establishment of deep, evolving understandings through a process of respectful questioning and listening. Each participant in the discourse has the opportunity to challenge and learn from others in order to reveal new understanding and potentials. As Bakhtin claims, "it educates each side about itself and about the other, and it not only discovers but activates potentials. Indeed, the process of dialogue may itself create new potentials, realizable only through future activity and dialogue" (Morson and Emerson, 1990, p. 55).

Alexander (2008) identifies five characteristics of dialogic discourse: they must be collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative, and purposeful. Barnes notes the importance of listening for those who are part of the dialogic group and points to the importance of exploratory talk which is hesitant and incomplete and which enables ideas to be tested and re-formed through a respectful process of speaking, questioning and listening (Barnes, 2008, p. 5). Dialogic discourse is typically associated with radical pedagogies, however it has potential within social research: if, as Vygotsky (1986) suggests, conceptualized learning is a social process of change which occurs because of dialogic discourse, then the creative practices and principles of AT provide a context for the emergence of new meaning and knowledge.

The inter-disciplinary dialogic discourse approach used in GUTYFE involved a series of overlapping and interrelated conversations. At the outset of each discourse, the value of the knowledge and experiences of all parties was reiterated. Three dialogic discourses formed the basis for the approach:

(1) Inter-disciplinary (AT practitioner with sociologist).

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[5]It involved a professional cast and 12 community choirs in a fictional drama, written by Coburn (2001). The community involvement was primarily as singers, performing a contemporary choral song cycle, composed by Karen Wimhurst. The play focused on the lives of fishing lasses and on the Eyemouth disaster. The appetite for community arts which reflect on fishing heritage proved considerable: 5,398 people attended performances of the play associated with the tour and 18,224 visited the exhibition of creative work. In the course of FTH almost six and a half thousand people directly participated in either collective knitting or the choral performances.

[6]The evaluation was comprised of site visits, audience and participant surveys, interviews and focus groups with those managing, delivering and participating in the project. It utilized participant diaries, audience comments books and exhibition feedback slips. Online participant and audience surveys were used to quickly capture experiences and views. The Participants Survey consisted of 37 questions covering, inter alia, demographic information; levels of participation in other cultural activities; health, wellbeing and individual circumstances; and experiences of participating in FTH was circulated to all participants and through Facebook and Twitter. In total, 86 participants and 146 audience members completed the surveys (Northumbria University, 2015).

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[7]Informed consent was sought from community participants and comments were anonymized. The research was given ethical approval by the University of Northumbria.

(2) AT Practitioner with Community Participant: (observed by the sociologist).

(3) Sociologist with Community Participant Focus-Group (observed by the AT practitioner).

These were cumulative and dynamic in nature: issues and knowledge that emerged within them informed other discussions and were discussed, and clarified during the development, rehearsal, performance, and reflection of the project. Here we consider each dialogue in turn to reveal what they made possible.

Inter-disciplinary (AT practitioner with sociologist) these dialogic discourses were constant throughout the creative process. Stephenson and MacPherson met a minimum of twice a week over a twenty-month period, each time for a minimum of an hour. Both parties agreed notes from each discussion.

These discussions were dialogic in nature as they were exploratory and based on reciprocal respect of experience and knowledge. In addition, they focused on self-reflection and a mutual commitment to identify the intersections between the two disciplines.

To illustrate, one of the issues raised by Stephenson related to MacPherson's approach to active "listening." Here MacPherson discusses how dialogic practices were embedded in her AT work with GUTYFE and how and why the act of listening became the primary consideration of the rehearsal process.

CS : *Explain to me how dialogic discourses are achieved and why you are so concerned with listening.*

F.Mac: *Ok, for many years, I felt….that my role was to encourage the* telling[MacPherson's emphasis] *of stories… creating a place in which group members felt empowered to speak. Making space for new voices, often traditionally silenced, to be heard. Recently I've realized the importance of listening….. listening necessities different qualities of engagement, social, political and artistic, and by prioritizing listening over speaking in the rehearsal room, I've found it not only challenges received notions of 'quality' and 'authenticity' and 'talent', it opens up the space to concentrate more closely on what is being said, rather than how the words are uttered……as a result a qualitative shift occurs. So we move away from the traditional skills of acting and 'actorliness' and concentrate more on the story they are telling. So, then it is my turn to listen to them…. about the town in which they live, their past and their perceptions of the impact this tragedy had on the community left behind.*

CS : *So, how was that done?*

F.Mac: *Ok, when I met the narrators [10] they were concerned about learning 'all those lines!'…. I knew that learning the lines and pretending to be someone else whilst saying them was an unnecessary pressure…a distraction we didn't need. So I told them…..they would read their story in performance, and they wouldn't need to pretend to be someone else, they would just 'be' themselves. The playwright had given permission for us to further adapt the text … it was therefore fluid and I encouraged them [performers] to cut and change where necessary. This editing was done through a process of active listening. During an early rehearsal, the narrators carefully read*

the piece aloud, taking turns to read different lines and speeches, those not reading were asked to listen closely to what was being said. It was an intimate exercise that took place over a couple of hours. Each line was interrogated by the group in relation to how they heard it.…they highlighted words they enjoyed saying, they were asked to identify any words that felt not quite right, 'not quite Eyemouth'.

CS : *What was the point of this? What was the outcome?*

F.Mac: *The aim here is about sharing power, it is about attempting to make the rehearsal room discursive, it was about turning it into a respectful, purposeful conversation, a dialogic discourse with a clear focus – to curate an authentic story about the disaster for a contemporary audience from their town.…it gave them the power to make qualitative decisions about the text and who felt comfortable saying what … they are not pretending to be actors, they are representing their community as they saw fit. Here we are creating an environment where they speak as themselves with a confidence because it is their story…I am not interested in them 'learning acting skills'; but in helping them to stand there authentically with a confidence that is different from acting, that is being.… I am interested in* Nancy's (2002) *theories of listening.*

CS : *Did you share Nancy's theories with the community participants?*

F. Mac: *Err…I didn't talk to them about Nancy specifically but I did talk always about listening and listening techniques were embedded in what we did. But I didn't really think about how his theory could frame my practice until after the first performance. It wasn't until you made me start to theorise around my practice.…in the next stage of this project will be to explore the act of listening for information, for making meaning and for sharing with their audience… so it is a practical introduction but I would talk then directly about Nancy, his terms etc. I won't hide him.*

This interaction between sociologist and director involved the sharing of established knowledge and the emergence of new understandings: It enabled MacPherson to critically reflect on her initial suggestion that "instinct" shaped her approach to listening in the context of AT. Stephenson challenged the reference to "instinct": MacPherson accepted that in reality years of theoretically, politically and socially informed experience and knowledge informed her practice. MacPherson's acceptance prompted a more detailed reflection on the theory underpinning her work. One important source was Jean-Luc Nancy's theorization of listening, which draws a distinction between *entendre* and *ecouter*—both French verbs, to listen. For Nancy while *entendre* refers to listening in order to identify meaning, the term *ecouter* refers to a more embodied listening, relating to emotional significance, a human listening. In addition, Nancy refers to *renvoi* (resonance) within listening—the return on the entendre and ecouter. Renvoi involves the sending and re-sending of communication between performers and between performers and audiences. GUTYFE participants engaged in a range of exercises, which sensitized them to different ways

of listening, and reading returns on their communications (an example of the impact of this features in the next section). Sociologically, Nancy's work offers a reminder—if one is needed - that social exploitation and disadvantage has material and personal/social-emotional manifestations and legacies and both are legitimately the concern of the discipline. Theories of AT applied theater provide a foundation for a critical and complex understanding of how collective emotion is communicated and, intriguingly, the practice of AT provides a platform for that communication and one in which the sociologist can be engaged.

AT PRACTITIONER WITH COMMUNITY PARTICIPANT DISCOURSES (OBSERVED BY THE SOCIOLOGIST)

These dialogic discussions took place between the AT practitioner and community participants during the development and rehearsal of performances some of which were observed by Stephenson. Consequently, the sociologist was able to see the sharing of existing knowledge and the development of new understandings that emerged "in the moment" in which they occurred. These insights were discussed later in inter-disciplinary conversations and in sociologist-led focus groups with community participants.

It became apparent in observation of rehearsal discussions that, for those who had a long-standing association with fishing in Eyemouth, the disaster had ongoing social and personal importance. The events of the day were well known. This were a source of both pride (*"Eyemouth crews went out as one - that was the Eyemouth way"*), and sadness: the state had failed them and the struggle to keep their children had been immense.

At a personal level, some participants could trace their family back to the disaster and that was a source of pride and sadness. Participants commented that one family had a relation who had been at a wedding on the day of the disaster and so had not gone out. Some of those that had lost relatives had not been able to speak to him or his family; his survival meant that he had somehow "broken rank." The sharing of grief and hardship made the community's survival possible. Observation of discussions that emerged in the development of the performance demonstrated how that loss and hardship had cast a shadow over the town that was both economic and emotional. One of the older female participant's spoke of childhood memories of the specific impact borne by fisher wives: *"they were always working, always in long black dresses bent over, baiting the lines"*.

It became evident that that the performance had provided a lens through which aspects of community life, which had not previously been directly expressed and explored, were raised. Specifically, this related to the importance of the sacrifices people had made because of association with the fishing industry, the respect for (and loss of) past collective ways of living. This came into sharp relief when participants empathized emotionally with the loss and sacrifice associated with the disaster and consequently chose to take control of the performance.

To illustrate, in one rehearsal narrators relayed verbatim the words of women who had lost their menfolk: "…. *and what do they write about us, the women left behind?*[8]" The script required the narrators to move from reporting in the third person to talking in the first: to move from storyteller into a character. However, one narrator chose spontaneously to put down her narration book and took center stage to speak these lines neither as a narrator nor as a character but as herself, as a mother speaking directly to an imagined audience about loss. This emotionally charged moment, that affected those that witnessed it, was incorporated into the final performance.

A further illustration came when GUTYFE were asked to perform 5 minutes of their performance at the unveiling ceremony of a commemorative sculpture, which named those lost in the disaster, to mark the 135th anniversary of the disaster. In the original GUTYF script, only the names of the boats were mentioned but the GUTYFE participants insisted that the names and ages of those lost were included in their version. The request for 5 min of the performance gave the participants new authorship responsibilities, which they took very seriously. In an inter-disciplinary discussion, MacPherson explained:

So which 5 minutes? I said Ok try this: we start a name but when the surname is said, it is overlaid by the Christian name of the next person - so it is like waves crashing on the shore one on top of the next..

When this was attempted in the rehearsal, participants rejected the plan as the full names of these who had died were obscured. Performers knew that the descendants of those who had died would be waiting to hear family names loud and clear in and their entirety:

Jimmy: *This is not right! This is not working. We've got to hear the names!*

F Mac: *If we say all the names, we will be in to 9 minutes….*

Jimmy: *Let them bloody wait*!

Here we see the point at which the group are unprepared to compromise, defending what is most important to them. MacPherson later commented, in relation to the theories of inter-active listening explored above, on the profound emotional impact of that decision on the performers and audience when the names were read in full:

It was arguably the most powerful moment I had witnessed….the performers knew this because they felt it, they were louder and bigger and more authoritative than they had been before, they embraced it….as those names were hitting that audience and the recognition was setting in, you could have heard a pin drop…it was a moment in which the group were unified.

Here we see the importance of Nancy's distinction between entendre and ecouter and renvoi: the names are communicated, emotionally felt, shared and returned. This is a shared, dynamic experience that is both cognitive and emotional. This theory and practice has potential in relation to the exploration of the sociological concept of social haunting which Stephenson examined with MacPherson in inter-disciplinary discussions. Social haunting, is the view that communities are affected by structures of feeling, collective memories and meanings, typically associated with collectively experienced trauma. These

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[8]Reported The Berwickshire News Oct 1881.

are ghostly as they are not necessarily directly acknowledged but persist in the culture and collective consciousness of traumatized communities (Gordon, 2008). Such ghosts can be realized through creative lenses—GUTYFE had become such a lens—and realization can enable a community to move on (Bright, 2018; Spence, 2019). Stephenson argued that from a sociological standpoint the disaster, and the hardship that followed, and indeed more recent processes of de-industrialization, cannot be understood as merely distant historical events. The nature of historical trauma and the degree to which that has been collectively realized has a bearing on how well social groups deal with contemporary challenges and injustices. In the focus groups that followed concepts of loss and abandonment became an overarching leitmotif when community performers explored both the disaster and the challenges facing Eyemouth in the contemporary era.

SOCIOLOGIST WITH COMMUNITY PARTICIPANT FOCUS-GROUP (OBSERVED BY THE AT PRACTITIONER)

Two focus groups occurred following the June 2017 performance of GUTYFE, one with narrators, the other with the choir. In total 30 of the 70 participants attended.

The focus groups allowed for a direct discussion about events and issues observed by the Stephenson in rehearsals and performance and provided an opportunity to discuss sociological concepts, research and practice. At the same time, they gave MacPherson an opportunity to listen to the discussion and reflect on her practice. They also provided an opportunity to talk directly about sociology, sociological skills and research, and existent sociological knowledge and concepts associated with PI communities. Questions typically began with '*sociologists are interested in..*'.

Focus group dialogic discussions were affected by the shared experience of engagement with GUTYFE and by the AT application of an approach to listening which had embedded the principles of dialogic discourse. Consequently, the discussions differed from usual focus groups in three key ways. Firstly, the participants had shared experience of the project, which provided a frame of reference through which to consider their community: participants drew attention to rehearsals/performance, decisions and disagreement, things they had tried and which had worked or had not to illustrate their points. Consequently, they were not simply responding as individuals to the questions set by Stephenson, they were involved in a reflective and well-developed dialogue with each other, which was established over time in their work with MacPherson. Secondly, Stephenson had witnessed group interactions and had talked to MacPherson, so had knowledge of how issues were raised and addressed and was able to raise some of these directly with participants. Thirdly, following MacPherson's use of a dialogic approach within the creative process which fore-fronted the exploration of ideas, the participants were noticeably engaged in active listening, prepared to take risks and being open to ideas.

Two inter-related themes emerged in the focus groups. One was in relation to the importance of the message in their shared industrial heritage, specifically in relation to the resilience of past generations. Attached to that was the value of collective focus and communal conversations. The second theme was of a sense of loss and abandonment, which was a leitmotif within the discussion: the loss of easy familiarity with others; of common purpose (fishing); of the absence of state support for fishing and frustration with Brexit progress; the loss of communal spaces; of grown up children; of pubs, shops and collective celebrations.

In focus groups discussions participants claimed that GUTYFE, because of its theme of the Eyemouth fishing disaster and resilience and its form (by the townsfolk, for the townsfolk) had drawn in people, both as participants and audience, who would normally eschew such events. Consequently, the project had widened debate and begun new and unexpected conversations. To illustrate, one female participant commented that after the performance an elderly local fisherman—"*A man's man, sometimes he will speak sometimes he will no*" - had crossed the street to speak to her:

"*It was the Monday after the shows, I was walking along the harbour after being out in my boat when I saw an old Fisher I know – a bit of a bluff gruff chap – a lovely singer though. He didn't want to be part of the Get Up choir though. He crossed the road to talk to me – which is a bit of a surprise as he's more likely to pass on by, but he stopped and said, 'I was there, Saturday night I was there! And I was in tears more than one once!'.... very emotional*".

It was felt that the project had provided a common purpose through which new understandings and relationships could emerge. To illustrate, as GUTYFE is delivered in a Scottish Dialect the story could potentially have been exclusive to those who were "long-term" Eyemouthians. However, this proved not to be the case, largely because of MacPherson's careful approach to inclusion, which allowed participants opportunity to collectively reflect on and negotiate involvement. Participants outlined a number of positions in relation to their legitimacy to contribute:

Christine: *Err well … I wanted to be involved but I decided that as I didn't have the accent, I would be involved but not as a narrator, I would be in the choir...*

Amanda: *Well no, I think you should. When I heard about this and I wanted to do it so that I could be more involved, more included ….but I was like 'Is it right and proper as an outsider to be doing that?' and in the end I was just like, 'Well actually I don't care, I want to do it so I'm doing it'!.Yay', I've come in here and I feel a bit more, yeah, good this is a community that I'm getting to know already, so….and yeah, it sounds a bit sort of pious, but, I like to, if I'm living in a place, I like to give something to the place. I'm not interested in sort of being an incomer who then goes 'Eyemouth, I don't care about your history!'. No! I do, I do, to me that's part of living in a place!*" (Woman in her thirties with young family, new to the locality).

Despite differences in approach, each respondent was self-reflective, each had wished to give something to the community and each listened to the position of the other with patience: one had been self-censoring; the other has seen the GUTYFE as "a way in." In the same focus group, Diana, a long-standing

female resident spoke of their frustration that: *"Incomers don't want to know anything about the community; they don't want to join in'.* After listening thoughtfully to the reflections of those new to the community, Diana said she had not thought of her new friends as "outsiders." The project had brought her face to face with some who had felt they might be seen in that way but had chosen to find a way to participate that was acceptable to them. Subsequently new relationships had been forged, prejudices overcome. MacPherson later acknowledged that but for GUTYFE these discussions might never have been aired directly. Her view was that this collective willingness to engage with and explore the standpoints of others stemmed directly from the relationships which had emerged as a result of the practices associated with dialogic discourse which formed the basis for the AT approach and the lens through which they explored the story.

A film was made of the final performance of GUTYFE[9] in April 2017 and shown to participants in 2018. At that point, MacPherson asked community participants if there was an appetite for a new piece, which focussed on contemporary Eyemouth. The response was positive. MacPherson has since secured funding from Creative Scotland. A company (Berwickshire Coastal Arts—One Coast, Many Voices) has been formed to support this work. While the objective of this next stage is to improve access to, participation in and enjoyment of the arts, the impact of public sociology is evident: participants have undertaken training workshops and, since January 2020, have carried out qualitative research interviews within their own community. The participants have chosen to engage in discussion with social groups that had been previously under-represented in the GUTYFE: young mothers, teenagers, fishermen, the Lifeboat Crew, The Harbourmaster amongst others. The material the group gathers will form the basis for ongoing dialogic discourse between sociologist, AT director and the community in the next stage of the telling of the Eyemouth story. Community participants have determined that this stage will involve a creative focus on the sociological themes explored within the development and performance of GUTYFE. These relate to belonging and not belonging; immersion in a new community and making a new life; re-connecting, returning and re-immersion in the community; building, a business, a life, a family; change in the economy, the area, harbor, family; the pull of the sea/home; the impact of tourism, climate change, the weather.

CONCLUSION

Before examining the achievements and potential of this inter-disciplinary approach, it is important to acknowledge the challenges associated with it and that some aspects of it were not fully realized.

One key challenge was that while it delivered rich data and reward, it was both time consuming and labor intensive. Stephenson and MacPherson met twice weekly to share discipline-based reflections on its development, but it was not

[9]The National Storytelling Centre, Edinburgh (Netherbow Theater).

practically possible for Stephenson to be present at all rehearsals over a 20-month period. Future applications of the approach would benefit from the full-time focus of a sociologist, or indeed, a team.

A second was that three-way dialogic discourse "in the moment" in which insights were revealed did not take place for a number of reasons. While observation of the rehearsal and performance enabled Stephenson to see interactions in the moment of their airing/negotiation/resolution, she chose not to intervene immediately to question those involved: it was reasoned that this would have been intrusive and disrespectful. Stephenson reflected on observations until an opportunity to talk directly to MacPherson arose (two hours after rehearsal; 1 day after the final performance) and with community participants in focus groups (10 days after rehearsals).

A further limitation, thus far, was that while Stephenson discussed sociological ideas and questions with the participants she was cautious in introducing theory into the conversations. There was concern that this had not been invited by the participants and might therefore interrupt, divert or inhibit dialogic discourses: it was felt that in keeping with a dialogic approach these should be introduced if and when they were valuable to the issues raised by the community participants. Similarly, when MacPherson discussed issues relating to theoretical aspects of AT practice with participants, she did so on a "need to know" basis. Many of the theories underpinning her practice were not widely discussed: she reasoned this might detract from the spontaneity, focus and enjoyment of the work (see above, her concern about the potentially negative impact of "actorliness"). While a relationship of respect and trust developed between community participants and MacPherson because of collaboration in the creative process, Stephenson's role was one of observer and focus group lead, and she remained something of an outsider in the creative processes. Nevertheless, a platform of trust was established with the participants upon which a more detailed examination of the sociological imagination, sociological and theory can take place. In the next phase, Stephenson will engage in discussion about the meaning of the material gathered by community participants and provide a more explicit social, political and theoretical context within and throughout the creative development of the work based on that material. The intention is to pursue a triumvirate conversation (three way and equal) in relation to theory and practice between community, AT practitioner and sociologist in all stages of the creative development, rehearsal and performance of the telling of the contemporary story of Eyemouth.

Nevertheless, the GUTYFE demonstrated potential in relation to four important areas. These relate to the sociological research potential of collaboration with creative practitioners and processes in work with disadvantaged communities; the mutual benefit associated with inter-disciplinary critical appraisal of AT practice; the actual and potential of a platform for public sociology; the transferability of the approach.

The approach used in Eyemouth is a way of working with, and for, communities, which delivers the combined benefits of the two disciplines, and a strategy for creative and critical reflection on those disciplines. The dialogic discourse and

interrogation of AT practice and the infusion of sociological ideas, theories and debates into the creative process shaped and enhanced the creative practices of the AT director and enabled her to critically reflection on practice. In addition, and perhaps most important sociologically, the collaboration also offered a unique research method. Sociological observation of the negotiation of understanding and meaning in the creative process exposed previously hidden and nuanced social interactions, which would not have been revealed through qualitative research strategies previously applied within such communities. In GUTYFE, the moment of creative process became a conduit for shared emotion and previously hidden meaning-making. If, as Gordon (2008) and Bright (2018) suggest, past problems faced by communities are connected, even if unconsciously, to contemporary problems then this inter-disciplinary approach offers not only an opportunity to make visible and explore those traumas creatively but for them to be seen, understood and directly discussed sociologically.

One of the key aims of the work was to explore how AT practitioners might benefit from the critical appraisal of the observation and intervention of a sociologist. Ultimately, inter-disciplinary discussion, observation, and self-reflection of the process proved to be mutually beneficial for both practitioners. The observation and investigation of AT practice and theory proved valuable from a sociological point of view, particularly in relation to those associated with the theorization and application of AT methods associated with listening and the potential of such a strategy for the exploration of social haunting associated with disadvantaged communities.

The third issue arising from this work relates to the degree to which this collaboration provided a platform for public sociology. A range of sociological issues were discussed—demographic change, loss of public spaces and resources, the absence or silencing of some stories, the impact of economic vulnerability on community cohesion. The curiosity of sociologist who found the town of interest and raised sociological and question prompted the participants to conduct their own social research to understand better the concerns facing the town in the contemporary era. The ongoing commitment of MacPherson to provide support for future performances provides an outlet and audience for the communication of those concerns.

A crucial question for this critical appraisal of this inter-disciplinary approach is the extent to which it is repeatable: this paper highlighted a number of conditions for the success of this approach.

An important condition was the political sensibilities of MacPherson and Stephenson, which directed them toward radical pedagogies within their disciplines: this was fundamental to the success of the approach. The Eyemouth project was not simply a collaboration between a sociologist and a theater maker, but between two who shared a common interest in how their disciplines could support the development of new, improved relationships and conversations that might facilitate collective creative social awareness and potentially social change.

A second was that the community of Eyemouth *invited* the involvement of the AT practitioner to support them in the creative telling of their town's heritage. This enabled MacPherson to invite legitimately the participation of the sociologist. In addition, it provided the basis for the equalization of relationships as it gave the participants control: the work had not been forced on the community.

A third important condition was that the content of the project had meaning for the community. The social and emotional draw associated with the exploration of shared heritage should not be underestimated. In Eyemouth, the project's content drew in many who would not otherwise have sought to engage with others at a creative level. Yet at the same time, the universal story of suffering and redemption allowed so-called "outsiders" to find meaning in the performance. Interest in shared industrial heritage continues to hold power either as a source of communal pride and/or as a conduit for the exploration and exorcism of past and contemporary injustices. In the case of Eyemouth, the trauma is not simply that of the 1881 disaster, but the loss of industry, way of life and identity associated with the decline of fishing and the discussion of the historical disaster became a way of talking about the present.

In the case examined here the motivating focus was shared industrial heritage; however, any shared collective experience or memory, which has meaning for a community, might usefully provide the basis for this approach. It would be wrong to suggest that communities are only defined by their past, particularly if that past is traumatic, but similarly wrong to suggest that past events have no meaning in the contemporary context. Gordon (2008) and Bright (2018) work on social hauntings suggest that only through the realization of trauma can communities move on: communities have a right and need to acknowledge the trauma associated with injustice. The inter-disciplinary approach used here, and the creative lenses it provided for the artistic and sociological exploration of shared trauma, provides a strategy for such an exploration elsewhere.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The datasets generated for this study will not be made publicly available to protect the identities of participants.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by University of Northumbria, Newcastle. The patients/participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

CS and FM contributed equally to the design of the research project, to the implementation of the research, to the analysis of data, and to the writing of their manuscript. All authors contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

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Dancers: Eyemouth and Coldingham Girl Guides and Brownies: Alexandra Bremner, Lily Bromley, Miah Hindaugh, Saskia Hindaugh, Tilly Lucas, Melissa MacFarlane, Alex Ritchie, Rachael Rutherford, Ollie Scott, and Taryn Walker.

Fiddle: Keir Logan.

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Individualism and Collectivism at Work in an Era of Deindustrialization: Work Narratives of Food Delivery Couriers in the Platform Economy

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Supposedly emblematic of digital capitalism, the rise of the gig economy is frequently taken as a cipher for the developing deindustrialisation of western societies. It is tempting to interpret the shift of manufacturing jobs to the global south and their replacement with service sector jobs as a one-way street, leading to the demise of decent work and the rise of work characterized by precarity, low pay, low skill and a non-unionized workforce. However, the reality is inevitably more complex. In the first place, pessimism may be attributed to a rose-tinted view of the experience of former industrial employment in the global north resulting from a questionable assumption about the nature of the jobs that occupied most people in former industrial societies. Certainly, deindustrialisation is not leading to "de-working," that is, working less for the same money. With respect to gig work, autonomy and flexibility are central to labor inducement and hence labor control. Yet at the same time, and linked to the latter, we need to explore another deep-rooted phenomenon: the persistence of work*space* collectivism. Our evidence derives from qualitative interviews with gig workers in the food delivery sector in a number of European countries. We highlight the extent to which couriers profess a variety of understandings of the character of platform economy labor processes. A range of narratives emerge including platform work as leisure, as economic opportunity, and as collectivist labor. Moreover, individuation, attendant upon the character of the physical labor process, did not lead in any straightforward way to individualism in social labor processes—contrary to our expectations, we in fact witnessed forms of collectivism. Collectivism is to be distinguished from "types of solidarity" described by Morgan and Pulignano (2020) whereby neo-liberalism has transformed a range of institutional forms of labor solidarities. By contrast, we are concerned with the persistence of the collective worker within the changing sociological structure of work. This echoes the earlier finding by Stephenson and Stewart (2001) that collectivism endures even when behaviourally absent and indeed even in the context of individualized working—termed "whispering shadow." Thus, the objective of the paper is to explore the forms of actor individualism and collectivism identified in our research. Given platform apps' external control, the gig economy spatially separates workers while at the same time requiring cognition of colleagues' collective

work and labor process. Notwithstanding structural processes separating workers-in-work, platforms also witness the instantiation of forms of collectivism. Deindustrialisation is neither the end to collectivism nor trade unionism. Rather than post-work, then, we explore the problematics of *plus* work and *variant* collectivisms.

INTRODUCTION

Those who see a terminal crisis of labor movements tend to see the contemporary era as one that is *fundamentally new and unprecedented,* in which global economic processes have completely reshaped the working class and the terrain on which labor movements must operate. In contrast, those who expect the re-emergence of significant labor movements tend to perceive historical capitalism itself as being characterized by recurrent dynamics, including the continual re-creation of contradictions and conflict between labor and capital (Silver, 2003).

The rise of organizations operating in the so-called "gig," "sharing" or "platform" economy has led to an increasing interest in the changing nature of work and working conditions for those employed in the sector (Berg, 2016). For an interesting discussion of defining vocabulary see, inter alia (Bughin et al., 2016; Huws, 2019; Morozov, 2019). [1] What is more, we must ask what the political economy of this sector tells us about the evolving character of work and employment in the global north. There has been a focus around the extent to which definitional ambiguity and contractual (in)security represent new challenges to workers and new dimensions of precariousness (Goudin, 2016). However, while concerns among academics and policy makers about the rise in precarious work have been visible, as have campaigns for greater security, these conditions appear to be transparent to the workers upon taking up such roles. Furthermore, there has also been defense of the flexibility and other benefits associated with such work, not only from the platforms but also from the workers themselves. This paper explores the narratives around the tensions and contested expectations of platform workers through a study of food delivery couriers. These narratives are significant in their articulation of dimensions of actor dissonance within the platform economy and moreover the persistence of collectivist attitudes in a society characterized by deindustrialization. Not only is collectivism present but the attitudes of platform workers reveal the spaces, character, and radical possibilities inherent in the social recomposition of the labor force in digital capitalism. Precarity, insecurity and individualism have always been a feature of capitalism albeit reflected in variant patterns of social solidarity and insolidarity. The discourses of individualism that we highlight are in fact no

more fundamental to working class culture in digital capitalism than they were to workers in industrial capitalism.

In line with Stewart and Stanford (2017), we adopt the terminology of the platform economy whereby the use of technology to match workers to discreet tasks has created what may be considered a new paradigm of what work means and provides (see also Taylor, 2017). Platform workers are paid piecemeal for tasks completed and are frequently treated as self-employed contractors. Yet while they are deprived of the rights and benefits of employees, neither do they necessarily exhibit the same autonomy and freedoms of typical self-employed workers (Rosenblat and Stark, 2015; Schmid-Drüner, 2016). As Drahokoupil and Jepsen (2017) point out, platforms present the work they offer as distinct from traditional employment in various ways, evidenced in terms of the flexibility the worker enjoys, rooted in part in the identity of the supposedly typical platform worker—young, male, fit, no dependents. This logic frequently is utilized to justify the platforms' non-compliance with the traditional, legal requirements of employers, especially regarding income, and job security. Moreover, flexibility and autonomy are presented as simply incompatible with the "traditional" employment relationship. Thus, according to this understanding, for firms operating platform commodity and labor utilization strategies, their non-compliance is not a case of worker exploitation but rather a requirement of the freedom desired by platform workers themselves.

In spite of this professed "freedom" in the platform context, a series of obligations and expectations emerge, both codified and non-codified. The divergence of expectations between (some) workers and platforms led us to investigate why some workers appear satisfied with the work, while others become disgruntled over time or take on the work grudgingly from the start. Moreover, the implications of worker expectations resulting from new patterns of capital accumulation and their attendant workplace and work space social solidarities are therefore pertinent to our research. A number of different theoretical approaches can help make sense of these expectations, including employment relationships (Marsden, 1999), social exchange theory (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) and critical labor process theory (Martínez Lucio and Stewart, 1997; Stephenson and Stewart, 2001; Vidal, 2007; Benanav, 2019; Casilli, 2019; Morozov, 2019; Tassinari and Maccarrone, 2019). In our research we explore how workers interpret met and unmet expectations through exploratory semi-structured interviews with couriers working for food delivery platforms in European countries—specifically the UK, France, Italy and Germany. Our analysis points to a series of competing narratives among couriers as they seek to make sense of their multiple identities.

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[1] Huws in particular unpacks the functionalist rhetoric of the soi-disant sharing economy – viz "it works to everyone's benefit so it must be positively beneficial" - highlighting the extent of capture by capital of what was indeed originally a form of social exchange within private sharing spaces outside the regulatory norms attending the commodification of our private lives and common spaces.

The competing explanations offered by couriers have parallels with Pasquale (2016) "Two Narratives of Platform Capitalism," in which he highlights the existence of a dominant narrative and counter-narrative regarding the platform economy. On the one hand, the neoliberal economy account tells "a simple narrative about the incentives created by reducing transaction costs and creating more opportunities for individuals and firms to compete to provide services" (Pasquale, 2016). A progressive counter-narrative highlights the ways in which platforms dominate through the individualization of risk and the use of capital to lobby against regulation as much as through fair competition. In this respect, we argue that the counter-narrative itself constitutes an important basis to the reconstitution of the collective worker in late capitalism (Jameson, 1984) in the context of the seeming individualization of the labor process. While for management the latter appears to provide a structural impediment to labor collectivism, we argue that on the contrary it can be seen also to highlight the persistence of the collective worker—a worker who is nevertheless displaced, distanciated and yet integral to the very structural forces that were supposed to end social solidarities at work (Woodcock, 2017; Tassinari and Maccarrone, 2019).

This paper is structured around six sections. Following this introduction, the next section explores the state of research on the platform economy. We then explore different theoretical approaches that shed light on the process by which expectations may be shaped and broken. Expectations are important in this regard since they are crucial to the motivational character necessary in all affective relationships and specifically the wellspring of actor behavior including individualistic and collectivistic tropes (and a mixture of both). We next outline our strategy for data collection. The final substantive section uses this data to explore the competing narratives of the food delivery couriers in relation to their expectations, obligations, and contractual status. We conclude by assessing the import of worker narratives in making sense of the reconstitution of the collective worker in the platform economy. In so doing we suggest that while patterns of (re)collectivism are inherently part of the capitalist labor process, the shape of collectivism is always tied to dissonant discourses. This means that just as worker collectivism does not go away and is continually reconstituted by new forms of capital accumulation (see Silver, 2003), so too are reconstituted forms of accommodation to precisely these patterns of accumulation. As our interviews indeed highlight, individualism is reflected in the persistence and recreation of the idea of the worker as a free (neoliberal) agent. The latter thus constitutes a tension with the collectivist, qua solidaristic, narratives also expressed by our interviewees. That said, and echoing Stephenson and Stewart (2001), collectivism is reducible neither to trade unionism nor anti-management solidarity. This is another way of saying that, while labor agency remakes worker collectivism, it also remakes individualism-individualization, both critical to the fate of the collective worker (Martínez Lucio and Stewart, 1997; Tassinari and Maccarrone, 2019). In making sense of worker agency, including our concern with the tension between individual and collective discourses, we focus on the idea of worker expectations from the standpoints of employment relations including a labor process perspective

while also paying due attention to other theoretical perspectives. However, prior to this we turn our attention to a range of literature exploring the distinctive character of platform working that, while important, can be said to largely eschew discussion of the impact of new patterns of working on employees' individual-collective identities.

THE PLATFORM ECONOMY

In spite of the relatively recent rise of digital platforms, there is already an emerging body of research on the nature of work created by such technologies. Initially conceived as the "sharing" economy (see fn 1 above; Cohen and Sundararajan, 2015; Sundararajan, 2015; Codagnone et al., 2016) it has become apparent that the collective and not-for-profit origins of such organizations have been superseded to a greater or lesser extent by more conventional concerns around the power of large organizations (Balaram, 2016; Scholz, 2016), tax and regulatory avoidance (Minter, 2017), and the exploitation of labor (Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn, 2014). The latter has spurred interest in the risks of increasing precariousness (Goudin, 2016), the needs for new forms of special protection, such as basic income (Standing, 2011), and regulatory categorization (Schmid-Drüner, 2016). Moreover, an associated literature has raised questions regarding the relationship between organizational form and labor utilization strategies, including exploitation, and hence labor responses within and beyond organized labor (Drahokoupil and Jepsen, 2017).

However, reflecting the emerging nature of the field, there is no consensus on a definition of work in this part of the economy, such that some conceive it more broadly than others do. As a result, a variety of terminologies have emerged to refer to the same or related phenomena, including "gig work" (Stanford, 2017), "independent work" (Bughin et al., 2016), "on-demand work" (Berg, 2016), and "crowd work" (Felstiner, 2011). Woodcock and Graham (2019), Huws (2019), and Benanav (2019) consider all of these definitions from a macro-sociological standpoint. The gray literature, by contrast, tends to focus especially upon individual features as being fundamental to platform work. For instance, the Chartered Instituted of Personnel and Development (CIPD, 2017) defines platform work as "a way of working that is based on people having temporary jobs or doing separate pieces of work, each paid separately, rather than working for an employer" (2017, p. 4), while the RSA emphasizes the use of apps to sell one's labor (Taylor, 2017, p. 25).

Much literature focuses on the question of defining platform work and its various subsets (see, inter alia, Wood et al., 2018a,b). Codagnone et al. (2016) offer a useful distinction between Online Labor Markets (OLMs) and Mobile Labor Markets (MLMs). While the former involves work delivered purely online, such as micro tasking through platforms like Amazon Mechanical Turk, as well as larger projects that are more skilled commissioned through platforms such as Upwork (Wood et al., 2018a). The latter, by contrast, involves a physical, and therefore local, presence and includes meal delivery tasks that are the focus of this paper.

Aside from digital mediation, the features of precariousness, blurred boundaries, and opaque contracts are not novel. Task-based, informal and irregular work has always existed in various forms, including childminding, day labor, contracted construction work, etc. (Peck and Theodore, 1998). Alkhatib et al. (2017) and Stanford (2017), for example, both compare modern on-demand labor to historical examples of piecework. However, platform technology permits a high level of commodification of labor. De Stefano highlights the connection between the pervasive mediation of work via apps and software and the risk that the workers themselves are "identified as an extension of an IT device or online platform" (2016, p. 5). This in turn can lead to associated expectations that workers should perform as seamlessly as a machine, followed by disproportionately negative reactions when they cannot. The euphemisms of the platform economy—"gigs," "tasks," "rides," "pin money"—suggest that this work is not significant enough to require ordinary labor protections (Codagnone et al., 2016; De Stefano, 2016). Yet research suggests platform work is performed by a diverse range of people, including those who treat it as "a spare-time activity" (Eurofound, 2015, p. 113) and those for whom it is the primary source of income (Berg, 2016).

It is again possible to draw parallels with more traditional forms of precarious work that do not necessarily rely on the technology of platform work. De Stefano identifies platform work as "part of broader phenomena such as casualization and informalisation of work" (2016, p. iii). This erosion of the traditional employment relationship dates back several decades and cannot be attributed solely to the rise of platform-mediated work (Codagnone et al., 2016). A common feature across these precarious types of work—platform and non-platform—is the shifting of risk from the firm to the worker (Friedman, 2014; De Stefano, 2016). Indeed, Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn (2014, p. 213) underline this risk in relation to OLMs, which can mean that:

> "functions once performed by internal employees can be outsourced to an undefined pool of digital labor using a virtual network. This enables firms to shift costs and offload risk as they access a flexible, scalable workforce that sits outside the traditional boundaries of labor laws and regulations."

Casualization is not new and these risks for workers are reflected in the debates surrounding the contractual status of platform workers. Schmid-Drüner considers recent literature and rulings regarding the legal status of platform workers, noting that while, "[i]n most cases, platform workers are classified as self-employed, [...]it is contested that the regular classification of platform workers as 'self-employed' really does justice to the original idea of self-employed" (2016, p. 5). By using the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), Oostveen et al. (2013, p. 1) identify "economically dependent workers," that is, workers who are registered as self-employed but resemble employees in important ways. For instance, they may "depend on a single employer for their income and thus have no real autonomy in running their 'business,'" suggesting that some of these workers tend to be more like employees in terms of control of time, tasks and place of work. Exploring perspectives addressing changes in labor market structure, such as those suggested by, inter alia, Rubery et al. (2018) may be more useful in getting to grips with the way researchers can consider gig work not only in terms of its insecure precarious nature. The issue is also that of the relationship between the state (viz, labor market protections qua de-commodification measures), the labor market and worker activity.

Finally, perhaps unsurprisingly, extant research tends to focus more on the consequences for those working in the platform economy in terms of their contractual status and working conditions as opposed to exploring the consequences of the platform economy for worker individual and collective consciousness. Taking this as a point of departure, we focus on the expectations of those working in the platform economy, including the significance of these expectations for notions of individualist-collectivist perceptions of actor identity.

