Belonging, memory and history in the north Nottinghamshire coalfield

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

Studies recurrently emphasise the critical role played by memory in the production of belonging in the context of deindustrialisation. This paper examines the interrelations of memory, history and belonging among former coal miners in the north Nottinghamshire coalfield surrounding Mansfield, UK, an area of complex and contested memories and histories. Couched in the approaches of emotional geographies and the 'turn to affect', the paper investigates the emotional and affective dimensions of remembering histories of the coal industry under nationalisation between 1947 and 1994 including job security, the 1984—1985 miners' strike and colliery closures, as well as the industrial ruination which these closures caused. To fully apprehend and empathise with the emotional processes of memory, the paper contends that memories must always be situated within a reading of the wider historical geographies and politics upon which they are constituted. Drawing on archival research and psychosocial life history interviews, the paper broadly argues that historicising memories as well as examining their affective dimensions advances understanding into what has been lost and disrupted through localised processes of dein-dustrialisation and postindustrialism. In the case of north Nottinghamshire the contested solidarities of the miners' strike and subsequent colliery closures have endured in affective memories which, in turn, have problematised the production of individual and collective belonging.

It is the 22nd of March 2014. A Saturday. Stood on the terraces of Field Mill I am waiting to watch my team, Mansfield Town Football Club, play bitter local rivals Chesterfield. The Stags versus the Spireites.[1] As the supporters shuffle in testosterone fills the air, trapped under the steel roof above. Common to fixtures with the expectancy of crowd violence, kick-off has been moved two hours earlier to limit the time available for alcohol consumption. The smell of beer, however, still hangs on breaths. The mutual ani-mosity between the two sets of supporters is palpable. The atmo-sphere inside the stadium swells, ever tense and volatile.[2] Through bodies and voice, both sides engage in performances of belonging in attempts to exclude each other.[3] The home supporters, with

fingers aggressively jabbing towards the away fans, sing their familiar chorus: 'We hate Spireites! We hate Spireites!' On cue the Chesterfield support, huddled adjacent behind stewards and police, retaliate with their familiar rhythmic, monosyllabic chant, specially reserved for Mansfield: 'Scabs! Scabs! Scabs! Scabs!'

The chant of 'scab', those detested individuals that work during labour strikes, began ringing around this fixture in 1984. Ever since the majority of Mansfield's thirty thousand coalminers worked through the year-long miners' strike.[4] After the football game has ended there will be violence reminiscent of the clashes between pickets, miners and police outside the gates of collieries across the area exactly thirty years earlier. Despite the abatement of anger and vitriol over the intervening years, and irrespective of personal histories, to these chanting Chesterfield supporters we forever remain the scabs of Scab County. To them, not only did we betray the solidarity of miners across Britain, we are culpable in the

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[1] The Stags and the Spireites are the nicknames, respectively, of Mansfield Town Football Club and Chesterfield Town Football Club. Mansfield is a large town in the north of the county of Nottinghamshire, UK. Chesterfield is a town of comparable size ten miles from Mansfield in the county of Derbyshire.

[2] T. Edensor, Producing atmospheres at the match: fan cultures, commercialisa-tion and mood management in English football, Emotion, Space and Society 15 (2015) 82—89.

[3] D. Trudeau, Politics of belonging in the construction of landscapes: place-making, boundary drawing and exclusion, Cultural Geographies 13 (2006) 421—443.

[4] D. Amos, The Nottinghamshire miners, the Union of Democratic Mineworkers and the 1984—5 Miners' Strike: scabs or scapegoats?, unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Nottingham, 2011; C. Griffin, 'Notts. have some very peculiar history': understanding the reaction of the Nottinghamshire miners to the 1984—85 Strike, Historical Studies in Industrial Relations 19 (2005) 63—99.

deindustrialisation of the coalfields and the socioeconomic ruination from which they are still to recover.[5] Memories of work and community before the collieries closed are embedded within these coalfield landscapes, haunting their inhabitants and disrupting senses of belonging.[6] The Chesterfield supporters will not forget what this place and its people did three decades ago, nor will they let us forget either.

Amid the gathered Mansfield fans, the picture is more complex. At one level we collectively belong through our support of, and emotional attachment to, the local football team. However, among the former miners, here and across north Nottinghamshire, there are associations and memories evoked by the pejorative 'scab' that are divided and troubled. These memories of lived histories include the fracturing of social relations resulting from opposing positions during the 1984–1985 miners' strike, bitter splits in trade union support and the traumas and loss of colliery closures and redundancy. All these are juxtaposed to and problematised by a faltering nostalgia for the old ways of life and work in the mining community.[7] This paper examines the interrelations of these memories and histories and how they have mediated forms of belonging among former miners in the north Nottinghamshire coalfield surrounding Mansfield (Fig. 1). Couched in the approaches of emotional geographies and the 'turn to affect', it uses psychosocial interviewing methods to investigate the emotional and affective dimensions involved in remembering work and deindustrialisation.[8] This paper also contends that to fully apprehend and empathise with the emotional processes of memory, elicited memories must be situated within a reading of the historical geographies and politics upon which they are constituted. Such an approach will further understandings of the impacts of deindustrialisation on how people feel about their shared pasts and how these memories and their attendant emotions, in turn, mediate forms of belonging in post-industrial places.

The next section presents a discussion of the literature on belonging, memory and deindustrialisation which ends by making a case for more extensive archival analysis to be used alongside psychosocial life history interviews. The theoretical and methodological approaches taken in this paper are then outlined. The analysis of material drawn from these methods then follows and is presented in two parts. The first provides an historical and geographical analysis of the British coal industry as it was experienced in north Nottinghamshire between the nationalisation of the coal industry in 1947 and the widespread closure of collieries in the 1990s. The key issue here is job security, which is critical for understanding both the changing formations of belonging in north Nottinghamshire over the period of nationalisation and, also, memories of this period. The localised perception of mining being a 'job for life' is particularly important in understanding the 1984–1985 miners' strike and deindustrialisation in the area. The second part investigates how the difficult and troubled histories of coal mining, the miners' strike and deindustrialisation are remembered in north Nottinghamshire, and how these memories

are interpreted, reconciled and suppressed within the renegotiation of belonging in the present.

Belonging, memory and deindustrialisation

Belonging, as a nebulously defined, yet inherently human, phenomenon, first attracted the attention of geographers within the humanistic and phenomenological traditions. Early theorisations of it centred on senses or feelings of 'rootedness' which 'in its essence means being completely at home' in one's surroundings.[9] Definitions of belonging have not strayed far from these formative ideas. Its conceptualisation, and that of the cognate ideas of place attachment and senses of place and community, coalesce around belonging being an emotional attachment to and identification with a bounded space, of being at ease within the place to which you belong.[10] Belonging to place can exist across multiple scales — attachment to a locality, a city, a nation or a continent — often at the same time and in relation to each other. Rather than being a specific, categorised emotion, such as anger or joy, belonging is understood as an assemblage of emotions producing an affective state.[11] The absence of belonging — of being 'out of place' — is also often expressed in emotional terms as 'feelings of loneliness, isolation, alienation, and dis-placement'.[12]

In recent years scholars have focussed on the processes, performances, practices and politics involved in the production and expression of belonging, as well as how these can be undone.[13] Much of this literature is concerned with how individuals produce and give authenticity to forms of belonging through personal and collective memory.[14] Important to these understandings is the relationship between memory and space.[15] Following the trend toward embodiment, the potentialities of the embodied and sensory landscape of touch, smells, tastes and sounds to evoke memories is increasingly appreciated. As Owain Jones writes:

The past survives however much one tries to drive it down and away from one's consciousness. It rears up provoked by something overheard or a scene, a place, an object, a tune, a scent even. It is inescapable.[16]

The processes of memory where they concern belonging can, for clarity, be separated into two reciprocal forms. The first of these is what social psychologists call procedural memory and what some

[5] M. Foden, S. Fothergill and T. Gore, *The State of the Coalfields: Economic and Social Conditions in the Former Mining Communities of England, Scotland and Wales*, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, 2014, http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/sites/shu.ac.uk/files/state-of-the-coalfields.pdf Last accessed 14 December 2015.

[6] A. Mah, *Industrial Ruination, Community, and Place: Landscapes and Legacies of Urban Decline*, Toronto, 2012; G.N. Bright, 'The lady is not returning!': educational precarity and a social haunting in the UK coalfields, *Ethnography and Education* 11 (2016) 142–157.

[7] T. Strangleman, Networks, place and identities in post-industrial mining communities, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 25 (2001) 253–267.

[8] O. Jones and J. Garde Hansen (Eds), *Geography and Memory: Explorations in Identity, Place and Becoming*, Basingstoke, 2012.