MAKING SENSE OF WORKER EXPECTATIONS—NOT ALL ABOUT INDIVIDUALIZATION

In considering the expectations of workers in the platform economy, a number of theoretical perspectives become apparent, including employment relationships (Marsden, 1999, 2000 and see reference to Rubery et al., 2018 above), social exchange theory (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) and critical labor process theory (Martínez Lucio and Stewart, 1997; Gandini, 2018; Tassinari and Maccarrone, 2019). While recognizing the relevance of psychological contract theory (Cullinane and Dundon, 2006), it has less relevance where our concern is with the structural fate and contextual tension created by tied discourses of individualism and collectivism in an era of deindustrialization. We consider each in turn.

For the employment relationship, the contract of employment is only partial since labor cannot be considered a commodity in the strict sense. Both employer and worker have an interest in the relation evolving, even to a limited degree (Marsden, 1999). The ongoing nature of the employment relationship provides employees with an assured continuity of income and the ability to plan for future events, while employers can rely on a regular labor supply that a strictly transactional relationship would put into question. Equally, employees benefit from income in non-work time such as holidays, leave and periods of illness, which underlines how employment relationships are highly embedded in institutionalized systems of welfare and protection whether provided by state or employer (Esping-Andersen, 1999).

The self-employed, or perhaps pseudo self-employed in the case of food couriers, may be categorized as having strictly transactional contracts, yet authors such as Wilkens and Nermerich (2011) and Marsden (2004) nevertheless point to relational aspects of their "contracts." Self-employed workers' security is often rooted in their ability to move from one short-term project to another, progressively building a favorable reputation, rather than having that security provided by a specific employer. As a result, self-employed workers can value

skill-development and networking in the projects they take on, and this can form the basis of a fair exchange: "As long as a job episode […] provides some opportunities for the future it is accepted as a reciprocal exchange relationship even though benefits are expected in future and not in present. Actual work relationships are evaluated in the light of opportunities for future development" (Wilkens and Nermerich, 2011, p. 79). Rubery et al. (2018) make a key intervention on this theme of what might be termed "job ownership-control." They assess the nature of precarious work not in terms of its sui generis character but rather with respect to commodification-decommodification (i.e., economic protections-non-protections) of state-labor market relationships in six European countries. These relationships ultimately concern the extent to which state-labor market policies are orientated toward protecting workers when they are not in work. Thus, questions around job security and job control, over-determined by the pattern of the state's relation to the labor market, are societally specific and as such fundamentally crucial in making sense of the contours of job precarity. This is in part also the story about the search to define new forms of work in relation to the Standard Employment Relationship (SER) and while it does not define our research brief it is germane to our concern with gig working.

Social Exchange Theory (SET) provides another perspective from which to consider platform worker expectations. In their review of SET, Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) identify that contexts where multiple exchange rules are employed simultaneously. This has been given less consideration in the literature, yet this is perhaps pertinent for couriers who experience overlapping and conflicting exchange logics with platforms, fellow couriers and clients. Competition is also perhaps a relevant consideration for riders who are in effect competing for "gigs," but it is perhaps unlikely that they would go as far as to hurt another party for the relatively small benefits associated with most platform work. Nevertheless, the nature of unwritten trust-based relations in SET may provide some useful pointers to understanding the expectations of couriers working for platforms.

These approaches, while important in assessing the regulatory (viz. employment) context of worker behavior and engagement in the platform economy, are limited in accounting for the wider social structural context. Thus, we need to explore expectations and behavior more fully in relation to social and political power. This is because, in considering changes to employment in the gig (post-industrial) economy, exploring workers' views of labor control, exploitation, and solidarity allow for a closer assessment of the contrasts and continuities between different eras in work and employment. In this respect, we consider that the critical labor process perspective presents a more fruitful avenue for our research agenda since, in allowing for a critical assessment of the changing nature of power in the employment relationship in the (post-industrial) era of the platform economy, it sheds light on a double relationship. This may be characterized as a relationship between, on the one hand, worker exploitation and patterns of labor subordination-insubordination (the "how do workers struggle/not struggle" question), and on the other hand, the social and material context of that exploitation. The

latter typically is understood as central to determining patterns, forms and orientations of subordination-insubordination (the collective worker question and its persistence through time). There is an archaeology to the so-called labor process debate which can be accessed elsewhere (Thompson and Smith, 2009). Since it is especially fissiparous we are concerned with one, albeit vital, aspect of the labor process that concerns the fate of the collective worker (Martínez Lucio and Stewart, 1997; Gall, 2020).

From our interviews we assess the variant strands in discourses reflecting the range of tensions we delineated above: the neoliberal and the counter-narratives. The counter-narrative, in particular, illustrates the social, and cultural contextual factors that block the translation of deindustrialization into decollectivism. Moreover, we see that the basis for a new collectivism is rooted precisely in the type of flexible work that was supposed to herald its demise. We thus argue that platform work itself creates the basis for a form of neo-collectivism. The accounts examined in this paper highlight the lack of a clear line of demarcation between employer control and market dictates, especially as platform algorithms become increasingly adept at reflecting and predicting market demand. We argue, therefore, that this constitutes a structural ambiguity in a worker's employment status partly determined by their degree of freedom in choosing when and how to work. Moreover, this ambivalence suggests conflict will be an inevitable part of this work paradigm. Deindustrialization is neither the end to collectivism nor trade unionism: rather than post-work we explore the problematics of *plus* work and *variant* collectivisms.

METHODS

One of the challenges in researching work in the platform economy is the socio-economic heterogeneity of platform workers. Platform work encompasses different sets of workers, from those who are high skilled (such as in high-level consulting) to low skilled (like data entry). To reduce this complexity, we focus here on one set of workers who have become a paradigmatic example of platform work in public debates: food delivery couriers, working for platforms such as Deliveroo, Uber Eats, Foodora, Just Eat, etc. Such workers have contested the definition of their employment status, given that these low-skill tasks are performed in the context of an ongoing relationship, even though platforms themselves publicly stress the lack of formal engagement. We used semi-structured interviews with 14 male platform workers (there are few women in the sector) between the ages of 20 and 36 across Europe (UK, France, Germany and Italy). The majority were students, five worked for delivery platforms as their primary job, and one was a more traditional freelancer, using platform work to top up his income (see **Table 1**). The limited sample size reflects the exploratory nature of our research and we complement with our analysis of protest materials from the four countries. Furthermore, the expert informants from Italy and Germany, a long with those from France and the UK, are used to complete the national protest materials in order to contextualize the responses of the

TABLE 1 | Participant attributes.

Age range	Experience level (months)	Financial dependence on platform	Platform	Status (PT: part-time; FT: full-time; SE: self-employed)	Vehicle	Int #
France						
26–30	18	Dependent	1 and 2	PT, student, SE	Bike	FR1
20–25	3	Relatively dependent	2	PT, student, SE	Bike	FR2
20–25	<1	Relatively dependent	1	PT, student, SE	Bike	FR3
20–25	<1	Not dependent	2	PT, student, SE	Bike	FR4
20–25	1	Not dependent	2	PT, student, SE	Bike	FR5
20–25	10	Relatively dependent	1, then 2	PT, student, SE	Bike	FR6
26–30	18	Dependent	1 and 3	PT, student, SE	Bike	FR7
UK						
26–30	2	Dependent	1 and 2	FT, SE	Bike	UK1
20–25	4	Dependent	1	FT, SE	Bike	UK2
26–30	9	Dependent	1 and 2	FT, SE	Bike	UK3
36–40	10	Dependent	1, then 2 and 3	FT, SE	Car	UK4
31–35	18	Dependent	1 and 2	FT, SE	Bike	UK5
Germany						
20–25	6	Relatively dependent	1, then 2	PT, student, mini-job	Bike	DE1
Italy						
31–35	2	Not dependent	1	PT, traditional freelancer, SE	Bike	IT1

interviewees within the public articulation of grievances at the societal level.

Systematic sampling of representative populations is made difficult by the specific characteristics of this workforce (Chai and Scully, 2019). We therefore approached couriers in informal gathering places, both physical and virtual, employing a convenience sampling strategy to access as many participants as possible in this dispersed and hard-to-reach population. We are mindful that the couriers who responded to our calls for participants are unlikely to be representative of the wider courier population, being both available and willing to participate in our study. However, in light of the existing research to date and our informal engagement with couriers' online support and protest groups, we are confident that the issues raised are consistent with the experiences of couriers more generally.

Platform couriers engaged in a wave of protests and strikes throughout 2017 across a number of European countries, and many of the actions were organized and publicized via social media. As part of our research, we conducted a systematic analysis of the complaints and demands associated with these actions to identify articulated worker interests in conflict with food delivery platform firms. As a first step, we constructed a timeline of significant strikes and demonstrations in the UK, France, Italy and Germany from news reports, beginning in August 2016. Other materials, including statements, leaflets, posters, placard images and banners, together with social media posts relating to the protests, were collected. These searches uncovered other lower-profile protests that enriched our data. Given that these groups tend to promote one another's efforts, we were able to identify additional groups claiming to speak for the couriers, thus this became an iterative process, with each group highlighting further events and groups. Once saturation

was reached, the data were imported into NVIVO. We then reviewed the texts and images, with a focus on identifying concrete demands. While bearing in mind that these materials are not representative of all platform workers, we took the number of appearances of a given element to be a rough proxy for its importance at least to the protesting couriers.

Using these data we explore the relationship between what workers "expect" from their work and the importance of these expectations as drivers of individualism–collectivism. As Stephenson and Stewart (2001) argue, collectivism is reducible neither to worker behavior nor to worker expectations. Individualism-collectivism takes myriad forms premised as it upon the social-technical character of the work organization and the labor process. While platforms typically seek to foster individualistic attitudes qua transactional orientations amongst workers, in our research these were not exclusive of other orientations, including collectivist ones. Affirming transactional commitment did not exclude a collectivist orientation. After all, as writers from Goldthorpe (1968) to Huws (2019) have pointed out, feeling "cheated" or ignored by a firm promising positive working conditions (autonomy, independence, flexibility) has always been a great spur to solidaristic consciousness. As we discovered, a shake-up in employment experiences indeed proved to be a great driver of solidaristic consciousness and action.

FINDINGS

Worker Expectations

Our initial analysis of the interview transcripts identified a number of emerging themes relating to expectations as workers in the platform economy. First, and in line with much of the

existing research, there is an overriding concern regarding the status of couriers in relation to their contract of "employment," often drawing comparisons with those working as employees in the sense recalled by Rubery et al. (2018) in their analysis of SERs. Second, we identify a series of obligations between couriers and platforms that the former perceived as having been transgressed. Third, we identify a series of exchanges between the couriers and other stakeholders—customers and restaurants.

As expected, given the ongoing debates and lack of legal clarity, few couriers classified their status as unambiguously that of either an employee or a self-employed worker. Couriers found themselves drawing parallels both with employees and more traditionally defined self-employed workers, while perceiving that they fell between the two:

> "yeah, the way it works with [Platform 1] and [Platform 2] I guess is they're not actually employing me. I mean they are supplying the kit, with branding on it, but you don't actually—it even says it in the contracts that you don't have to wear the uniform and you are free to work for whoever you want, even if you are wearing our uniform. So I can do a [Platform 2] job covered in [Platform 1]. It doesn't matter, they don't really care about that. And I think it's to avoid them looking like they're employing me, I think it's a legal thing. But it helps me, it's great, I don't have to change my clothes or anything." (UK1)

> "In my situation I think it's a fair balance. But if I worked like all the day I think it's unfair because you must take an insurance and... it's quite "salariés déguisés" [hidden employees]—it's like if you work for someone but not officially" (FR3)

This was a source of frustration and perceived injustice for some:

> "I felt like they had acted in a very disloyal way and had made it clear that they didn't value me as an employee. So they'd broken a sort of contract of honesty and reasonable behavior between us" (FR1)

In addition, beyond questions of employment status, interviewees reflected on expectations, their relationship with the platform, and moments when perceived obligations were not honored. Participants identified obligations they believed the platform had toward them:

> "I think it's something maybe [Platform 2] should look at, try to look after the good hard worker. […] These kinds of companies should look at it cause these people would be very good workers. People who work really hard for them." (UK4)

But also that these obligations were not always honored:

> "When I signed up I was told that my wage would increase as time went on as a function of my behavior, my performance. So I worked very hard initially to ensure that I was in the upper percentile of people that'd get the extra money. And that was never, that never materialized, even though that was promised in writing to me, I have the emails." (FR1)

Similarly, participants identified expectations the platform had of them:

> "Personally, I think that we must be polite with the client because it's an image, and if you don't it can be a nuisance. It can be bad for the image for the enterprise, for [Platform 1], and for me." (FR3)

> "The first week that I was doing [Platform 1] after the training session, so after that they said 'right, so, when are you going to work, we'd strongly encourage you to sign up for 3 or 4 shifts right now'. So I hadn't planned on doing that, I'd planned on taking a week and then signing up, but because of that I signed up for the weekend." (FR1)

It also emerged that respondents considered relationships with other parties as important, including restaurants, customers and other couriers:

> "It's not something that I should do or am obliged to do. It's a human thing that I did with him. […] I could have finished the delivery and told him 'it's not my problem, call the support, they will call the restaurant'. […] you're not paid for it. […] 5 euros, I don't care, it's a human thing, and you can't be paid for a human thing." (FR4)

> "we do think about each other as well. like, anyone in that group if you're working for [Platform 1] and if you've got a problem or you're struggling everyone like helps and digs in and helps out that person because like I say it's just the way, it's like being part of a squadron I guess, you know you look after each other as a family in a way." (UK1)

Through these emerging themes, we observe that platforms aim to foster transactional rather than relational relationships with their workers (Cullinane and Dundon, 2006). Such an approach supports their public and quasi-legal position that platform workers are not in fact employees but rather self-employed contractors. The rhetoric of these platforms has emphasized the lack of relational elements to their relationships with workers—for instance, by not requiring workers to act as brand ambassadors by wearing logoed uniforms, and explicitly confirming that couriers are free to simultaneously work for competitor platforms. The manner in which workers are paid, piecemeal for individual tasks, is perhaps the clearest public indication to workers that the relationship is purely transactional. There is no explicit system for directly rewarding anything extra couriers may do to advance the other interests of the firm. Couriers' multiple relationships, however, complicate the (straightforward) expectations between platform and courier and contribute to competing narratives, as discussed in the next section.

Narratives of Individualism, Narratives of Collectivism

From their perspective, the couriers profess a variety of understandings of the courier-platform relationship, and express varying attitudes toward platforms and the platform economy. Following Pasquale, we reviewed the transcripts with a view to exploring the competing understandings in couriers' accounts of their work. We found that couriers employ at least three distinct narratives, threaded through our respondents' testimonies: platform work as leisure, as economic opportunity, and as collectivist labor. The first two roughly correspond to narratives

TABLE 2 | Narratives informing courier expectations.

Platform work as:	Leisure	Economic opportunity	Collectivist labor
Favored by	Platforms	Platforms	Unions/protestors
Nature of work	A sport (focus on physical performance) and/or a videogame (focus on app, tech)	Empowering, facilitating couriers' economic freedom	Menial, exploitative piecework, managed by algorithms
Courier identities	Students/young people	Freelancers/entrepreneurs/artists	Workers/victims with few options
Logic	Payment as side-benefit, pocket money	Individuals responsible for their own business, platform merely provides tools, at a cost	Platform claims profit comes from algorithm, but really generated by underpaid labor
Characterization of platform	An app	A start-up, a disruptor	A traditional capitalist firm, with a tech veneer
Employment status	n/a, formality	Self-employment	Hidden employment/worker status
Implications for worker obligations	No/minimal obligations	Return based on investment	Traditional employment obligations Minimal obligations for minimal pay
Implications for platform obligations	No/minimal obligations	No/minimal obligations	Approaching those of a traditional employer, moderated by employee flexibility
Implications for logic of exchange	Determined by rules of the game/algorithm	Market logic, Pareto efficiency	Reciprocity; Group gain
Implications for platform-courier relationship	Potential for brand loyalty	Minimal trust and loyalty—market rules	Little trust, loyalty—justified by reference to platform betrayals
Implications for courier relationships with restaurants and customers	Minimal obligations, but in-person interactions suggest other social rules apply	Minimal obligations, but market favors professionalism	Comparison to service workers
Implications for courier relationships with other couriers	Friendly competition	Competition; group gain	Solidarity, cooperation

put forward by platforms themselves, while the third reflects the account favored by dissatisfied couriers, as well as protestors and trade unions. Here we outline each of these three narratives, before exploring the implications for our concern with the relationship between individualism and collectivism in the courier labor process. In doing so, we identify a number of tensions between the three narratives (see **Table 2**).

Three Narratives: Platform Work as Leisure, Economic Opportunity, or Collectivist Labor

The first narrative of what delivery couriers do highlights the aspects that make it resemble a sport or videogame. Here the emphasis is on the physical performance of couriers, their speed and statistics. A number of couriers we spoke to described their existing passion for cycling, and how delivery riding is "cool." Treating riding as a sport rather than as a job encouraged workers' intrinsic motivation to improve their performance. Indeed the data generated by couriers and displayed in the platform apps perhaps encourages this understanding, with metrics recorded on various aspects of each couriers' own performance, and foregrounding images of fit couriers in athletic wear. This is indeed reminiscent of Burawoy's account of "making out" at Allied Steel whereby "game playing" provided the emotional and social basis both for daily survival of tough, monotonous industrial labor whilst at the same time allowing for the constitution of the social basis of consent to economic exploitation (Durand and Stewart, 1998).

A second narrative is of platform work as freelancing, whereby couriers are each proprietors of their own small business,

claiming more autonomy and flexibility for themselves than they could achieve through traditional employment.

"I like the way it works, I mean everyone's different—there's people that want to work for a company where they've got a lot of job security, for certain reasons—maybe they've got kids or other responsibilities or, I don't know. But then there're other people who really don't care, like myself, all I'm interested in is getting paid for what I do, and if I don't do it and you don't pay me then fair enough. If I go [on holiday] every year [...] it won't bother me in the slightest that I won't be getting paid while I'm there. A lot of people would get bothered about that, because they'd be like "well, I feel entitled to it," but I don't think you are entitled to it—if you're not doing any work, why should you get paid for it? But I guess people have got different ideas about that." (UK1)

This understanding emphasizes individual responsibility, with the platform cast as a facilitator of couriers' economic empowerment, providing tools for self-employment. Platforms' obligations to couriers thus begin and end with those of a software provider's obligations to its clients. For their part, couriers have no obligations to the platform and are free to behave as they deem fit when interacting with restaurants, customers and other couriers—those who deliver promptly, avoid canceling orders and shifts and gain good ratings from customers and restaurants will find that their business is more successful than that of others. This perception of economic empowerment, as with the first narrative, is undermined by the rider's dependence upon the platform for economic activity sui generis: obligations are one way (from courier to platform), as is responsibility.

	UK	France	Germany	Italy
Fair pay	50	48	38	26
Clear, open communication	7	17	22	19
Physical risk burden	8	3	26	17
Job security	8	17	8	12
Respect	8	10	4	11
Holiday and sick pay	6	2	4	7
Loyalty	7	0	0	1
Working conditions—difficulty	1	2	0	4
Working conditions—breaks	4	0	0	0
Promotion opportunities	0	0	0	1
Training	0	0	0	0
Help with personal problems	0	0	0	0
N=	14	10	4	10

Figures indicate percentage of demands falling into each category (rounded to nearest integer). With shading indicating highest (green) to lowest (red) priorities.

A third narrative woven through almost all respondents' testimonies is that of platform work as precarious labor. This latter is typically perceived by workers within the terms of a collectivist framework, defined by Stephenson and Stewart (2001) as workplace collectivism. Here, we might speak of work*space* collectivism, since of course the essential characteristic of platform gig work is the determinate absence of a common workplace. In the public discourse, this understanding is naturally most represented by proto-unions and protestors, as well as academic observers (see, inter alia; Howcroft and Bergvall-Kåreborn, 2014; Rosenblat and Stark, 2015; Aloisi, 2016; Berg, 2016; De Stefano, 2016; Drahokoupil and Jepsen, 2017). The narrative suggests that couriers are exploited and highlights the ways in which delivery riding resembles other low-paid, manual or service work. Couriers themselves underline the insecurity of their earnings due to fluctuations in demand, courier supply and a lack of guaranteed hours for platforms operating shift systems. For those couriers who are financially dependent on platform work, the lack of sick pay is important and encourages a scarcity mind-set (Shah et al., 2012) and over-work. A lack of clarity regarding platform sanctions (account deactivation or unfavorable access to shifts) further exacerbates feelings of precariousness, with some couriers reporting low confidence that they will be permitted to continue working through the platform from 1 week to the next. The couriers generally recognize that they bear a much greater burden of risk regarding fluctuations in the matching of supply and demand than in traditional employment situations, and that there is little cost to the platform of over-recruiting couriers. This precarity is one of the drivers of protests across European countries and the emergence of a collectivist labor narrative (Tassinari and Maccarrone, 2019).

Through our own analysis of the protest materials, we were able to identify specific demands and rhetoric linked to the precarious labor narrative. Despite some variation between countries—potentially attributable to differing legal contexts and

thus policies on the parts of the platforms—we found a high level of consistency. **Table 3** summarizes the results with percentages and coloring to indicate high and low priorities (green and red, respectively), weighted according to the overall number of references for each country.

This analysis suggests that platform workers were not necessarily asking for promotion opportunities, the company to invest in their professional development, significant changes to the nature of the work or recognition of their individual talents and needs. Two high-priority elements—fair pay and job security—might appear to amount to demands for a relational exchange. However, by reviewing each of these references and the coding more carefully, we found that, again, these demands were notably transactional. For example, when it came to demands regarding job security, the protestors call for guaranteed hours and management of labor supply, not long-term contracts. Similarly, their fair pay demands centered on pay for hours actually worked and metric pay, rather than "regular" salaries.

Although the terms and conditions for platform work appear on the surface to be clear, the protest materials reveal evidence of broken promises. We found evidence of poorer conditions imposed unilaterally by the platforms, suggesting, perhaps, that the original or advertised conditions were acceptable to at least some of those who had taken the job to begin with. Secondly, the protestors indicated that the exchange between the worker and the platform requires balance, with many complaints rooted in the imbalance of this power relationship. At the same time, the collective protests also referred to the lack of alternatives as a reason for their disempowerment, explaining why riders enter into and remain in jobs with conditions they considered unacceptable. Furthermore, there is evidence that protestors contest their employment status, highlighting the ways in which they are more akin to employees than self-employed workers and arguing that this classification constitutes a legal loophole exploited by platforms to deprive workers of employment protections and the minimum wage. Overall, couriers registered dissatisfaction with their identity as self-employed workers rather than employees.

A collectivist labor narrative is arguably the driver of a collectivism that many feel has become less present in post-industrial working environments. Not only less present but also structurally less possible due to the apparent fragmentation of the collective worker, a situation reflected in platform organization and labor processes. For example, while some of our respondents claimed that platforms manage rider supply with shifts "to make it a bit fair for everyone" (UK1), others were less trusting of the platforms' intentions, arguing that initial offers of high incentives that were subsequently reduced over time were "deceitful" (DE1) and show that "either they were very naive or they were very cynical" (FR1).

Moreover, those interviewees articulating a collectivist worker narrative frequently perceived their place as workers positioned within an exploitative capital-labor relationship that provided the spur to collectivist labor organization. Speaking about his experience as a courier and union organizer with the IWW, UK5

argued that couriers' protest and strike activity was attributable to a reduction in pay at Platform 1:

"I guess there's a couple of things: one, pay has been steadily going down—every few months, they'll update their pay calculations, and they'll be updated downwards. [...] But it's always a little bit complicated. So what they've done over the last year is they've increased the range that they'll sort of cover within a delivery, and they've adjusted the pay system so as to pay us more for the longer journeys but to pay us less for the shorter journeys. And most people fear that overall they're seeing their pay go down as a result, and that like right from the start, that was the assumption that that was what they were playing at. The second thing is that, so in [Platform 1] you need to [...] book these hour-long shifts, and they're released on a Monday afternoon for the following week. So you book 2 weeks in advance, to get a priority in booking those shifts, you need to have good statistics, basically a rating system for each rider. *And they've adjusted how that works. So basically, they've got more control over when you're working*. And if you book a shift, previously it was enough just to log on to the account as having attended that shift. *Now you need to log on for a certain amount of time. And assuming you're offered orders, you need to accept at least one of them and so on. So again, it reduces the flexibility of riders and especially those who are working for multiple apps, and might log on to [Platform 1] to tick the box.* But take an order from Platform 2, for example, now you're forced to actually take the orders for [Platform 1]. So the way that people had been sort of gaming it, I guess, has been undermined. And that's caused a lot of– it's a breach of the kind of informal contract relationship between the couriers and [Platform 1]. And that's angered a lot of people and put a lot of people in a bad situation." (emphasis added)

This is interesting for at least two reasons. First, it highlights the way in which platforms "game" the flexibility process central to the functioning of the business itself and of course, a feature of the gig economy sold to workers as great advance over traditional forms of work. Second, it reveals the extent to which platforms are actually attempting to force workers to make themselves flexible only to one firm: again, using the potential scope promised by platforms for worker autonomy as a way to reduce workers' actual autonomy on the labor market. Moreover, the reasons given by firms for changes to pay did not convince:

"[..] they'll fob us off with a reason to increase efficiency [...] [W]ith the recent pay changes they said it was to allow us to become more flexible. Give you a pay cut, so you can become more flexible, it doesn't really—nobody, they will always tag on a reason but it never sells to riders." (UK5)

This concern over reductions to pay and reduced worker choice over employer and working time was the source of worker mobilization that was, interestingly as our interviewee put it, "quite organic" in the sense that strike actions were, "largely [...] self-organized [...] perhaps encouraged by the unions and the knowledge of the presence of unions but not necessarily directly by us" (UK5).

If changes to conditions provide a basis for formal and informal mobilization, as important to collectivism is the management of couriers' labor process. Couriers complain that the way in which platforms detail and provide labor suffers from a lack of transparency and moreover that this opacity is a deliberate feature of the management of courier time, work and labor process organization:

"I think transparency is always something that people are asking for both through the unions [organizing], but also just on the individual level. It might be on the level, as simple as if something goes wrong in a delivery, you try and contact rider support. And they just completely fail to even understand the situation. Perhaps they've accused you of doing something wrong, but they won't tell you what you've done wrong or whatever. So it's that aspect of transparency is a really big concern across the board in that sense that there's a there's a black box that we can shout into with no idea what is happening or what is being said or how decisions are made and so on. So that continues to be a big concern." (UK5)

"I think if you were having a lot of absences and a lot of holidays I think what [Platform 1] would do would be take your repeat shifts away from you. I don't know how it works, cause I've never really known anyone or experienced it myself, but I'm guessing that's the way it would work that they'd take the repeat shifts away from you. maybe at first maybe half your shifts and if you carried on continued doing it then I guess they'd just take all the shifts away from you and then you'd be on a platform where you'd actually have to apply for shifts and get them approved, and nobody's going to do that cause it's just a headache, so you'd just quit of your own accord, cause it wouldn't be worth it." (UK1)

What is more, in several instances this lack of trust has been the important factor in a number of protests against platforms:

"They protest when their rights are reduced. What happened with [Platform 1] is, in Paris, they were paid by the hour and after they were paid by the delivery. So it reduced their rights and they weren't happy. It's rare… it happens, but they rarely ask for job security or that kind of thing" (FR2).

In summary we can say that few of the respondents exclusively adhered to any single one of these narratives. Rather, they borrowed from each throughout our interactions in examining different aspects of the work, giving rise to tensions and uncertainty.

The economic opportunity narrative is most straightforward in its implications for couriers' employment status, solidly aligning with claims that couriers are self-employed workers. Here participants emphasize that delivery riding allows them to make money without committing to specific hours or taking orders from a superior, adhering to this narrative of individual responsibility and choice. The leisure narrative, on the other hand, calls the entire premise of the employment status debate into question. If delivering is just part of a game, then maybe it is misguided to ask what type of work it is. While none of our participants went so far as to deny that what they do is work, it seems that its similarity to sports and videogames perhaps dilutes the strength of their claim to remuneration comparable to "traditional" work. The implications of the collectivist labor

narrative for the couriers' employment status is less clear-cut. Some value the flexibility platform work provides and express doubt that such flexibility would be possible with a more secure contract. Others seem to suggest that some sort of intermediate status between employment and self-employment might be preferable. Unions and protest groups, for their part, argue that it is incorrect to believe flexibility is incompatible with security.

Expectations, Obligations, and Logic of Exchange

One implication of the economic opportunity understanding of platform work might be the expectation of a minimal relationship, and thus minimal obligations, between the platform and the courier. This understanding is clear to see in the interviews. Couriers generally underline the lack of a relationship, noting that they do not believe the platform considers their interests and so highlighting the transactional nature of their relationship. Nevertheless, there is still some disappointment that the platform does not acknowledge or reward exceptional performance:

> "if you're having like some accident on the road [Platform 2] only care about if you delivered the parcel and that's it" (UK4)

> "it doesn't bother me that they don't care, 'cause I don't necessarily care about them either. The only thing, like – they're interested in making money, I'm interested in making money, and that's all I really see in it" (UK1)

The app-mediated relationship of couriers with the platform also seems to contribute to the perception that few obligations exist between the courier and the platform. This minimal relationship informs the types of perceived obligations couriers understand. Even those couriers most positive about the platform they use were clear that they owed no loyalty to the platform, and claimed that they would switch to a competitor if they were to offer better pay or conditions. Underlying these minimal obligations seems to be a belief that the exchange with the platform is governed by a purely market logic, which we might understand to be part of the economic opportunity narrative. Couriers recognize that they are valued according to the supply of and demand for their labor, pointing to the low barriers to entry for the job, and the weak bargaining position that comes with it. Others recognized phases in platforms' recruitment of couriers, surmising that platforms initially offer high rewards to entice couriers away from competitors with conditions later deteriorating.

Yet other exchange logics can also be found in the couriers' testimonies. Reflecting a logic of reciprocity, some couriers suggest that they are motivated to work particularly hard or provide good service out of a sense of fair exchange with the platform:

> "I don't think you should slack off, 'cause they are paying you, even if it's a small amount they are paying you—it's only fair" (UK1)

Yet, the logic of reciprocity seems to underlie some couriers' beliefs that they are owed more by the platform, such as pay for time spent waiting for orders as well as other payments associated with more traditional employment relationships including greater support from the platform framed in a logic of group gain. Here, riders' present sick pay, for instance, as a benefit not just for riders but also for the platform.

The collectivist labor narrative diverges from the other two in that it takes the status quo to be unjust and in need of change. Thus, while there is little disagreement regarding what workers and platforms actually provide one another, the collectivist labor narrative presents a normative case for more extensive platform obligations to couriers, currently unfulfilled by platforms. As we saw, courier protest groups, the public proponents of a collectivist labor narrative, most usually articulate a collectivist, critical labor movement orientation. Yet they do not generally ask for promotion opportunities, the company to invest in their professional development, or for significant changes to the nature of the work or recognition of their individual talents and needs. With regards to job security, the protestors call for guaranteed hours and management of labor supply, not long-term contracts. Similarly, their fair pay demands center around increased pay for deliveries realized and time spent on the job, whether waiting for orders or dealing with admin, rather than salaries.

Perceptions of platforms' failures to fulfill their obligations to couriers lead some to protest and strike, while others exit with little noise. In response to platform 1 failing to meet what he perceived to be their obligations, FR1 argued that they "had acted in a very disloyal way and had made it clear that they didn't value me as an employee," and recounted his use of a number of strategies to make the job easier for himself while artificially improving his metrics. These strategies included using GPS software to fake his location, placing him closer to busy restaurants in the eyes of the platform, and exploiting scheduling bugs so as to get paid for time in which he would not actually have to make deliveries. By way of justification, the rider noted "they'd broken a sort of contract of honesty and reasonable behavior between us, so I no longer felt bound by that" (FR1). In a similar vein, other participants reported their knowledge of riders who, for instance, illicitly make themselves available for work on multiple platforms simultaneously "[be] cause not one of the platforms are guaranteed for you" (UK4). Thus, recalcitrance, cutting corners and reframing, all typical of traditional industrial labor processes, were quite widespread.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

We can understand these exchanges in the platform economy through the lens of the three narratives. The economic opportunity narrative might emphasize couriers' strategic cultivation of a professional reputation and relationships with restaurants and customers, while the leisure narrative might understand interactions with all parties primarily through the rules of the game as established by the platform app. Neither narrative is incompatible with accepting the existence of other incentives for extra work, since the courier is free to develop relationships and motivations external to the exchange between the courier and platform. Nor should they discount the possibility that workers articulating the first and second narratives act in neo-collectivist ways. Their evident workday

and workspace reciprocity is a feature of their common sociality: helping one another out with problems, banal or otherwise. The collectivist labor narrative, by contrast, is suspicious of such non-remunerated labor. This extra discretionary effort undertaken for restaurants and customers is crucial for platforms' success, as noted by Rosenblat and Stark (2015) in the case of Uber taxi drivers.

The plausibility of these competing narratives is rooted to some degree in the ways delivery riding presents characteristics of both employment and self-employment. Yet it is also revealing of two critical features of the sociology of digital capitalism of which platform working constitutes a vital part. First and from a worker's point of view, is the evident lack of a clear line of demarcation between employer control and market dictates, especially as platform algorithms become increasingly adept at reflecting and predicting market demand. Given that a workers' employment status is determined partially by their degree of freedom in choosing when and how to work, this ambivalence suggests there is no easy answer to the employment status debate. Indeed in many jurisdictions courts are increasingly recognizing gig economy employees as workers sui generis. Moreover, as one of our interviewees pointed out, riders are wise to ways in which platforms use the "black box" to reduce worker autonomy and thus self-management. In critical labor process theory, the fight over labor control qua the frontier of control is an essential marker of social conflict over the effort-reward bargain. That said, while employment status remains unresolved, conflicting narratives would not unreasonably continue.

Second, what platform working indicates, perhaps surprisingly in forms as acute as traditional industrial work, is the persistence of myriad forms of collectivism. This supports an argument made elsewhere by Stephenson and Stewart (2001), McBride and Martínez Lucio (2011), and Tassinari and Maccarrone (2019) that the focus upon conflict as a marker of collectivism underplays its structural character, which is axiomatic to the capitalist labor process in the form of the collective worker. For that very same reason, therefore an absence of conflict is not reflective of an absence of collectivism: the former is not an ontological marker of the latter. This echoes Stephenson and Stewart's evocation of a "whispering shadow": even when collectivist behavior appears not to be evident, nevertheless it can be argued that distinctive forms of individualism are themselves inherently linked to collectivism qua the collective worker. The collective worker was for Marx about sociology and economics, not space, per se. This is another way of saying that what orientates workers insofar as here we are discussing individualism-collectivism, is not where people work so much as how and for whom (their common employer) and under what conditions. Thus, arguably the individualistic narratives of economic opportunity and leisure, especially, echo a pattern of coping with the stress of the platform labor process in ways reminiscent of Burawoy's factory workers game playing ("making out") strategies (see above **Table 2** "Leisure"). While research on workplace collectivism in traditional industrial cultures focuses upon the immediacy of working together in the same geographical space, it may be too readily assumed that commonality of space is *the key* determinant of common

experiences which in turn allows for (trade union) collectivist action. Yet one of the factors allowing for collectivism amongst gig workers is precisely the attribute that leads to geographical fragmentation—the device itself. Moreover, and this is one of the paradoxes of the platform economy labor process, it is exactly the courier's ability to utilize the technologies of the platforms, including gaming the app, that allows fellow workers delivering several kilometers apart to share information just as immediately as two automotive workers in the same factory. The very technology that divides the collective worker spatially can also provide mechanism that brings them together socially: moreover, bringing people together socio-economically into a 'common' working context by virtue of exploitation by the same employer in itself does not lead to collective action that is always conflictual.

Given this insight, we argue that early perspectives dating back two decades on the meaning of collectivism and the collective worker, Beck (2000) being perhaps the most pessimistic, tended toward the view that since factory workers in industrial capitalism constituted the archetypal collectivist actor, their demise spells the end of collectivism as such and solidaristic trade unionism in particular. Yet as our research and that of others suggests, new forms of labor and labor exploitation belie the idea that individualist, neoliberal narratives spell of the end of collectivism never mind the collective worker (Woodcock and Graham, *op cit*). On the contrary, both over-work and actor commitment to *plus* working serve to underscore the reality that a deindustrializing economy is certainly not leading to a decollectivising society. Neither is it an economy in which forms of trade unionism have become less salient. In this respect, we can recall Silver's point to the effect that we may be witnessing the growth, however febrile, of a collectivist trade union agenda amongst workers.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The datasets generated for this study are available on request to the corresponding author.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors listed have made a substantial, direct and intellectual contribution to the work, and approved it for publication.

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The Long Shadow of Job Loss: Britain's Older Industrial Towns in the 21st Century

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This article takes a long view of economic change in Britain's older industrial towns, drawing on the authors' accumulated research into labor market trends in the places and communities most affected by deindustrialization. It begins by documenting the industrial job losses over the last 50 years and their impact on unemployment, economic inactivity and welfare benefit claims, highlighting the diversion onto incapacity benefits triggered by job loss that remains a major feature of the towns. It then looks at the evidence on the present-day labor market in the towns, identifying job growth at a slower pace than in the cities and continuing weaknesses in terms of earnings, qualifications and occupational mix. These are the on-going problems the authors describe as the 'long shadow of job loss'. The evidence also shows that despite years of job loss, industry remains a key component of the towns' economy and that the towns are increasingly connected to surrounding areas, including nearby cities, by strong commuting flows.

Keywords: industry, towns, employment, welfare benefits, UK

AIM OF THE PAPER

A widely-held view of the UK economy is that it has become 'deindustrialized.' The world's first industrial nation now employs far fewer workers in manufacturing and mining than was the case fifty or more years ago and the economy as a whole is now dominated by jobs and output in the service sector. That this deindustrialization has happened in the UK is indisputable but the massive consequences for the individuals and communities that once depended upon industry for their livelihood are only poorly understood.

This is the gap in knowledge that the present paper helps to fill by bringing to bear statistical evidence on the contemporary labor market in the places hardest hit by deindustrialization. In doing so, the paper is also intended to provide a context for the others in this volume.

Specifically, the paper summarizes the evidence from the authors' own research, now extending over three decades, into employment, unemployment and welfare benefits across the UK and adds a quantitative overview of the contemporary labor market in Britain's older industrial towns, drawing on official statistics and the authors' most recent research. Job losses, labor market adjustment and the contemporary labor market in older industrial towns have been covered in an earlier report (Beatty and Fothergill, 2018). Here the empirical evidence has been comprehensively up-dated, mostly from 2016 to 2019, and the conclusions revised accordingly.

BACKGROUND

Because so many of Britain's industrial job losses happened a generation or more ago and because so many of the redundant workers have themselves reached pension age or died it has become

easy to assume that the problems arising from deindustrialization have passed into history. Indeed, as the second decade of the twenty first century drew to a close official figures pointed to unemployment levels in the UK that were lower than at any time since the mid-1970s, when large-scale industrial job losses were only just beginning to get underway. If official unemployment data is the preferred guide, then the problems arising from deindustrialization do indeed appear to have been overcome.

There are however more dimensions to labor market disadvantage than just unemployment, and national figures almost always hide important differences between places. Britain's older industrial towns—the smaller places beyond the big cities that generally have an industrial history extending far back into the nineteenth century—are where so much of British industry was once concentrated. These are the places where the loss of industrial jobs is likely to have been most keenly felt and where we might expect to observe lasting impacts. By contrast, although Britain's cities too nearly all have an industrial past they have always played a wider role in regional and local economies as service centers for their hinterlands, administrative headquarters, transport hubs and as home to major universities.