[9] Y-F. Tuan, Rootedness versus sense of place, *Landscape* 24 (1980) 5; A. Buttimer, Grasping the dynamism of lifeworld, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 66 (1976) 277–292; E. Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, London, 1976; C. Nagel, Belonging, in: V.J. Del Casino Jnr, M.E. Thomas, P. Cloke and R. Panelli (Eds), *A Companion to Social Geography*, Chichester, 2011, 108–124.

[10] N. Lovell, Introduction, in: N. Lovell (Ed.), *Locality and Belonging*, London, 1998, 1–24; N. Wood and L. Waite, Scales of belonging, *Emotion, Spaces and Society* 4 (2011) 201–202.

[11] K. Mee and S. Wright, Geographies of belonging, *Environment and Planning A* 41 (2009) 772–779.

[12] T. Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression*, Minnesota, 1996; M. Antonsich, Searching for belonging — an analytical framework, *Geography Compass* 4 (2010) 649.

[13] J. Tomaney, Regions and place II: belonging, *Progress in Human Geography* 39 (2015) 507–516.

[14] J. Edwards, The need for a bit of history: place and past in English identity, in: Lovell (Ed.), *Locality and Belonging*, 147–167.

[15] S. Hoelscher and D.H. Alderman, Memory and place: geographies of a critical relationship, *Social and Cultural Geography* 5 (2004) 347–355; D. Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, London, 1997.

[16] O. Jones, 'Not promising a landfall … ': an autotopographical account of loss, memory and landscape, *Environmental Humanities* 6 (2015) 1.
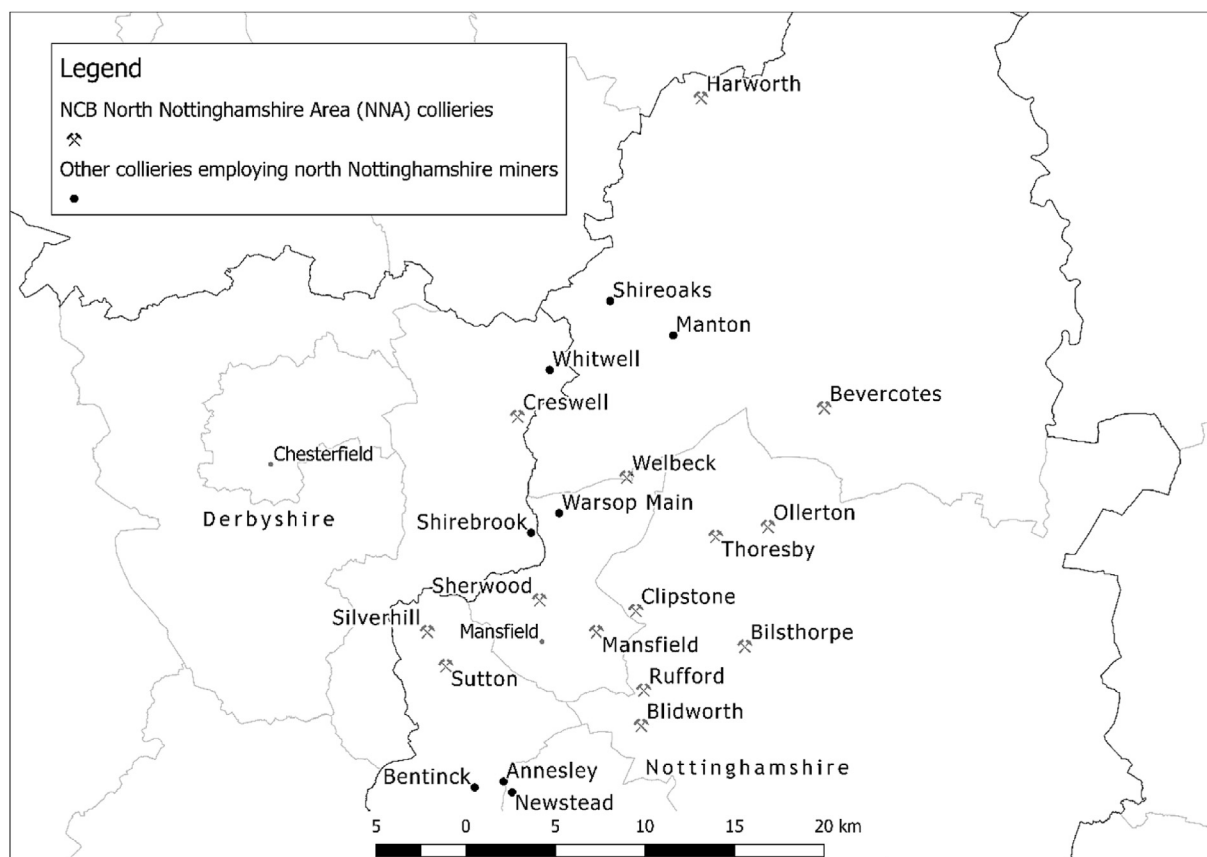
Fig. 1. Collieries in the north Nottinghamshire Coalfield, 1984.
Source: QGIS open source software and open source data from Ordinance Survey, UK.