The recession provoked by the 2008 financial crisis was in many ways a wake-up call, prompting a rediscovery of the divergent labor market trends between North and South (Gardiner et al., 2013) and between city regions (Townsend and Champion, 2014; Centre for Cities, 2015; Swinney and Thomas, 2015; Martin et al., 2016; Pike et al., 2016). In particular, there has been a growing realization that Britain's older industrial towns may not after all be well on the way to recovery. In the 2016 referendum on EU membership, for example, older industrial towns in England and Wales generally voted 'leave' by a margin of two-to-one (Jennings, 2017). This has been widely interpreted as a reflection of rising disaffection and disenchantment with the economic impacts of globalization and deindustrialization. The big cities, by contrast, mostly voted 'remain.'

As the realization of on-going problems has grown, the term 'left behind places' has gained widespread use in British political debate and it has been applied in particular to older industrial towns. A sign of shifting priorities has been the UK government's announcement of Town Deals, which make available additional funding for economic and social development (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019). Of the first 100 towns across England invited to submit bids to the new fund, rather more than half could be described as 'older industrial.'

Britain is not unique of course in having towns that have lost most or all of their original industrial base. Deindustrialization also characterizes parts of North East France, the former East Germany and the 'rustbelt' of the United States, to mention just three other examples. In Britain, however, the original industrialization happened earlier and the efforts to rebuild economies have mostly been in place longer. Reflecting the research on which it is based, the evidence in this paper focusses exclusively on Britain but there may well be pointers to the experience in other developed, post-industrial economies.

STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER

The next section of the paper summarizes the industrial job losses that have taken place in recent decades in Britain, and their distinctive geography. The following section looks at how the labor market adjusted to these job losses, highlighting the extent to which the impacts have been on labor force participation rather than recorded unemployment.

The core of the paper then looks at the contemporary labor market in Britain's older industrial towns, presenting a range of new evidence covering employment, unemployment and economic inactivity, industry mix, job quality, skills, pay and welfare benefits. This is preceded by a short section on a working definition of the towns, necessary in order to deploy a range of official statistics.

The final part of the paper considers the labor market links between older industrial towns and neighboring cities, before concluding with an assessment of the position that Britain's older industrial towns occupy in the economy of the early twenty first century.

THE DESTRUCTION OF INDUSTRIAL BRITAIN

Employment in British manufacturing peaked in 1966 when 8.9 million people worked in this sector, accounting for 30% of all employment. By 2019, the UK government's Office for National Statistics put the numbers employed in manufacturing at just 2.7 million, or 7.7% of the employed workforce.

UK manufacturing employment fell especially steeply in the early 1980s during a recession triggered by a high exchange rate and high interest rates. The job losses during these years were documented in particular by Townsend (1983) and Fothergill and Guy (1991) and the process of deindustrialization more generally by Martin and Rowthorn (1986). The recession of the early 1990s added further major job losses (Gudgin, 1995). Thereafter, manufacturing output largely stagnated and manufacturing employment continued to slide even though the UK economy as a whole enjoyed 15 years of sustained economic growth. The recession triggered by the 2008 financial crisis reduced UK manufacturing employment still further and during the subsequent economic recovery manufacturing employment did no more than stabilize at a new lower level.

The coal industry's job losses go back much further. When UK coal production peaked in 1913, 1.1 million miners were employed in over 3,000 mines. For much of the rest of the twentieth century employment in the UK coal industry fell, though there were still 450,000 miners working in the mid-1960s. The more recent job losses began in earnest after the year-long miners' strike of 1984/5, which failed in its attempt to stop pit closures, and the final colliery closed in 2015.

The shift from industrial to service sector employment is not unique to the UK. In all advanced economies it has its roots in differential rates of growth in labor productivity—it is generally easier to replace people by machines in manufacturing than in most service activities—and the shift away from

industry has been accentuated by globalization, which has resulted in much routine production moving to China and other emerging economies. In the UK, however, the process of deindustrialization has probably gone further and faster than elsewhere.

The UK's industrial job losses have been concentrated in specific parts of the country. Partly this reflects the distribution of manufacturing, which was always more important in some places than others, but partly it reflects the location of the industries such as coal, steel, shipbuilding, heavy engineering and textiles and clothing that experienced the biggest reduction in employment. **Figure 1** illustrates the geography of this job loss. This map flags up the most significant job losses, in places where major industries have been reduced to a fraction of their former size or disappeared entirely. The closure of individual large plants accounts for some of these job losses but more often, in the case of the coal and textile industries for example, the job losses affected several sites across neighboring towns.

Manufacturing employment has fallen in just about all parts of the UK but the concentration of industrial job losses north of a line from the Severn estuary to the Wash is especially noticeable. It is the cities, towns and coalfield areas of the Midlands, North, Scotland and Wales that have been hit hardest—a pattern that will be familiar to anyone with a basic knowledge of Britain's economic geography.

LABOR MARKET ADJUSTMENT

The first and most obvious consequence of the large-scale loss of industrial jobs was a rise in the number claiming unemployment benefits. This hovered around 3 million for several years in the 1980s but fell away after the recession of the early 1990s, eventually to less than 1 million for most of the 2000s.

By the end of the 1990s, however, it was clear that the job shortfalls across Britain were highly uneven and that they were no longer accurately reflected by unemployment data (MacKay, 1999; Webster, 2000; Erdem and Glyn, 2001). The present authors' research on the coalfields shed important new light. In this part of Britain, the mines had mostly closed but claimant unemployment was no higher than when the mines had been working. The evidence on the coalfields showed that the main consequence of job loss was in fact a diversion of working age men into 'economic inactivity' and in particular into what the Census called 'permanent sickness'—in practice a withdrawal from the labor market onto incapacity benefits (Beatty and Fothergill, 1996).

A decade later, a follow-up study (Beatty et al., 2007) identified growing job creation in the former coalfields but confirmed the observation that the principal labor market adjustment in response to the loss of mining jobs was an increase in economic inactivity among working age men. By this stage many of the ex-miners had themselves reached state pension age so it was clear that the continuing high level of economic inactivity among men must be spread more widely across the local workforce. Indeed, it appeared that job loss for one generation was being passed on as higher economic inactivity among the next.
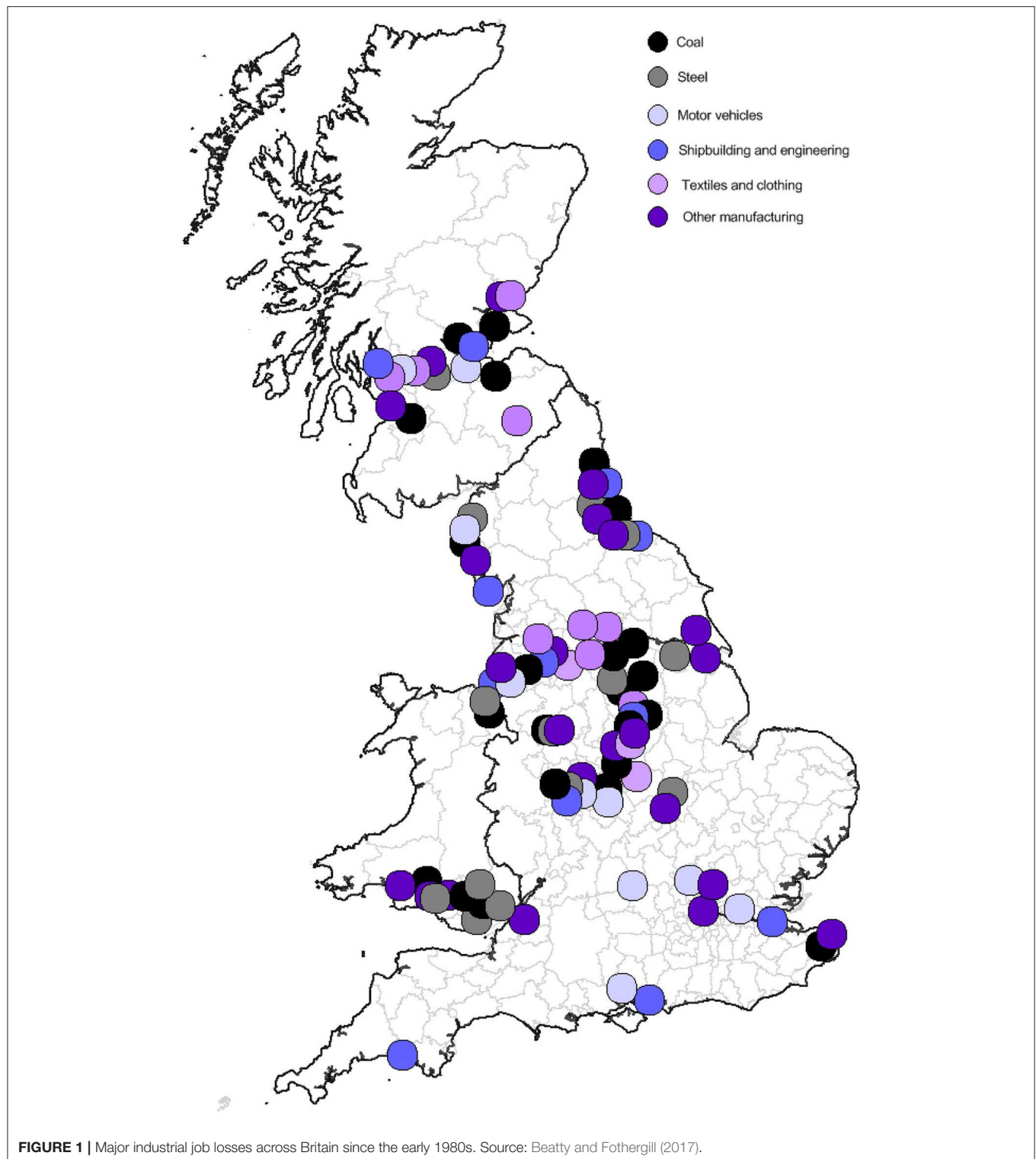
The labor market adjustments in the coalfields were not unique. Across the whole of older industrial Britain, from the mid-1980s through to the early 2000s, the numbers out of the labor market—'economically inactive'—on incapacity benefits surged to unprecedented highs. This triggered the argument that much of the increase was a form of 'hidden unemployment'— men and women who in a fully employed economy might have been expected to be in work but whose health problems or disabilities entitled them to incapacity benefits instead of unemployment benefits (Beatty and Fothergill, 2005).

The increase in the numbers claiming incapacity benefits occurred among women as well as men. At first this seemed hard to understand because many of the older industries shedding jobs—coal and steel for example—had a predominantly male workforce. The explanation turned out to be that in older industrial areas and elsewhere the male and female sides of the labor market interact, so the competition for jobs transmits a shortfall in opportunities for men into a difficult labor market for women in the same places. When women with health problems or disabilities are out-of-work they generally then claim incapacity benefits in the same way as their male counterparts (Beatty et al., 2009; Beatty, 2016).

Figure 2 shows the numbers claiming the three main out-of-work benefits across Britain as a whole between 1979 and 2019. By the end of this period, and before the recession triggered by the coronavirus crisis, the numbers claiming unemployment-related benefits were well down on the levels of the 1980s and early 1990s, though there was an upturn in the late 2010s resulting from the introduction of the UK's new all-encompassing benefit, Universal Credit, which counts partners and some on small hours or very low pay. The numbers claiming lone parent benefits peaked in the mid-1990s, when the evidence pointed to job loss among men as a driving factor (Rowthorn and Webster, 2008), but have fallen back as eligibility has been restricted just to those with the very youngest children and, more recently, as Universal Credit has been phased in.

The striking feature of **Figure 2** is the rise in the numbers out-of-work on incapacity-related benefits, these days Employment and Support Allowance or, as the changeover takes place, Universal Credit on the grounds of ill health or disability. The numbers on these benefits rose from around 750,000 to a plateau of more than 2.5 million in the early 2000s and have subsequently only fallen to around 2.25 million. It is impossible to explain the large increase in health terms alone at a time when general standards of health and physical well-being have slowly been improving.

The highest incapacity claimant rates are predominantly in older industrial Britain. Exposure to industrial injury and disease means that older industrial Britain has long had higher levels of incapacitating ill health but the surge in incapacity claimant numbers only occurred after the industrial jobs began to disappear. Ill health or disability is not always an absolute bar to employment, so what seems to have happened is that where there are plenty of jobs the men and women with health problems or disabilities have been able to hang on in employment or find new work if they are made redundant. However, where the labor market is more difficult, as in much of older industrial Britain, ill

FIGURE 1 | Major industrial job losses across Britain since the early 1980s. Source: Beatty and Fothergill (2017).

health or disability has ruined many people's chances of finding and keeping work.

In effect, the job loss in older industrial Britain has led to higher numbers out-of-work on benefits but not in ways that were perhaps expected. It is the numbers on incapacity benefits,

not unemployment benefits, that in the long-run have been impacted most.

Although the rise in incapacity claimant numbers is the defining feature of labor market adjustment in much of older industrial Britain the phenomenon is now past its peak. The
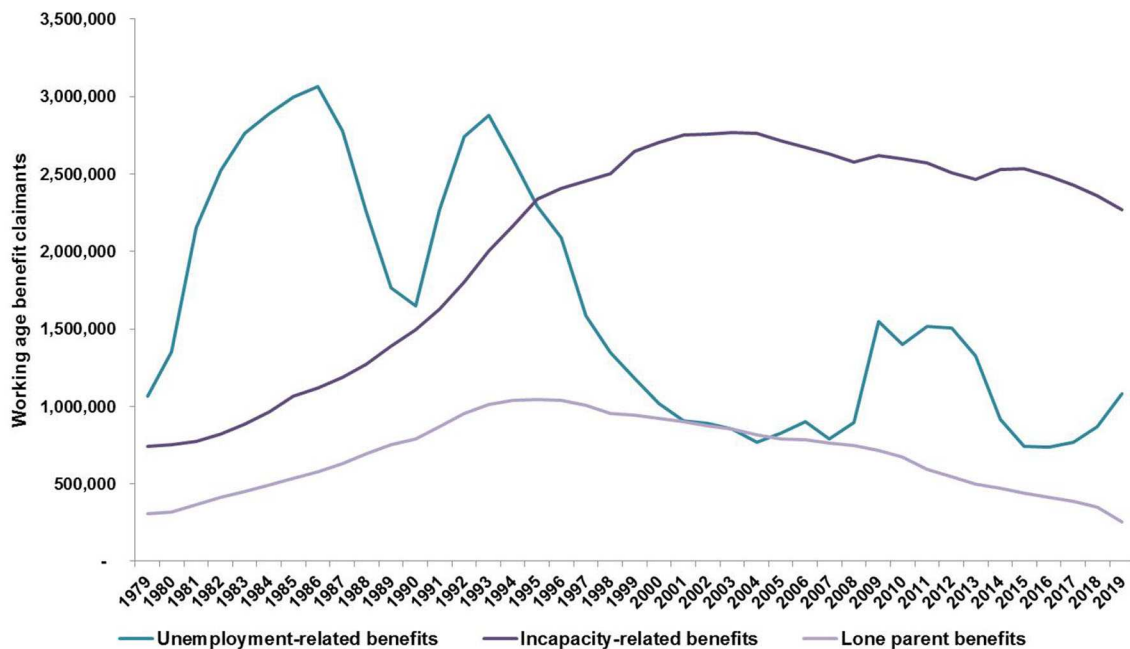
FIGURE 2 | Working age benefit claimants, GB, 1979–2019. Source: Department for Work and Pensions.

national reduction in incapacity numbers since the early 2000s has occurred particularly in older industrial areas, where the claimant rate has typically fallen from above 10% of all adults of working age to a new average of 7–8%, though still well above the 3–4% in the more prosperous parts of southern England. The most recent estimate of 'hidden unemployment' among incapacity-related claimants, for 2017, puts the figure at 760,000, well down on an estimated peak of 1.15 million in 2002 (Beatty et al., 2017).

That incapacity numbers in older industrial Britain have fallen back from peak levels owes something to job growth in these places. In the former coalfields, for example, the number of employee jobs increased by 138,000 between 2012 and 2017 (Beatty et al., 2019). The wider growth in UK employment since 2010 has also provided commuting opportunities, particularly in nearby cities. Falling incapacity numbers probably also owe something to revised medical assessments, more restrictive entitlements and new conditionality for some, though the increase in women's state pension age has pushed in the opposite direction, bringing an additional cohort of over-60s into the scope of incapacity-related benefits.

THE CONTEMPORARY LABOR MARKET IN BRITAIN'S OLDER INDUSTRIAL TOWNS

A Working Definition of the Towns

So what exactly does the labor market now look like in Britain's older industrial towns? The figures we are able to present here are mostly for 2019—at the end of a sustained period of recovery from the 2008 financial crisis but before the coronavirus crisis hit economies across the world. The recession triggered by

coronavirus will have worsened labor market conditions just about everywhere but its impact specifically on Britain's older industrial towns will take some while to become clear. It seems unlikely, however, that deep-seated differences between places, and in particular between older industrial towns and more prosperous local economies, will be easily overturned.

Presenting quantitative evidence on the labor market in Britain's older industrial towns requires the use of local area statistics, which in turn requires a working definition of the places to be included. Although these towns are a substantial part of the country there is no official definition of them to assist in the deployment of statistics. In this article we therefore use the term 'older industrial towns' to include all Britain's older industrial areas beyond the main regional cities, and we use district and unitary local authorities as the building block because they are the smallest unit for which much of the contemporary labor market data is available. The list of authorities is shown in **Table 1**. The list is taken from our earlier report on older industrial towns (Beatty and Fothergill, 2018) and has also been deployed in a recent study of labor market adjustment (Beatty and Fothergill, 2020), where a fuller description can be found.

The core of the list comprises the former coalfields of the Midlands, North, Scotland and Wales, where so much of the UK's early industrialization took place and where so many of the UK's older industries once flourished. The additions to this core cover the locations of job loss from the UK's main steelworks, shipyards and concentrations of heavy engineering and chemicals. The list also includes the former mill towns of Lancashire and West Yorkshire, where the textile industry has all but disappeared. All the local authorities are in parts of the country where job losses from older industries have long posed a problem, in contrast to

southern England where older industries were generally a smaller component of the economy. In 2018 the local authorities on the list had a combined population of 16.8 million, or 26% of the GB total.

Four points are worth noting. First, some of the local authorities actually cover substantial cities—Sunderland, Hull, Bradford, Stoke and Swansea are examples—though none of these are the main city within their region. Second, a number of the local authorities cover numerous quite small towns, especially in former mining areas such as County Durham. Third, some of the local authorities include rural areas just as some of the obvious omissions (Northumberland is an example) include sub-areas that are older industrial in character. Fourth, the sheer extent of job loss over the years means that in some cases 'industrial' may no longer be a very good description of the present-day town.

Labor Market Status

It is useful to begin by looking in **Table 2** at the labor market status of working-age (16–64 years old) residents in Britain's older industrial towns. The figures here show that of the more than 10 million working age residents in the towns, 7.5 million were in work in 2019—an employment rate of 73%.

By comparison, recorded unemployment was modest—just 380,000, equivalent to 3.7% of the working age population. The unemployment figure here comes from the government's Annual Population Survey and uses the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of unemployment, which counts anyone who is out-of-work, available to start work within 2 weeks and has looked for work within the last 4 weeks. The ILO unemployment figures do not depend on benefit status and in the years following the financial crisis have been notably higher than UK claimant count. The 3.7% of the workforce unemployed in older industrial towns on the ILO measure is therefore actually the higher of the UK's two official unemployment estimates, which underlines the extent to which recorded unemployment had receded prior to the coronavirus crisis.

The remaining adults of working age fall into a number of categories. In Britain's older industrial towns there were rather more than 500,000 students, many of whom will be still at school or college rather than in higher education. There were more than 500,000 who look after family or home on a full-time basis, and 300,000 who described themselves as 'retired.'

At 730,000, and accounting for 7.1% of all adults of working age, the single largest group of among the non-employed in the towns were the temporary and long-term sick, of whom all but 50,000 were in the long-term category. The Annual Population Survey tends to under-record the size of this group: in older industrial towns in May 2019, Department for Work and

TABLE 1 | Districts and unitary local authorities covering Britain's older industrial towns.

North East	Yorkshire and Humber	Scotland
County Durham	Barnsley	Clackmannanshire
Darlington	Bradford	Dundee
Gateshead	Calderdale	East Ayrshire
Hartlepool	Doncaster	East Dunbartonshire
Middlesbrough	Hull	East Lothian
North Tyneside	Kirklees	East Renfrewshire
Redcar and Cleveland	NE Lincolnshire	Falkirk
South Tyneside	North Lincolnshire	Fife
Stockton on Tees	Rotherham	Inverclyde
Sunderland	Wakefield	Midlothian
		North Ayrshire
		North Lanarkshire
North West	**East Midlands**	Renfrewshire
Allerdale	Amber Valley	South Lanarkshire
Barrow in Furness	Ashfield	West Dunbartonshire
Blackburn with Darwen	Bassetlaw	West Lothian
Bolton	Bolsover	
Burnley	Chesterfield	
Bury	Corby	**Wales**
Chorley	Erewash	Blaenau Gwent
Copeland	Gedling	Bridgend
Halton	Mansfield	Caerphilly
Hyndburn	Newark and Sherwood	Carmarthenshire
Knowsley	NE Derbyshire	Flintshire
Oldham		Merthyr Tydfil
Pendle		Neath Port Talbot
Preston	**West Midlands**	Newport
Rochdale	Dudley	Rhondda Cynon Taf
Rossendale	Newcastle under Lyme	Swansea
Salford	Sandwell	Torfaen
Sefton	Stoke on Trent	Wrexham
South Ribble	Walsall	
St Helens	Wolverhampton	
Stockport		
Tameside		
Trafford		
Warrington		
Wigan		
Wirral		

Source: Beatty and Fothergill (2020).

TABLE 2 | Labor market status of 16–64 years olds in older industrial towns, 2019.

	No.	%
In employment	7,510,000	73.1
ILO unemployed	380,000	3.7
Students	540,000	5.3
Looking after family/home	560,000	5.5
Temporary and long-term sick	730,000	7.1
Retired	300,000	2.9
Other	230,000	2.2
All 16–64 year olds	10,270,000	100.0

Source: Annual Population Survey.

Pensions benefit data put the number of 16–64 year olds out-of-work and claiming incapacity-related benefits at 776,000, or 7.5% of all adults of working age. These figures underline the point that a diversion out of the labor market onto incapacity benefits remains a key feature of the towns. Indeed, with roughly a quarter of the GB population, Britain's older industrial towns are home to more than a third of the country's incapacity-related claimants.

Table 3 draws comparisons between older industrial towns, the main regional cities, London and the GB average. There are similarities and important differences. On the ILO measure of unemployment there is little to differentiate older industrial towns: the rate in 2019 was a little higher than the national average but a little below the level in the main regional cities. In contrast, the incapacity-related claimant rate in older industrial towns (7.5%) was higher than the rate in the main regional cities (7.1%) and well above the GB average (5.7%) and the rate in London (4.4%).

The employment rate—the share of adults of working age in work—paints a complex picture. On the raw figures, the employment rate in older industrial towns in 2019 does not appear unduly low—a little lower than the GB average or than in London but distinctly higher than in the main regional cities. The raw figures are however misleading. The big distortion is the distribution of students across the country, who are concentrated in London and the main regional cities where so many universities are located. In older industrial towns students accounted for just over 5% of all 16–64 year olds; in the main regional cities they accounted for nearer 10%. This distortion to the figures has always existed but as student numbers have increased it has become more important.

A better measure is therefore the *employment rate excluding students*. This points to older industrial towns as a whole lagging three percentage points behind the national average. It also narrows the gap between older industrial towns and the main regional cities. On this measure the labor market in older industrial towns looks less convincingly healthy.

Employment Structure

Table 4 shows the sectoral breakdown of the jobs in older industrial towns. In total 6.4 million jobs were located in the towns in 2019. Manufacturing, energy and water—'industry'—accounted for one-in-seven, or 950,000 jobs in total. These days employment in older industrial towns is dominated by the service sector, particularly by over 2 million jobs in education, health and public administration, which will mostly be in the public sector, and by retail, distribution, hotels and related activities (a further 1.2 million in 2019).

The number of jobs in public services, such as schools and hospitals, is in most places driven by the size of the local population and many jobs in other parts of the service sector, such as retailing, follow local spending power, which is population-related. By contrast, jobs in businesses that serve markets beyond the local area, including most manufacturing but also some parts of the service sector, play a key role in driving the whole local economy because they bring in income to an area which then recirculates and supports other local businesses and jobs. Manufacturing's on-going significance to the economy of older industrial towns is therefore substantially greater than its share of employment.

Table 5 compares employment in older industrial towns with the main regional cities, London and the national average. This bears out the point that jobs in several parts of the service sector—retailing and public services for example—are found in large numbers in all areas because they are tied to population. The differences between older industrial towns and other places are in other sectors.

In particular, despite years of decline which has often led to the disappearance of whole industries, Britain's older industrial towns continue to have a higher proportion of jobs in industry than the economy as a whole, than the main regional cities or than London in particular. These may be 'older industrial towns' but they remain to a large extent the heartland of British industry. The converse is that older industrial towns have proportionally fewer jobs in banking, finance and business services than either the main regional cities or London. The drivers of the economy of older industrial towns remain very different from those in London or the main regional cities.

TABLE 3 | Labor market status: comparisons, 2019.

	Older industrial towns (%)	Main regional cities* (%)	London (%)	GB (%)
ILO unemployment rate	3.7	4.2	3.8	3.3
Incapacity-related claimant rate**	7.5	7.1	4.4	5.7
Employment rate	73.1	69.9	74.5	75.6
Students	5.3	9.7	7.0	5.7
Employment rate excluding students	77.2	77.4	80.1	80.1

*Birmingham, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham and Sheffield (all defined as their local authority district).
**May 2019. Includes individuals with limited capacity to work transferred to Universal Credit.
All figures are percentages of 16–64 year old residents.
Sources: Annual Population Survey, Department for Work and Pensions.

TABLE 4 | Industry breakdown of jobs in older industrial towns, 2019.

	No.	%
Manufacturing, energy and water	950,000	14.7
Construction	460,000	7.1
Retail, distribution, hotels etc.	1,260,000	19.6
Transport and communications	510,000	7.9
Banking, finance and business services	810,000	12.6
Education, health and public admin	2,080,000	32.4
Other services	330,000	5.2
All jobs	6,440,000	100.0

Source: Annual Population Survey.

TABLE 5 | Industry breakdown of employment: comparisons, 2019.

	Older industrial towns (%)	Main regional cities (%)	London (%)	GB (%)
Manufacturing, energy and water	15	8	4	11
Construction	7	7	7	7
Retail, distribution, hotels etc.	20	17	14	18
Transport and communications	8	9	13	9
Banking, finance and business services	13	20	29	18
Education, health and public admin	32	34	26	30
Other services	5	5	7	6
All jobs	100	100	100	100

Source: Annual Population Survey.

TABLE 6 | Selected labor market indicators: comparisons, 2019.

	Older industrial towns (%)	Main regional cities (%)	London (%)	GB (%)
Self-employed (% of employed residents)	11	12	18	14
Part-time work (% of jobs in area)	25	22	19	25
White-collar jobs* (% of jobs in area)	39	50	60	47
Degree or equivalent** (% of 16–64 year olds)***	31	41	53	39
Born outside UK (% of 16–64 year olds)***	10	23	44	19

Managerial, professional, associate professional and technical occupations.
**NVQ level 4 or higher.*
***Data for year to end 2018.*
Source: Annual Population Survey.

Job Quality and the Workforce

In older industrial towns the shift from mining and manufacturing to new forms of employment has inevitably resulted in major changes in the experience of work. The qualitative aspects of these changes—job satisfaction, a sense of identity, and control over tasks and workload for example—are very real no doubt, and deserving of study. Here we are limited to the insights that official statistics are able to offer.

Table 6 brings together a number of indicators, again for 2019. These cover the nature of the employment in older industrial towns and two measures of the local workforce—the proportion of working age residents with degree-level qualifications and the proportion born outside the UK.

One of the widespread assumptions about the UK labor market is that as the economy recovered from the recession caused by the 2008 financial crisis the growth in employment was skewed toward part-time and insecure working, including debased forms of self-employment. A common assumption, too, is that these forms of employment became particularly prevalent in weaker local economies, such as much of older industrial Britain, where welfare reforms made it increasingly difficult for many claimants to stay on benefits. The proliferation of 'self-employed' delivery workers and taxi drivers, for example, was in the popular view been a defining feature of the last decade.

The first line of **Table 6** shows that in fact self-employment in older industrial towns accounts for a below national average share of the workforce and a considerably smaller proportion than in London. This snapshot for 2019 does not however tell the full story because 'self-employment' has gradually been increasing. Expressed as a proportion of all employed residents, the increase since 2010 in older industrial towns was only 1 percentage point, on top of a 1 percentage point increase between 2000 and 2010, but the absolute numbers are substantial—an increase of 140,000 between 2010 and 2019. Self-employment accounted for 30% of the increase in residents in employment in older industrial towns between 2010 and 2019.

The increase in self-employment is probably unwelcome. As the UK government itself has documented (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2016), the self-employed as a group have seen falling incomes since the post-financial crisis recession, which mostly reflects their changing composition as a group. The modern self-employed worker is less likely to be a prosperous entrepreneur or freelance worker than a quasi-employee with diminished employment rights.

The second line of **Table 6** deals with part-time employment. This points to a share of jobs in older industrial towns that is only a little higher than in the main regional cities and in line with the GB average, and in older industrial towns the share fell by 1 percentage point between 2010 and 2019. Once again, the raw figures do not tell the whole story. According to the government's Annual Population Survey, 2.5 million people across the UK as a whole were 'underemployed' in 2019 in that they wanted to work more hours, were able to start to do so within 2 weeks and were already working less than full-time. This was down on the peak level of around 3.1 million in the wake of recession but still higher than the pre-recession figure of just below 2 million. Across the UK, around one-in-ten part-time workers say they could not find a full-time job.

Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of employees on zero hours contracts (Office for National Statistics, 2018). A government survey of businesses puts the figure for 2017 at 1.8 million contracts that did not guarantee a minimum number of hours. The Annual Population Survey puts the national figure for 2019 at 900,000, or 2.7% of all people in employment. Since 2010 the numbers have risen sharply from around 200,000 but the Office for National Statistics takes the view that part of the observed increase appears to be due to increased recognition and awareness of this form of employment. No local figures are available. According to the Office for National Statistics, the people on zero hours contracts are more likely to be young, part-time, women or in full-time education when compared with other people in employment, and only around

a quarter say they would like more hours, mostly in their current job.

Across the UK as a whole, the Annual Population Survey points to 3% of workers with second jobs, and 4% in temporary employment. Of those in temporary employment, a quarter say this is because they could not find a permanent job, a proportion that has fallen from around 40% in the immediate wake of the financial crisis. Again, no local figures are available but the small national percentages with second jobs or in temporary employment suggest that both are likely to be relatively marginal features of the labor market in older industrial towns, though that does not rule out the possibility of increases since the pre-financial crisis years.

But if self-employment and part-time working (and possibly zero hours contracts, second jobs and temporary working) do not sharply differentiate older industrial areas from other places the remaining indicators in **Table 6** most certainly do. The share of white-collar jobs is far below the level in the cities, the proportion of the workforce educated to degree level is far lower and so is the proportion of the workforce born outside the UK.

There are issues here of cause-and-effect. One interpretation could be that it is the location of white-collar jobs that follows the location of highly educated workers. There will always be cases that fit this model. A more likely model is that the composition of the workforce in older industrial towns reflects the nature of the job opportunities and that there is a migration of highly-educated workers out of the towns to the cities where they are more likely to find appropriate employment. Some of this will occur as school-leavers from the towns move to university, mostly in the cities, and then never return. At the extreme, London's exceptionally high proportion of graduates clearly reflects the availability of higher-level jobs that attract graduates from elsewhere in Britain and from the rest of the world. The industrial and service jobs that form such a large component of the economy in older industrial towns do not have the same magnetic appeal.

Likewise, the low proportion of the workforce born outside the UK at least in part reflects the long-term weakness of the economy in older industrial towns. Migrants are attracted to the places where jobs are more readily available. It should be no surprise, therefore, that international migrants are fewer in number in towns where the economic base has been eroded. There are exceptions of course—Bradford and the Lancashire mill towns are examples, where there continues to be in-migration to established Asian communities. As a general rule, however, it is the strength of the local economy to which we should look for the prime explanation.

Pay and Welfare Benefits

Table 7 compares the median weekly earnings of employees in older industrial towns with the equivalent figures for the main regional cities, London and the GB average. The first part of the table shows the figures for the jobs located in the area and demonstrates that in older industrial towns these jobs pay less than the national average, less than in the main regional cities and substantially less than in London. The median earnings of

TABLE 7 | Median earnings: comparisons, 2019.

	Older industrial towns	Main regional cities	London	GB
Jobs in area				
Gross weekly pay	£ 438	£ 481	£ 634	£ 479
GB = 100	91	100	132	100
Residents				
Gross weekly pay	£ 449	£ 446	£ 589	£ 479
GB = 100	94	93	123	100

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

TABLE 8 | In-work households in receipt of Tax Credits, 2015/16.

	Older industrial towns	Main regional cities	London	GB
No. of households in receipt	903,000	303,000	386,000	2,932,000
*GB = 100**	120	108	89	100
Average annualized value (£)	6,479	6,922	7,693	6,726
Total expenditure (£bn)	6.0	2.2	3.0	19.7
Expenditure per 16–64 year old (£)	576	559	498	490

No. of households in receipt relative to working age population.
Source: Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

jobs in London are almost £200 a week (or 45%) higher than in older industrial towns.

The second part of the table shows the earnings of residents. On this measure, older industrial towns are still below the national average and well below the level in London, though in both cases by a smaller margin, but residents' earnings are much the same as in the main regional cities. The differences between the two halves of the table reflect the influence of commuting: some of the residents of older industrial towns fill higher-paid jobs in the cities.

One of the consequences of low pay in older industrial towns is that there is a substantial financial burden on the Exchequer. This occurs because the UK tax and benefit system operates to prop up household incomes not just for those out-of-work but also for those in low-paid employment. To illustrate this point, **Table 8** looks at in-work households in receipt of Tax Credits. These figures are for the 2015/16 financial year—the last before Tax Credits began to be subsumed into Universal Credit and as a result difficult to disentangle as a separate category—but it is unlikely that the geography and to some extent the magnitude of the payments will have changed radically.

The absolute numbers for older industrial towns are large. In total, just over 900,000 in-work households in the towns received an annualized average of almost £6,500 in Tax Credits, at a cost to the Exchequer of £6bn a year. What is also clear is that the cost to the Exchequer of Tax Credits is greater in older industrial towns than in the cities. This is not because the size of the average

claim is higher—in fact it is lower in older industrial towns than in the cities—but because low wages bring larger numbers of households into the scope of Tax Credits. Averaged across the whole of the working age population (the final line of **Table 8**), the expenditure on Tax Credits is higher in older industrial towns than in the main regional cities or London, and higher than the GB average.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE CITIES

In recent years the dominant view within economic geography (Jacobs, 1986; Krugman, 1991; Centre for Cities, 2015) and in policy making (HM Government, 2011; Core Cities, 2013) has been that cities are the motor of regional and local growth. By implication, surrounding industrial towns are increasingly expected to function as their satellites, providing a source of labor and an overspill location for businesses. This is very different from the way in which Britain's industrial towns first developed, when they were nearly all locations of business growth in their own right.

What is undeniable is that approaching three-quarters of the population of Britain's older industrial towns listed earlier in **Table 1** live in the immediate hinterland of the main regional cities. Only the remaining quarter live in towns located further afield—places such as Barrow in Cumbria or Grimsby on the south bank of the Humber, or smaller cities such as Hull, Swansea, Dundee, and Stoke on Trent that stand at some distance from the main regional cities.

The evidence on job growth in the final years of the twentieth century and the early years of the 21st did not support the view that employment in the UK's main regional cities was growing consistently faster than elsewhere (Champion and Townsend, 2011, 2013; Martin et al., 2014). More recent trends, however, show that job growth in the cities is now substantially faster than in Britain's older industrial towns. As **Table 9** shows, this is especially marked when the growth is expressed in relation to the resident working age population. On this measure, between 2010 and 2019 job growth in the main regional cities was five times faster than in older industrial towns, and nearly six times faster in London.

In a small country such as the UK, with high car ownership and a network of public transport, the labor markets of cities and surrounding towns are inevitably strongly intertwined, as Swinney et al. (2018) have documented. This can be an asset for some older industrial towns if they are close to a city with a strong economy but a problem for others if they are further away or if their neighboring city is less prosperous. Additionally, Pike et al. (2016) identified 'overshadowed cities' (most of which are actually large towns)—that is, cities with a larger neighbor that hosts higher-level functions and provides development opportunities—as one of the categories of UK places facing relative decline.

The labor market links between older industrial towns and neighboring areas are certainly strong. Annual Population Survey data for 2019 puts the total net commuting out of older industrial towns at 1.06 million, equivalent to 14% of all residents in employment. Not all the commuting will have been into the main regional cities but this figure is a *net flow*—the daily

TABLE 9 | Increase in employment in area, 2010–2019.

	No.	As % of working age pop.
London	900,000	16.3
Main regional cities	500,000	14.2
Great Britain	*2,880,000*	*7.4*
Older industrial towns	290,000	2.8

Source: Annual Population Survey.

flow outwards will be significantly larger, offset in part by in-commuting. Looking at commuting flows from the other direction, in 2019 the 10 main regional cities had a net in-flow of 990,000 commuters, equivalent to 27% of all the jobs located there.

Net out-commuting from Britain's older industrial towns rose by 200,000 between 2010 and 2019, and net in-commuting to the main regional cities rose by 100,000 over the same period. Around Manchester, Edinburgh and Cardiff there is clear evidence of rising in-flows of commuters from older industrial towns in surrounding areas (Beatty and Fothergill, 2020) but in these cities the growth in employment has been especially strong and the corresponding growth in their older industrial hinterlands (e.g., in Cardiff's case the Welsh Valleys) has been poor. Elsewhere the gap in job growth has been more modest and the changes in commuting patterns more complex.

London's particularly rapid growth—an additional 900,000 jobs between 2010 and 2019—has however had little impact on older industrial towns. Because of the distances involved it was always unrealistic to expect that London's growth would attract daily commuters from beyond the south of England, though there are undoubtedly Monday-to-Friday flows from longer distance into the capital. London's rapid job growth might however have been expected to attract a net inflow of migrants from older industrial towns in the rest of the country. In practice this has not happened because the London economy has tapped other sources of additional labor: a large net inflow of international migrants, a surge in commuting from the rest of southern England, rising labor force participation among London residents and a natural increase in the size of the local workforce that reflects a population skewed toward younger groups. The balance of internal migration (i.e., the flow of UK residents) has actually been strongly out of London (Beatty and Fothergill, 2020).

London it seems is no longer acting as a powerful magnet for migrants from the older industrial towns of the Midlands, North, Scotland and Wales, in effect detaching its growth from the labor market north of a line from the Severn to the Wash. This observation from the post-financial crisis years confirms a trend first identified in the previous decade: the net flow of internal migrants into London and the South of England has essentially come to a halt (Rowthorn, 2010).

ASSESSMENT

Let us now draw some overall conclusions. The first is that set against the backdrop of years of massive industrial job loss,

the labor market in Britain's older industrial towns is not as distressed as might have been feared. In some towns, it is worth remembering, virtually the whole of the original economic base has disappeared and this might have been expected to have resulted in permanent mass unemployment or large-scale depopulation. In fact, taking Britain's older industrial towns as a whole, prior to the coronavirus crisis the unemployment rate was only a little higher than the national average.

Britain's older industrial towns are not, it seems, locked into a spiral of decline. It might have been expected that the loss of most of their former industrial base, which in historical terms happened quite recently, might have triggered a longer-term knock-on loss of jobs, in the local service sector for example as a result of reduced local spending-power. If these negative consequences are still happening in the towns they have so far been offset by other more positive developments, including no doubt the impact of substantial public sector efforts to rebuild their local economies. On balance, the number of jobs in Britain's older industrial towns was growing prior to the coronavirus crisis, though more slowly than elsewhere.

The second conclusion is that even if conditions in Britain's older industrial towns are not as bad as they might have been, the labor market in the towns still remains difficult. This is evident not only in below-par employment rates but also in the very large numbers on incapacity benefits, in low pay, the predominance of manual jobs and a high dependence on in-work welfare benefits. In many respects this is 'the long shadow of job loss.'

Until very recently, perhaps, the nature of the problem has been different from what it was 20 or 30 years ago. Even allowing for distortions to the official figures, unemployment in the towns was down on peak levels and down on the immediate post-financial crisis years. For many of the workless the problem is therefore likely to have been not that they could not find any job at all, which was probably the case in the era of 3 million claimant unemployed, but rather that they had difficulty finding suitable work with acceptable pay and conditions. In older industrial towns there have simply not been enough of these 'good' jobs to satisfy everyone, not least because the destruction of so much industry over so many years has removed the layer of jobs that once filled this important gap in the labor market. The new recession, triggered by coronavirus, looks likely to bring back older difficulties, at least for some while.

The third conclusion is that to describe most of these towns as 'post-industrial' is inaccurate. Certainly, they have lost most if not all the industry that underpinned their original growth but the figures here show that manufacturing, energy and water together still account for 15% of local employment—nearly four times the proportion in London and twice the proportion in the main regional cities. Add in the now numerous jobs in warehousing—just another 'industry' to many residents, no doubt, and a major element of the economy in several former coalfields—and the proportion would be significantly higher.

The point here is that Britain's older industrial towns remain the heartland of British manufacturing. Unlike the big regional cities, and London in particular, which have shed most of their former industrial jobs and become centers of banking, business services and higher education, many of Britain's older industrial towns remain to an important extent 'industrial' with economies that still depend on the local and national performance of this sector.

The fourth conclusion is that Britain's older industrial towns need to be understood in their wider geographical context. They do not exist in isolation from the places around them, in particular from neighboring cities. They are increasingly becoming dormitories for men and women who work elsewhere, partly no doubt because the on-going slack in the local labor market encourages commuting to neighboring areas and further afield.

The scale of commuting should be kept in perspective: the net outflow from the towns is presently just over a million whereas nearly seven and a half million residents of the towns are in work. Moreover, it is not always the big regional cities that are the destination and there is no evidence at all that London's spectacular recent growth has been of any direct benefit to the labor market in Britain's older industrial towns. Nevertheless, commuting on this scale represents a significant redefinition of the role of the towns within wider urban networks.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The datasets generated for this study are available on request to the corresponding author.

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Work, Identity, Place, and Population. A Changing Landscape

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Taking a biographical approach, this paper uses life history narratives across four generations of families living and working in Wigan, Lancashire to analyse social and cultural changes in working life biographies over the past 80 years. Beginning with those who left school at 14, prior to the 1944 Education Act up to the present, where young people are required to remain in education until 18, the paper examines the decisions people have taken throughout their working lives. Inevitably these are shaped by structural changes, particularly to the industrial landscape. The biographical narratives allow a "bottom up" approach to uncovering changes to life courses over three generations in a northern British former industrial town whilst also exploring the wider relations between self, society and place (conceptualized here as "taskscape") in a post-industrial setting. Key changes over the generations are the increased ability of women to pursue careers in addition to having a family, the decrease in parental influence over career choice, and the loss of a "job for life" and employment opportunities for manual workers.

Keywords: biography, work, taskscape, life-history, postindustrial, narrative, place, social class

INTRODUCTION

This paper considers life history narratives of work from the 1940s to the present day. Using biographical narrative interviews with up to four generations of families from Wigan, UK, the choices, opportunities, and trajectories of working life are examined across the life course, in relation to changes in the type of work available, education, social policies, and place.

In post-industrial societies, biographies are often framed in a temporal and deterministic way that can imply rites of passage are standardized and relatively immobile (Hörschelmann, 2011). By looking at family narratives based in a single place, rather than focusing on individuals *per se*, this paper is able to tease apart some of the changes in working lives over a period of time which encompasses those starting work before the Welfare State, during the years of the provision of a state "safety net" and into the current era of neoliberal subjectivity. Continuities as well as differences over time become visible in the connections between self, society, and place and the dynamic nature of the lifecourse comes to the fore through the biographical approach (Bertaux and Delcroix, 2000; Bertaux-Wiame, 2005). Transitions studies tend to differentiate between the relative influence of structure or agency (Heinz and Krüger, 2001) but by examining linked lives over multiple generations elements of both structural change and personal choice can be drawn out. The significance of place on the lifecourse is a constant thread running through the narratives presented here (Hörschelmann, 2011).

Shildrick et al. (2015) ask whether "we need a longer-term historical perspective so as to examine social continuities with earlier periods prior to the boom decades and possibilities of social mobility found in the 1950s–70s?". This paper will go some way toward addressing Shildrick et al. (2015) question. It shows changes over generations by examining work-life biographies from the perspective of those now retired, in mid-career, and looking to gain their first job. These narratives cover working lives pre-and post- the 1944 Education Act, through the full employment years of the mid-twentieth century and the mass unemployment of the 1980s into the current era of mass higher education. All of the participants here own their own home, or are currently living with their parents who are homeowners. They could be described as what Byrne (2019) has called the "missing middle": those who are not the most deprived in society, most would describe themselves as comfortable. As Shildrick et al. (2015) also highlight "these are not just questions for youth studies, but for sociology in general," focusing here on the dynamism of working lives.

In deindustrialisation discourses an emphasis on the intergenerational impact may obscure the salient issue of place. Place is a key marker of belonging and identity for people. In the activities of daily life in a familiar place, place appears to be merely a context for daily life. But place is, in fact, a part of what makes up the ordinariness of daily activity (Bennett, 2015). As Valentine (2003, p. 41) says "place matters" when it comes to the type of work available and the ability to access it through appropriate social networks. The impact of closures of large industries, or work places of any kind, goes beyond those who worked there and extends to the wider community (Walkerdine and Jimenez, 2012), particularly social and leisure activities. Part of this impact is economic but it transcends production and consumption. When the identity of a place is built around an industry its loss changes the identity of that place, which then reflects back on to the people who live there (Rhodes et al., 2019, p. 33; Bennett, 2015). As Rhodes et al. (2019) point out "place is central" when discussing deindustrialisation and changes in working biographies (see also Byrne, 2019). Therefore, rather than a focus on "work" as separate from "life," the intention here is to show how life is made up of work, a community (in place) and a social identity—that is, in Ingold's (2000) terms, a "taskscape." "Taskscape" describes the mutual, generally routine and often unnoticed, practices of interaction between people and environment, over time, often multiple human life times; or, as Ingold (2000, p. 195) defines it an "ensemble of tasks, performed in series or in parallel, and usually by many people working together." Looking at life lived within a taskscape provides a focus on the processes of change, rather than only the outcomes (Bertaux and Thompson, 1996). Conceptualizing lifecourses as taskscapes allows us to see recurring rhythms across generations and the myriad interactions which go to make up the continuities and changes in lives, embedded in landscapes, over time. This paper therefore situates the changing landscape of working lives within a longitudinal, multi-generational biographical framework of both place (Bennett, 2015; Pedersen and Gram, 2018; Farrugia, 2019) and family (Bertaux and Thompson, 1996; Brannen, 2003, 2006; Nilsen and Brannen, 2014; Vogt, 2019).

I argue that being from a particular place is as fundamental as social class in how one is recognized by others and is constitutive of identities (Bennett, 2015). Moving to find work is not necessarily an appropriate choice for everyone and some value their place attachment over other life choices (Farrugia, 2019). This research is based in a single place, Wigan, in the north west of England, situated between the large cities of Manchester and Liverpool. Wigan was chosen as the site for the research because it has a high proportion of families who have "stayed put" over time (Office for National Statistics, 2019), allowing for an analysis of belonging in place through family connections. By extending the analysis to the social relations within the wider community beyond the workplace changes in employment opportunities over time become visible (Hörschelmann, 2011). Bringing together structural changes to education and the industrial landscape, the narratives here covering the years from the 1940s through to 2017, show both changes and continuities over time.

The next section discusses the methodological issues of biographical narratives and intergenerational research with families. This is followed by an explanation of the data collection, including a detailed description of the place, Wigan. The analysis itself is split into sections covering the concept of "a job for life," deindustrialisation, changes and similarities in women's working lives and family influences on working lives.

BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVE RESEARCH WITH FAMILIES

Biographical narratives are a long-established method of examining working lives sociologically (for example Thomas and Znaniecki, 1958; Foman, 1978; Bertaux, 1981). This type of interview offers researchers a unique insight into people's everyday lives. The way that a life story is narrated, the structure of the narrative, can demonstrate the importance people attach to particular events in their own lives (Kohli, 1981). This inductive methodology allows for following the research participant as they find their way along their path in life, without trying to map standardized cultural transitions onto a life story. Standard life transitions may or may not be included as important "moments" within the biography.

A life story comes into being in the telling and may be different each time it is told. Within the boundaries of "making sense" the same set of events can be organized around different plots (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 7). Biographies are rarely told in strict chronological order as the narrative follows threads and knots in different directions. Untangling these threads may be necessary to bring some order to the data, but the narrative as a unified text, knots and all, comprises the "taskscape" (Ingold, 2000, p. 195) which meshes together people (lives), place, histories, and practices. It is through this mesh that the whole story of how, why, where, when this person became who they are, becomes apparent. Enrolling multiple generations of the same family drew a picture of the family, its ethos and position, that I did not get from the individual respondents whose families did not take part. A family narrative highlights relations between family members bringing social-structural relations within the community and

the place to the fore (Bertaux and Delcroix, 2000, p. 75), avoiding the individual focus biographical research can sometimes take (Hörschelmann, 2011).

This research uses families in a particular place, as the locus of the empirical work. Individual life stories gathered from people within a particular community can tell us about individual lives within that community, but extending a biographical approach to multiple members of the same family within a community begins to show how the taskscape is reproduced in that community (Bertaux and Delcroix, 2000, p. 75). A family spread across multiple households within a small area is likely to be a part of the fabric of that place community, sharing the same social connections (Nilsen and Brannen, 2014). Support networks within the family and the community as a whole create "both potential opportunities and potential constraints for its members" (Bertaux-Wiame, 2005, p. 49). Opportunities include being privy to job opportunities before these are opened up to the public whilst constraints may involve remaining in the place to look after family members (Brannen, 2003). Lives can sometimes seem to follow a similar trajectory, from one generation to the next but there are always rejections, conflicts, varying degrees of external pressure giving rise to changes in the family form (Brannen, 2003). One child may stay put but another leaves, for example. Researching families encompasses wider sociological notions than the family itself: families are connected to places through houses which may be passed on within the family; through workplaces where many family members work; through attending the same schools, even with the same teachers; and through cemeteries and memorials. These all build strong connections to the place (Farrugia, 2019).

The next section outlines the wider research project that the narratives used here are a part of.

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The research project took place in Wigan, England between 2009 and 2017. The first stage of the research in 2009–10 comprised two three-generation families and three two-generation families alongside five individuals whose families did not want to participate. Participants were found through local advertising and snowball techniques. Overall 22 biographical interviews were held. In addition, ten of the participants completed written and photographic diaries over the course of a week and I subsequently conducted six post-diary interviews. In 2016–17 I contacted some of the original participants to take part in a small follow-up study in order to re-look at the lives of the youngest generation in particular and to see how far they had followed their anticipated trajectories. Two family groups and one individual gave five further interviews (including with one new participant, too young to take part in the original interviews). Interview data from both stages of the research is used here; the diaries did not specifically touch on working lives and are therefore not used here. British Sociological Association ethical guidelines were followed and participants have seen the transcripts of their interviews and publications from the first stage of the research.

I took a narrative approach to the interviews and began with "tell me your life story." During the interviews I bore in mind that I wanted to cover key transition points in people's lives: leaving school and getting a job; getting married; having children; and so on, as well as family history, as far as this was known and followed up on these points if they weren't covered by the participant. A focus on major life events and rites of passage helped to show whether these decisions had a lasting impact or not. Interviewing multiple generations of the same family meant that I could identify what is passed on through the generations, particularly in relation to work biographies. The transcripts were analyzed both thematically and as narratives (Czarniawska, 2004). The biographies used here have been chosen because the stories relate to key issues in patterns of working lives: the idea of a "job for life," the gendered nature of working lives, family influences and deindustrialisation. The NS-SEC classifications of the participants' jobs/ former jobs range from 1–6, with only the youngest falling into "8 Never Worked" (ONS, 2010). All own their own homes (either with a mortgage or outright). In a qualitative study of this sort it is not feasible to gather a respondent sample who are statistically representative of the place. My sample are skewed toward administrative and intermediate occupations, perhaps partly because more women than men took part. I would argue, though, that although the group may not be statistically typical of the local population they are not atypical either. For the most part, they fall within what Byrne (2019) termed "the missing middle" of those who are reasonably comfortably off and "missing" because they are often not accounted for in sociological class analyses.

Wigan is one of the oldest towns in the historic county of Lancashire, having been granted a Royal Charter in 1246. Coal mining took place in and around the town from at least the 1500s until the 1990s, with the last mine closing in 1992. Mining is an extractive industry, literally tearing the place apart to provide fuel for the industrial revolution and the growth of the British empire. Textiles also became an important industry drawing people to the town in the nineteenth century (Wigan Archaeological Society, 2019). This was already in decline by the 1960s and Wigan therefore did not attract South Asian migrants in the ways that other mill towns around Manchester did. Since the demise of coal and textiles there has been a lack of employment, particularly low-skilled jobs, in the local area. According to Office for National Statistics figures, currently the unemployment rate is below the north west average (3.5 and 4%, respectively), but the percentage of people who are economically inactive due to long term sickness (31.8% of the economically inactive) is higher than the average for the north west (26.1%) (Nomis, 2019). As Lisa Nandy, the local MP has pointed out (Nandy, 2020), recent government policy has been to focus job opportunities on cities rather than towns. This has left Wigan and other places around a large city unable to attract new employers to the locality. There is a strong sense of belonging to place, or what Tomaney and Pike (2020) call "enduring local attachments," which mean that people stay here. In the 2016 referendum the town voted 63.9% to leave the European Union. This was not discussed in any of the interviews. Wigan today could be seen as a "typical" northern English, deindustrialised town, albeit with less in-migration than

some other similar places (Beatty and Fothergill, 2018; Rhodes et al., 2019).

Wigan may be seen as a "left behind" place (Rhodes et al., 2019) by some, but those I spoke to were keen to highlight its benefits describing it as "quite a nice place to live" and pointing out the excellent transport links and proximity to green spaces (Prince, 2014). It does have what Wigan Archaeological Society (2019) describe as an "image problem," often blamed on Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier* describing life there in the 1930s, which can transfer to the people who live there (Allen and Hollingworth, 2013; Prince, 2014; Pedersen and Gram, 2018; Rhodes et al., 2019). There are a number of industrial "relics" which point to its Victorian industrial heyday including mill buildings and the elaborate former Wigan and District Mining and Technical College building now used as the town hall. None of my respondents worked in mining or mills themselves but all had parents or grandparents or other family members who did. The current college has an old winding wheel outside to signify the connection to the mining college (one of the foremost in the country at the end of the nineteenth century). The loss of industry is therefore a constant, but silent, "reminder" in the landscape. Not that the work available in either coal or cotton industries was pleasant, the industrial taskscape was at least cruel and sometimes lethal.

Table 1 details the participants included here and their relationships. All participants have been given a pseudonym. Where I did not speak to the person themselves then they are referred to by their relationship e.g., Janet's husband.

The following analysis examines the working lives of those entering the workforce at different times between 1940 and 2017. In looking across whole lives the dynamism of working life comes to the fore: various strands of personal choice, opportunities afforded by the place and time, and family support are woven together to create a cohesive biographical narrative.

A JOB FOR LIFE AND THE DEMISE OF INDUSTRY

A "job for life" is something that is understood to belong to an industrial era. With insecure, part time contracts now the norm in many sectors (Standing, 2009; Rhodes et al., 2019), a job for life would appear to be a luxury. Indeed, Atkinson (2010) found that even highly qualified professionals no longer saw themselves as necessarily able to pursue a single career throughout their working life. However, in the industrialized past, it was not unusual (Strangleman, 2015). Rather than a single job what this often meant was working for a single employer and working one's way up.

"I started work for … company and worked for them for the rest of my working life, it was fine, not in the same place all the time, moving from job to job, factory to factory [all around Wigan/St Helens] … and was working there when I retired [after 40 years]."

(Keith, 65, 2009)

Keith is not a "born and bred" northerner but moved north with his family when he left school at 15 in 1959. He took up an apprenticeship and stayed with the same company until he took early retirement. However, he did not work in the same role throughout and retired as a senior manager for the organization. He told me that he was taught "how to say things in a Northern accent" by a fellow apprentice to help him fit in better, although as a senior manager his comparative lack of a local accent may well have worked to his advantage in conferring a more middle-class identity. This career path was possible because night school offered people (men, in my sample) the opportunity to continue their education whilst being able to work and support a family:

"I did a fair amount of my further education in St Helens and Wigan so having left school with minimal, well not adequate, qualifications so it really was necessary to go to night school so I did, well I was still going to night school when I was 36, I think."

(Keith, 65, 2009)

During the 1960s and 1970s this was an accepted career path (Byrne, 2019, p. 96). Janet's husband, in the 1970s, also left school at 15 and took up an apprenticeship but continued to gain qualifications:

"[he] did leave school, but he didn't stop being educated, he carried on … that doesn't exist anymore, the old apprenticeships, which is what he went through… he must've left school in about 1970, so 15 years later he's still actually in education."

(Janet, 52, 2010)

This type of career path gave these men the opportunity to experience the workplace without having to cram tertiary education into 3 years in a university context. At 15, neither wanted to stay on at school but in the 1960s and 1970s this did not preclude them from gaining qualifications throughout their working lives and pursuing professional/senior management careers. Whilst their schooling and their first job put them into a "technical occupation" (NS-SEC class 5), their ultimate career destination put them into NS-SEC class 1 (ONS, 2010), demonstrating the "dynamism" of social class that Byrne (2019, p. 4–5) highlights. Keith's son and Janet's children all went on to higher education, continuing the upward absolute social mobility of their parents.

In contrast, after the 1950s and 1960s "golden age of smooth and rapid school-to-work transitions" (Roberts, 2004), Sean left school at sixteen in the early 1980s and also took up an apprenticeship. This in itself was an achievement at that time: "I did well for get that 'cos there was 800 people going for 60 jobs" (Sean, 42, 2009). However, despite serving his time including going to college for 4 years on day release from work and getting his ONC (a qualification equivalent to "A" levels) he felt "it's not done me any good." Unlike Keith, Sean has moved to different organizations. There is no particular career trajectory, or aim, simply for work that is challenging and interesting:

Grandparents	Parents	Children
"The Leythers"		
"Leyther" is a person from Leigh (a separate town within the Metropolitan area of Wigan)	**Claire**, 35, works in recruitment, currently for a Government agency; lived in Leigh all her life	2 daughters, 10, and 3
Val, 65, retired bank clerk lived in or close to Leigh all her life	**Paul**, 35, married to Claire, spent 5 years out of Leigh in the army, works as a technician	
Completed Diary		
Keith, 66, retired senior manager for international company, lived in Leigh 20 years	**Rob**, 37, lives in London with partner, works in media, brief email "conversation"	1 son, 1 year old
John and Joanne		
	Joanne, 35, primary school teacher, always lived in Wigan	2 children, 5 and 1
John, 61, retired BT engineer, always lived in Wigan	Joanne's husband, BT engineer from Wigan	
Completed Diary		
Wife, teaching assistant, always lived in Wigan	Joanne's sister, 33, works in a health care profession, lives in Wigan, single	
Barbara		
Barbara, 75, retired coach tour guide, widowed and remarried, always lived in Wigan	Daughter, married, works part-time, lives in a neighboring town	3 children 10 and under
Completed Diary		
"The Aspinalls"		
Beryl, 76, married, retired administrator, always lived in Wigan	**Janet**, 52, at first interview in 2010, does not work due to a disability, formerly civil servant, lives close to Mum Beryl, husband, not interviewed, insurance assessor, also from Wigan	**Tom**, 18, taking A levels, hoping to study Computing at university
Completed Diary		**Completed Diary**
		Lauren, 16, taking GCSEs, wants to be a solicitor
	Completed Diary	**Completed Diary**
	Interviewed again in 2016	Both interviewed again in 2016 Tom aged 24 in his first graduate job in IT, Lauren aged 22 just returned from a post-university gap year
Ian, 62, Beryl's brother, married, retired teacher, lived in Manchester and Salford when younger	2 children, daughter lives in Thames Valley, son about 35 miles from Wigan	1 baby grandson
Linda's family		
Ethel, 85, widowed, always lived in Wigan, 5 children, 1 great-great-grandchild	**Linda**, 61, retired secretary, always lived in Wigan, husband an engineer from Scotland originally	**Kate**, 34, at first interview in 2010, works at Leisure Center, divorced, 2 children, including **Josh** interviewed in 2017, when he was 18
	Completed Diary	
Sean		
Father, deceased, ran own business Mother, widowed, lives close by	**Sean**, 42, lives with partner, always lived in the same house (from 1 year old), sheet metal worker	2 sons, 6, and 2

*Names in **bold** indicate those interviewed. Those who completed diaries are also indicated. All participants are White British.*

"Right boring job that, when you serve your time it's all right when you're in factory and then when I made … my time I worked three months on a press and I thought when I'm 21 I'm leaving, so I was 21 Wednesday, Friday I left."

(Sean, 42, 2009)

Although Sean has never experienced any lengthy periods of unemployment he has had to find new jobs due to redundancy and the threat of job loss is ever-present, making him fearful for his children's future:

"then I ended up going GEC where they make power stations - it's all flat now that … they're not bothered about manufacturing so it's all gone … so now I'm working back in Wigan … but last week there were 15 redundancies … our hours have been cut down to 30

hours … in Wigan there's no employment, back in th'olden days it was all mining and engineering but now it's all gone so when my lads leave school what [are] they going to do?"

(Sean, 42, 2009)

The "olden days" of mining and engineering jobs were as recent as 1950s and 1960s when, as Keith's story shows, people were moving to the area for work and getting an apprenticeship could secure a secure job for the future. The working landscape of the place where Sean's parents and grandfathers (both miners) lived and worked has changed so that there is no "family script" (Bertaux and Thompson, 1996) to follow, but there is a "residual culture" (Williams, 1958; Byrne, 2019) which leads Sean to feel lost between the Wigan he grew up in with industrial work the norm and the ongoing deindustrialisation he is experiencing

now. Even those with "traditional" jobs are acutely aware of their precarity (Standing, 2009) and the uncertainty for future generations, particularly for "masculine" work (Walkerdine and Jimenez, 2012).

Along with similar towns overshadowed by nearby cities, Wigan has failed to attract new manufacturing or technical work (Rhodes et al., 2019). Keith confirms Sean's view of the current situation for those who, like Sean, do not see themselves as "academic":

> *"Construction is the only area left for people who would have traditionally gone into the pits or the mills, there really isn't that work available now, it tends to be a McDonalds, or an Asda or things like that that people find themselves going to 'cos they've not got the academic qualifications."*
>
> (Keith, 65, 2009)

This is the situation the youngest person I spoke to finds himself in. Josh, who was 18 when we met in 2017, was part of the first cohort in England to have to stay in education or training until 18. Unlike his stepsisters who all have degrees and are employed in public sector roles, Josh does not want to go into higher education and wants a more practical career. His uncle and great uncles work in construction, but Josh has been unable to find an apprenticeship. In any case, modern apprenticeships, whilst often being as competitive as Sean's was, do not necessarily lead to a permanent job. Josh has been compelled to go to college to undertake a BTEC (level 3) which he has no interest in: "it's boring" he told me, although he also echoed Roberts (2011, p. 28) participants in saying that he just gets on with it. It is perhaps amongst young men such as Josh that the biggest changes can be seen over the generations as jobs requiring vocational qualifications have all but disappeared (Roberts, 2004). Compared to the experiences of Keith and Janet's husband in the 1960s and 1970s discussed above, opportunities for those who prefer practical to academic work are far fewer now in a place like Wigan (McDowell, 2019). Josh is embedded within a place and family of male relatives who do practical work which clearly demonstrates that his situation is a result of structural changes, rather than personal choices (Byrne, 2019:58–59).

The working landscape of Wigan is such that those with higher educational qualifications may need to move away to find appropriate work, especially outside the type of infrastructural public sector roles, such as teaching and health work, where Josh's step-sisters are employed (Finn, 2017; Pedersen and Gram, 2018). Ian, Janet's uncle described such workers— "policemen, firemen, local authority employees" —as "the aristocracy of the working class." They lived on a council estate alongside him, growing up in the 1950s. Today they would be more likely to live on private estates of semi-detached 1960s housing, as indeed many of the participants do. This kind of work, much of which now requires a degree, is available and needed everywhere. Rob, Val's son, who lives in London, exemplified this dilemma when he explained that he felt his media work colleagues would find it strange if he chose to live in a place like Leigh (Rob, 37, 2010, via email). As Ian told me in 2010, he could count 24 children of his neighbors who had all been to university but only two still live in the Wigan area

"one's a teacher and one's an accountant," the kind of professions that are needed everywhere.

As Nilsen and Brannen(2014, p. 1.1) point out "lives need to be understood over time and in particular times and places." Both structural changes to the education system and economic and political changes through globalization, deindustrialization, and neoliberalism have made the working taskscape in Wigan in 2017 very different from what it was in 1959, when Keith started work (Byrne, 2019). It is noticeable here that it is men who have felt the greatest impact of these changes. I will now examine some changes to the work of the female participants.

WOMEN'S WORK: THE PRESENT AND THE PAST

In the 1940s and 1950s a young person's wage would have helped to support parents and younger siblings (Nilsen and Brannen, 2014). None of the participants here in either the grandparent or parent generation left home before marriage (or partnership) except to go to university or join the armed forces.

Ethel, in her mid-eighties when we met in 2010, left school at 14 years old during the Second World War. It was easy enough to find a job as a school leaver as she explained:

> *"There were two jobs came up, one was in an office, and then this came up [in a bakers], because me dad knew the man who delivered the yeast for this shop and he told me dad that they were wanting an apprentice you know so I went there…and I worked from starting school to getting married, just the one place."*
>
> (Ethel, 83, 2010)

Ethel took the job that sounded most attractive to her without any specific long-term plans but she has used the skills she learned throughout her life. Ethel also points out that she stayed at the bakery until she married, and how happy she was there, being treated as one of the family. Barbara on the other hand was "pushed" into secretarial work as her father paid for a shorthand and typing course after leaving school. She made use of strong social ties through going to work at the factory where both her father and, earlier, her grandfather had worked (Byrne, 2019). Although she worked at other places too, she returned there after her daughter was born.

> *"…me dad was a joiner by trade but he, … I mean he was a works manager, but that's how he started off with an apprenticeship… it was at Whitter's at Appley Bridge, which was a linoleum factory, and I went there … so there was three generations of us who had gone to the same firm… I went to Upholland Grammar School, left there [at 16] … went to a commercial college for 3 months, did shorthand typing and bookkeeping and then started in the office down there and [after birth of daughter] I was back at Whitters so I was still working locally."*
>
> (Barbara, 73, 2010)

Barbara's path, although her father was "works manager," followed a typical meandering "women's work" route, including these elements of circularity, leaving and then returning to the same place (without the career progression of her father).

But Barbara also emphasizes the "family script" (Bertaux and Thompson, 1996) that she followed in getting a job at the local factory alongside her father. Although Barbara attended a grammar school her career showed little difference from those who had left elementary school at fourteen. Beryl, like Ethel, left elementary school at fourteen. She also undertook a shorthand and typing course paid for by her father. As with Barbara, this gave her access to a variety of jobs both before and after marriage. Once working the young women would have contributed significantly to the household budgets; there was no question of them leaving home until marriage (Bennett, 2015).

Val and Janet could be said to have had a "job for life," but had no significant progression in their careers as their husbands (above) did:

"I worked in a bank from being 16 ... you didn't have maternity leave then, you got pregnant you lost your job, but I did go back to the same branch part-time after, when [Rob] started school and [Claire] was three."

(Val, 63, 2009)

"I decided to leave [school] at eighteen and it was 1976, I thought ... go out and get a job, which you could do in those days, and I kept that job, that was the only job I ever got....I worked for the Civil Service and in the same office doing the same job until I was thirty eight, nine when ... I retired on ill health....there was maternity leave then [1991], but not as much - 12 paid weeks and then half. I [took] eight months in total ... then I went back part-time after he was born which was, sort of, available - you only had to make your own case..."

(Janet, 52, 2010)

Val was the first in her family to go to grammar school, leaving at 16 in the early 1960s, despite school staff encouraging her to stay on and consider a teaching career. Janet was offered a place at grammar school but chose to attend a comprehensive, as grammar schools were about to be abolished in Wigan. Despite having "A" levels and the option of going to university (for Janet), or staying on at school and applying to teacher training college (for Val), both women followed the example of the previous generation and fitted their work around family and children (Bennett, 2015), perhaps embodying the circularity that lives, over time, tend to follow (Brannen, 2006). In contrast men of the same generation who went to grammar school—Ian, Janet's uncle, is an example here—did go on to university in the 1960s, and this seemed to be the accepted path amongst his cohort. Although the career paths of women have changed in many ways since the mid-twentieth century, there are also similarities in the way women view their working and family lives today.

The ability of both Val and Janet to retain or regain work in organizations where they were known is an example of the "industrial citizenship" and the family orientation of many organizations in the past (Standing, 2009; Strangleman, 2015). Since 1996 employees in England have had the right to request flexible working but these examples from the 1970s and early 1990s show that larger employers and the public sector were open to requests before it became a statutory requirement (Crompton, 2006, p. 106). Val's parents and in-laws helped with childcare. Janet paid for childcare as her mother was still working (Brannen, 2003). The dual-earner/female-part-time-carer combination became normative from the 1970s onwards, but, according to Crompton (2006, p. 196), has not resulted in any significant change in gender roles. It is perhaps notable here that despite lengthy careers neither Val nor Janet was promoted, in the way Keith (above), for example, was.

Claire (Val's daughter) changed her career path to fit around family when she had her second child, an example of how different life stages can trigger changes: "I used to be the money earner but then I took a backstep to work here. Though it's a good job, I reduced my earnings." In moving from the private to the public sector Claire now has job security and greater flexibility albeit with a cut in salary (Crompton, 2006, p. 106). Gerson (2010), in the "The Unfinished Revolution" shows how young women in the US accept that they need to take responsibility for supporting themselves and their children without relying on the children's fathers. Claire and Joanne are not single parents but do shoulder the greater responsibility.

Joanne has, to a greater extent, taken a more active career path as a primary school teacher and is the primary earner in her household:

"I'd love to [go part time] but ... my job is so secure and I have gradually worked my way up in school and I love my job ... I'm very well paid so you know it helps us to manage. Like I say, [husband] was made redundant just as we moved here and then got this job, so we never rely on it, you know ... it's important to rely on me..."

(Joanne, 35, 2009)

Joanne had a career path in mind when she left school as she studied Primary Education at a local university. The job itself "came up" when she was finishing her degree, was local (she was living with her parents at that time) and she has been there ever since.

She sees domestic duties as being her responsibility, regardless of whether she carries them out or not:

"... [husband] has two days off in the week and he can apply for overtime or he does my cleaning for me which is great! I said that was my condition, if I go back to work I need help and he is very, very good, he does an awful lot ... in the house, you know, round about, and at weekends you know, he'll, er, take [son] out and about."

(Joanne, 35, 2009)

Both these women rely on grandparents for at least some childcare, as is common (Brannen, 2006, p. 133). For this reason, neither would consider moving away from Wigan. Both have higher qualifications than their husbands, neither of whom has a degree. The continuation of women becoming entangled in domestic work either in addition to or to the detriment of paid work outside the home is an ongoing issue (Gerson, 2010; Charbonneau et al., 2019). Crompton (2006, p. 141) points out that men with higher levels of education do more housework in general, but Joanne is not unusual in continuing to take responsibility for the care of the home and children (Lyonette and Crompton, 2014; Charbonneau et al., 2019). The fact that

Joanne's husband is at home during the week and uses this time to do housework implies they are at least partially following the "time availability hypothesis," in terms of time spent on housework, but also continuing to "do gender" in that Joanne assumes it is still her responsibility (Lyonette and Crompton, 2014). With both these couples the men do a more equal share of childcare than of housework tasks, which again is in line with findings elsewhere (Lyonette and Crompton, 2014). It may be that socially conservative places, such as Wigan (Nandy, 2020), are slower to change in relation to attitudes to gender. This slower pace of change was mentioned by Keith in his interview in 2009 in relation to attitudes of his charity work colleagues toward domestic violence and by a council officer I spoke to as part of this research project in relation to local attitudes toward disability and sexuality, and can be understood as the legacy of a strongly patriarchal culture in the industrial past (Bennett, 2015). Overall Claire and Joanne have been able to continue with more challenging careers than the previous generation of women, but they are still left with the main responsibility for the housework and children (Brannen, 2003; Gerson, 2010).

Systemic changes in the working landscape of Wigan are different for women with families than for men undertaking more manual roles. "Women's work" is changing more slowly being driven by broader changes in gender structures in society, rather than substantial changes to the types of work available.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

By focusing on a whole work-life biography a cohesive view of how work is negotiated and juggled alongside "life" has been explored here. The social practices of working life have changed considerably for men, in Wigan, over the last 80 years, perhaps less so for women. Those whose education took place after the 1944 Education Act seemed to see their lives as successful and fulfilling. Since the 1970s however, opportunities for work and for education have contracted. Degree-equivalent education was available to many prior to the recent expansion, as Keith demonstrates, without the costs involved today. Women continue to juggle paid work and family or care work, made more difficult by the need to secure a full-time income. The influence of family members and other social networks has decreased along with job security.

It is clear from these biographies that that whilst there have been changes over the last 80 years in the way working life biographies develop through the lifecourse, there are a number of continuities as well, once one looks across a longer period. Looking at a life embedded within a taskscape presents a holistic view of the possibilities and threads involved in work-life biographies (Ingold, 2000; Hörschelmann, 2011; Bennett, 2015).

Overall what comes through most clearly from these stories is the contingencies in any working career. The majority of the narratives take winding paths without any clear goal in sight, looking for somewhere to fit in rather than the next promotion opportunity. Although the research is focused on families who have remained in place over multiple generations, it demonstrates the dynamic nature of these lives (Hörschelmann, 2011; Byrne, 2019).

As life transitions become increasingly destandardised and individualized in post-industrialized societies life course research needs to have the focus of this paper on both micro-social agency through individual voices and structural changes and continuities in communities. The lives of women, in particular, are still being shaped by gendered norms, although this is now being ascribed to agency ("I've worked hard … I love my job" from Joanne), whereas previously it was more clearly structural, echoed in Barbara's claim that "mothers didn't work." This illusion of choice is an aspect of the neoliberal agenda to ascribe agency where it does not properly exist and consequently remove obligations for state support (Standing, 2009).

The taskscape here provides for everyday needs, but not much more. The kinds of work the participants here describe tend to be related to the rarely noticed infrastructure of modern life (Star, 1999). These essential jobs often fade into the background: retail work and banking, teaching, public sector work. Those who want to work in the media (Rob, Val's son), in politics, in research (Lauren), in cutting edge technology, need to look to cities for employment (Nandy, 2020). This perhaps opens up other career options, but it also seems to confirm the commodification of life and the subservience of social and family life to work life. Due to the underlying similarity between most of the jobs undertaken by the participants here, and their common place of residence and family histories, they can be seen to share a taskscape: working (metaphorically) together to reproduce the culture of Wigan (Byrne, 2019). Whether they are described as "the aristocracy of the working class," lower-middle class or traditional working class, their cultural identity is as a Wiganer (or Leyther). I would argue that place is the determinate identity for these people rather than as someone of a particular social class. Reciprocal recognition is as a Wiganer and a Northerner (with the right accent) over and above being working or middle class. It could be claimed that place trumps class where place attachment and shared working culture and history are strong.

The examples of working lives discussed here have shown how structural changes mean the current generation of women are more able to pursue careers than their mothers but continuities in gender norms still allocate them primary responsibility for family. Deindustrialisation means manual work has almost disappeared and jobs are no longer "for life." The "missing middle" (Byrne, 2019) in Wigan have working life biographies that have been subject to changes throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. Examining family biographies has demonstrated the dynamic nature of these changes.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The datasets generated for this study are available on request to the corresponding author.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by University of Manchester. The patients/participants provided their written informed consent to participate in this study.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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Miner Artist/Minor Artist? Class, Politics, and the Post-industrial Consumption of Mining Art

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This article uses the recently discovered art work of a County Durham coal miner, Jimmy Kays (1886–1951) to highlight the terms in which coal mining art has achieved popularity and value in the post-mining period. Kays' work is considered with reference to the presenting narrative that promotes and markets mining art not only in terms of its intrinsic artistic quality, but also as a desirable commodity which, as a legacy of the mining past, can contribute to the revival of post-mining places. Maximizing the value that can accrue from mining art in post-industrial conditions involves appealing to the interest of the largest possible audience. The consequence of this is the dominance of a particular interpretation of the mining past. The art of Jimmy Kays does not conform to the conditions of the market, and cannot achieve a similar status. Despite its artistic qualities and its uniqueness as the product of a Durham working miner in the early twentieth century, it sits outside the dominant lexicon of coal mining art. The outsider status of Jimmy Kays is an example of a wider set of issues relating to the invisibility of working class creativity and the difficulties of achieving excellence or public acknowledgment in conditions that lack organizational support and in which value is established elsewhere. I argue that an understanding of the invisibility of art work such as that produced by Kays illuminates the exercise of class-based power in terms of the production, consumption, and range of meaning inscribed within popular mining art. Mining art that has been allocated value is in danger of being appropriated in ways that pacify rather than energize audiences, by foregrounding particular aspects of the mining past for purposes of consumption whilst submerging the issues that link more troubled aspects of the past with the present.

Keywords: mining art, Durham coal field, art market, ex-mining localities, nostalgia, regeneration

INTRODUCTION

Since the demise of deep coal mining in the UK in the years that followed the 1985 defeat of the year-long miners' strike, public interest in "mining art" has grown. Artists such as George Bissill (1896–1973) and Gilbert Daykin (1886–1939) who depicted mining work and life from their own experiences have become well-known and sit alongside professionals such as Sir Frank Brangwyn (1867–1956) and H. A. Freeth (1912–1986) who represented mining life as observers (McManners and Wales, 2002).

In the northern coalfield, the work of the most popular miner artists came to prominence through the groups in which they developed their artistic skills. The paintings of miner Oliver Kilbourn (1904–1993) are particularly notable in the context of the Ashington Group (1934–1983) that met initially under the auspices of the Workers' Educational Association (WEA). The group was brought to public attention through Lee Hall's critically acclaimed play, *The Pitmen Painters*, and a collection of the paintings is now on permanent display in a specially designed facility at Woodhorn Mining Museum. Not all members of the Ashington group were miners, but the subject matter is predominantly of life in what was once understood as the world's largest coal mining village, built to serve five collieries, including Woodhorn (Feaver, 1988; Hall, 2008). Further south, the artistic development of Norman Cornish (1919–2014) and Tom McGuinness (1926–2006), two prominent artists of the Durham coalfield, was encouraged by their membership of the sketching group, established through a conscious effort to develop the arts, including literature and drama, within the Spennymoor Settlement (1931–1954) (McManners and Wales, 2006, 2008). As in Ashington, members, including non-miners, flourished through encouragement to paint what they knew from their own lives in a mining town.

The paintings of McGuinness and Cornish are central to the Gemini Collection of mining art which inspired the development of a Mining Art Gallery in Bishop Auckland. In preparation for the gallery opening in 2017, the collection was expanded by its owners, Bob McManners and Gillian Wales with a range of solicited donations. Amongst those are a set of cartoons, prints, and drawings by a County Durham miner, James (Jimmy) Kays (1886–1951) whose mining images belong to the first quarter of the twentieth century, predating most other items in the collection. A generation before the artists of Ashington and Spennymoor were representing their own lives, Kays was doing likewise, apparently without the benefit of tutor, organization, or support group to help him develop or exhibit his art.