social scientists refer to as embodied memory.[17] This refers to the repetition of direct embodied interactions and performances with other people and space, and has been used to conceive how forms of everyday belonging are produced. It is argued that moving, communicating and engaging with human and non-human actors embeds memory and meaning into surroundings and anchors people in place.[18] However, belonging as produced by the embedding of meaning through a quotidian, embodied relationship with space is dependent upon the levels and types of engagement with and within that bounded space. These, in turn, are determined by socially reproduced subjectivities and how types of engagements, for example types of employment or leisure pursuits, are situated and perceived within wider frameworks of judgement and value.[19]

For example, in industrial communities formations of belonging among male industrial workers are understood to have been founded on the purpose, pride and dignity derived from heavy manual work.[20] These types of employment held a value not only at the local level but within wider discourses of nation building and class based identity. Further, industrial communities were often sustained by a single industry or employer which gave a sense of homogeneity and solidarity among localities. There were also clearly defined spheres and spaces of participation separated into work, social and domestic life, and primarily demarcated along gender lines. Studies of belonging in mining communities in particular have noted the tightknit social relations that resulted from an isolated bounded space as well as the camaraderie produced by the danger of mining work. Important to these processes were the interdependence of the colliery and social and welfare institutions and representation through the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM).[21] Processes and 'legacies' of deindustrialisation and postindustrialism over the last few decades have disrupted and confused these supposedly once stable formations.[22] The shift toward labour markets based on services, combined with the trauma of job losses and deindustrialisation, has resulted in a

[17] M. Lewicka, In search of roots: memory as enabler of place attachment, in: L.C. Manzo and P. Devine-Wright (Eds), *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Applications*, Abingdon, 2014, 49–60; P. Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge, 1989.

[18] C. Degnen, Socialising place attachment: place, social memory and embodied affordances, *Ageing and Society* 36 (2016) 1645–1667.

[19] M. Savage, G. Bagnall and B. Longhurst, *Globalization and Belonging*, London, 2005; A. Gorman-Murray, Economic crises and emotional fallout: work, home and men's senses of belonging in post-GFC Sydney, *Emotion, Space and Society* 4 (2011) 211–220; T. Fenster, Gender and the city: the different formations of belonging, in: L. Nelson and J. Seager (Eds), *A Companion to Feminist Geography*, Oxford, 2005, 242–256.

[20] V. Walkerdine and L. Jimenez, *Gender, Work and Community after De-industrialisation: A Psychosocial Approach to Affect*, London, 2012; D. Warwick and G. Littlejohn, *Coal, Capital and Culture: A Sociological Analysis of Mining Communities in West Yorkshire*, London, 1992.

[21] M.I.A Bulmer, Sociological models of the mining community, *Sociological Review* 23 (1975) 61–91; D. Waddington, M. Wykes and C. Critcher, *Split at the Seams? Community, Continuity and Change after the 1984–5 Coal Dispute*, Milton Keynes, 1991; D. Gilbert, Imagined communities and mining communities, *Labour History Review* 60 (2005) 47–50; A. Taylor, *The NUM and British Politics, Volume 2, 1969–1995*, Ashgate, 2005.

[22] Mah, *Industrial Ruination*; T. Strangleman, J. Rhodes and S. Linkon, Introduction to crumbling cultures: deindustrialisation, class, and memory, *International Labor and Working-Class History* 84 (2013) 7–22.

mourning for lost ways of life and work. These senses of loss endure in bodies, materialities and memories and, it is suggested, have provoked a pervasive nostalgia within deindustrialised communities.[23] This nostalgia is mobilised within the second formulation of memory.