Thwarted in his ambition to become a professional artist by family circumstances[1], Kays' mining life began in 1899 and ended sometime in the 1920's. His reason for leaving the pit is unclear, but the 1920's was a decade of political turmoil in mining culminating in the 1926 General Strike and 7 month mining lockout against proposed mining wage cuts and extended hours. The defeat of the miners resulted in many miners, especially union activists, losing their jobs (Garside, 1971). Subsequently taking work as a dustbin man and later as a night watchman, Kays illustrated the local social life and characters in the mining village of Horden where he lived and where men in his family continued to work in the colliery until it closed in 1987.

Kays' mining images do not fit smoothly with the "finished" paintings in the Gemini collection. He suffered from a lack of access to high quality art materials. The work is largely produced on cheap paper or card and comprises mainly cartoons, line drawings and lino prints, all of which require few materials, but none of which lend themselves to fully realized visual compositions. Nevertheless, the cartoons tell "stories"

[1]This information was offered by his surviving son, Colin Kays.

FIGURE 1 | The offtakes question. *Author's collection*.

concerning his work and society, and offer a unique insight into Durham mining life in the early twentieth century. His observations of characters and relationships draw attention to many of the difficulties endured in mining life and work and he communicates these difficulties with a wry humor (**Figures 1**–**3**).

Unlike most of the miner artists in the Gemini collection, Kays is unknown. He produced cartoons during 1923 for a newspaper, the *Weekly Star,* that seems to have survived only for that year, but his work has otherwise remained hidden in his family. The death of a daughter who was not in touch with other family members brought some of the work onto the open market and l bid for it on eBay in late 2014. The auction starting price had been £10.00. My winning bid of £62.00 bought me thirty four items including original work and *Weekly Star* cuttings.

Under the protection of the Mining Art Gallery, the set from e-Bay will now be preserved in archive conditions and at some time might receive remedial attention with a view to showing it in the gallery. At present, there are no examples of Kays'

work in the permanent exhibition nor has there been any public reference to these images preserved in the archive. In response to my question about the omission of Kays at the opening of the

gallery, I was informally told that his art "did not fit the narrative" which gave cohesion to the permanent exhibition. I accepted this explanation but it prompted me to reflect upon "the narrative" in terms of what it might be and how it was being read and consumed in post-industrial conditions. This linked with a wider set of questions about mining and creative practice that arose from previous research and analysis concerning mining life and culture, and my current participation in a voluntary arts project in the ex-mining area of East Durham.

THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

The issues raised in this article arose from personal-political circumstances and activism rather than from the conventions involved in pursuing an empirical research project. Having been brought up in a Durham mining family in the mining town of Seaham, and being involved in women's activism against planned mine closures in 1992–1993, I began to write reflexively about the subject of identity, gender and mining politics as a sociologist and lecturer in community and youth work (Spence, 1996). Insights from this work were subsequently extended in partnership with Carol Stephenson to cover questions of community, activism, and cultural production specifically relating to gender and the narratives that articulate mining life with class politics in the UK (Spence and Stephenson, 2007, 2009, 2012).

Research undertaken with Stephenson included a review and analysis of poetry written and published by women during the 1984–1985 UK Miners' Strike and also a consideration of the significance of a series of photographs of miners taken and used by women involved in a campaign associated with pit closures in Nova Scotia, Canada. The evidence suggests a wealth of hidden creative and artistic skill and production in mining life. Much of this is revealed in conditions of political activism associated with mining that facilitates a brief public "flowering" after which most participants retreat (Williams, 2009; Popple and MacDonald, 2012). Although images, publications, and other ephemera survive the political conflicts that inspire them, subsequent public attention is mostly given to material produced by professional artists and commentators—including participant observers of the activism. The distinction between professionals and amateurs in the public allocation of worth implies that
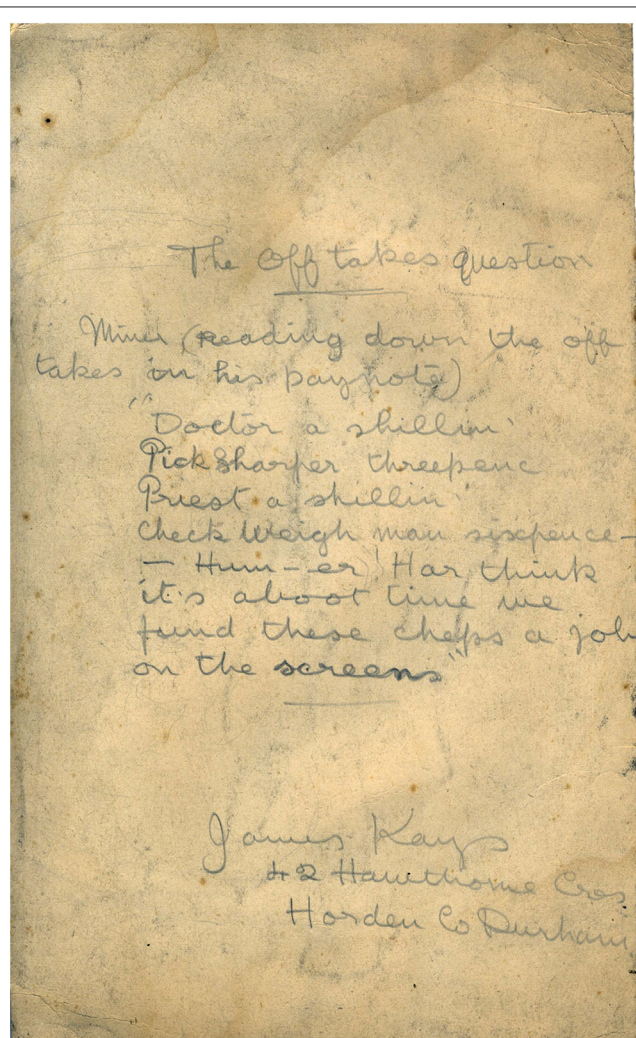

FIGURE 2 | The offtakes question (reverse side). *Author's collection.*
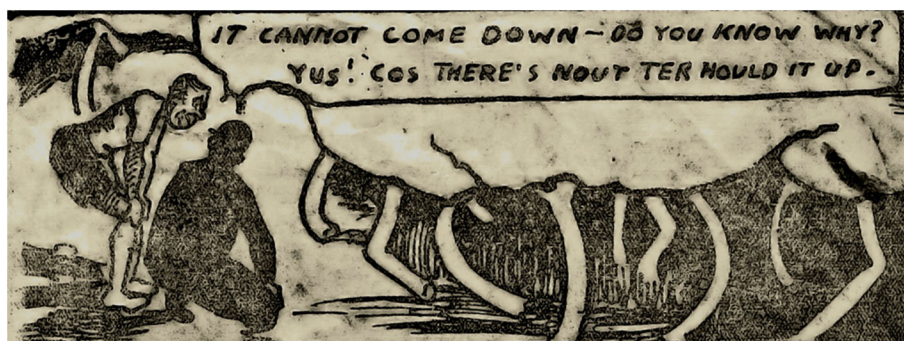

FIGURE 3 | Nowt ter hould it up. *Author's collection.*

much of the artistic talent and creative output of working miners and their families has been unacknowledged in mining history. This raises questions about the forces that enabled some miner artists to overcome barriers, develop their creative skill, and achieve public recognition—and indeed my own role in bringing Jimmy Kays to public attention. Such questions articulate with issues of class, power, and structural inequality that informed my professional practice as a community and youth work practitioner and lecturer.

After retiring in 2010, I became more consistently involved in a voluntary arts organization, East Durham Artists' Network, (edan) which is committed to encouraging art and cultural practices in East Durham, and runs a small art gallery, the Art Block, in Seaham. The Art Block is the only dedicated art gallery in the East Durham coalfield, and to my knowledge there has never been another. The nearest public galleries are Hartlepool to the South and Sunderland to the north. Edan is largely self-funded through membership fees. The gallery, previously a public toilet, is leased free of charge from Durham County Council and occasionally small grants are accessed from various sources to enable specific projects to proceed. Although not organized to promote "mining art," edan is responsive to the legacy of mining. The east Durham landscape still carries the scars of coal, mining is a continuing reference point for local identities, and the history of mining is one strand in efforts to reinvent East Durham for leisure and tourism. Thus, member artists, including ex-miners and artists from mining families, have created publications and organized exhibitions and activities that focus upon mining themes. The local response to such activities in terms of numbers of visitors to the gallery and the level of participation of those visitors greatly exceeds those of other themes. A Jimmy Kays exhibition attracted over 500 visitors between 16th January and 25th February 2016—about four times the average for a winter month normally very low on footfall. Edan's activities do not include "research." To undertake formally constructed research in this setting would run counter to my role as a volunteer and be problematic in terms of the standing of the organization in the locality. Nevertheless, producing art work related to mining, helping to curate exhibitions that represent mining, participating in associated art workshops, and being present in the gallery, provide opportunities to hear unguarded opinions and to engage in reflective conversation about art and mining which would not be otherwise possible. The experience has suggested that whilst there are high levels of interest in the visual representation of mining life, there are low levels of confidence about "art knowledge" and artistic skill in east Durham.

I chanced upon the Jimmy Kays images on eBay during the lead-up to an exhibition at the Art Block arranged to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the ending of the 1984–1985 miners' strike. The selection eventually displayed in that exhibition attracted enthusiastic attention and commentary from visitors. Later, thanks to support from Durham Heritage Coast[2], it was possible to print and frame copies of the originals

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[2]Durham Heritage Coast is a multi-agency partnership organization that focuses upon protecting and enhancing the qualities of the coastal zone which is also the area of Durham's coastal collieries–the last in the Durham coalfield to close.

for further local exhibitions. The inaugural exhibition, at the opening of a new Heritage Center in what was previously a mine ambulance station in Kays' home town of Horden, generated a great deal of media excitement and received wide publicity as the "discovery of a miner artist" (e.g., Engelbrecht, 2015; Prince, 2015). However, local visitors to the Kays exhibitions spoke about the images not so much as art, but in terms of personal mining identities and histories. They also frequently referred to their own (thwarted) interest in artistic practice.

The eBay collection revealed little about the artist other than his name, address in a council house in Horden, a date of 1912 on one drawing, and some *Weekly Star* cuttings dated 1923. I therefore embarked on a research quest firstly to locate surviving members of the Kays family, and secondly to unearth any surviving documentary evidence of his life. Family members were contacted thanks to an article in the *Sunderland Echo* (Stoner, 2015). His descendants offered information about Kays' life and personality and also revealed a further three collections of his art, plus one or two individual pieces in their private ownership. Otherwise, little documentary evidence and few photographs survive. The census, war records, newspaper reports, and mining archives provided scant information. Official documents also led to confusion between Kays the artist and a cousin with the same name. Research was further complicated by the fact that Kays was born to a single mother and his father is not named on his birth certificate. Later, he took the name of his stepfather, Penman, and then on marriage, returned to his given name. Eventually I was able to reconstruct something of a Kays biography and produced a short pamphlet about the collection (Spence, 2015). The documentary information revealed nothing about Kays the artist. The only sources for such information are the memories of his last surviving son, who was 11 years old when his father died, the clues present in the work itself, and the few *Weekly Star* cuttings of cartoons attributed to "Jimmy Kays, the Horden Miner." The difficulties involved in "finding" Kays raise a volley of questions about the invisibility of working class lives and the lack of value accorded to the fruits of working class creative labor, of which the known miner artists appear to be an exception.

The following discussion draws upon my own responses to Kays' images, to the mining-related art that I have encountered via the work of edan, and in visits to mining art exhibitions. I have appreciated, enjoyed, and identified with mining art, but my response often includes a sense of "lack." Sometimes this is associated with the subjectivity of gender and the exclusion of women from mining and mining art, but sometimes it derives from my experiential awareness of the complex social relationships in mining which continue to impact on the post-mining experience but are mostly absent in mining art. In this regard, insights gained from participation in workshops in the Art Block using the concept of Social Haunting have been helpful (Gordon, 2008). The workshops, ("ghost labs"), conducted as part of an Arts and Humanities Research Council research project were intended to highlight the potential of creative expression in addressing troubled and repressed histories, in this case specifically that of mining and the miners' strike (Munday, 2017; Spence, 2019). They provoked reflection and analysis that fed into this article regarding the role of mining art in energizing local

people toward artistic and cultural production in contemporary post-mining conditions.

MINING ART AND THE DEATH OF MINING

Mining art has come to prominence in the UK in the context of the demise of an industry that had been synonymous with British wealth and global power. Deep mining was declining before the final closure programme of the late twentieth century, but coal had remained a natural asset and mining was heavily subsidized by the government. From the late 1950's, a programme of restructuring and closure had been carefully managed by the National Coal Board (NCB), responsible for the nationalized industry, in collaboration with the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) (Hall, 1981). As late as 1980, the NCB Chairman could write in a catalog accompanying a national exhibition of mining art:

> Coal has played a vital part in the British economy for more than three centuries and was the foundation of the industrial revolution that made Britain "the workshop of the world." Today the coal industry has an assured future, with several hundred years of reserves still available, and will continue to play that central role (Siddall, 1980).

One year later, the Conservative Government under Margaret Thatcher, elected in 1979 in a climate of hostility toward trades unions, was threatening that "assured future," proposing to close 23 pits. Faced with NUM strike threats, the government temporarily retreated. The decisive Conservative re-election in 1983 was to radically change conditions for managing the coal industry. Government determination to reduce state subsidies and accelerate pit closures provoked a bitter strike beginning March 1984. In March 1985, the NUM admitted defeat. The consequence was the destruction of the power of the NUM, demoralization amongst the miners, and a rapid decline of the industry (Goodman, 1985; Williams, 2009, 2019).

The 1984–1985 strike enacted the collectivist values of mining life, and its defeat precipitated not only the end of mining, but also the denigration of those values. The NUM had organized successful strikes in 1972 and 1974, resulting in the fall of a Conservative Government. Both sides of the conflict understood mining to be an exemplar of trade union, and indeed, working class collective influence (Hall, 1981). Destroying the NUM, led by its avowedly socialist president Arthur Scargill, was pivotal to the government's wider determination to eradicate socialism from industrial organization in the UK (Goodman, 1985). Defeating the miners was both a means to implementing pit closures, and also to weakening the whole British labor movement, enforcing an historic shift in classed social and political values as well as industrial relations. The subsequent privatization of the coal industry in 1994, and the radical closure programme that ended deep mining in the UK has left a legacy of deprivation, social dislocation, and bitterness in ex-mining areas, and a level of resentment in the wider labor movement that remains unresolved today (Beatty et al., 2019; Williams, 2019). Such conditions shape the post-industrial reception, deployment,

and consumption of the remnants of mining, including its art and culture.

Just as coal mining had been at the core of the industrial revolution, its deconstruction was pivotal to the de-industrializing revolution that involved streamlining the economy to compete in the "free" global market and privatizing state-run industry and services. Neo-liberal Conservativism favored the service and creative sectors over manufacturing, promoting enterprising individualism at the expense of collective organization and social welfare. Such processes stimulated the art market and the growth in art collecting as an opportunity for private investment. Mining art, as a specialist interest, and one connected with an industry that was rapidly disappearing, gained enormous financial value in this atmosphere.

Independently, McManners and Wales began collecting mining art in the early 1970's (McManners and Wales, 2006). At that time, the subject matter was unfashionable and the miner artists, as working class "amateurs," lacked status. Professor Jean Brown, Director of Northumbria University Gallery, has suggested for example, that because Cornish was a miner without professional art training, his paintings were stigmatized in the "fickle" art market and that even today he remains underrated as an artist in these terms (Horton, 2019). Yet the post-mining rise in value has been exponential. Mining solicitor, Iven Geffen paid under £10 for paintings by Cornish and McGuinness in the 1950's that sold for thousands at auction in 2015 (Henderson, 2015). The death of an artist further affects the price. Cornish prices rose sharply after his death in 2014 and have benefited from promotional activities marking the centenary of his birth in 1919. His oil painting of the Acadia Cinema, Spennymoor, is currently advertised for sale for £26,000 (Castlegate House, 2019) whilst prices on the official web site range from £2,500 to £13,950 (Norman Cornish Ltd., 2019). Cornish was prolific, painting throughout his long life; it is almost impossible to find for sale work by other highly rated mining artists including McGuinness who died in 2006.

Mining art expresses and validates memories of a previous era which has left traces in the physical qualities of once lively but now depleted places. As such, death increases not only its financial but also its emotional value. Mining art can contribute to the mourning process (Roberts, 2007). However, financial and emotional values diverge. People who suffered most directly from mine closures are those most likely to find mining art prices prohibitive. Conversely, emotions hardly count in investment decisions, even if they shape the interest. The art that emerged from mining places is beyond the purchasing power of most people who live in the shadow of the mining past. The average income in Spennymoor is <£25.000 (Spennymoor AAP, 2017). In Ashington it is <£23,000. Meanwhile in Sunderland, a town that suffered particularly from de-industrialization and whose colliery closed in 1993, it is <£15,000 (Dowson, 2019). A recent report suggests that if grouped as a region "the statistics would probably show the former coalfields to be the most deprived region in the UK" (Beatty et al., 2019, p. 44). Ironically, the very processes that have added value to mining art are those responsible for the collapse of the places that conceived and nourished the talent of miner artists. Thus, the art is distanced

from its source in working class life. It now belongs "elsewhere"— not only in the past, but in terms of ownership and control.

Efforts to make mining art publicly accessible through museum and gallery exhibitions and their derivative consumer goods, are responsive to its emotional value in ex-mining localities. However, in order to be sustainable, the organizations concerned must both take advantage of opportunities offered in the post-industrial economy, and appeal to the personal interest of a much broader constituency than those directly affected by mine closures (Scott, 2009). This is possible because of the importance of mining to British industrial history and because so many families have memories of mining and continuing links with ex-mining places.

MINING ART, MEMORY AND NOSTALGIA

The importance of coal mining to British collective memory can hardly be overestimated. From the start of industrialization, coal powered British manufacturing and imperial expansion, sustained its wars, and warmed its homes. At its height in 1920 when Jimmy Kays was mining, it employed 1,191,000 men. As British global power waned, coal mining contracted unevenly but it remained significant, employing 237,000 workers in 1980. By 1984, only 180,000 workers remained, but the ensuing strike energized a field of supporters who identified with mining life and values, projecting mining to the center of British political consciousness and setting the terms for alignments that remain influential today. In the 15 years following the strike, the coal industry lost 169,000 workers. When the last deep mine, Kellingly closed in 2015, 1,000 jobs were lost (Sönnichsen, 2020). It is hardly surprising that coal mining and its fate continues to have emotional resonance and even to "haunt" large numbers of people. However, that haunting is different in quality for men and women who have different relationships to and memories of mining and its politics. The inheritance of mining is a complex matter.

The death of its industry means that mining art now forever represents a world that is past and indeed "lost"—but lost in many different ways. For those who encounter mining images from the perspective of their interest in mining rather than art, engagement is first and foremost with the past and with the meaning of that past in contemporary lives. Encounters with mining art are not direct. They are filtered through organizations such as galleries and museums, inflected by the subject matter of the images and the decisions of curators. Ensuring that exhibitions are financially viable demands that audiences become consumers. Attracting the widest consuming audience is achieved largely by obscuring differences and appealing to a shared mining heritage. The lost world that is integral to the history of the nation, is something that we can all own and, whatever the different qualities of our loss, in viewing the art of coal we can all share in the bittersweet nostalgic pleasures that remind us of where we came from.

Significantly for the fate of the Jimmy Kays collection, his images are very specific in time and place. His cartoons in particular, with their accompanying captions in "pitmatic"

dialect[3], are situated very firmly in Durham (Griffiths, 1994). Meanwhile, the work predates the time frame that activates living memory which is an important characteristic of the nostalgic qualities of so much mining art. Kays' work was produced before the circumstances that encouraged the development of most of the miner artists from the 1930's onwards.

Following the 1926 defeat, miners' politics and union activism were in abeyance. The depression and mass unemployment of the 1930's encouraged voluntary organizations to help in the "distressed areas" (Hannington, 1937; Williamson, 1982). The Ashington WEA class and the Spennymoor Settlement were both middle class socialist and left-liberal responses to the difficulties endured by impoverished mining communities. The mining art nurtured through cross-class institutional contacts in the 1930's, became more publicly visible because of the Second World War. Mining became once again a key industry and men were conscripted from across the UK to produce coal. The conscripts (Bevin Boys) included some, such as Ted Holloway, who came to be recognized amongst the best miner artists (McManners and Wales, 2002). Meanwhile Graham Sutherland and Henry Moore (a coal-miner's son) were employed by the government to illustrate the contribution of mining to the war effort, and mining became an acceptable artistic subject. After the war, mining was accepted as essential to rebuilding the economy. Nationalization in 1947 offered the hope of calmer industrial relations and the NCB, facing manpower shortages, was keen to foster good will and recruit new workers (Illingworth, 1952). Its efforts to enhance the image of the industry included promotional film, photography, and painting[4]. Professional artist H. A. Freeth was employed to visit mines and produce a series of portraits of miners that were published in the NCB newspaper *Coal: The Magazine of the Mining Industry* (e.g., Freeth, 1951). Meanwhile, its welfare arm, the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organization (CISWO), sought to stimulate positive leisure activity in the coalfield. The annual art competitions it organized encouraged the talents of artistically inclined miners, and offered opportunities for their work to be publicly displayed.

It is this period of working class validation, underpinned by new securities offered by the emergent welfare state that underpins many memories of the mining past. Much mining art reflecting mining life at that time provokes simple nostalgic responses, but that is offset by other images relating to the actual work of mining that reminds the viewer of the dangers and difficulties of mining. Many miners disliked their work and the post-war period that nourished mining art, also nourished dreams and opportunities that involved escape. The securities of that time offered a bedrock for building alternative futures— including for those artists who left mining in order to paint it.

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[3]"Pitmatic" was the language used by Durham miners to communicate amongst themselves.

[4]Much of this material is now available in archives held by organizations such as the British Film Institute (www.bfi.org.uk), the National Coal Mining Museum (www. ncm.org.uk), and the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers (www.mining institute.org.uk).
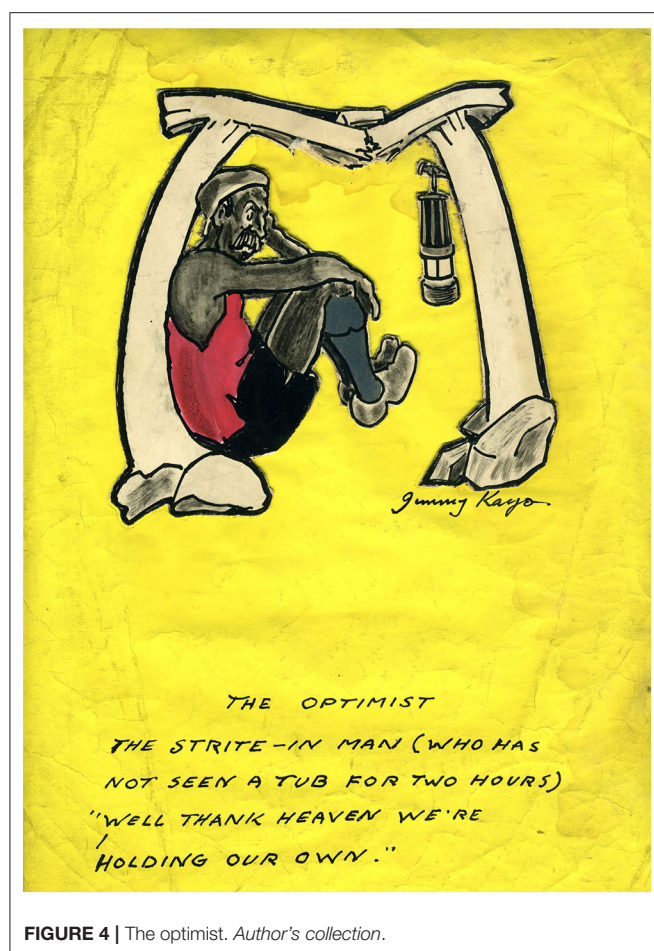
FIGURE 4 | The optimist. *Author's collection.*

frame public access to mining art, is much more likely to be reflective in ways suggested by Boym (2001). Ambiguity between security and danger might provoke critical reflection but is more likely to result in passive engagement with a past that seems absolutely disconnected from the present. There is a tendency to romanticize mining in national mythology, and also in working class politics such as witnessed during the 1984–1985 strike (Samuel et al., 1986). Romanticism feeds directly into the consumption of mining as "heritage" in the museum and gallery contexts through which "obsession with the past reveals an abyss of forgetting and takes place in inverse proportion to its actual preservation" (Boym, 2015, p. 13).

The descriptive and figurative images of mining life that are a significant part of the oeuvre of mining art exemplify past certainties in a volatile present, reminding viewers of a place where class and gender identities were given, social values clear, and families seemed cohesive. This obscures a world that Jimmy Kays shows, where repression, inequality, poverty, dissatisfaction, and dysfunctional families were as much a feature of everyday life as they are of any other social history. These features of mining did not disappear at nationalization but have been discarded in the collective discourse, driven into individual memory. Difficulties in mining society are not foregrounded in the images made by established miner artists for whom everyday scenes are largely benign. Before such images, consumers can collectively remember and identify, but any dislocation between personal memory of mining life and the dominant narratives in the art work is individualized. The art itself and the context in which it is consumed offer no resolution for this disconnect. We are not invited to engage painfully with the art on display in post-industrial contexts but rather to actively enjoy the stimulus to fond memories.

The tension between the securities of mining life and the insecurities of the actual work encourage a more resigned accommodation with the conditions of the present. Some mining art emphasizes masculine strength but the focus is predominantly upon the physical distortions and pain caused by mining labor. Kays' work also depicts the difficulties and dangers underground work but significantly, he is more concerned with working relationships and the unfairness endured by the system of allocating work which renders some individuals powerless. In this sense, Kays' images are a reminder of injustice in mining. Mining work was not only difficult, it was unfair. Such unfairness is not located only in the past and in mining but was always there and many of the gains won by workers through trade unions and collective action have now been lost. In this sense, Kays' simple cartoons are continuous with the present and more likely to provoke more oppositional aspects of nostalgia (Strangleman, 2013).

Images generated from mining life during that brief period between the second world war and the end of the 1950's, when the demand for coal began to shrink, implicitly affirm the virtues of social cohesion, cross-class collaboration, national unity, and indeed, national glory. The historic moment when the interests of miners and nation were as one, also nurtured non-mining aspirations and opportunities, many of which were realized. Today many families, across all classes–including the Duchess of

Thus, the nostalgic responses to mining art can be as much about the sense of security and hope for a different future inscribed in post-war mining images as about the mining itself. That sense of security and hope is absent from Kays' work. Although many of his images are humorous, it is a humor derived of resignation to insecurity. The cartoons foreground powerlessness in a world in which escape was hardly a possibility (**Figure 4**). In this fundamental sense, Kays' work does not fit one narrative that makes mining art attractive in post-industrial conditions.

The end of mining coincided with the end of previous securities. The imposition of neo-liberal policies radically altered employment and other institutional relationships, creating work-based stress even amongst the once-elite skilled and professional classes (Young, 2007; Baccaro and Howell, 2011). In the vertiginous maelstrom of post-industrialization, the nostalgic appeal of security is powerful and can sanitize the painful features of the remembered industrial past.

Strangleman (2013) has argued that there are "radical or oppositional" aspects to nostalgia, which can provoke critical questioning of the present. Opportunities for the stimulation of such nostalgic responses undoubtedly exist in coal mining art— perhaps most notably in the work of McGuinness (McManners and Wales, 2006). However, the type of nostalgia stimulated through the filters of the tourism and leisure markets which

Cambridge, who have no direct link with mining, can identify coal mining forebears. From a distance, the success of mining art in itself is an affirmation of the possibilities of social progress and mobility in which personal endeavor can prevail. The classed relations of power that survived nationalization and the social democratic consensus to eventually show their face in the conflict of the 1984–1985 strike and that continue to characterize the inequalities of post-industrial economic and social organization are not revealed in conventional mining art and therefore cannot disturb this view.

The broad appeal of "authentic" mining art lies at least partially in a conservative reading that emphasizes the role played by mining in the narrative of nation. The success of mining artists, the market value of their art, and their acceptance into the art establishment adds weight to this perspective. This is defied in the images and the fate of the work of Jimmy Kays. The conservative evaluation venerates a particular quality of art and idealizes a very particular moment of the past within a linear and progressive understanding of history. In the UK, the most prized mining art is by definition about the past, and its success implies that such a past always promised a brighter future. The 1984–1985 strike was in these terms, an aberration, a misguided, if understandable effort to reverse historic inevitability. Insofar as its appeal is to memory and to a simple or reflective nostalgia for what has been lost, most mining art, including that which references the union and the strike can be consumed without ambiguity by a wide range of people from across the political spectrum, whose mourning for a lost past is mitigated by the reassurance that they exist in that better future. Miners can be now comfortably claimed and acclaimed within the national story without irony (Horton, 2019). As Lee Hall describes the films sponsored by the NCB after nationalization: "Although they are clearly about mining, they are even more essentially about Britain" (Hall, 2009). The 1984–1985 strike, fought in terms of irreconcilable class-based values that precipitated the death of the industry, has been incorporated through a mythic history of national consensus. Disconnected from its source in working class life, mining art is subjected to an external gaze that creates a narrative that is partial. The work of Jimmy Kays, a minor working class artist, whose work speaks of poverty in its form and entrapment in its content, belies this narrative.

The disconnection from mining as a living occupation, and from the classed conditions that inspired the art, began in the lifetime of those miner artists who gained public recognition through organizational networks, sponsorship, and patronage associated with middle class interventions, art education, and the art market. Jimmy Kays' work stands outside such influences. He lacked cross–class or organizational connections. Living and working in what was a relatively new mining settlement of Horden, whose colliery opened in 1900, Kays seems not to have had access to voluntary community organizations whose support might have helped him develop his art and access external opportunities (Davis and Cousins, 1975). Except for the brief employment by the *Weekly Star*, he made art without external influence. Later miner artists who risked leaving mining to become full time artists became immediately subject to the buyers' market. The impact of this is evident for example, in the

later work of Cornish and in some of his commissioned pieces[5]. Similarly, for those ex-miners, including Robert Olley and Bill Hindmarsh, separated from their source by the death of mining and forced to produce mining art from memory, the direct link between lived experience and their art is broken. For Jimmy Kays this did not happen. When he left mining in the mid 1920's, he stopped producing mining images, shifting his attention to everyday life, albeit in a mining place. His work is entirely of his present. In contrast, the post-industrial circumstances in which mining art flourishes encourages both artist and audience to focus upon the past without raising discomforting questions about the present. Thus, a gap has emerged between the contemporary lived experiences and remembered histories of struggle in ex-mining populations, and the lost and retrospective world that serves consumers.

Coal mining shaped the economy, social structure and local culture of all who lived and worked in mining districts for two centuries. The late twentieth century mine closures involved a systematic assault on traditional working class employment, organization and culture. For mining localities, patterns of work, social, and personal relationships were forcefully reshaped in ways that defied the expectations inherited from of the past so absolutely, that the past became the only "known" fixed point of stability. When the present is degraded and the future cannot be imagined, the past can become a place of retreat and nostalgia (Boym, 2001). Recognizable images of that past can validate received identities and steady instabilities associated with change. Mining art itself is part of what has been lost but as a visible residue, evidence of "what we were," it is viewed with reverence, respect, and longing. Thus, the oeuvre of mining art is an important reference point for living artists who are ex-miners and for an audience of ex-mining people. It does not in itself offer resolution for the trauma of imposed loss, but ownership of a proud past can be encouraged through the public recognition of its art. In these terms, whether produced in the present or the past, art that uses the mining past as its subject becomes an object of desire to be consumed in a regenerated and re-formed economy that uses nostalgia to promote and market "heritage." The appropriation of the mining past in these terms reinforces mining connections and identities but deprives mining history of its complex substance and contradictions. Art that was inspired by the experience of mining does not throw light on that contested class history in which miners and mining culture have been more denigrated than admired, and against which they struggled to improve their conditions of existence not only through industrial conflict, but also through industrial, social and political organization, the substance of which died with the industry.

DEGENERATION AND REGENERATION

The earliest successes of miner artists depended upon the patronage of middle class social activists who shared their

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[5]See for example the commissioned work on show at Bowes museum in 2019 as part of the centenary of his birth. That work is competent but lacks much of the energy of his earlier images of mining life.
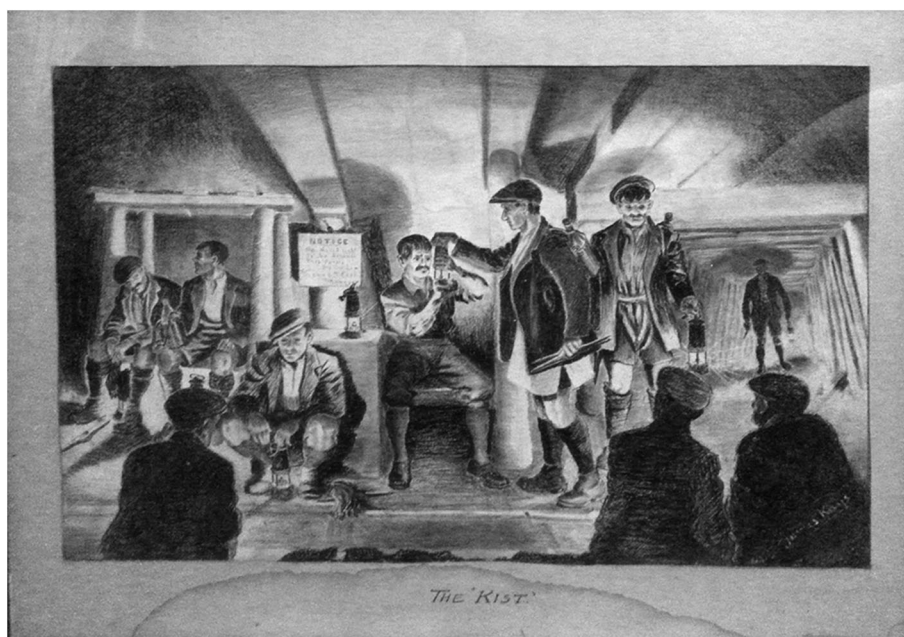
FIGURE 5 | The Kist. *Private collection, W. Kays*.

skills and social contacts (Gilchrist and Jeffs, 2001). Later, the NCB and adult education classes fulfilled a similar function. Would-be artists in contemporary post-mining places have access to informal educational and recreational opportunities, but mainly in organizations which are concerned with helping post-mining populations to participate constructively in post-industrial renewal. Opportunities offered in such circumstances are circumscribed by aims and objectives set elsewhere and in terms not relevant to art itself. In today's market dominated climate, voluntary and adult educational organizations, including the WEA and the remaining settlements, survive mainly through indirect deference to the policy demands of the central state. Their funding depends upon clearly defined objectives that are "delivered" by professional community and educational workers for whom politically referenced activity can be problematic. Significantly, the ex-coalfield areas of England have attracted little direct funding from the Arts Council (Hansard, 2018). The *Creative People and Places* initiative within the Arts Council that "focuses on parts of the country where involvement in arts and culture is significantly below the national average," includes ex-mining areas such as East Durham (Arts Council, 2017)[6]. Post-mining arts and culture have been supported by Government and by charitable trusts mainly through the lens of regeneration. As such, the goals are about adaptation. These processes might encourage creative 'skill' but they do not encourage critical engagement with post-mining life. Encouraging local participation to encourage active citizenship

is often an underlying objective of community based initiatives. Making art is one means to that end.

The experience of the 1984–1985 miners' strike and of pit closures seriously dented trust in the value of civic and industrial organization among ex-mining populations. The defeat of the strike and the inability of the miners' union and its welfare and recreational organizations to prevail against the tide of neo-liberalism implied a loss of hope, energy, and confidence in the subjective power to influence the present, to escape from it, or to imagine a better future (Bennet et al., 2000; Perchard, 2013). This too limits the prospects for artistic expression that references the present condition of post-mining life or that facilitates building on the work of miner artists in ways that are not simply derivative or retrospective. The drive toward transition after mine closures included the hasty demolition of mining structures that were closely aligned with working class industrial politics. Such loss included demolition of the "Big Club," the Working Men's Club in Horden where a Jimmy Kays composition "The Kist," having been donated by one of Jimmy Kays' sons, had been on display in the Committee Room for many years (**Figure 5**). The picture, the only one to have inhabited a (semi) public space, was returned to the family, to be hidden once again from public view. The fate of the club and "The Kist,"[7] which his family consider his "best work," produced probably in 1919 as a present for his in-laws after the death of his first wife, could be a metaphor for the fate of those whose identities, knowledge, and skills were displaced by the death of the industry.

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[6]In the first stage of Creative People and Places in East Durham, professional organizers stated that there would be no references to mining in their work. This stance was unpopular locally and was changed after evaluation.

[7]A "kist" was an underground cell where the miners met before approaching and after leaving the coal face. In this cell, the deputy (overman), distributed tasks and work tools.

The end of mining set a seal on the past, domesticating it and obliterating its visible remains whilst introducing new public constructs for the future. Changing physical and cultural landscapes reflected the now uncharted landscapes of people's lives and their lack of control over how those landscapes would be reshaped and remembered (Atkinson, 1999; Ling et al., 2007). Whilst the state and private interests engaged in a highly politicized and exploitative feast of "regeneration," the institutional and cultural life of ex-mining localities was destroyed or repressed. In compensation, ex-miners and their descendants were presented with a pastiche of their past through a process of memorializing that replaced mining with its representation as heritage whilst enabling no place for authentic representation of the present or the critical interrogation of the past (Griffin, 2006). What was on offer was a mediated and reframed perception of mining art and culture that would sit in the landscape as in a cemetery, whilst the body that had served the mines decomposed.

In post-mining environments, public space is degraded and contested before it is regraded. The will to remember mining in the regraded landscape is subject to vagaries of power, influence and finance. Sometimes locally organized groups have been able to access funding to commission artists to create monuments that speak directly of the losses sustained, including the human toll experienced in historic mining disasters which emphasize the sacrifices (Hutchinson, 2019). The welded sculpture produced by local artist Ray Lonsdale, of a miner with his heart torn out, situated in the regenerated Welfare Park in Horden, is an unambiguous cry for past suffering and the conditions that have followed the end of mining. However, contemporary public art mainly offers images of the mining past re-presented as heritage.

The process of transition from mining into new post-industrial conditions was never going to be easy. The memory of the strike adds a layer of particularly fraught emotion, but the UK is not unique in its experience of complex social problems following mine closures. In Canada and across Europe, similar issues have arisen. The particularities of mining, its related organizations, values, and culture have ensured that regeneration is never straightforward. The experience of mining was communal and interdependent; its collective historical memory is easier to incorporate than to displace. Thus, targeted policies of regeneration have attempted to smooth the processes of economic and social change by utilizing surviving natural and cultural resources as a means of safely memorializing the past by mobilizing its relics toward new ends (Wirth et al., 2012). However, and particularly when the closure of mines has been marked by political turbulence, such as in the UK and Nova Scotia in Canada, securing the consent of post-mining populations to new conditions is a delicate task and the process of memorializing is fraught with contested meaning (Haiven, 2010). Troubled memories of past injustices, dangers, disasters and class conflict might be subdued, but they nevertheless continue to haunt the present in ways that have political connotations (Bright and Ivinson, 2019; Spence, 2019). Regeneration decisions intended to smooth transition must find ways to accommodate the past without disturbing or re-igniting the emotions associated with troubles that beset that past.