Alongside the procedural and embodied, memory can also take the form of more conscious and reflective remembering, termed declarative memory. It is the practice of declarative memory which is enacted in social commemorative events and heritage.[24] This type of memory produces belonging through an emotional attachment to collectively shared place histories. It is suggested that, as well as the spatial, social and embodied forms of belonging discussed above, a predominant feature of mining communities was a strong sense of collective memory based on socioeconomic hardships and the collective solidarity which secured relief from them.[25] These collective histories were materialised in union banners, immortalised in folk songs, embodied and performed through galas and communicated within strong oral cultures. Mining communities drew strength and resilience from these collective histories to sustain them in periods of economic uncertainty, conceiving community and industrial struggle as a respected 'tradition' of mining culture to be loyally upheld.

With the demise of the coal industry, mining communities have tried to retain this cultural and collective memory through heritage practices. This extant heritage is not only celebratory but has been used to resist the socioeconomic disruptions of deindustrialisation and foster belonging through a continuity with the past.[26] The 1984–1985 miners' strike in particular is an important event for commemoration.[27] However, it has been argued that forms of belonging which are anchored to collective histories can act as a barrier to the future regeneration of places and communities within changed socioeconomic conditions.[28] Furthermore, place histories and collective memories are often not necessarily the same for all people sharing the same space.[29] Socioeconomic change, particularly deindustrialisation, has forced people into interpreting the past and future directions of the spaces to which they anchor belonging.[30] As specific events are selected to be commemorated they can be interpreted in ways which conflict with the sensibilities and visions of the past among different people claiming the same place.[31] As individuals and collectives seek to establish an authorised past or official memory contestations arise over whose history belongs in designated spaces and whose is excluded.

As the past constitutes much of the basis of belonging to place, a close reading of historical processes is required.[32] This, however, is lacking from much of the existing work on how belonging is mediated through memory among redundant industrial workers where only brief histories are provided 'as a mere context, a background for present events'. As Tim Strangleman argues:

> What this leads to is a vision of the unstable 'now' juxtaposed to a stable 'past'. This does violence to a more sensitive understanding of the flow of history and the presence of the past in the present.[33]

This lack of historical analysis has several implications. First, it suggests that we can gather everything that it is necessary to know from the memories of participants. Yet, recollected memories are always partial and mediated by the environments and encounters in which they are communicated.[34] Most important here, however, memories of deindustrialisation are fundamentally shaped by the experience of working life prior to deindustrialisation as well as the processes of deindustrialisation itself. These experiences are vastly different across different industries, regions and localities. Also, while the literature has explored the enduring emotional effects of deindustrialisation, little attention is given to how historical processes shape the emotional valence of these memories and forms of belonging. This results in underdeveloped and uniform conceptualisations of the emotions bound up in senses of loss. A greater degree of archival work is needed to provide a more nuanced and thorough understanding of how the historical processes of industrialism and deindustrialisation have interacted with memory to produce and reproduce belonging. Further, used in conjunction with archival work, psychosocial interview techniques can apprehend the discreet ways emotion is communicated and expressed as well as understanding the complex registers of emotion involved in remembering industrial work and deindustrialisation.

As will be shown below, in the case of north Nottinghamshire feelings and emotions engendered by remembering the coal industry are shaped by how it was experienced at the level of the coalfield. Locally experienced cultures of mining work, perceptions of job security, the miners' strike and colliery closures dominated the memories of participants leading to a complex and divided emotional geography which positions positive memories alongside negative associations such as shame, guilt and betrayal. The complexity surrounding emotion and memory, absent from work which stresses collective solidarities and the shared and homogenous experience of loss, has had far reaching implications for forms of belonging in the present. First, however, it is necessary to outline recent developments in geography concerning memory and emotion to explain both how memories and their attached

[23] A. Perchard, 'Broken men' and 'Thatcher's children': memory and legacy in Scotland's coalfields, *International Labor and Working-Class History* 84 (2013) 78–98; L. Meier, Encounters with haunted industrial workplaces and emotions of loss: class-related senses of place within the memories of metalworkers, *Cultural Geographies* 20 (2013) 467–483; R. MacKenzie, M. Stuart, C. Forde, I. Greenwood, J. Gardiner and R. Perrett, 'All that is solid?': class, identity and the maintenance of a collective orientation amongst steelworkers, *Sociology* 40 (2006) 833–852; V. Loveday, 'Flat-capping it': memory, nostalgia and value in retroactive male working class identification, *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 17 (2014) 721–735; K. Bennett, Telling tales: nostalgia, collective identity and an ex-mining village, in: M. Smith, L. Bondi and J. Davidson (Eds), *Emotion, Place and Culture*, Farnham, 2009, 187–206.