In the UK, the incorporation of different interests into the post-mining landscape has been achieved partly through a belated commitment to the preservation of remaining buildings, structures, and memorabilia and partly through commissioning new public art that references and memorializes mining. Finance has been made available to energize local populations and encourage them to participate in decision-making about such matters. Notably such participation is focused upon community rebuilding, rather than upon major investment or planning decisions (Atkinson, 1999; Smith and Yellowley, 2019). There has been a largely sympathetic response to locally organized efforts to salvage or replace remnants of the mining industry such as pit wheels and lodge banners. As Scott (2009) has pointed out, these efforts involve a diverse range of people, who having accepted the end of mining, are now keen to acknowledge its role in the history of their local place. The reconstitution of icons is now a function of establishing community identity rather than occupational identity. Even though the politics of mining continue to adhere to the icons, they do so in ways that are mainly celebratory of community cohesion. Whether or not the reworking of these icons can be considered community arts practice, is open to debate. Is a pit wheel an object of art when it has been removed from the mine and resited as a sculptural memory of the mine? Marcel Duchamps' urinal, *Fountain* (1917) comes to mind.

The reconstitution of defunct buildings as galleries and museums, as in Beamish and Woodhorn, is part of a process of reclamation that honors the legacy of mining. Yet, and perhaps as understood by those involved in the orgy of demolition that followed mine closures, it can also serve to highlight the loss. The ex-bank building in which the Mining Art Gallery is housed in Bishop Auckland, is a statement about the value of the art in efforts to rejuvenate a dying place, and at the same time a reminder that the bank no longer thrives in today's Bishop Auckland. That such buildings are available for use as galleries, is symptomatic of the flight of finance and capital that has accompanied de-industrialization over which working class people have had no control. The transformation of Woodhorn Colliery from coal mine to museum with its art gallery housing the Ashington collection is testament to the ways in which history and art focused upon the possibilities of income generation from a volatile post-industrial tourism industry have replaced and appropriated the skeletal remains of reliable, working class employment, and creative leisure (Griffin, 2006). Nevertheless, through the related de-politicized processes of envisioning the post-industrial future whilst memorializing heritage, the reconstitution of mining-related relics and defunct buildings and the controlled creation of new public art can help to ameliorate the disturbed history of transformation.

Buildings that once thrived as part of British industry, can now face a new and brighter future. They are transformed not only with regard to use, but also in relation to context, taking their references from surrounding and related developments as much as from their past. In the case of the Mining Art Gallery, the contextual reference is the ambitious Auckland Project whose intention is to "reinvigorate the region and bring about real change" (Auckland Project, ud.). The Project emerged from the artistic interests of the financier and philanthropist Jonathan
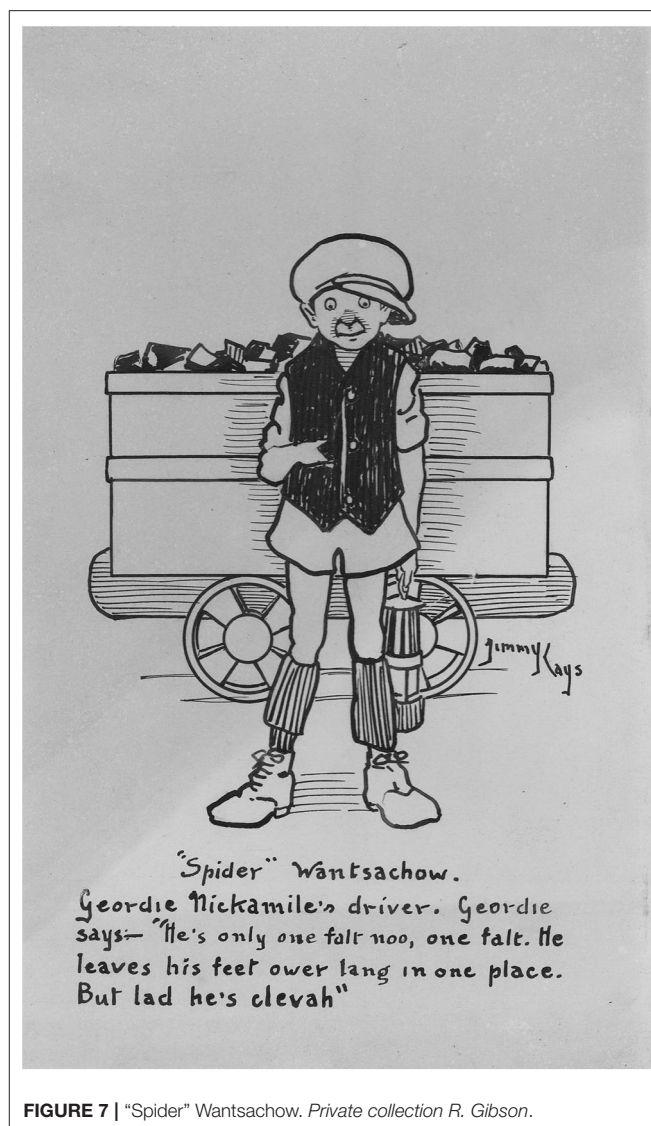
FIGURE 6 | The Stoneman. *Author's collection.*

FIGURE 7 | "Spider" Wantsachow. *Private collection R. Gibson.*

Ruffer. In purchasing an important set of Spanish paintings by Francisco de Zurbarát, *Jacob and his Twelve Sons* that hung in the Bishop's palace in Bishop Auckland, Ruffer also took on the vacated palace and its gardens. Ruffer's commitment stimulated an ambitious charitable regeneration venture that has focused upon cultural heritage, linking the long and short histories of the local and the national[8]. The priorities of the Mining Art Gallery can only be understood fully with reference to the greater ambitions for the regeneration of the town which itself did not have a mining history but once benefited from the affluence of the South Durham coalfield and now, hoping to gain income from tourism, links the heritage of the area with a national history.

Highlighting the quality of mining art as high quality "art" in the context of regeneration and the reconstitution of ex-mining places speaks of a will to make a practical contribution to the creation of a brighter future. However, that contribution cannot be made in isolation from broader processes of regeneration and economic redevelopment. In museums and galleries that

are costly to establish and run, what counts involves not only judgement about artistic quality, but also potential economic and income-generating potential. Such concerns are integral to the terms of sponsorship, curation, valuation, and advertising that involve the organizational, financial, and personal power of decision-making (Lukes, 2005). Mining art, like any other art, is incorporated into a class-based system of distinction that selects and rejects according to criteria which are not intrinsic to the art itself (Bourdieu and Darbel, 1992). The system of class, money, and power relations that define the terms in which art is valued, excludes the poor and socially discarded (Frascina and Harris, 1992). It includes neither Jimmy Kays nor the populations of ex-mining places. What is promoted for public consumption depends upon who has decision-making power in a marketing context that includes selling exhibitions and the goods associated with them to as wide an audience as possible. In these terms, the appeal to national nostalgia and sentiment is inextricably connected with the emphasis on the quality of the art.

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[8]It includes the highly rated tourist attraction, "Kynren" that relates a 2,000 year history of England in an outdoor theatrical show.

FIGURE 8 | Snakes! *Unattributed newspaper cutting, author's collection.*

ARTISTIC QUALITY

The art of the miner artists demonstrates talent and skill but the skills differ from those demonstrated by Jimmy Kays who was interested in character and relationships rather than the drama of mining or the everyday patterns of mining life. Rather than fully realized paintings, he used outline portraits and humor to emphasize qualities of character (**Figures 6**, **7**), and cartoons to illustrate what are mainly dislocated and uneven relationships (**Figure 8**). He shows working hierarchies and camaraderie in the mine. The struggle with the coal face, and the dangers are present, but the focus is elsewhere—with the communication between underground workers. Above ground he shows miners discomforted by misunderstanding in relationships with women (**Figure 9**), with other authorities such as police, and in public institutions such as theaters. In illustrating the world of children, he is alert to the nature of their friendships, their interests and their trials and shows particular sympathy for young boys attempting to adapt to underground work (**Figure 10**), and girls laden with the responsibilities of childcare (**Figure 11**).

Kays dependence on the cartoon form mean that he made little use of the light and shade effects, the chiaroscuro, that gives weight and volume to the underground images of working miners, whilst emphasizing the atmosphere of industrial energy and power in the overground mine images. Many of the paintings by the most highly rated artists including those still living, that specifically depict miners and mines, feature strong light contrasts, and use a limited color palette.

The particular use of chiaroscuro in mining art not only represents the reality of the darkness punctuated by artificial light in underground conditions, but is also part of an industrial aesthetic in which coal mining represents the struggle of man against nature that is symptomatic of modern progress and, particularly in the case of McGuinness, has religious allusions (McManners and Wales, 2006). Dualistic metaphors focusing upon day and night, heaven and hell, spiritual and physical, good and evil are persistent features of coal mining art (Thesing, 2000). Within this iconography, the miner appears as an heroic figure, pitting his body against the unyielding and unforgiving forces of nature. This is a post-enlightenment narrative of the industrial revolution and integral to the national story of the UK as a world power. In the dominant visual narrative, the struggle of miners as a body of workers against exploitation by mine owners and subject to the vagaries of the market for coal, is subsumed by the greater struggle against forces of nature and of darkness.

Mining paintings depicting the coal face and the pit head are often at one and the same time realistic and idealistic, literal and symbolic. The battle against nature presents the miner as industrial warrior. Implicit in this is the notion of miner as national and working class hero. Until the 1984 strike, in the labourist politics pursued within mining, there was no apparent contradiction between national and class heroism: miners' trade unionism and the history of struggle was for better conditions and wages, not for revolution.

Kays images do not show the miner as any sort of hero. "The Kist" is the only Kays drawing that includes underground light
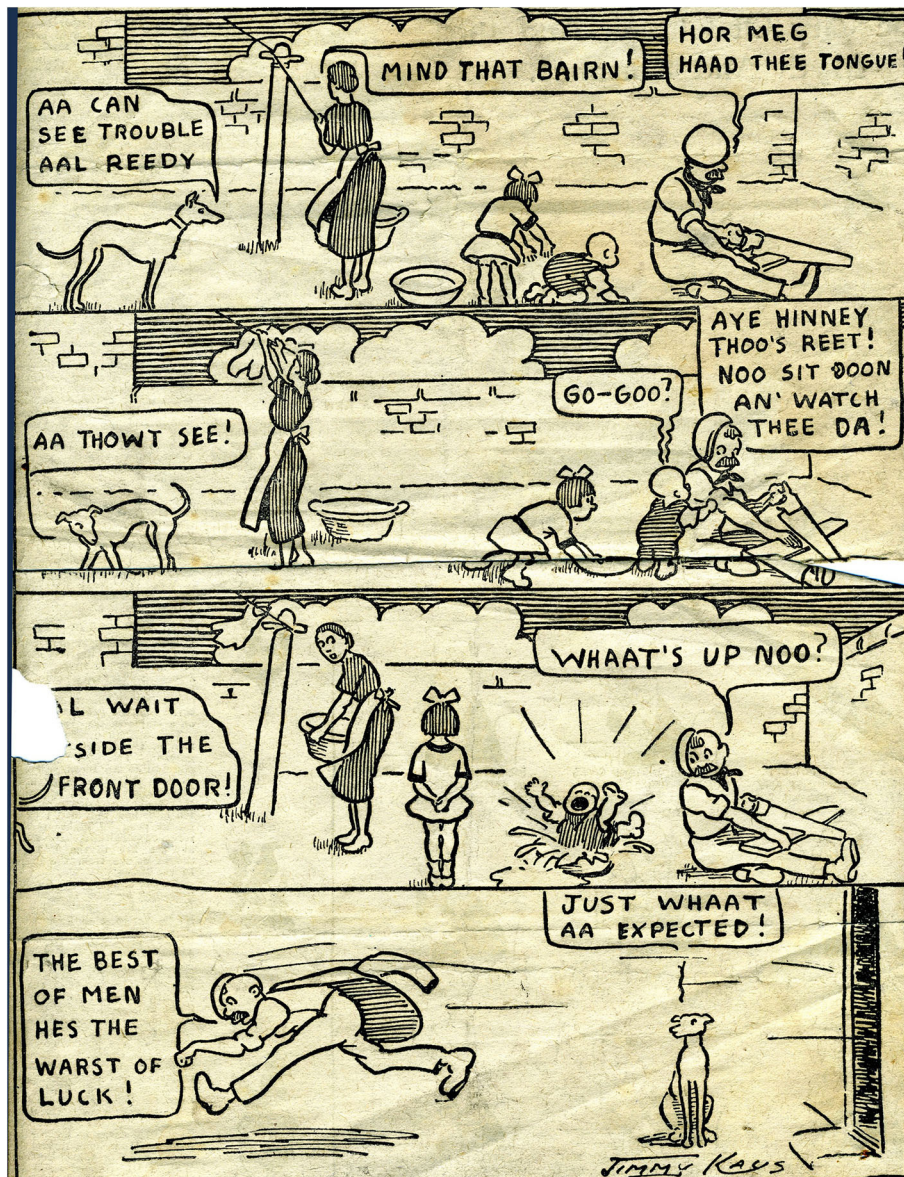
FIGURE 9 | The warst of luck! *Unattributed newspaper cutting, author's collection.*

and shadow effects, but there is no drama in the scene, and no particular attention to the masculine physicality of the miners. His other mining images suggest the wearying everyday attrition of mining rather than the more spectacular dangers associated with roof falls and explosions. His sensibility, especially with the reproduced images of the broken props holding the roof (see **Figure 4**), is anxiety for what might happen. The audience for the published cartoons, readers of the *Weekly Star,* belonged to the same class and the same locality as Jimmy Kays. Otherwise his work was only for himself and kith and kin. Using an easily understood art form, he was speaking to the people whose worlds and worries he shared. There is no heroism in the humor, but rather what is revealed is a grim resilience and vulnerability in

the face of forces and circumstances beyond the control of the laboring miner.

The cartoons employ physicality to emphasize informal relations of power in the pit, rather than "man against nature." The oppressed boy miner and pit pony, the ineffectual deputy, and the bullying coal hewer express realities of underground relations that do not conform to the heroics of mining (see **Figure 10**).

To survive conditions that constantly threaten to overwhelm, the miners in the narrative developed by Kays, including the boys and ponies for whom he shows particular sympathy are often hapless. They are mainly resigned to their conditions and appear powerless in the face of forces that are beyond their control. Their
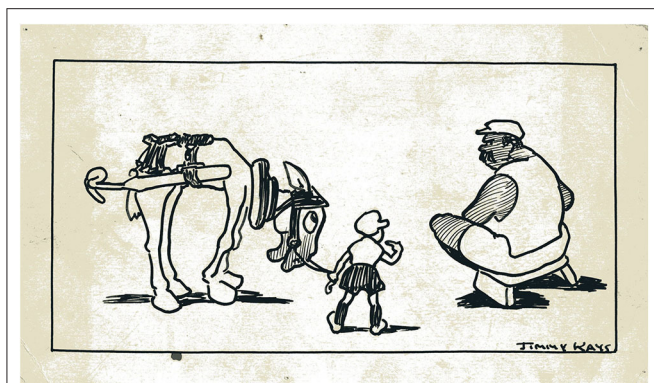
FIGURE 10 | Hewer, putter and pit pony. *Author's collection*.

FIGURE 11 | A Nellyfunt? *Private collection, C. Kays*.

only resource is their wry humor, their companionship and their own characters. This is no heroism. It is simply endurance and it does not lend itself to a sentimental or romantic reading.

Kays' depiction of life above ground is interesting in the way it depicts male and female worlds as full of misunderstanding (see **Figure 9**). The sexual division of labor in mining ensured that the home was the domain of women but unlike other miner artists

who tend to show co-operation and tenderness in the home, Kays shows men and women misunderstanding each other, and alienation of the miner from the domestic situation.

The retreat for the miner above ground is in male company and sometimes in alcohol. It is impossible to take from Kays' images any sense of glory in mining. That does not make it irrelevant as mining art, but it does problematize its position. It sits outside the mining art narrative and does not conform to the heritage tropes that make mining art attractive to the leisure and tourist markets. Yet it offers a unique visual historical record of its time and one with which local people in Durham identify and understand.

When the Jimmy Kays pictures, including some from the Kays family collections, were copied, printed, framed, and exhibited in local venues in East Durham, they attracted large audiences. Apart from the Art Block and Horden Heritage Center, Kays prints were shown at Horden Centennial Center, Blackhall Community Center and Seaton Holme, Easington. The physical spaces available in these community settings included corridors, rooms where no nails were allowed in the walls, and rooms that were outside the main congregating areas of the building. Nevertheless, these venues have a present relevance in local lives, and as such, the decision to display the Kays work in them was to signify that this art work was meant to be viewed by those who use the buildings now, albeit mainly for other purposes. In addition, the work has been shown on display boards and tables in conference and festival settings, such as the Easington Miners' Picnic in 2019.

The authenticity of Kays as a local miner artist was important in the promotion of the exhibitions which were intended to be accessible to and to communicate with an audience of people living in post-mining circumstances. Nobody who visited these exhibitions questioned the quality of the art, no market relationships were involved, and the audience engaged with the images as equals rather than as consumers. That "one of their own" had been "discovered" and was being recognized by having his work shown in an exhibition was reason itself for pride, but what was most important was the affirmation of class and cultural identity that communicated directly to deep knowledge and common understanding without any intervening "arts" discourse and without any question about how much the art might be "worth." Local visitors were excited by the representation of a history that they recognized as uniquely their own, by images of an everyday life which otherwise remained only in traces, detritus, and the mementos hidden in family cupboards. Some simply looked quietly and reflectively. Others were stimulated to speak. Their conversations revealed a poignancy about mining always touched by ambiguity, sad for loss but rarely nostalgic. The examples of responses that I am able to give depend entirely upon my own presence at accidental moments and my ability to recollect what was said. Three examples which are uppermost in my recollection will serve to illustrate the significance of Kays' work and its relevance as working class art.

The first example is that of a cartoon whose humor belies its seriousness (**Figure 12**).

This cartoon, illustrating everyday dangers in the pit, frequently provoked a response. One ex-miner explained that
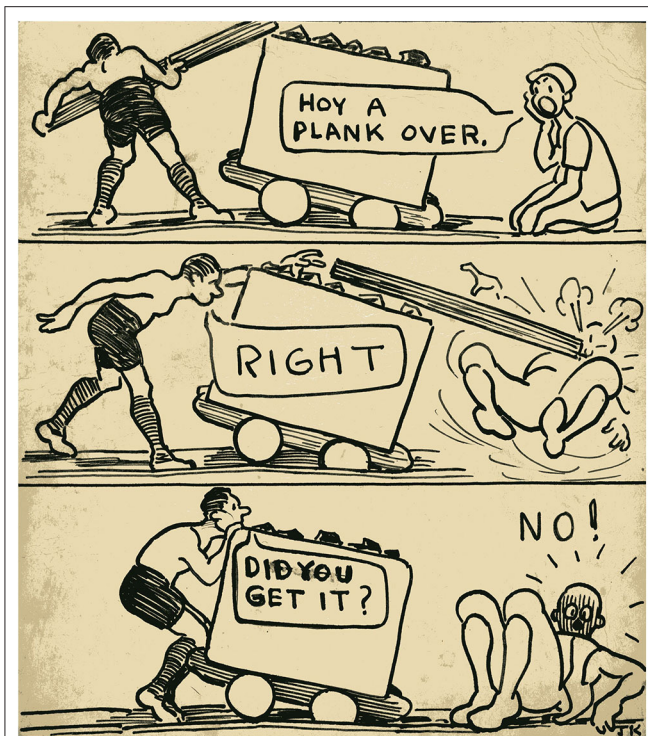
FIGURE 12 | Hoy a plank over. *Author's collection.*

the first underground job that he had been given was to lift a truck back onto the rails. Another described the narrowness of the tunnels and the fact that often there was no space at the sides to take the plank around and so it had to be thrown (hoyed) over[9]. In both these cases, the men wanted very much to speak of "what it was like." Meanwhile an elderly woman wanted to tell of her grandfather. She said that he had been a very strong man; it was told that he was so strong that he could lift a tub back on the rails on his own, with his bare hands, without a plank. Before he died, he was like a matchstick and could have been knocked over by a child. His decline and death was due to pneumoconiosis, the miners' lung disease caused by inhaling coal dust over years of underground toil. This is a well-known mining disease, but not one that conjures images of heroism. That it does not appear as such in Kays' images does not invalidate the fact that his cartoon provoked this memory and brought the topic into public conversation through a private story. Unlike the mines themselves, pneumoconiosis has not yet disappeared. It is a hidden legacy of mining that continues to blight the lives of aging miners—including incidentally, an ex-Horden miner who is a member of edan and who uses art to give himself a life beyond his disability.

The second example concerns a retired woman, a volunteer in the Horden Heritage Center. For her, the fact that these

were cartoons was of particular significance, mainly because of their immediacy and because of the dialect captions. She was delighted by the humor announcing that it was "ages" since she had laughed like she did when viewing these cartoons. They had apparently resurrected an aspect of her being that had been repressed and silenced with the loss of the mines and their associated speech patterns. She was not nostalgic for this lost world, but it connected with her efforts in the Heritage Center to offer a community café and to her role in collecting and organizing local memorabilia, documents, and photographs to be accessed there. Kays' cartoons spoke in a voice she knew, offering encouragement for her recording and archiving work and feeding into the conversations in the center. In the Heritage Center the Kays exhibitions were a reminder that local talent and agency had survived the depredations of mining. They might now inspire local confidence to survive the dire conditions of the present, where in 2015, an ex-mining house, including that in which Kays parents lived, could be purchased for £1.00 (Jenkins, 2015). Jimmy Kays might have belonged to a different age, but the spirit of fortitude and the subtleties of humor deployed as a social defense against adversity remain relevant.

The thwarted ambitions inscribed in Kays' life and work speak to the post-mining present. He was not the only miner for whom pit work was a necessity preventing the fulfillment of other talents. One Art Block diary entry records that an ex-miner who visited the Kays exhibition said that "many miners were very good drawers" (Art Block, 2016). Another was moved to bring some pen and ink drawings of underground scenes that he had done himself. The third example concerns an ex-miner from Horden who helped to hang the Kays exhibition in the Heritage Center. He was reminded of the art in underground tunnels, mentioning chalked cartoons and murals that workers had done themselves. Subsequently, other ex-miners have corroborated this. It appears that drawing underground was not uncommon. Some of it was lewd—understandably perhaps, but some seems to have been a commentary on the work itself. It is recorded that it was the result of seeing Tom McGuinness drawing on a coal tub that prompted a mining supervisor to suggest that he should attend evening art classes (Borchard, ud.). Underground art created by miners was lost with the mine but some sketches using conventional art materials, that were done *in situ* survive. There is at least one image in the Kays collection that might have been drawn underground. This sketch entitled "The Story" shows two miners eating their bait and engaged in conversation (**Figure 13**). Here the context is secondary to the talk; for the men, the pleasure of "the story" is a distraction from their surroundings. This faded pencil drawing shows something of the importance of conviviality in underground relationships.

Creativity in the squalid and inhospitable conditions of work underground, prompts questions about the exclusion of opportunities for creativity in contemporary workplaces. As a new member of edan, recently moved to County Durham asked, "What would be the equivalent today of mining art?" Indeed, what would be the equivalent? Is it simply that contemporary work lacks the visual qualities, the dramatic lighting, and the icons that inspired mining

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[9]One of the few known miner artists from the early years of the twentieth century, Gilbert Daykin shows the narrowness of the tunnels in a fully realized oil painting, "The Tub: At the end of the coalface" (1934).

FIGURE 13 | The story. *Author's collection*.

art? Or is it that surveillance and methods of controlling workers in post-industrial conditions excludes all opportunity for independent creativity? Today, "cultural production" has become part of a contrived response to degraded localities. In the neo-liberal economy and workplace, creativity is only legitimized if harnessed for the benefit of productivity: artistic practice has become instrumental (Mould, 2018). Creative production is defined as "art" only in these terms. There are few remaining circumstances in which workers, including professional artists, can feel that their creativity is legitimate or has value outside the market. Moreover, representing "what you know" in a social sense hardly seems meaningful in local societies characterized by fragmentation, polarization, and mourning for the past. Disparate, tightly controlled working conditions and privatized and individualized leisure militate against opportunities for producing visual art that can be collectively representative of contemporary life and culture. More than ever, art is removed from its social bearings, dislocated from everyday life and presented as unattainable for ordinary people—no matter what their talent. The challenge arising from the world of Jimmy Kays is to consider how artistic practice in post-mining localities might be reoriented to the present.

CONCLUSION

The strength of the art work produced by Jimmy Kays is also its weakness. People who have experienced and inherited the consequences of mine closures, whose creativity has been crushed and appropriated through their displacement, find in Kays' images features that connect them positively with their past without provoking a desire for its return. Kays' drawings and cartoons, produced without reference to a consuming audience, are inherently valuable in terms of the historical insight they offer into County Durham mining life in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Yet its unmediated authenticity also renders Kays' work problematic in the contemporary conditions in which mining art is flourishing. It sits uneasily in the neo-liberal post-industrial conditions in which mining art is accorded value and brought into public recognition. It is physically shabby. It threatens the cohesive narrative of a "hard" but heroic and glorious remembered past through which so much mining art is viewed and filtered, and provokes an encounter with a longer history of daily attrition and denigration in which miners and their families struggled to create a distinctive, resilient culture.

The class conflicts between miners and mine owners before nationalization, and subsequently between miners and the state are incorporated in most mining art by their relegation to a past which seems to have no implications for the present. This appeals to a critical but ultimately passive nostalgia for a period from which emerged a better present. Such a conservative reading situates the class-based mining conflicts in that same past. The national story is one which transcends such conflict. It is impossible to view the work of Kays in these terms because his art was of a moment of abjection—more continuous than discontinuous with post-mining conditions. It was local, immediate, and unsentimental, produced without symbolism or reference to a wider set of sensibilities about "art." This does not make it "not art." The power to define the worth of art is not a power without borders, but is circumscribed by a range of interest groups, including those who deal in art on the open market, those who influence decisions in galleries, museums, art journals, art education, and universities, each of which have their own markets to satisfy and all of whom are interconnected.

The terms of the historical invisibility of Jimmy Kays, the production of his work in conditions of poverty and without professional patronage other than his brief period cartooning for a short-lived working class newspaper, the preservation of his work in a private domestic setting, and the difficulties of including it in the public lexicon and display of "mining art," illuminates the exercise of class-based hegemonic power in terms of the production, consumption and range of meaning inscribed within all art. Kays possessed artistic skill, but he is a minor artist whose output is outside market valuation except as a historic curiosity. It is a unique visual "insider" representation of a time and place which is otherwise largely unseen and forgotten but it could not reveal as much as it does without the skill of the artist. Its intrinsic value is that it speaks for and to those who have been largely unseen and unheard, whose lives are not reached by filtered and mediated historical narratives.

Not all people can be artists, but all people have creative potential. It is the expression of creativity that facilitates human confidence and agency. Restoring that confidence and agency amongst people discarded by the death of mining and denigrated in the post-mining world cannot be undertaken by art alone, and art cannot replace a world that is lost. However, mining art can make a contribution. Displayed in appropriate and accessible conditions, it can facilitate remembrance, reflection, and conversation in ways that help to inspire pride and confidence in identities that otherwise have few unmediated outlets. To fulfill this potential requires that a widening of the scope of understanding about what is valuable in art, taking into consideration the class based criteria that promote or denigrate different forms of creative expression. We need to foster a creativity and artistic practice that is integral to existence, questioning of prevailing conditions, and empowering for those engaged in it. Mining art can support this, but only through a more critical interrogation that also recognizes that in class terms a minor artist in one setting, can be a major artist in another.

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"Whatever *Did* Ever Happen to the Likely Lads"? Social Change, Mobility, Class, and Identity in the UK 1969–2019.

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This paper reflects upon issues of class and identity in the UK over the last 50 years. 1969 is a useful starting point, economically and technologically it can be regarded as the high tide of the vision of a Britain remade in what the then Prime Minister Harold Wilson had termed "the white heat of technology." That technology had produced Concord the world's first supersonic airliner which made its debut that year. This successful Anglo French collaboration also showed how Britain was rapidly moving into a different relationship with Europe a process that culminated in the UK's entry into the EEC or the "common market" as it was more usually referred to on January 1st 1973. Sociologically, it marked the publication of Goldthorpe et al. Affluent worker studies, which examined the idea that increasing affluence was breaking down established class structures, roles and attitudes. This debate about whether the changing nature of work brought with it a fundamental change in class structure and identity has been going on ever since. It has subtly changed and this is to be expected, 50 years is a long time. However, it is generally accepted that the change to economic and social policy that had followed the second world, social mobility was increasingly evident by the late sixties and continued into the seventies. Over the years issues of not only social class but de-industrialization, social mobility, regional decline, globalization, and its impact on policy have been added to the mix. Furthermore, "Brexit" is part of this debate and partly a product of it, however this paper doesn't have the space required to examine this. The title of this paper relates to Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais sitcom "Whatever happened to the Likely Lads" (WHTTLL) which was first broadcast by the BBC in 1973. It focusses on the relationship between 2 young men in their late 20's Bob and Terry. They come from the same place, have similar backgrounds and have been friends since childhood. But their lives are now at a crossroads. Whilst Bob is attempting to grasp new opportunities, Terry is skeptical and to some degree baffled by the change going on around him. The future of class in an era of social mobility also raised questions about aspiration and identity. These are questions which are now less prominent within discourse on class. The debate around class today is arguably less concerned with the mainstream and has become focussed on extremes looking at either poverty, criminality, dispossession or

sometimes the lifestyles of a superrich elite. In summary then this paper will look at the changing ideas, and narratives that have surrounded social class and social mobility over the past half century within the context of the UK, it will do that by reflecting on my own personal biography and the themes raised in "Whatever happened to the Likely Lads" (WHTTLL).

BACKGROUND

Biographies, People, Places, and Times

I am interested in biography, but not just in the conventional sense that is generally concerned with giving accounts of the lives of individuals (usually those who have become famous or notable for some reason). My interest is wider than that, I am not just interested in the biographies of people, but of the places and also the times that they inhabit. I make no claim that this is in any way novel. I see it as an exploration within the spaces between the three key intersections that Wright-Mills outlined in the Sociological imagination (Wright Mills, 1959). Namely those between Private problems and Public issues, the Individual and the Social and the interplay between Biography and History.

Mills saw all of these areas as important but it can be argued that he saw the relationship between Biography and History as particularly crucial, declaring that;

"Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both" (1959, p. 5).

This paper then is an exercise in exploring biographies and history. It has certainly been prompted by my own biography as during the course of writing this paper I celebrated my 50th Birthday.

I was born at the very end of the 1960's and as such my lifetime began when Britain was at its most highly industrialized, as Fothergill and Beatty have shown employment in 1966, just prior to my birth, employment in manufacturing and primary industries like coal reached a peak with 8.9 million workers employed in them. Today they account for just 2.9 million in other words my life span has coincided with the UK's rapid de-industrialization.

"Back in 1966, when manufacturing employment peaked, 8.9 million worked in manufacturing and a further 500,000 in the coal industry. This compares with just 2.9 million employed in manufacturing in 2016, and none at all in the coal industry" (Beatty and Fothergill, 2016, p. 4).

I have reflected upon my own biography and family history increasingly in the last few years, I expect this is partly a function of aging, but I have also become increasingly aware that the opportunities that were available to my parents and to me, are no longer available to my son and his contemporaries in the same way. The history of the last 50 years then has been about not only the de-industrialization of British society but also the narrowing of structures of opportunities. This is not to say that opportunities for social mobility have disappeared, however the risk and cost of taking up such opportunities has been increasingly shifted onto individuals whereas they were previously promoted and paid for by the state.

Perhaps it would be helpful to elaborate. My parents were born in Battersea, South London in the years immediately before the Second World War. Both came from typical working class backgrounds. My paternal grandfather was employed in the family trade, he was plumber and gasfitter, my paternal grandmother had been a housemaid when she first left school but then worked as a children's nanny. On my mother's side, her father had died young at the age of 41, he had been sailor in the Navy during WW1 before going to work for the Post Office. My maternal grandmother was left with two young daughters after his death in a world before the welfare state. The Post Office employed her as a cook where she spent the rest of her working life, although before getting married she had worked as a bookkeeper. Both families lived in private rented accommodation. Neither of my parents were evacuated during the London Blitz (by this I mean they were not sent away to live with strangers as so many were). But both were taken away by parents to locations outside of London at certain points in the war, my father to Lancashire in 1941, and my mother to stay with relatives in Scotland in 1944, at the height of the V1 and V2 attacks.

My parents benefited hugely from the coming of the welfare state, particularly in terms of education. My mother attended the local secondary modern before going on to take "O level" exams at Regent Street Polytechnic. My father passed the 11 plus and went to the local grammar school, passed his "O levels" began studying for "A levels" and had hopes of perhaps going to University. However, his father's early death meant that he had to abandon his studies and go out to work. It is perhaps this availability of work due to the economic policy at the heart of the post-war consensus which allowed the dramatic social mobility which followed in the decades immediately after 1945. This I think is often forgotten, or at least taken for granted, instead we prefer to talk about the social policies, education, the NHS, the huge expansion of social housing, the benefits system. But it needs to be remembered that this was all built upon a Keynesian economic strategy and a commitment to full employment. My parents often remarked that it in the fifties it was possible to "leave a job on Friday and get another on Monday." Whilst I have always been a little skeptical about the literal truth of this statement, I have no reason to doubt that jobs were not scarce and easy to come by. So by their early 20's my parents both had good white collar jobs, my mother in the insurance industry, and my father in engineering working in sales. By 1966 my father had a company car (he told me he had to pass a company driving test before he was allowed to use it). They had also moved out of inner London to suburbia. They bought a flat in North Cheam,

this was made possible by a mortgage scheme provided by the then London County Council. By the time of my birth in late 1969 they had moved again to a 1930's semi-detached house still in North Cheam.

What did this all mean? Well it is difficult to be definitive, but it certainly meant that I would have a very different life with different opportunities to that which my parents had. It is the dramatic rise in social mobility that my parents' generation experienced and it consequences that is the backdrop to this paper and the main theme running through it. In other words what happened was both intragenerational mobility (the extent to which people can climb the earnings ladder within their own lifetime) and consequently escaping intergenerational mobility (the extent to which your parents determine your life chances) themselves and consolidating it for their children. Or more simply, my sister and I had more opportunities than our parents.

What happens to people is shaped greatly by their surroundings. I have written fairly extensively about how places possess their own biographies (Warren, 2011, 2017; Warren and Garthwaite, 2014), stressing the need for researchers and policy makers to understand local history, culture and practices, if an meaningful sense of place is to emerge and that this essential if the lives of individuals are to be understood and social and economic issues tackled. This paper is not so much concerned with place (although it certainly shouldn't be discounted), rather while place is of course in the background it is time which is more significant.

Time also seems to have become increasingly important as the period of unprecedented economic security and social progress from 1945 to 1979 that British commentators termed "the post-war consensus. This unwritten agreement between the political parties which accepted a mixed economy, full employment, and the welfare state had underpinned the type of social mobility which my parents and many like them experienced.

However, this era is becoming an increasingly distant memory this was an exceptional period and is now best regarded as such, although during the immediate post war and until the late 1970's this was thought to be the new normal. How we might return to that time and whether a return is desirable or even possible can be argued to have been the central debate in British Politics between 1979 and 2010. It has also been part of a wider debate which incorporates social scientists, for example, British social policy analysis has concerned itself to a very great extent with the progressive dismantling and sometimes partial reconstruction of the British Welfare State, whilst also attempting to predict what the social consequences of this might be.

What is certain is that the type of opportunities available for many have changed, and that we now live in a society which is far more unequal than it was in 1969 with less opportunities for social mobility of the kind that my parent's generation experienced. This change has had different consequences for those from particular backgrounds and undoubtedly location has also been an important factor.

People like myself born at the end of the sixties benefited as our parent's generation had already experienced social mobility, they had white-collar jobs and aspired for their children to achieve further and consolidate their position. In short they had

done the hard yards it was now up to us to make the most of those gains. Although It can also be argued that social improvement had increased across the board between 1945 and 1969 but it was only those in certain industries and parts of the country who were able to withstand the economic pressure of the 1970's after the 1973 Oil crisis, the coming of Thatcherism and the economic recession of the early 1980's, who were able to hang onto these gains. Others of course were not so fortunate.

This was particularly the case for young working class men in places such as Teesside, which suffered a sharp reversal of its fortunes and went from having the highest GVA (Gross Value Added: Regional gross value added is the value generated by any unit engaged in the production of goods and services), apart from Aberdeen or Central London in 1971, to parts of Middlesbrough having rates of male unemployment in excess of 50% by the mid 1980's. David Byrne writing in 1995 summed up a key aspect of this change.

"In 1971 most school leavers in Middlesbrough had no formal qualifications but had access to an employment system in which many well-paid jobs did not require such qualifications. Now things are very different" (Byrne, 1995, p. 112).

What Byrne is referring to is how the decline of the staple industries of Steel, Chemicals, and Engineering in a place like Teesside had also meant the dramatic contraction of training opportunities for school leavers which existed in the form of industrial apprenticeships and training schemes. These had provided school leavers with qualifications and acted as the gateways to secure well-paid employment. Their value became more apparent as employment declined on Teesside as many trades had transferable skills, for example instrument artificers who are always in demand in the global petroleum and chemical industries.

What this highlights is that for many working class families the general rise in living standards that the post 1945 social and economic consensus had delivered, were not as permanent as they initially may have appeared. Furthermore, those who had by a combination of these broad social improvements combined with their own efforts to "better themselves," had undoubtedly changed their situation. They also expected that the kind of social mobility they had experienced would also be available to their own children and their grandchildren after them. Such expectation then can be argued to be a product of a particular time. However, the reality was that the sustainability of that was strongly connected to the places they lived and worked in.

Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads?–1973–1974

Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais' 1973–1974 TV series is very much a product of its time, I would argue that it captures ideas and anxieties about "embourgoisement" and the disappearance of what for want of a better term "traditional" working class life. This of course was one of, if not the central pre-occupation of British sociology in the sixties and seventies with debate emanating from the affluent worker studies carried out by Goldthorpe et al. and published in 1968 and 1969. This in turn fed debates about the nature of social class, what it was made of,

what it wasn't made of, how to recognize it and how to measure it. Crompton writing in 2010 sums it up very well.

"the linkages between concrete classes and the structure of employment were brought closer together, sociologically speaking, as a consequence of an influential corpus of research and writing in Britain from the late 1950s onwards, including Lockwood (1958), Dahrendorf (1959), and Goldthorpe and Lockwood (1963). Goldthorpe and Lockwood's (1963) article gave notice of a major empirical project, on the 'affluent worker' (see Goldthorpe et al., 1968, 1969, 1970). The 'affluent worker' research was a case study of Luton which included three major manufacturing organizations (Vauxhall, Skefco, and Laporte). The researchers examined comparatively a range of manual occupations—skilled, routine assembly, chemical process work as well as 'white-collar' employees (the study focused on male workers only). One of the major objectives of the research was to examine the thesis of 'embourgeoisement', or 'the worker turning middle class'" (Crompton, 2010, p. 12).

It is very clear within WHTTLL that the writers conceptualization of social class is a highly complex one, it is not just about work, money, politics, or heritage it is instead about all of these things and more. Place, attitude, clothes, leisure choices are all thrown into the mix. Its message is that class cannot simply be boiled down to one of these factors (This is something that social scientists have sometimes found difficult to grasp and deal with, this is a theme that we shall return to later). But the series whilst it explores class routinely it doesn't at any point get bogged down by the issue and it provides much of the comedy.

I was too young to see the series when it was first screened, however it has been extensively repeated on terrestrial and satellite TV on regular basis ever since the early seventies. I believe that its enduring appeal is because many of the themes it explores about change, place, class, tradition, and aspiration are still very much with us today. I think that it appealed to my parents as they saw much of their own situation being presented back to them. Many of my generation saw much of our parents in the characters in the show in my case Mum and Dad were recognizably Bob and Thelma Ferris.

The series also became of more interest to me as it increasingly intersected with my own personal biography. I came to live in the North East in the late 1980's to study Social Sciences at what was then Sunderland Polytechnic. Apart from a short time overseas in the early 1990's I have lived in the region ever since settling here and raising a family. The rise and fall of the North East and its industries has also over the years become my chosen subject of study.

I arrived when the region's traditional industries, coal mining, iron, and steel making and ship building were in their closing stages whilst others which are now central to the region's economy, like automotive manufacture were just beginning (Nissan opened their plant at Washington in 1985). This tension between the region's past and its future has been a theme I have encountered again and again. What was and what might be is also at the heart of "Whatever happened to the Likely Lads," hence it has been a text that I have returned to many times over the years.

I am very conscious that a British TV situation comedy made in the early 1970's might not be the most accessible text for those reading this journal (although the series can often be found on streaming sites such as YouTube, or Dailymotion links can also be found in the references section for those of you that wish to do so). Consequently there is a need to introduce its main protagonists, Bob and Terry.

The trajectories of the two central characters Bob Ferris and Terry Collier can be argued to offer us a way to track ideas about class and identity and the region through fictional but essentially recognizable characters. How they were formulated and how enduring they have been, is in itself worthy of discussion. Basically the series relates the adventures of and the relationship between these two former school friends and workmates who meet again after losing touch for several years.

The stories revolve around their aspirations (or in Terry's case the lack of them) and their common history. They were born at the end of the second world war went to school together and then went to work in the same factory and both were fairly typical young skilled industrial workers. This was how they appeared in the earlier series (1964–1966) 'The Likely Lads.' The original series ends as Bob decides to join the Army to "see the world" and "do something different" (It is worth noting that this was a fairly common thing, joining the armed forces offered a way to move away from home for young men, although in the North East a far more common way of getting away from the region was by joining the Merchant Navy). However, Terry although initially scornful of Bob's decision to leave him, his home and his job behind misses his friend and he decides to join him in the army. However, as Terry arrives to begin his basic training he is dismayed to see Bob coming the other way. Bob has been discharged on medical grounds for having "flat feet" and is returning home leaving his best friend in the care of HM Armed forces. Thus, the parallel paths which their lives had followed up to this point diverge forever.

By the time we meet Bob and Terry again in the 1973 series their circumstances are very different. Bob has moved on and whilst he not ashamed of his working class background, aspires to "better himself" in terms of both his income and lifestyle. Bob has left the factory that he and Terry joined straight from school, and we learn that he has gained more qualifications partly through a correspondence course and through "night school" (this alongside other initiatives such as "day release" schemes, operated by large employers which allowed workers to attend Further and Higher Education courses during the working week were an important part of post war mobility). Bob is working as a site surveyor for a construction company and has essentially become middle management, it must also be said that being engaged to the bosses daughter hasn't harmed his prospects either. So Bob's working life has changed dramatically in the 5 years that we are told have elapsed since his return from his brief time in the army and Terry's departure.

It is not only his work situation that has changed. Bob is about to get married, he is buying his own house on the "Elm Lodge Housing Estate" a new build estate on the edge of the city, buying his own car, and he goes on foreign holidays. Whilst such things are commonplace now they were not in the early 1970s. Bob also

feels that he has a new social status too. In other words the change of his employment status has led to a different social status. Bob and his fiancé Thelma who he has known since junior (primary) school are aspirational and anxious to leave their past behind, this means living a different sort of lifestyle with different friends, different activities, and with different habits. The past is just that, the past, something to be fondly remembered, but something that Bob and Thelma are glad that they have left behind. However, this is less of a departure for Thelma as her father is a self-made man who runs his own company and she herself works as an assistant in a local library. It is the friction that this supposed change of social status or the aspiration to change social status that provides the space or situation for much of the comedy to unfold.

The past then is given both form and a dissenting voice by Terry. Terry has now returned home from the army and he's shocked to find how things have changed. Terry struggles to grasp and accept how his home town has changed, but he is even more alarmed by the change in his friend. As the series progresses, it becomes clear that despite their apparently diverging lifestyles, their common past binds them together whether they like it or not.

Put another way the characters can be seen as personifying what Williams (1973) termed the "emergent" and "residual working" class. This process remakes and reproduces the relations of class in new and novel forms. Class relations do not fundamentally alter but their form changes.

"By residual I mean that some experiences, meanings and values which cannot be verified or cannot be expressed in the terms of the dominant culture are nevertheless lived and practiced on the basis of the residue cultural as well as social of some previous social formation. By "emergent" I mean first that new meanings and values, new practices, new significances, and experiences are continually being created. But there is a much earlier attempt to incorporate them because they are part-and not yet part of effective contemporary practice" (Williams, 1973, p. 10–11).

This interplay continues throughout the series, I find this particularly fascinating as the characters can also be read as shorthand for the North East region too which has an extremely strong "residual culture." This strong heritage derived from Coal, Iron and Steel, Heavy Engineering and Shipbuilding, which established the North East as the world's first industrial region in the nineteenth century still plays an important part in the regions life and identity to this day. However, this incredibly powerful complex of what Byrne has termed "carboniferous capitalism" (Byrne, 2005a) which the regions power and wealth was founded upon had been in decline since the early twentieth century as other parts of the world industrialized and caught up. It's highpoint can be argued to be 1913, which was the year that the great Northern Coalfield which covered County Durham, Northumberland and what is now Tyne and Wear achieved its highest ever production figures. The last deep mine in the North East closed in 1993, but mining heritage is celebrated by the region. As Tomaney points out in this collection the annual Durham Miner's Gala or "Big Meeting" which is held every July and attracts huge crowds in what has been described as the

"biggest celebration of working class culture in Europe." It can be argued then that the search for a new identity for the region has been going on for a very long time, and that finding and nurturing an emergent culture has been an uphill struggle.

At the time of WHTLL in the early 1970's the region still had its traditional industries (although they were well into their long and often painful decline). Shipbuilding continued on the Tyne, Wear and the Tees. Iron and Steel still had a major presence at Consett and on Teesside. Coal was still a major source of employment but many of the region's inland collieries had closed in the 1960's and workers transferred to the larger coastal pits or to other parts of the country. It was the need to consider what "life after coal" looked like that led to the 1963 Hailsham report on the North East (HMSO, 1963). It recommended major infrastructural improvements many of which the region had wanted for years such as the final construction of the Vehicular Tyne Tunnel (something agreed upon as long ago as 1937). Roads were upgraded and new town developments approved. The report envisaged the region as being a center of advanced manufacturing. This mirrored (in fact it predated) Wilson's vision of a Britain "forged in the white heat of technology "and it also bolstered the dominant narrative in local and regional politics which was one of "modernization." At the heart of this modernization agenda was the deliberate fracturing of the regions past in order to recreate the place a new, for those leading this project, this meant ensuring that the region could not return to the poverty and unemployment it had been blighted by in the 1930's. This political project was personified in the shape of Thomas Dan Smith (1915–1993). T Dan Smith rose to prominence in the 1950's and 60's as leader of Newcastle City Council. Always a controversial character Dan Smith was loved by some to whom he was "Mr Newcastle" and loathed by others to who he was "the mouth of the Tyne." Smith was intent on large scale change, he initiated ambitious modern building schemes and demolished large swathes of Victorian Newcastle in a bid to create the "Brasilia of the North." Newcastle and many other parts of the city were certainly transformed by the revolution that "Modernization" brought. Dan Smith's political career ended in disgrace and imprisonment after his connections to a number of corrupt transactions involving the developer John Poulson came to light in the early seventies. His legacy for good or ill remains within the fabric of Newcastle and the wider urban North East.

It is this changing landscape that Terry has returned to and in an early episode entitled "Moving on" Bob decides to take Terry for a Sunday morning drive around their old neighborhood. Terry is enthusiastic at first but Bob warns him.

Bob: "Things have changed."

Bob drives Terry around the town, Terry is eager to see their old haunts from their teenage years but at every turn Bob informs him that the dance halls, coffee bars, and pubs he remembers have been demolished with new structures under construction or having already taken their place.

Terry is both shocked and disbelieving. When Bob reveals that the "Go-Go Rock Club" is now buried under a huge multi story car park Terry exclaims.

Terry: "the Go-Go! Gone!"

The duo retire to the pub to have a pint and talk things over. Terry is dismayed and Bob admits that there have been a lot of changes, but adds that;

Bob: "if you live here all the time you don't notice it so much, still it's a good thing progress, expansion, plenty of opportunities round here now you know"

Terry counters this with,

Terry: "You wouldn't think that if you went down the labor exchange!"

Terry also learns that it is not just his old social haunts that have disappeared. When Bob asks him what his plans for getting a job are he is non-committal, when pressed on this Terry says that if nothing turns up he can always,

Terry: "go back to Ellison's (the factory they had both previously worked at) old Darby always said to me "when you come out Terry your job will be open" I'll just go back to Ellison's!"

Bob however has news for Terry.

Bob: "there is a problem, they pulled it down 2 years ago!"

What is striking about this scene to me is that many of the places which feature in it as the "new" buildings have themselves been demolished in the last 10–15 years. In fact the multi story carpark referred to became famous in its own right. Designed by Owen Luder as part of the Trinity Square shopping center in Gateshead the car park was part of one of the definitive scenes from what is certainly *the* definitive North East film Get Carter (1971). Jack Carter takes revenge upon one of his brother's killers by throwing them to their death from the top level. Featuring in the film led to the building achieving cult status. However, in spite of this this and attempts to get it listed building status, the "Get Carter" car park was demolished in 2010.

Bob and Terry's reflections on the changing landscape around them continue later in the episode as they join Terry's sister Audrey and her family for lunch.

Audrey "Still it's a good thing progress, expansion isn't it? There's a lot of opportunities round here now."

Ernie: "Yes they say that by 1988 this will be one of the most exciting environments in the United Kingdom!"

Terry "is there anything still left standing in this town? One solitary pre 1967 brick left standing on top of another?"

It is clear that the absence of physical elements of his past unsettles Terry. However, Bob, Audrey, and Ernie insist that Terry will be ok as he has a trade to "fall back on."

Ernie: "You're a qualified electrician you'll have no problem getting a job."

The importance and status of "having a trade" should not be underestimated. Ian Robert's book "Craft, Class and Control" (Roberts, 1993) illustrates this very-well. Roberts explains how his decision to leave a craft apprenticeship as a pipefitter in the shipyards of Sunderland in the 1980's was met with incredulity by his family and friends. This went against all the received wisdom that an apprenticeship was to be prized as its completion was the best guarantee of employment available to working class young men in his community.

The question of employment returns to the series time and again, but Terry remains either unemployed or in unskilled work throughout, and certainly never works as an electrician.

The theme of work and its relationship to social class and social mobility is one which sociologists have made many attempts to unpick. The embourgoisement thesis, saw class as being intimately linked to work crudely making the transition from blue collar work to white collar work meant leaving the working class and becoming middle class (Undoubtedly many who made such a transition also saw this a being the case too).

Of course by the early Seventies this thesis was being challenged as the workplace again became the focus of industrial conflict. Whatever happened to the likely lads did after all first appear in the midst of the Miner's strikes of 1972 and 1973–4 which alongside the 1973 oil crisis reduced Britain to a 3 day week under the leadership of Conservative Prime Minister Edward Heath. Class conflict in the workplace had also become of interest to sociologists again (Beynon, 1973), saw the publication of Huw Beynon's seminal work on industrial relations in the car industry "Working for Ford." The following year Braverman (1974) challenged the idea that a "change of collar" could bring about a change of class by arguing that white collar jobs were more accessible but were also increasingly routine and "proletarianised" as such it was not the type of work or the color of the collar that mattered but the relations within labor process itself.

This is not a debate which Bob and Terry really enter into, Bob has come to see work as vehicle away to earn the kind of money which will allow him to access a certain lifestyle, a lifestyle which will allow him to "get on." Terry on the other hand sees work as a necessary evil, a means to an end, the way to earn enough money to pay for the good things in life which for him are rather more traditional, such as drinking, smoking, and gambling. Industrial relations are barely mentioned within the series which is fairly remarkable given the backdrop of industrial strife that was going on in the UK at the time. Instead we know that Bob is a site surveyor working for a construction company, owned by his fiancé's father (Bob of course insists that Mr. Chambers "does him "no favors" and that he has to "pull his weight"). Thelma works in a local library, this is important to note. Byrne (2018, p. 38) uses WHTTLL to make the point of how women's employment and the growth of dual income households where important components of the post-war transformation.

"What large scale female waged work also led to was a real growth in household incomes and of general household prosperity. So for example in the UK the mass growth of owner occupation whilst not solely due to the income levels of dual-income households was a crucial transformer of lived experience" (Byrne, 2018, p. 38).

This again mirrors my parents experience in the 1960's with a dual income being essential for them getting an initial foot on the property ladder.

Finally, Terry is a happily unemployed electrician. Occupation then, with the series is a signifier of social status but just one of several which indicate how far people have "got on."

Getting On ……

Within "Whatever happened to the Likely Lads" (WHTTLL) there is a wider discussion around the idea of "Getting on" which frames most to Bob and Terry's discussions about employment.

In the second episode of the series Bob asks Terry what he is going to do now he is home and out of the Army, offering the suggestion that,

Bob "it's time to forge ahead and build a future!"

Terry: "Some of us have been able to forge ahead and build a future, while some of us have been serving Queen and Country."

This theme reoccurs throughout the series Terry repeatedly tries to make Bob feel guilty/responsible for his time in the army and therefore his failure to "get on" (Of course in reality Terry could always have bought himself out of the army).

Again we see Bob looking toward an emergent future whilst Terry prefers to view the future as a distant almost threatening prospect from the relative safety of the past. Terry is both dismissive and somewhat jealous of Bob's success.

Terry: "You've obviously done alright for yourself, mortgage, and a car and a few premium bonds have you?"

However, his compliments are often back-handed ones. Series one of WHTTLL is built around the run up to Bob's marriage to Thelma. They have bought a new build house on what is referred to as the "Elm Lodge housing estate" but are yet to move in (remember it's still the early 1970's and living together pre marriage is still an issue especially for the "respectable" working class). Instead Bob is spending time at the house decorating and preparing for when he and Thelma move in. Terry visits Bob at the house.

Terry to Bob "Is this your house?"

Bob proudly and enthusiastically begins to tell Terry all about the house and its specifications he concludes by saying,

Bob: "Yes, we haven't got a name for it yet."

Terry: "Well you'll need one to find it again!"

Bob of course protests that not all the houses on the estate are the same, but his friend's criticism of his new home annoys him. Terry compounds this by, giving the following generalized critique of Bob's new home, lifestyle, and situation.

Terry: "There's something so depressing about these estates, it's the thought of you all getting up at the same time, eating the same kind of low calorie breakfast cereal, all coming home at the same time at 6.30 switching on the same programme at the same time and having it off the same two nights of the week!"

By this time Bob has had enough and he counters Terry's provocation with a defense of his aspirations.

Bob: "Well what's wrong with being the same as everyone else? What's wrong with wanting to make a bit of modest progress? I've worked hard for the last 5 years and this is what I've got to show for it. This and the car. It might not mean much to the Burtons but it means a hell of a lot to me! And what's so special about your lifestyle? You're homeless, jobless, car less, and single. What does that amount to? Terry Collier, bachelor pedestrian!"

Again, Bob talks about "progress" by which he means social mobility, and whilst Terry is at best skeptical and at least mocking of this, but he doesn't have an alternative vision to offer.

It is also worth noting that homeownership is central to Bob's aspirations. This key of "getting on" was of course to become increasingly important to UK politics over the next decade as the promise of a "property owning democracy" proved central to the election of the Conservatives in 1979 and the Thatcherite project. Politics are never really openly discussed in WHTTLL but it is clear that Bob and Thelma would be key targets for the Conservatives.

The way then that Clement and La Frenais present issues of class, social mobility, and social aspiration in the series has far more in common with the ideas of Pierre Bordieu, than other theorists. This is essential as it makes Bob and Thelma much more human and likable. Without this Bob and Thelma would just be examples of embourgoisement. Instead the writers explore the contradictions in the characters and the problems with the assumption that Bob has become middle class by getting a white collar job and buying a house and a car.

Bourdieu argued that individuals and their communities are molded by the culture which surrounds them and they develop a particular mode of living. Bourdieu used the related ideas of capital, habitus and field, in order to explain this.

Bourdieu argues that capital consists of several elements; economic capital i.e., material resources, assets, and earning ability. Social capital, circles of friends, memberships of groups, and social networks. Cultural capital, individuals' skills, knowledge, life experience, taste, and manners that are acquired by being part of a particular social class. Cultural capital is a powerful mechanism which leads to social exclusion and inequality as some forms of cultural capital are seen as much more valuable than others. So for Bourdieu the more capital one has, the more powerful a position the individual occupies in social life. Habitus is the ingrained habits, skills, and dispositions that we possess due to our life experiences, it is the manifestation of capital which we effectively carry around with us. It is our habitus allows us to successfully navigate social environments, however if those environments are beyond our experience this does not work i.e., it is depended upon context. Bourdieu argued that habitus was often taken for granted and mistaken for being natural rather than cultural. The final element is what Bourdieu called "Field." The social world consists of a multiple fields which overlap such as work places, institutions such as school, family, education, religion, and practices like art law and politics i.e., the spaces within which social life occurs and make up society. Bourdieu contended that each field had its own rules and practices which he termed "Doxa" (Longhofer and Winchester, 2013).

However, what is uncertain is how capital and the related habitus formed in areas dominated by industrial work and the social relations which underpinned them endure or change as the social and economic fabric changes? Is the old habitus the basis of a new modified habitus? If so how significant is this, and what happens when the goalposts are shifted radically? Does this mean the past has more to do with the present than we might like to think? Or is the habitus of the past an obstacle to be overcome? All of these questions can be found within WHTTLL.

For people in Bob and Thelma's position like my own parents in the early nineteen seventies it is fairly clear that their context and surrounding, the time and place within which they live combined with their own personal agency meant that acquiring economic capital was not the prime issue, instead the question of accumulating social, and cultural capital became much more important. This process is far more difficult and throughout the series scenarios within which Bob tries to accumulate social and

cultural capital whilst being haunted by his habitus in the form of Terry are a recurrent theme.

These elements come to the fore in the eighth episode of series one "Guess who's coming to dinner." Bob asks Terry to come with him and Thelma to dinner at their "new" friends Alan and Brenda's house. Initially Terry is hostile to the idea and refuses. Bob teases Terry likening him to the cartoon character "Andy Capp" (a well-known cartoon which first appeared in the *Daily Mirror* in 1957, Andy is a northern working class caricature, workshy and found frequently in the pub or the betting shop, hence the comparison with Terry). Initially Terry decides to treat this as a compliment and attempts to turn the conversation back onto what he sees as Bob's middle class pretensions.

Terry: "let me tell you something, I *love* Andy Capp! I'm proud of my home and my class. Just because you're flirting with the lower lower middle middle, just because you've got yourself an office job and fiancé who lives on a mock Tudor estate with a monkey tree!"

He continues in the same vein.

Terry: "I don't want to meet any of your new friends. I bet they all belong to the rugby club, the tennis club or the squash club!"

Bob simply replies,

"We all have a wide range of leisure activities if that's what you mean"

For Terry leisure activities are indicative of social class, i.e., they are for him indicators of social and cultural capital. He attempts to hammer this point home to Bob who of course recognizes this too but sees things rather differently.

Terry: "You'll stop going to football soon, because Saturday afternoon will be *golf!*"

Bob decides to leave Terry to it.

Bob: "if you want to sit there behind your class barrier, fine."

However, Terry eventually agrees to accompany Bob and Thelma to dinner at Alan and Brenda's the following weekend.

Saturday arrives and Bob and Thelma with Terry in tow arrive at Alan and Brenda's. It is quickly established that whilst Alan is an immigrant from "the deep south" (in fact Surrey) Brenda had attended Park Junior School along with Bob, Thelma and Terry. This provides the set up for the rest of the episode which continues to stress class, aspiration, social capital and snobbery.

Brenda makes it clear from the outset that she doesn't want to discuss the past.

Brenda "I'd like to think that we have come a long way from Park Juniors."

Terry however has no other template to reference except the past and responds,

Terry: "Well you certainly have Brenda the last time I knew you, you were living above your dad's chip shop near the glue factory."

Brenda is embarrassed and annoyed, it also becomes clear that this is an aspect of her past that Alan is unaware of.

Alan "Did your father have a fish and chip shop dear?"

Before Brenda can answer Terry steams in with further details much to Brenda's embarrassment.

Terry: "Yes he did, a good 'un and all, the Silver Grid, big helpings and free batter!"

Of course this is in Terry's eyes a compliment, Brenda struggles to contain herself and excuses herself by saying she has to go and see to the dinner. Terry fans the flames further by commenting,

Terry: "Are we having rock salmon and chips for old time's sake?"

With Alan and Brenda absent in the kitchen Bob feels compelled to ask Terry to avoid the subject of Brenda's past. His reasoning is,

Bob: "There's nothing wrong with someone who gets a bit of money and a nice house wanting to forget their past. If you must go down memory lane leave off her dad and the chip shop."

Dinner passes uneventfully until the subject of the past is brought up again, not by Terry this time but Bob who offers some food for thought.

Bob: "Here we all are having a sophisticated supper party with "Tia Maria "and wafer thin mints, and the last time we sat down to eat together was school dinners at Park Juniors."

A discussion ensues between Bob, Thelma, Terry and Brenda about school dinners whilst Alan looks on with interest. Brenda cannot see why the others are still interested in a past she would rather forget.

Brenda:" that's irrelevant now we are all different people!"

Bob, however begs to differ about this.

Bob: "Not *necessarily,* not *necessarily*, we might be a bit older we might have a few more possessions now but we are still basically the same people."

Bob and Thelma are happy to discuss the past. For them it is something that they retain but feel that they have moved away from. Unlike Brenda who would rather hide her past, or Terry whose only reference point and guide to action is the past. Put another way this issue is not just about the past but their relationship with their habitus in Bourdieu's terms. It also provides the backdrop for the climax of the episode when matters come to a head. Brenda can finally take no more of the tales of Park Junior School and she turns her anger toward Terry.

Brenda: "Part of your reluctance to leave the past Terry Collier is that you have very little to look forward to in the future, and your present hasn't much to offer beyond the pub and the billiard hall. Most of us have improved ourselves and developed as people. But you, you're an embarrassment to your family and an embarrassment to your friends!"

Bob swiftly leaps to Terry's defense.

Bob: "Now wait a minute! He doesn't embarrass me! He might be coarse and he might be vulgar. He might be crude and bit rough at the edges, and all right he might have eaten the wrong end of his asparagus, but I'll tell you one thing, he's down to earth and he's honest."

This is not all that surprising given Bob and Terry's common history and long friendship. What does come as a surprise is that Thelma also comes to Terry's defense, and turns things back onto Brenda.

Thelma: "I think Bob's right. Terry is honest, he's got no pretensions, *he* would never deny he lived above a chip shop! You're an enormous snob Brenda and you always have been!"

Brenda is shocked and challenges Thelma, who is happy to carry on criticizing Brenda accusing her of flaunting her new found affluence and possessions.

Thelma: "When you watch people admiring your fabrics and praising your carpets and envying your precious fondue set, you wet your knickers!"

Unsurprisingly this brings the evening to an abrupt close!

Of course these kind of comedic takes on class, social mobility, and aspiration was an ongoing theme in comedy and comedy drama in the 1970's. Mike Leigh's Abbigail's Party celebrated (Leigh, 1977) play explores very similar themes in a similar situation to "Guess who's coming to dinner," but it does so in much greater depth. However, can it be said that these issues are specific to a particular time? Britain has changed a huge amount since the 1970's do these anxieties about class status mobility and escaping from circumstances and habitus have any relevance today?

It can be argued that they do. Katy McEwan whose blog post "Drinking Carling out of Stella glasses" (McEwan, 2016) addressed this question as part of her study of Ingleby Barwick.

Ingleby Barwick is today's Teesside equivalent of the "Elm lodge housing estate" and Bob and Thelma Ferris would probably be found living on, or aspiring to move to Ingleby Barwick. As part of my research about Teesside and the legacy of the industrial past I interviewed Katy about her work.

Katy explained that the people she spoke to were aspirational and from working class backgrounds, but in a particular way, they were keen to transform themselves into something else by their physical relocation to Ingleby Barwick. Moving there was about leaving the past behind this physical transition they saw as bringing a new status. Katy told me what she thought lay behind this:

"The purpose is to not be where you have come from."

This involved a change of location and also one of mind-set:

"It's about becoming different people, about no longer being one of them."

In this case "them" means the community you were part of previously so it is both a physical and cultural departure (McEwan in Warren, 2018, p. 205).

It would seem then that very little has changed in the intervening 40 years, what is being described is a very similar process that Clement and La Frenais dramatized back in Clement and La Frenais (1973). But of course things are very different too.

What Did Ever Happen to the Likely Lads Then?

The situation which is so well-outlined in WHTTLL is still with us in many ways. But the intersection of personal biographies and the economic landscape is not the same, times have changed. In a world where class is still important but operating in a post-industrial context things are a good deal more uncertain than they were in 1973.

The question of whatever became of Bob Ferris and Terry Collier has been speculated about over the years, with the question re-emerging on a regular basis. Alas plans for any kind of update or follow up on the characters situations were never to

be after the actors Rodney Bewes and James Bolam who played Bob and Terry fell out during the filming of the likely lads feature film in 1976 and never spoke again. Any possibility of a reconciliation and revival was finally ended with Rodney Bewes death in 2017.

Clement and La Frenais have responded to the question of what might have become of the characters their replies have been plausible but ambiguous along the lines that Bob Ferris started his own business and went bankrupt in the 1980's whilst Terry Collier became a millionaire scrap metal dealer…or got a vast compensation pay out after being involved in an accident.

In a 2019 La Frenais in an interview with the Times explained that,

"Through no fault of his own but circumstances, in post-Thatcher Britain... [Bob's] business ran into financial difficulties so it was a real struggle. After all those years of wanting to upgrade, Bob is forced to downgrade and retire". Whereas, Terry was involved in a serious car crash that ended up being lucrative for him.

"Probably he drank a bit, he was probably coming back from a race meeting, and he scored an enormous amount of money." (The Times 18/03/2019)[1].

What exactly happened to Bob and Terry the characters is of course something we will never really be sure of. In these interviews I always get the impression that the writers are really just humoring those answering the question, Clement and La Frenais moved on from the Likely Lads over 40 years ago and a lot of water has flowed down the Tyne since then. However, It is interesting that Bob's story is very similar to the of Dennis Patterson who was one of the main characters in Clement and La Frenais highly successful 1980's series "Auf wiedersehen pet (Clement and La Frenais, 1983)". In the series about unemployed building workers from the North East traveling to Germany to find work Dennis is introduced as having lost his own building firm to bankruptcy.

What is of more interest to a social scientist like myself is what happened to the "real" people, the parts of the population which Bob and Terry were meant to represent? Again, it is possible to construct possible life trajectories based upon the situations they found themselves in in 1973/74. As skilled workers both of them would have been courted by Thatcherism indeed successfully securing the votes of what were then known as C1 (skilled manual workers) was central to the Thatcherite project. This cohort are in many ways pivotal as they are the group which voted for the Conservatives under Margret Thatcher between 1979 and 1987 this period of course marked the end of the Post War consensus, and its replacement with neo liberal approaches to economic and social policy.

If I look at my parents fortunes in the 1980's they changed through that decade, it began well with my father having risen to be a senior project manager with a major engineering company. We moved from outer London further into the Home Counties with my parents taking out a far larger mortgage to finance the move. At the time such moves were encouraged by a government

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[1]The Times. What did happen to the Likely Lads? Now we know (accessed March 18, 2019).

tax break provided by the Miras (Mortgage interest relief at source) scheme. However, the trajectory of upward mobility which my parents had been on all their adult life began to falter and stall for them by the mid-eighties. The recession of the early eighties hit engineering particularly hard and my dad was made redundant, fortunately he found work quickly but then moved through a succession of similar jobs. None however represented advancement on the career ladder or brought in a higher income. Interest rates also rose dramatically in the late 1980's and what had been a large but manageable mortgage became increasingly uncomfortable. This was not a disaster by any stretch but it was clearly to my father in particular a disappointment. So in many ways my father's experience was similar to the fate Clement and La Frenais described for Bob in the 1980's, not in terms of bankruptcy but certainly, he became increasingly disillusioned and disappointed.

My father was however heartened by the fact that I went off to do a degree in 1989, the first in my immediate family to do so, although he would not live to see me receive it. Its completion was only possible to the fact that I benefitted from the local authority paying my tuition fees and the fact that I received a maintenance grant to cover my living expenses. The gains then of my parents' generation coupled with parts of the state structure that had promoted social mobility allowed me to consolidate the gains that they had made.

It is worth asking whether these characters and their situations would still be of interest to social scientists. It can be argued that questions about class have increasingly become focussed on the margins and extremes. Rather than social class, social exclusion and the processes that cause it came to the fore. This is of course to a degree understandable given the changing economic background throughout the last fifty years. It can be argued that an interest in those marginalized by de- industrialization in times of rising affluence such as Smith (2005) book "On the margins of inclusion" rightly seeks to understand the processes that meant that many communities had been left behind whilst those around them were enjoying higher living standards than ever before. The 2008 financial crash and the ensuing rush toward neo-liberal austerity has rightly kept the spotlight upon those most marginalized by the draconian cuts in public spending and a remodeled and an increasingly punitive benefits system has meant that ethnographies of lives on the margins such as those by McKenzie (2015) and Garthwaite (2016) have rightly been at the center of sociological debates about class. Sitcom's changed to of course to reflect the times, they had different preoccupations and treated class very differently to WHTTLL. As I have already mentioned Clement and La Frenais' "Auf wiedersehen pet" reflected the reality of mass unemployment in the North East in the early 1980's. While "Shameless" (Abbot, 2004) which ran from 2004 to 2013 was based around life on a fictional Manchester "sink" estate. But Bob and Terry were never on the margins and this is what gave then their appeal to a great extent. Instead they have much more in common with what Byrne (2005b) has called the "missing middle" within his article he also cites the first time owner occupiers of Ingleby Barwick as being important but neglected by those of us trying to understand contemporary class.

Bob and Thelma Ferris are still very much with us then but in a modified form. The social mobility which had led to Bob and Thelma's move to the "Elm lodge housing estate" can be argued to have arisen as part of a collective social endeavor, the post war welfare state and its associated economic policies. The opportunities were made available and the likes of Bob were able to take them.

It can be argued that those who are buying homes at Ingleby Barwick studied by McEwan today are doing so for similar reasons but in different circumstances. Average house prices on Ingleby Barwick are relatively modest compared to other parts of the country, the property site Zoopla gave an average house price of £205,000 for the estate and £235,000 for detached properties[2]. However, it is unlikely that household mortgages for these properties equal 2.5 × annual income as would have been the case for Bob and Thelma. Also a dual household income is essential for today's Ingleby Barwick resident. It can also be argued that things are much more precarious. Yes it is much easier to obtain loans and credit, all will have one if not two cars financed by a personal credit plan (PCP) on the drive but they are much more likely to be employed insecurely. They are also likely to be carrying levels of debt that would have been incomprehensible to their contemporaries from 1973 in terms of both scale and type, for example student loans. This is a social mobility upon which the responsibility and risk is placed upon the shoulders of individual citizens. The big difference between the lives of those buying their first homes on Ingleby Barwick and the fictional residents of the Elm Lodge housing estate is that theirs is a much more precarious mobility which could be reversed very quickly as a consequence of higher interest rates or sudden job loss.

Precarity then it seems has become a fact of life, a new context within which both the "left behind" and the aspirational are forced to try and operate within and which shapes the biographies of individuals and the places which they live in. Due to this there is then a diminished ability for individuals to change their own circumstances due to the lack of a secure economic foundation upon which to build. Consequently, the social mobility which was possible for those from working class backgrounds in the post war decades has declined.

Social mobility is a critically important aspect of society. The post war consensus contained within it, an acceptance and understanding that if you don't give people opportunities then they can't take them. It was also accepted that this would be beneficial not just for the individuals who managed to "get on" but for society in general. Therefore, the state became an agent and sponsor of social mobility.

There has in recent times been attempts to ask the question "Whatever happened to social mobility?" The former Labor cabinet Minister Alan Milburn was appointed in 2010 by the Tory/Liberal Coalition Government to chair a Commission on Social Mobility which eventually reported in 2017 it reflected on the efforts made by governments of all political persuasions between 1997 and 2017 and conclude that,

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[2]Zoopla – House prices in Ingleby Barwick (06/03/2020). Available online at: https://www.zoopla.co.uk/house-prices/ingleby-barwick/.

"successive governments have failed to make social mobility the cornerstone of domestic policy. Over two decades efforts have waxed and waned. They been piecemeal rather than holistic. All too often they have relied on the tenacity and commitment of individual Ministers rather than being a core objective and shared mission for all Ministers, including Prime Ministers. The social mobility agenda has tended to be skewed toward children and the education system with too little emphasis on young adults and the labor market. There has been no overall long term plan for change" (Social Mobility Commission, 2017, p. 5).

I would argue that the reduction of opportunities has been largely due to a combination of neo liberal ideology which did not believe the state should sponsor social mobility directly, i.e., there has been no long term plan because there was no belief in planning and importantly industrial decline. The issue has been further complicated because the process of industrial decline has not been uniform with many regions of the country suffering disproportionately. As has already been stressed, the biographies of individuals are intertwined with the biographies of the places they inhabit. So the consequences for those living in the North East and other old industrial regions have been much greater than in other parts of the country. The North South divide may have been evident culturally in the early 1970's but it did not become an economic fact until the 1980's.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion then it can be argued that there is an underlying, taken for granted assumption within WHTTLL that the social progress and mobility that had occurred in post war Britain was something that was permanent and irreversible. This new world of social possibilities was mirrored by a changing world in which the physical Victorian nineteenth world that had produced traditional class relations was being demolished and replaced with a new one based on modernization.

However, it also failed to see what the effect would be of abandoning a mixed economic model within which the government underwrote minimum levels of employment and income would be. Also how quickly seemingly permanent improvements could be reversed. But of course why should a sitcom consider such matters? They are there to entertain, but of course to be popular and successful they must represent lived experience to some extent. In the final episode of the second series of WHTTLL "The shape of things to come." Terry's great

Uncle Jacob dies, no one in the Collier family has a good word to say about him. Bob and Terry reminisce about him, but unsurprisingly the discussion turns back to the present and they resume their usual "residual" and "emergent" roles.

Terry: "I'm working class like he was and proud of it if that's what you mean!"

Bob: "So am I!"

Terry: "Get away! You used to be!

Bob: "I'm no less working class than you! We went to the same school, grew up on the same streets, and lived in the same drafty houses. But that was in my past, you still like to live like that. You like the old working class struggle against the odds. What you don't realize is that some of us have won the struggle, and it's nothing to be ashamed of!

Almost five decades on what looked like cynicism on Terry's part looks rather more measured and in hindsight it is Bob who can be accused of being naively optimistic.

So what has changed? The central question in WHTTLL was about the impact of economic and social change and the mobility it brought upon class status and relationships. Half a century on such concerns, whilst they are still present have faded into the background. Instead the central issues are about whether social mobility is still possible and if so on what basis? Savage (2011) in a report for the Resolution Foundation found that while intergenerational mobility (the extent to which your parents determine your life chances) has remained stubbornly steady, but intragenerational mobility (the extent to which people can climb the earnings ladder within their own lifetime) has shown some improvement.

"Our analysis shows that an individual's earnings at 40 were less closely tied to his or her earnings at 30 in the 2000s than in the 1990s, indicating an improvement in relative mobility. This challenges the generally held view informed by analyses of intergenerational income mobility that social mobility in Britain has stalled" (Savage, 2011, p. 24).

So it seems that if social mobility is possible and that Bob and Thelma Ferris's equivalents are out there any mobility they experience will be much more precarious and difficult to negotiate than it once appeared.

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SPECIFIC EPISODES OF "WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE LIKELY LADS" AND STREAMING LINKS

WHTLL Series one episode 4-"Moving on" https://youtu.be/1S3wXNAeeLE

WHTLL Series one episode 2-"Home is the Hero" https://youtu.be/IJ1u-APoWPg

WHTLL Series one episode 8 -"Guess who's coming to Dinner?" https://youtu.be/G_KJZJ6HDMQ

WHTLL Series two episode 13 -"The shape of things to come." https://youtu.be/Nwg7L3RHb48.

Drinking Carling Out of Stella Glasses: People and Place in the Missing Middle

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As trends of social and economic change allow precarity to inch into the lives of those who may have been more accustomed to security (Standing, 2011, 2014), this paper addresses the response of some young people who are caught "betwixt and between" in potentially liminal states (Turner, 1967). Those whose families have undertaken intra- or intergenerational social mobility and who have made a home in a place, Ingleby Barwick in Teesside, that seems to be of them and for them—an in-between place that is seen as "not quite" middle or working class. This paper draws data from a research project that adopted a qualitative phenomenological approach to uncover the meaning of experiences for participants. Methods included focus groups and semi-structured interviews through which 70 local people contributed their thoughts, hopes, concerns, and stories about their lives now and what they aspire to for the future. Places, such as the large private housing estate in the Northeast of England on which this research was carried out, make up significant sections of the UK population, yet tend to be understudied populations, often missed by a sociological gaze attracted to extremes. It was anticipated that in Ingleby Barwick, where social mobility allows access to this relatively exclusive estate, notions of individualism and deservingness that underlie meritocratic ideology (Mendick et al., 2015; Littler, 2018) would be significant, a supposition borne out in the findings. "Making it" to Ingleby was, and continues to be, indicative to many of meritocratic success, making it "a moral place for moral people" (McEwan, 2019). Consequently, the threat then posed by economic precarity, of restricting access to the transitions and lifestyles that create the "distinction" (Bourdieu, 1984) required to denote fit to this place, is noted to be very real in a place ironically marked by many outside it as fundamentally unreal.

Keywords: social change, social mobility, meritocracy, place, missing middle

INTRODUCTION

This paper presents and discusses the experiences of those who find themselves in the "missing middle" of class analysis and sociology. Those who "drink Carling out of Stella glasses," as a participant shared, when attempting to describe a middling (or inauthentic) status of place and people. Drawing together concepts of the "missing middle," meritocracy, and social mobility, which interact, overlay, and obfuscate class (dis)advantage in the "borderlands" between the traditional working and middle classes, this article presents analysis from an empirical research project asking the following questions:

What is it like being in the missing middle? How secure is the status? What, ultimately, does this mean for people's understanding of fairness, choice, and advantage? Specifically, these questions are asked of a population in a place where "middling" dispositions appear to manifest largesse, seemingly built in to a private housing estate designed to be intentionally different from working-class neighborhoods.

Liminality is an anthropological concept that describes a "betwixt and between" status. Specifically, it denotes progressing through the in-between stage of a rite of passage, when one has ceased to be who/what one once was yet has not completed the full transition into who/what one will go on to be (Turner, 1967). Given this, liminality is not used in its strictest sense here (a temporary situation in which, should the progression halt, the person instead becomes "marginalized"), but rather, it is adopted to refer more generally to being "betwixt and between," offering a temporal and spatial notion for explaining in-betweenness. That said, feelings of not quite belonging on either side for intragenerational social mobility and how this may relate to the marginalization of those who are unsuccessful in social mobility is interesting nonetheless and would warrant further investigation.

The concept of the "missing middle" used herein has two similar but discrete meanings, alluding to both sociological analysis and social class stratification. For the former, it refers to an in-between status, between working and middle class, in which people feel themselves to be not quite fully one or the other oftentimes because of the accumulation (or not) of resources or due to inter-/intragenerational mobility and associated class cultural legacy. For the latter, it refers to claims of an apparent lack of sociological analysis of those in the middle of UK society by a discipline attracted to extremes (Byrne, 2005). As class has returned to the forefront of sociological analysis, it is hoped this contribution adds to the continued growth of "middling" sociology.

Class location is perhaps most messy for those on the borders of "traditional" class categories. Social positioning blurs as people move over the working–middle class boundary, backward and forward, taking up characteristics of both sides. Consequently, this is what Tyler (2015) describes as Bourdieu's "classificatory struggles" most often on display, when people and groups work intensely to maintain the boundaries between "them" and "us." For those in the working–middle class border territories (geographically and sociologically), the power, privilege, self, and identity resources available are muddled. Bradley and Waller (2018) note their use of the "muddle in the middle" category for their group of participants who were not easily placed in traditional middle- or working-class groupings. This missing middle, of status and investigation, are those who live in between and were often underrepresented in research and writing before the 2010s, yet the ordinary and unspectacular make up much of the UK population (Byrne, 2005; Roberts K., 2013; Roberts S., 2013).