[24] J. Sather-Wagstaff, Heritage and memory, in: E. Waterton and S. Watson (Eds), *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Heritage Research*, Basingstoke, 2015, 191–204.

[25] D. Kelliher, Constructing a culture of solidarity, *Antipode* 49 (2017) 106–124; B. Supple, *The History of the British Coal Industry, Volume 4, 1914–1946: The Political Economy of Decline*, Oxford, 1987.

[26] C. Stephenson and D. Wray, Emotional regeneration through community action in post-industrial mining communities: the New Herrington Miners' Banner Partnership, *Capital and Class* 29 (2005) 175–199; B. Dicks, *Heritage, Place and Community*, Cardiff, 2000.

[27] M. Bailey and S. Popple, The 1984/85 Miners' Strike — re-claiming cultural heritage, in: L. Smith, P. Shackel and G. Campbell (Eds), *Heritage, Labour and the Working Classes*, London, 2011, 19–33.

[28] H. Doering, Competing visions of community: empowerment and abandonment in the governance of coalfield regeneration, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 38 (2013) 1003–1018.

[29] N. Yuval-Davis, *The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Contestations*, London, 2011.

[30] S.L. Linkon and J. Russo, *Steeltown USA: Work and Memory in Youngstown*, Kansas, 2002.

[31] J. Rhodes, Youngstown's 'Ghost'? memory, identity, and deindustrialisation, *International Labor and Working-Class History* 84 (2013) 55–77.

[32] Walkerdine and Jimenez, *Gender, Work and Community after De-industrialisation*; V. May, Belonging from afar: nostalgia, time and memory, *Sociological Review* 65 (2017) 401–415.

[33] T. Strangleman, Deindustrialisation and the historical sociological imagination: making sense of work and industrial change, *Sociology* 51 (2017) 478.

[34] B. Rogaly and K. Qureshi, 'That's where my perception of it all was shattered': oral histories and moral geographies of food sector workers in an English city region, *Geoforum* 78 (2017) 189–198.

emotions were elicited and interpreted through psychosocial life histories and how these memories related to archival research.

Theoretical and methodological approaches

Geographers concerned with memory have recently been drawn to the affective and emotional dimensions of remembering and the relationships between affect, memory and space.[35] As previously noted, memories can be evoked by a whole manner of things, senses and spaces. These also contain affective capacities to invoke emotions which span the emotional registers, positive and negative.[36] This paper uses the term affective memories to refer to the emotionality of memory and remembering. Research has demonstrated that affective memories not only contain a complex assemblage of, sometimes conflicting, emotions which vary in valence but also recognises that the ways one feels about past events, episodes or occurrences can change over time.[37] Thus far, work which has examined the relationships between memory, emotion and space in geography has largely been either speculative or autoethnographic. Such approaches are highly personalised and do not speak to the sociality of the emotional processes of memory and remembering.[38] To ascertain shared and social affective memories the research in this paper borrows from the emergent field of emotional geographies.

Within work on emotional geographies, emotions and affects are 'vital (living) aspects of who we are and of our situational engagement within the world; they compose, decompose, and recompose the geographies of our lives' and are important 'in mediating identities, relationships and place'.[39] Such work is keen to stress the relationality of emotions and affect with space and time, with each mutually producing, inscribing and invoking the other. As emotions and affects in these conceptualisations are amorphous and often occupy spaces outside of oral expression, emotional geographies have been recovered using psychosocial interviewing techniques to excavate the emotional and affective meaning beyond dialogue.[40] As well as looking at the words spoken, practitioners of psychosocial methods encourage us to take the interview as a sensory and embodied whole and pay closer attention to the emotional and affective dialogue and expression between researcher and participant.[41] This requires the observation of changes in tone and speech, bodily dispositions and expression.

Within the research outlined in this paper, thirty interviews were conducted with former miners. These combined psychosocial approaches with traditional oral history methods.[42] Participants ranged in age from their early fifties to late seventies, and all had previously worked in collieries within north Nottinghamshire. Participants included former miners that both worked during all or part of the 1984–1985 miners' strike and those that were on strike for its entirety. The interview process involved eliciting stories about past working lives and relationships to the mining industry through chronological life histories. Specific issues that arose were the problems of interviewing older working class men to elicit affective memories when much of the discourse on this group leads to a preconception that they are emotionally guarded or withdrawn and, relatedly, comprehending the nuanced communicative clues within the masculine and generational subjectivities of the participants.[43] However, as I have grown up and been socialised within similar conditions in the Nottinghamshire coalfield, understanding of both verbal and nonverbal communications was aided by my insider status. Further, once participants were aware that I was not 'one of those university types' and, in fact, from Mansfield, dialogues proceeded in a more relaxed and open manner. As will be shown, my insider status may have, however, caused some participants to be cautious of what they said when discussing the miners' strike because they were unaware of my particular family history. These types of silences further highlight the need for archival research.

In turn, themes arising from these life histories informed the analysis of a wide range of archival material relating to the north Nottinghamshire area including union meeting minutes, media representations, diaries, memoirs and government records. Historical analysis, set out in the following section, seeks to not only contextualise the life histories but to advance understanding of the interrelationships between historical processes and memory in the formation of belonging. In addition, it has become apparent through the research process that archival research was necessary to fully appreciate what was, and was not, communicated through oral testimony.

'Jobs for life': job security and nationalisation in the north Nottinghamshire coalfield, 1947–1990s

As outlined above, coal miners in part assembled belonging through collective and personal feelings of pride, solidarity and purposefulness which converged at the level of the colliery and village and extended out to class identity and union affiliation. These conditions were present within north Nottinghamshire and this paper does not contest these analyses. However, as has been identified in various studies, and by the miners themselves, the north Nottinghamshire coalfield was differentiated from other coalfields in important ways.[44] In the post-war nationalised coal industry, north Nottinghamshire was to be the 'jewel in the crown' of the National Coal Board (NCB), the governmental organisation set up to run the industry.[45] These local specificities were decisive in producing experiences and senses of belonging distinct from miners in other coalfields.

Although nationalised in 1947 the structure and financing of the NCB gave the coal industry little protection from either fluctuations

[35] Jones and Garde Hansen (Eds), *Geography and Memory*.

[36] J. Horton and P. Kraftl, Clearing out a cupboard: memory, materiality and transitions, in: Jones and Garde Hansen (Eds), *Geography and Memory*, 25–44; H. Lorimer, Homeland, *Cultural Geographies* 21 (2014) 583–604; J. Wylie, Landscape, absence and the geographies of love, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 34 (2009) 275–289.

[37] E.A. Kensinger and D.L. Schacter, Memory and emotion, in: L. Fieldman Barrett, M. Lewis and J.M. Haviland-Jones (Eds), *Handbook of Emotions*, London, 2016, 564–579.

[38] A. Maddrell, Living with the deceased: absence, presence and absence-presence, *Cultural Geographies* 20 (2013) 501–522.

[39] M. Smith, J. Davidson, L. Cameron and L. Bondi, Geography and emotion – emerging constellations, in: Smith, Bondi and Davidson (Eds), *Emotion, Place and Culture*, 9; B. Pini, R. Mayes and P. McDonald, The emotional geography of a mine closure: a study of the Ravensthorpe nickel mine in Western Australia, *Social and Cultural Geography* 11 (2010) 559.

[40] L. Bondi, Understanding feelings: engaging with unconscious communication and embodied knowledge, *Emotion, Space and Society* 10 (2014) 44–54.

[41] W. Hollway and T. Jefferson, *Doing Qualitative Research Differently: A Psychosocial Approach*, London, 2013; R. Dowling, K. Lloyd and S. Suchet-Pearson, Qualitative methods 1: enriching the interview, *Progress in Human Geography* 40 (2016) 679–686.

[42] T. Wengraf, Betrayals, trauma and self-redemption? The meanings of 'the closing of the mines' in two ex-miners' narratives, in: M. Andrews, S.D. Sclater, C. Squire and A. Treacher (Eds), *Lines of Narrative: Psychosocial Perspectives,* London, 2000, 117–128.

[43] S. DeBoise and J. Hearn, Are men getting more emotional? Critical perspectives on men, masculinities and emotions, *The Sociological Review* 65 (2017) 779–796.

[44] D. Howell, Defiant dominoes: working miners and the 1984-5 strike, in: B. Jackson and R. Saunders (Eds), *Making Thatcher's Britain*, Oxford, 2012, 148–164.