This paper recognizes class as existing through "base" and "superstructure," which shape and form one another (Williams, 1973). Further, as explained by McGuigan and Moran (2014, p. 175–178), drawing on William's "notion of culture that

[…] we must analyse ideas, values and cultural forms in the social conditions of their production and circulation" and his argument "against the logic of concrete spheres and to focus on constitutive human activities." Multiplicity and interrelatedness are key concepts that underpin the analysis and the stance taken by the author throughout. Furthermore, the argument developed herein draws on Tyler (2008, 2013, 2015) assertions that we recognize ourselves as who we are and our "fit" for place through what we *are not* as much as what *we are* and that actions are undertaken to create this "distinction." The working classes, Bourdieu (1984) states, provide a negative reference point from which the dominant middle classes can define their cultural practices. Similarly, those who attempt upward social mobility face multiple accusations of pretentiousness and "getting above themselves" with many idioms deployed by locals (in this research and elsewhere) about the upwardly mobile working class, including "10 bob snobs" and "all fur coat, no knickers" (Lawler, 1999; Skeggs, 2004).

Although Bourdieu (1984, 1990) can be accused of underplaying some of the fundamental economic principles that underlie class, his work, particularly in *Distinction*, allows for investigation of the lived experiences of class in this "middling" research field, in which significant economic resources were rarely discussed as inherited (aside from hopes to provide this for subsequent generations through mortgaged property eventually acquired as capital). Furthermore, although an external labor market outside of their control was noted by participants to exist, it would be equally "explained away" with various ideas of agency frequently elevated above this structural constraint. Bourdieu's (1984. p. 56) states, "Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier." In the research interviews, people spoke of class, value (Skeggs, 1997, 2004, 2011, 2016), and deservingness in multiple ways. As such, Bourdieu's classificatory concepts offer a strong tool for analysis.

The research project from which this paper draws data rests on the assumption that the representation of the place, Ingleby Barwick, and the people who live there are a co-creation of those on both the inside and outside (Ritzer, 2003; Hodkinson, 2005). Bourdieu (1997), Bourdieu's (1984) theories of practice were guiding theories; he devoted much of his work, Ritzer (2003) claims, to building a bridge between structuralism and constructivism, demonstrating that objective and subjective structures are different yet operate in a dialectic relationship, influencing one another. Identifying these dialectic relationships is pertinent in a culture that often asserts the dominance of agency over structural inequality. Demonstrable in many forms, it is recognizable most recently, as Gill and Orgad (2018) explain, in the growth of language of agency and responsibility, currently visible in the increasing rhetoric of "resilience" that establishes this psychological resource as a limitless classless reserve when it is, in fact, primarily accessible to those who have multiple cultural and economic sources.

With access to economic resources in the missing middle most often predicated on employment income (rather than capital), any disruptions to that income stream could attract serious consequences. Therefore, should economic precarity be returning in new form, as Standing (2011, 2014) suggests,

it is assumed this population would feel the consequences, be it in a direct and immediate financial sense or through heightened anxiety that they are vulnerable and exposed to risk. In a time when neo-liberal meritocratic ideologies, which push public accountability onto private individuals (Byrne, 1997, 2005; Littler, 2018), appear to be dominant streams of thought, it was presumed that this may be an essential element of the stories participants tell to make sense of their lived experiences.

It is important to investigate these life experiences and judgments (for Bourdieu, 1984, "classifiers" through "tastes") as ideas of social mobility, meritocracy, deservingness, and value that underwrite UK politics and society. An individual's value, Skeggs (1997, 2004) states, is demonstrably linked to class status, and although class may not often be directly spoken, it is, nonetheless, objectively apparent in both occupation and where someone is consequently placed in a hierarchical structure. Research, therefore, is required into the motivations and meanings of the stratifications of the population that make up the "missing middle." Those who reside in the class boundary land "betwixt and between" the higher working and the lower middle classes, predominantly where upward and downward social mobility takes place. Research such as this allows for interrogation of the lived experiences of (re)production of social divisions and inequalities and, as such, sheds light on the tensions and motivations that underlie people's "choices."

Pakulski and Walters (1996) famously declared the death of class in the late 1990s in what was oft-claimed then to be a post-modern world (Beck, 1992). Indeed, then Labor UK Prime Minister Blair (1999) subsequently declared the class war to be over. Based on an ideology of aspiration, New Labor rhetoric, informed by the work of sociologist Giddens (1991), focused on the "responsibilities" of citizens, reducing the responsibility of the state to correct against capitalism. Pikkety (2014) demonstrates that inequalities have grown vastly since this period. The ideology that championed property ownership for "all" and widened opportunities to allow "all" to attend university has neither undone class (dis)advantage nor dismantled boundaries. The propulsion of class analysis and debate back onto the public and academic agenda on which this paper builds is enthusiastically welcomed by Skeggs (2014) as allowing the opportunity to discuss the structural opportunities and restrictions that are brought to bear on lives and to challenge the language used to deny class (dis)advantage.

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research project data from which this paper draws was designed to take a phenomenological and inductive approach to recognize the meaning of experiences for participants. The original research proposal was to investigate young people's responses to what Standing (2011, 2014) claims to be changing socioeconomic times. It set out to do that through answering an earlier challenge from Byrne (2005), who asked about the lives of people, young and old, who lived in a suburban place on Teesside. A place such as this, Byrne (2005) states, appeared

confused and confusing in class status, and furthermore, places such as this made up significant sections of the UK population yet appeared often to be missed by a sociological gaze attracted to extremes. Consequently, these challenges were drawn together and intergenerational interviews undertaken to investigate how those in the "missing middle" explained life transitions (housing, family, education, and employment) they had taken (or were still to take).

The Teesside Studies have a strong vestige of youth transition research within local marginalized and excluded communities (see Webster et al., 2004; MacDonald and Marsh, 2005; MacDonald et al., 2005; MacDonald and Shildrick, 2007; Shildrick and MacDonald, 2013). Understanding neighboring young people's lives through transition is, therefore, in keeping with this legacy. There is a longer legacy of sociological investigation in Teesside into both place and work. Lady Bell's *At the Works* (Bell, 1907) describes the poor conditions of early industrial workers and their families who lived at the local capital's beck and call in Middlesbrough in the late 1800s. The history of place, people, and work in Teesside weave together to shape a "biography of the place" (Warren and Garthwaite, 2014; Warren, 2017) that shapes the lived experiences of those who reside therein. Following this, place held a prominent position in the research conceptualization and analysis as an active agent, its "biography" recognized as influencing and shaping the lives and choices of the participants.

One of the most prominent debates in current youth research, be it from a transitional, cultural, or social generation approach, is the argument of continuity and change: Researchers are asking whether life is quantifiably and/or qualitatively different for young people today compared to previous generations. Furthermore, youth transitions researchers debate whether "precarity" is simply a return to difficulties experienced by earlier generations or whether the features of current precarity are so unique that young people's transitions are demonstrably different and disrupted (MacDonald, 2011). To account for this, the research was designed to interview generations within families as much as possible. Although young people are the primary focus of this research, parents were also invited to discuss their transitions to allow for consideration of potential parallels or differences.

Silverman (2014, p. 39) states that "the facts we find in 'the field' never speak for themselves but are impregnated by our assumptions." In a contested place, such as Ingleby, where the nature of its meaning is claimed to be manufactured by residents from those on the outside, the ontological and epistemological position taken must be clear. Subsequently, this research adopts a somewhat nuanced approach, taking a variant of a "realist" approach, perhaps most close to "subtle realism," which would assert that "an external reality exists but is only known through the human mind and socially constructed meanings" (Ormston et al., 2014, p. 5). Further, Ormston et al. go on to point out that "when so-called inductive researchers generate and interpret their data, they cannot do this with a blank mind" (Ormston et al., 2014). Subsequently, the author does not claim the research to be an entirely inductive analysis: the author knows the research field, is from the wider area, and knew many of the nicknames

and ideas of place long before this research was undertaken as well as holding the author's own feelings, ideas, and assumptions about social class in contemporary Britain.

Bourdieu's (1984) theory of habitus, how he manages the interplay of the structure and agency dichotomy, is a fundamental theoretical basis of this research, and it is woven into the fabric of the research design, practice, and analysis. Dean (2017, p. 30, emphasis in original) explains the mathematical-style equation that Bourdieu (1984, p. 95) himself used, albeit he states he was not overly keen on how it simplified the position: "(Habitus × Capital) + Field = Practice [t]o break it down, we can see as (Who we are × What we've got) + Where we are = What we do." This is useful as a clear underlying premise of the research, and also, Dean (2017) relates this to reflexivity in research: "(Personal biography/position x Research skills/resources) + Site = Research practice." Research, Dean (2017, p. 8) demonstrates, is similarly an interplay of a person's own biography, social position, social cultural and economic resources, and the research field: "Reflexivity is the way we analyse our positionality, the conditions of a given social situation [. . .] it is an exploration of the researcher's own place within the many contexts, power structures, and identities and subjectivities of the viewpoint." As noted, the author knew this place as a local and, for full disclosure and positionality, would "move up" there.

Much as the author could not lay claim to an entirely inductive approach due to positionality, it was agreed during the ethics process to not anonymize the place discussed within the research: "Ingleby Barwick" in Teesside in Northeast England. This decision was based on the understanding that the explanations of this place and its relation to its wider locality required to give meaning to the findings would have easily given it away. In which case, any attempts at (or claims to) anonymity would be misleading. That said, to protect participants, all were given pseudonyms and minor changes made to identifying characteristics to protect confidentiality.

Fieldwork took place between 2015 and 2017, starting with focus groups, which took place at a local FE college, a local sixth-form center, and a youth center in Ingleby. From these, the framing and approach of the semi-structured interviews were devised. To understand youth transitions, how, what, where, when, and why forms of questioning are required. Participants were asked to talk through major transition stages (school to FE/HE, employment, housing, familial), be that looking backward, discussing current events, or projecting forward. Each interview was between 45 and 75 min and was individual or in a small familial group. The "corrections" and questioning of participants by other participants in real time that arose in the group interviews were of huge interest and added a richness to the responses. Overall, some 70 people contributed to the research, recruited through gatekeepers, the researcher's local connections, engaging with residents in community spaces (real and virtual), and snowball sampling. Informal interactions and conversations were written up as field notes, and stakeholder interviews took place with community members such as estate agents, retail managers, and local politicians.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim before qualitative data was analyzed following thematic analysis,

searching for patterns and "instances" (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). The emerging themes indicate an uncertainty or insecurity that demonstrated aspects of what Turner (1967) might explain as liminality, an in-betweenness, in four discrete areas that ranged from macro to micro: precarity as a consequence of larger economic and societal forces, an unsure class position or status, an ambiguity of place, and the uncertainty that can arise when undergoing transition from youth to adulthood. Subthemes were then identified under these overarching themes, noting how these elements played out individually and wove together. The analysis drew a complex and layered picture of people with varying resources across the main themes. It is suggests that none can be entirely understood without the other, and all underpin the lives and experiences of the families interviewed.

CONTEXT: THE IMPORTANCE OF (THIS) PLACE

Ingleby Barwick

Although it has existed as a settlement and township in various guises over thousands of years, Ingleby Barwick began its current incarnation in the late 1970s when development started on a large private housing estate on a disused Thornaby airfield. It has been continuously built on by numerous housing developers since that time, growing over several farms. Locals share with hubris and horror that Ingleby was once the largest private housing estate in Europe, apparently losing the title to a German estate. Although it was not possible to corroborate this, it is a local tale commonly (re)told as a matter of fact.

Ingleby is situated in Stockton-on-Tees Borough in the Northeast of England, an area that falls within "Teesside," a legacy place name taken from a local authority district in the late 1960s and early 1970s that encompassed the industrial towns situated around the River Tees. The original development was based on the creation of multiple "villages" that would make up a larger whole. Six "villages" have been built consecutively, the most recent addition is The Rings, currently viewed as the most desirable location to live according to a local estate agent, who shared that clients most often would prefer a smaller property on The Rings over a larger property in an older village at the same price. Many others move within the estate itself, taking part (intentionally or not) in an internal social mobility process. The estate is increasingly self-contained and hosts six primary schools, two secondary schools, general practice surgeries, dentists, vets, supermarkets, takeaway outlets, hardware stores, newsagents, funeral directors, estate agents, hairdressers, beauticians, churches, pubs, a golf course, and both a public and a private gym (the first Duncan Bannatyne, a famous Scottish entrepreneur whose surname is now synonymous with a chain of gyms and hotels, opened back in 1997).

During the time of the fieldwork, most house sales in Ingleby Barwick were detached properties that sold for an average of £228,411. The overall average price for a house in Ingleby in 2016 was £205,673. Comparing this with neighboring areas, this is nearly double the average for predominantly working-class Thornaby, which stood at £114,241, yet is significantly cheaper

than Yarm, a predominantly established middle-class area where the average was £241,013. The average wage in Stockton on Tees in 2015 was £25,200 (Manpower, 2016), significantly higher than other locales in Teesside, with Middlesbrough's average £19,600. Given these salaries, it would likely take an above-average salary for Teesside in a double-income household with a significant deposit to be able to purchase a property here.

Ingleby is described as a "*nice*" place, a "*clean*" place, and a "*quiet*" place; these are fundamentally important words that were repeatedly used by participants. Such assertions were often employed when attempting to demarcate this place from other local working-class areas, those that still appeared stained by their industrial heritage. Ingleby feels demonstrably post-industrial; none of the local industrial works on which Teesside grew rich are easily visible on the skyline as they often are in parts of neighboring towns. This is analogous with the white-collar nature of the employment of many of the residents. A further frequently used description is that Ingleby is a "*neat*" place, as in tidy, and it is indeed highly ordered with planning restrictions on front fences and networks of connecting paths and street layouts. This sense of orderliness, alongside notions of safety, which arose from such discipline of people and place, is demonstrably appealing to many residents.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Liminality is an anthropological concept, first introduced by Van Gennep (1961) but made most famous by Turner (1967). It refers to an in-between stage of a rite of passage, wherein initiates cease to be who they once were yet have not become who they will go on to be. Liminality is about transition, it is about change, and it is also about ambiguity. I suggest that the uncertainty of living through precarious economic times while in a liminal status position through being indeterminately classed in position and place in addition to living through a liminal stage of life, the youth phase, generates insecurity. Liminality is useful for recognizing the concept of the "missing middle" in class stratification and as such for understanding that life experiences do not fall neatly into order and disorder or people themselves into clear classifications (Thomassen, 2015). The concept of liminality, in which people and places are betwixt and between, offers a spatial and temporal way of thinking about boundaries and thresholds, how and where individuals are located within society, and how they recreate structure. Such an idea offers a useful tool for thinking about youth transitions alongside other transitional states, such as new spaces and places and time periods as well as experiences of social mobility. The argument presented here is that young people in Ingleby are subject to four levels of "liminality," or transition, and that this impacts, interacts with, and informs their "choices" and sense of value and being.

These levels of liminality range from macro to micro in scale and can be experienced and understood objectively and subjectively. They are, first, the phenomenon of precarity; this is manifest on social and individual levels and is in regard to tangible change in notions of security and stability, a consequence of late capitalism. Second is class in the middle; for those in the higher stratifications of the working class and the lower stratifications of the middle class, there is much internal

mobility alongside apparent confusion and hybridity in terms of status, identity, and access to economic resources. Third, place and its meaning and purpose is in active construction in a new estate that appears to offer itself as a post-industrial place for a post-industrial people. The final phase is the youth phase of life itself, in which young people undertake multiple transitions in education, employment, housing, and family. These levels of liminality are claimed herein to be inextricably linked, each crucial for understanding the impact of the other.

The following draws on data from all four themes, which became "levels," to attempt to demonstrate the multiple ways that tensions across the levels pulled against each other or could be collectively mobilized to manage uncertainty. Place was often a leading level; it was found that the place Ingleby presented a means of creating distinction that was well-recognized inside and outside of the estate. Therefore, even those who distanced themselves from such cultural practices were nonetheless aware of them and their use. Importantly, although they may not have agreed on the meaning and extent, all participants felt conditions were different intergenerationally and principally agreed that younger people faced different structural (dis)advantages when making housing, education, and employment transitions. In discussion, these structural circumstances were often mediated through ideas of individualism and cultural practices (Bourdieu, 1984, 1990) tied to deservingness and difference. This paper builds on earlier work in which the author suggests these beliefs and practices are drawn together into the creation of a "moral place for moral people" (McEwan, 2019). The geography matters, and it is demonstrably and actively mobilized by insiders and outsiders for the mapping of social class and stratification (Wills, 2008).

THE (UN)REAL

Participants in the interviews often appeared to avoid provoking forms of class shame and stigma (Jensen and Tyler, 2015) attracted from being perceived to be middle or working class by establishing a "middling" position. Ingram (2011), using Bourdieu's concept of habitus, describes a "third space" for the socially mobile, outside of the working- or middle-class habitus, which can be created through a "habitus tug." Similarly, Abrahams and Ingram (2013, p. 145) explain that, by being forced into a new field, a person is made to consider not only "what is novel in that space," but that it also "creates a new lens to look at where [they] have come from." In this research, when explaining their class positioning in interviews, participants often drew together what they saw as the "best bits" of working- and middle-class characteristics to create this middling status, those that most closely allied with meritocratic ideas of choice and deservingness. This practice appeared to offer them a strong basis for positive conceptualization of self and for societal participation yet also attracted accusations of inauthenticity.

It was Brent (26) who perhaps most neatly brought together these ideas of the (un)real, drawing together what I would suggest as multiple layers of liminal in-betweenness of class, place, and people:

Kathryn: *"Do you think they [people from Yarm] look down on people in Ingleby?"*

Brent: *"Probably yeah, the thing is though I can understand why, everyone is financed up to death, everyone has all these houses and flash cars, and they are all just drinking Carling* out of Stella glasses and stuff."*

Kathryn: *"If you had to say what class people on Ingleby are what would you say?"*

Brent: *"If there was a class between lower and middle I would put them in there, cos I think a lot of people think they are middle class on Ingleby, but I would say they are in between, because the housing and that they probably are middle class, but their personalities, really friendly, I would associate that with lower class people. Like if it was a Venn diagram thing, I would put them in the middle of it."*

*Carling and Stella Artois are both brands of lager sold in the UK. In a major supermarket in England at the time of writing 10 × 440 ml cans have only have a £1 difference in price (both under £10). Marketing is consistently different for these brands. Stella is advertised as a continental product and used the slogan "reassuring expensive" from 1982 until 2007, and Carling advertising is focused on football, pubs, and "banter."

BIT OF BOTH

Rebekah's (22) parents, she shared, told her she was on the *"boundary"* of middle and upper, and this boundary concept was also referred to by Annie (52), who described her class as *"borderline working-middle class."* Richard (55) used language that described his position in a physical manner; he might be *"leaning"* toward the middle class, he said, but he would not define himself as such, his feet seemingly rooted in their working-class preposition. Over his interview, Richard frequently used the history, geography, and class embodiment practices that Emery (2019) suggests as a useful mode of analysis for deindustrialization and class.

Such forms of intermediate positioning were often discussed as a consequence of familial amalgamation, so parents or grandparents of differing class status and backgrounds were blended to create an intermediate or liminal transitional position through that heritage mix. Warren (18) describes,

> *"My stepdad has come from a very working-class family, my mum a more upper-middle-class family, and now she is a very happy medium almost"* (Warren, 18).

Jonny (21) and Francesca (25), brother and sister, describe a similar circumstance although one that also includes the important reflection of what this means for them intergenerationally. When I asked them what they thought their class status was, they answered,

> Francesca: *"How many different ones are we going for? As I wouldn't say we were quite middle class, but I wouldn't say we were working either. Probably lower middle class."*
>
> Jonny: *"I would say working class for me."*
>
> Francesca: *"It depends on what you say by working class though cos for me, some people have opinions of the working class as those you see every day that go into the benefits office. I have heard it

called in the Daily Mail the non-working class. A lot of people have an opinion of them as being the working class, and I don't, wouldn't consider myself that, not that there is anything wrong with it, but I don't think we are quite middle class, like your Middleton type family people, we are not up there."*
>
> Jonny: *"I don't know because I go to work, I am on minimum wage and stuff, like I don't know, I don't know what the definition of a working-class person is, but I think I don't have my own house yet, I don't really have a lot."*
>
> Francesca: *"Alright, well take it as us as a family as a whole, so me, you, mum, Mike..."*
>
> Jonny: [unsure tone] *"working middle?"*
>
> Francesca: *"Yeah, that is what I mean, so in-between, not quite middle class not quite working class, so I would put us in between."*

Jonny and Francesca were both in working-class occupations, yet their parents were both senior managers with high salaries. Francesca believed that she and her brother would do well-over time, so their current occupations were not reflective of who and where they were in a bigger sense; she would "work her way up" as her parents did.

VIRTUE

Social mobility and fluidity have been presented to the UK public as an unquestionable good, purported to offer individuals the opportunity to fulfill their potential, and as such, to "better" themselves (Bukodi et al., 2015; Friedman, 2016). Such ideas are determined in government policy through a non-departmental public body named since 2016 as the Social Mobility Commission, previously the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission in the period 2012–2016 and before that in the period 2010–2012 as the Child Poverty Commission. Allied to the meritocratic model, it is suggested that this ensures those who hold the top positions in society do so as they have the right skills, not just the right parents, and as such appears (on the surface at least) to be both socially just and economically efficient (Cabinet Office, 2009, 2012).

However, the social mobility project has been demonstrably unsuccessful on many counts. A 2017 Social Mobility Commission report, *Time for Change: An Assessment of Government Policies on Social Mobility 1997–2017,* found that, after 20 years of policies to attempt to support social mobility, young people's wages had fallen by 16% since 2008, sitting below 1997 levels in real terms; that more new apprenticeships had gone to older workers than younger; and that graduate outcomes for disadvantaged students had demonstrated only very minor improvement over the period. Indeed, by the time of the sixth State of the Nation report by the Social Mobility Commission (2019, p. 2), the foreword states it "lays bare the stark fact that social mobility has stagnated over the last 4 years at virtually all stages from birth to work."

Whether it is objectively achievable or not, implicit in the idea of social mobility is a social hierarchy of value; it implies that those left behind, or who a person was before they undertook upward mobility, was deficient or less valuable (Lawler, 1999; Skeggs, 2004). The interview findings reflect these ideas; structural inequality is rarely referred to, and instead, most

inequalities are individualized and/or pathologized. Although many held precarious class positionality and were in their current class locations through reliance on precarious resources, such as full-time stable employment income, mortgaged homes, or financed lifestyles that could easily be lost in an economic downturn, the sentiment behind many interviews was that the "deserving" could and would rise out of the lower stratum of the working class. Lipsey (2014, p. 37) suggests meritocracy, the ideological idiom of socially mobility, to be a toxic ideal: offering "equality of opportunity [. . .] combined with gross inequality of outcome, is the worst possible recipe for a harmonious society." However, social mobility was almost universally welcomed as a social good in the interviews, albeit as a personalized burden.

Meritocracy is a fundamental element of neo-liberal ideology, making a virtue of the valor of striving (Shildrick et al., 2012), which subsequently leads to deservedness (Walkerdine, 2003). Should an individual fail to succeed in such a belief system, guilt is placed squarely at the individual's own feet. It was anticipated that, in Ingleby, where social mobility allows access to this relatively exclusive estate, that the notions of individualism and deservingness that underlie meritocratic ideology would demonstrate themselves to be significant, and this supposition was borne out in the findings. "Making it" to Ingleby was and continues to be indicative to many who live there and those who know this place locally of meritocratic success. However, the anti-pretentiousness (Lawler, 1999) doctrine of the working class remains in tension with the desirability of mobility.

CLASS TRICKERY OR A PRIZE WORTH WINNING?

Brent (26) had been successful in his career to date; he had secured a well-resourced apprenticeship and had recently been appointed to a well-paid permanent contract on completion. Now in skilled employment, having been a call center operative previously, it would be fair to say he had undertaken upward social mobility, yet the thought of making this change was not attractive to him in the way it was to Jonny and Francesca, and he described it as an unwanted fit:

> "I don't want to be associated with them people though. I like the lower class, they are more friendly, aren't they? They don't look down their nose at ya; you always find that people with nothing are always a lot friendlier, they are always happy to talk to you, have a laugh with you. Even just total random people waiting in the queue or whatever, but I don't think you get that with middle-class people, they keep themselves to themselves in public" (Brent, 26).

Undertaking social mobility seemed to be only genuine to many participants when it was undertaken intergenerationally, not intragenerationally. Such movement allowed time for a new habitus to form for the new generation as Richard (55) appeared to describe when he said it allowed the "*roots to fade.*" Emery (2019, p.3) notes that class includes "temporal processes of history and memory as well as geographical lineages." Richard's son Matt (22) seems to recognize these memory roots:

> "I think I consider myself more of a working class if it was just me, but with my parents, like the way they are, I think it's aiming more towards middle class if anything [. . .] I know my granddad on my dad's side is working class, [Cumbrian town] has always been a working town and a working-class place. So, I would say before he moved here my Dad would have been working class, but he has bettered himself by coming here" (Matt, 22).

Conspicuous consumption in this middling place and people was frequently remarked on by participants in the interviews. Rebekah (22) discussed being in the middle as a potential opportunity, which allowed for slightly higher economic resources that could be converted for use. However, she believed this did not translate into passing through a liminal or intermediate position or phase into a new genuine position and so undertaking a *complete* form of social mobility:

> "A hundred years ago, class was just money [...] whereas you can sort of trick people now, you can have a really nice car, and you can have a really nice house and all of this" (Rebekah, 22).

This class masking was also noted by Melissa (28), who had recently moved to Ingleby from a traditional working-class area and who described uncovering this class "trickery," where a middle-class habitus was being performed so apparently effortlessly it passed as "genuine" at first glance:

> "I spoke to a lady on the school playground, and I thought she was going to be a doctor or something and she said oh yeah I am a nail technician and I thought, what, I thought you were going to tell me you were a doctor, the way that some people act is that they put themselves a lot higher than other people" (Melissa, 28).

Alternatively, some do not even attempt this "mask." Brent (26) shared those using economic capital alone could not "pass" as having undertaken complete social mobility as they have not utilized all the capitals (Burke, 2015) required:

> Brent: "I mean look at some of the offshore lads, they earn a fortune, but they are thick, they are common, they are horrible, aren't they?"

This notion of incompleteness of identity and status, of the masquerade of one thing as another and the associated pitfalls, begs the question of whether class is indeed mutable (Byrne, 2005) and whether upward social mobility is a feasible or attractive goal for any individual. Symbolic capital is the total of Bourdieu's (1984), Bourdieu (1990) economic, social, and cultural capitals converted to power, but it requires external validation. Skeggs (2015) states that such power can ascribe value through its sights, shapes, and sounds; furthermore, she later explains (2016, p. 5) that value can be "structured by use (what we do) and exchange (the value that can be realized)." Therefore, an upwardly mobile population, such as Ingleby's, would not possess the full symbolic power to legitimate its value and undertake complete class transitions.

Skeggs (2016, p. 4) ties the establishment of the middle class to the 1832 Reform Act, which gave them political representation through private property ownership and

subsequent access to "the symbolic means for legitimation." Middle-class personhood requires multiple resources as well as individualism, governmentality, and the ability to command a moral authority. Furthermore, the middle-class protects its interests in this personhood through "processes of exclusion and legitimation, and through symbolic boundary marking" that delegitimates the working class (Skeggs, 2016, p.11). This produces a class divide that most on Ingleby would find impossible to traverse entirely and so plays an active part in the creation of a "betwixt and between" class position and stratification for those who have enough resources and power to leave much working-class exploitation and stigma behind them yet cannot fully enter the middle class.

JUST HOLDING ON

For all those who indicated this liminal and indeterminate class stratification or position as incomplete or some form of "class trick" or masquerade, the societal and familial pressure to undertake upward social mobility did not appear to be abated. Rebekah (22) explained she felt under pressure from her parents to continue, or at the least sustain, their attempts toward upward social mobility. Furthermore, as her grandmother resides in a far "less than" place, she feels this as a spur, reminding her that, if she does not work hard, she may have to face downward mobility and return to the original position of her father. In Ingleby, the geographical and economic proximity of those in a lower social class or even closer still in a lower stratification of the same class instigates what Ehrenreich (1989) characterized as a "fear of falling."

Class position is a mark of success and is felt to be mutable to Rebekah's family; they expect their daughter to do better again, she explained. Her parents hope for her to be "*upper class*" through maintaining the trajectory they started. Rebekah notes that most overwhelming is how much of the responsibility for this rested on her own shoulders; further social mobility is a project of herself by herself. This is all indicative of what Byrne (1997) calls a weak version of social exclusion, transferring public accountability onto private individuals. Moving up the class hierarchy and so completing successful upward social mobility appears to be seen by Rebekah's family as not only still possible, but that any failure to do so would be a failure in her and by her (McEwan, 2019).

At the same time, inequality, as experienced by differing access to economic resources, has an inevitable stranglehold on many attempts by young people to undertake their own upward social mobility or indeed to simply avoid downward mobility. Phoebe's (21) father held a middle-class well-remunerated position, but he had left the family home a year previously and had ceased providing any financial support to his family. Phoebe's mother, in a working-class occupation, was unable to sustain the family's position on her own, which had an inevitable impact on what financial resources were available for their daughter to compete effectively in the art world in which she had chosen to train. This precarity did not seem to be particularly unique to this family. Indeed, one participant explained that the 2008 financial crisis had triggered what felt like a "flag day" on the estate with many houses (which often rely on dual-income households) going up for sale subsequently as the fallout and austerity that followed restricted employment opportunities and wages.

Phoebe described cut-price folders to display her work and the problems with traveling to university on unreliable and expensive public transport. She recognized that this puts her at a disadvantage among her middle-class peers, yet still spoke as if this was within her control to correct: *"But as long as I work hard, I will get there; it doesn't bother me."* Although this may well be true in part, all the same, Phoebe frequently indicated individual and personal responsibility for the structural constraints she faces. This reflects the findings of Mendick et al. (2015) in their work on "aspirations," where the right mindset and "hard work" were seen to be able to overcome all and any obstacles regardless of evidence to the contrary being all around. Similarly, it's a critical element for Gill and Orgad's (2018) "bounce-backable" woman.

The only young person who was comfortable talking about historic structural constraints was Jay (27), who had experienced upward mobility to Ingleby before returning to a local working-class area at the end of a relationship. Jay's conceptualization of class reproduction accessed through parenting advantage was expressed as he recalled outcomes of his school friends:

> *"The kids whose parents had proper jobs, kids whose […] dads done real stuff, rather than just a job, like they had careers, kids whose parents had careers, they've all got careers now" (Jay, 27).*

"SOCIAL MAGIC"

It would appear that, although social mobility is accepted as an unquestionable good, in practice, this is rather about successful collation of resources that places people into an exalted stratification of the working class rather than moving people up into the middle class. Indeed, even if the resources had been available to manage the latter, which was unlikely, it was also resisted due to the stigma of anti-pretentiousness (Skeggs, 1997; Lawler, 1999). Even those who had undertaken the "hard work" and "aspired," earning a higher position, as Mendick et al. (2015) identified was expected of them were castigated as undertaking forms of class trickery. As with Melissa's nail technician, it is a rarity that the socially mobile can affect what Lawler (2013), employing a Bourdieusian concept, names "social magic," a naturalization of socially learned competencies, tastes, and dispositions of another class identity. Many are "caught out" in this untruth and reproached for attempts to cast themselves as not who they really are.

Ingram and Allen (2019, p. 729) use Lawler's (2013) social magic to explain how the hiring processes of some graduate recruiters conceal a desire for classed characteristics through transforming them "into 'objective' criteria, which naturalize privilege as earned and developed skills." These include "self-starter" and "entrepreneurialism," individualized traits that rarely account for the economic capitals required to underpin them. Notions of meritocracy and associated ideology made themselves apparent through all the interviews with differing levels of clarity.

A successful neo-liberal subject, Verdouw (2016) describes, takes on life as a project of self; they are almost wholly independent (outside of the family unit) and are personally responsible for their "choices," as such, they are dependent on agentic action to ensure success. Any (lack of) success in this conceptualization is entirely personal, no matter where one starts or the resources they have at hand. These ideas arose in Elizabeth and her son Joe's interviews:

> "Say if there is someone who lives in Pallister Park [working-class estate in Middlesbrough] who wants the same, to achieve the same things, as someone who lived in Wynyard [exclusive housing estate near Sedgefield], if they both want it, I don't see why they couldn't" (Joe, 25)
> "We had nothing, [spouse] and I. We didn't have great upbringings, we've done alright, it was just hard work, no handouts" (Elizabeth, 56).

Josh recognized things might be more difficult but saw these as hurdles rather than barriers:

> "if someone is from a lower background or a higher background, I think you can get the same goals, it might be harder, but I think if you persevere with what you are doing I do believe that anyone from anywhere can get what they want" (Josh, 22).

This belief, that the power of aspiration and intention can (and should) overcome all, ignores what Hanley (2016) describes as the quite rational judgments and behaviors of those working-class young people who do not "aspire" to "higher" levels of education and occupation. Many working-class young people are keenly aware of the low expectations of them from larger society and so act accordingly. Harrison and Waller (2018) explain that young people do indeed aspire, but they also grasp what is objectively available to them and so temper those aspirations accordingly. Similarly, Papafilippou and Bathmaker (2018) demonstrate the accrual of additional capital alongside the academic qualification required for successful education to employment transitions is often made possible through creation of "a strong possible career self." Built from the social psychology concept of Markus and Nurius (1986), this recognizes the concept of self as having an impact on future behavior given its grounding in a consistent self-belief in entitlement. The tension in expectations and possibilities in the "missing middle" could be acute, exposed to macro and micro precarity, and differing levels of resources.

STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

Although in an objectively relatively advantaged social group, Rebekah (22) explained her family had significant housing costs, which meant that, although they appeared "better off," the family had little disposable income. She was aware that many in her peer group at university received more through the student loan system as they came from lower income households and, alongside living with meritocratic ideas of individualism, she described being lost in the middle managing this:

> "I do feel like the middle amount of people are getting a bit disadvantaged, especially in the North East cos is you are relying on your parents, and they just don't have that money, then you are kind of stuck, and you can't get on and yet everyone is saying you need to get on, it is you that needs to do it, so you kind of feel a bit stuck" (Rebekah, 22).

The objective circumstances of young people's lives in the "missing middle" means they have access to finite resources with which to enact (or maintain) social mobility and so be able to achieve or sustain "middling" class positions. Furthermore, this was frequently "explained away" by notions of positive individualism, "resilience" (Gill and Orgad, 2018), and the valor of striving (Shildrick et al., 2012)—all of which were reminiscent of the language or meritocracy and neo-liberal ideology that obfuscating class (dis)advantage.

Macro conditions, including a poor labor market, high house prices, and high personal debt, are in a dialectical relationship with micro conditions enacted through individualized responsibility for public issues (Byrne, 1997), which include subjective experiences of insecurity and uncertainty. Together, these left participants feeling stuck and, with a strong meritocratic ideology instilled in their understandings of participation and success, ready to attach blame to themselves or other individuals rather than structural (dis)advantage for any success or failure.

CONCLUSION

This paper drew on data from a research project to consider how people explained and understood their lived experience of inter-/intragenerational social mobility in the "missing middle" of class and sociology. The data was collected between 2015 and 2017 as part of a qualitative phenomenological research project and included interviews of young people (up to 30) and their parents whenever possible to compare and consider differences. The field of study was a large private housing estate in Teesside called Ingleby Barwick with multiple schools and amenities, situated in between more traditional working- and middle-class areas in the region. The estate was known locally as a destination of social mobility, a place where one had "made it" by moving up and moving in.

The "missing middle" was described as a "betwixt and between" status of class—an often self-selected stratification, which participants describe as taking on a hybrid identity because of inter-/intragenerational mobility, which includes elements of both working- and middle-class cultural practices and practicalities. Another mode of the "missing middle" is the lack of sociological analysis in the middle of society by discipline attracted to extremes. The argument is developed that the "missing middle" is, therefore, an interesting site to research people's experiences in what many researchers, theorists, and commentators have claimed to be changing or at least challenging times.

This paper asks, what is it like being in the missing middle? How secure is the status? What does this mean for people's understanding of fairness, choice, and advantage? It answered

that "middling" positions were purposefully sought out and claimed to attempt to gain control of an insecure and uncertain status and avoid class stigma and shame. Further, that this "middle ground" allowed for the denial of class (dis)advantage that was at odds with the meritocratic language of the neo-liberal ideology that were cloaked as "common sense." Participants mobilized varying degrees of economic, social, and cultural resources across the "levels" of liminality to gain or maintain their position, yet revenue streams were not guaranteed, and the prospect of another "flag day" was a consistent specter on the horizon.

Much felt uncertain with the in-betweenness often felt to be rejected by those in the classes above and below them as unreal or inauthentic. Ingleby manifested largesse that one could "move on" and "move up" away from industrial working-class origins. It offered, from conception, a "neat" and "clean" estate, perhaps where you could keep your white collar immaculate unlike in the neighboring town known colloquially as "smoggy land." Ingleby offered a place free of the stains of industrial heritage writ large on many working-class neighborhoods. However, the social mobility offered through meritocracy worked as an apologist and cover for social class, which, for all its denial of import, was nonetheless apparent in macro and micro experiences of lives.

The "levels" of liminality accorded participants with varying degrees of resources to mobilize. Participants often appeared to be involved in "classificatory struggles," which provoked heavy defense of positioning and privilege in this class borderland. The residents who participated in the research discussed what cultural practices they recognized as being of the "missing middle" and what these meant to them (and outsiders). Overall, these created a "moral place for moral people," that was aspirational in its presentation and participants. However, this was often described to be not genuine by residents, in relation to themselves, others, and how they were perceived by those on the outside. Those who were accused of "drinking Carling out of Stella glasses" were reproached as a pretend (or pretentious) group of people.

Given this, it is fair to ask, what is the win, and is it worth it? Insecure status was reflected in the wider economic circumstances, homes, and lives were often built on unstable resources, such as mortgages and wages. Opportunities for the younger generation to perpetuate or even, in some circumstances, maintain the social mobility started by their (grand)parents were contracting; young people's wages are lower in real terms than in 1997, and housing and services costs are high. However, such structural constraint was rarely discussed, particularly so by younger participants who instead often subscribed to neo-liberal notions of meritocracy that push public accountability onto the shoulders of private individuals. Class was thrown into a "middling" place as it was, all at once, agreed to be important and not important at all, claiming the liminal, in-betweenness allowed for the denial of class (dis)advantage, which was not in keeping with people and place.

For all this appears an unflattering picture of place and people; it's fair to ask what is so wrong with the attempts being made to secure any form of advantage of oneself or family? Rather, the research suggests the shame should not be on those who wish to accrue advantage, security, and avoidance of "smog" for them and their children, but a societal structure and governance that allows the acute risk of maintaining it to be so privatized. Meritocracy appeared to offer a sense of control of one's fate with inequality or injustice (and alternatively success) pathologized or individualized. In this belief system, the virtue of unquestionably striving would be rewarded with success, no matter that social mobility has, by most measures, stagnated.

"Making it" to Ingleby was (and continues to be) indicative to many who live there and those who know this place locally of deservingness. This matters as the missing middle make up significant numbers of the UK population, and understanding their beliefs and motivations is critical for social policy makers, academics, and those who hope to influence them to participate in politics with a potential new "flag day" on the horizon following the Covid-19 pandemic.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation, to any qualified researcher.

ETHICS STATEMENT

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by Teesside University. Written informed consent to participate in this study and for publication of their verbatim quotes was provided by the participants.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

KM undertook proposal, data collection, analysis, and wrote up of the empirical research this article is based on.

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