[45] Amos, The Nottinghamshire miners.

in international energy markets or government expediency.[46] Under these conditions, the uncertainties and instabilities which characterised the coal industry in the inter-war period, and which public ownership was intended to remedy, continued under nationalisation.[47] When faced with increased economic pressures the NCB's industrial strategy throughout the chairmanships of Alfred Robens (1961—1971) and Derek Ezra (1971—1982) was to rationalise the industry and concentrate production in the most profitable and productive coalfields. Between 1957 and 1975, under both Labour and Conservative governments, the number of collieries reduced by seventy per cent from 822 to 241 with the number of miners falling sixty-five per cent from 704,000 to 245,000.[48] The inability of the NCB to balance miners' expectations of nationalisation with the vagaries of capitalist economic systems resulted in a catalogue of broken assurances on job security from the NCB and government.[49] Julia Mitchell argues that over the 1960s and 1970s much of the disaffection among miners with the NCB, as well as the Labour Party, stemmed from the fact that nationalisation had 'clearly not delivered on the security it promised'.[50] However, this was not the case in the Nottinghamshire coalfield where only 778 mining jobs had been lost in this period. North Nottinghamshire miners, especially, had reason to trust the May 1960 headline of _Coal News_, the official NCB newspaper read widely throughout the coalfields, that there was a 'Certain Future for East Midlands Coal'.[51]

Several geographical and economic reasons contributed to this. Firstly, there were extensive coal reserves in north Nottinghamshire estimated to last up to between 200 and 480 years.[52] These coal reserves had favourable geological conditions resulting in north Nottinghamshire collieries regularly breaking production records and featuring in the national top ten for tonnes of coal produced per month.[53] Importantly, unlike the coastal coalfields, coal mined in north Nottinghamshire was under contract to supply nationalised domestic energy producers, protecting it against international competition. Finally, the north Nottinghamshire coalfield was hugely important to the NCB. Prior to 1984 the NCB was organised at the regional level into twelve coalfield areas. The North Nottinghamshire Area (NNA) was consistently the most profitable by some margin, often being the only area to make a profit.[54] These statistics placing north Nottinghamshire collieries at the top of the industry were disseminated freely to employees via _Coal News_ and NUM communications. This productivity helped secure the coalfield's position at the centre of the NCB's long-term industrial strategy and the area received extensive investment for

mechanisation and expansion, materialised in the opening of Bevercotes colliery in 1965.[55]

The expansion of the north Nottinghamshire coalfield was used to offset redundancies in declining coalfields and new housing estates sprang up on the outskirts of mining villages to accommodate migrating miners and their families. This migration of miners through the NCB's Inter-Divisional Transfer Scheme acted as visible and experiential evidence that mining jobs in north Nottinghamshire were assured.[56] Participants who descended from north eastern and Scottish mining families remembered vividly the promises of 'jobs for life' which informed their decisions to migrate.[57] The folk singer Jack Purdon captured these sentiments at the time in the lyrics to 'Farewell to 'Cotia':

> But leave your cares behind ye
> Your future has been planned
> And off ye go tae Nottingham
> Tae Robens' Promised Land.[58]

Acknowledging the insecurity and anxiety resulting from colliery closures and redundancies in other coalfields, job security into the future was also used in promotional material aimed at attracting miners to migrate to north Nottinghamshire collieries. A recruitment poster distributed through local newspapers and on colliery noticeboards in north east England, carried the strap line, above images of the benefits of migrating to the county: 'If Security Is Your Target, Come to the Robin Hood Country'.[59] A segment of _Mining Review_, a short film series broadcast in cinemas in the coalfields, also sold the north Nottinghamshire coalfield. It was advertised as where mechanisation and modern technology were delivering higher productivity, 'big wages and the luxury that they imply'. Reaching its crescendo, the segment declared that the 'future beckons bright' for north Nottinghamshire, 'the most productive coalfield' in Britain.[60]

Thus, the industrial strategies of the NCB which privileged the north Nottinghamshire coalfield had by the 1970s resulted in 'a sense of security, that ha[d] hitherto been unknown' among its miners.[61] As the programme of the 1978 Nottinghamshire NUM Gala held in Mansfield stated, '[t]he demand for coal both now and what is forecast for the future, guarantees security of jobs within the industry'.[62] Widespread belief in the permanency of the coal industry within the local area engendered senses of belonging that began to drift from being rooted in the collective memories and histories of hardship and struggle, as has been documented in other coalfields, to being rooted in the present and future. As will be analysed in the following section, the perception of guaranteed security against redundancies and colliery closures within the coalfield was part of a wider outside perception of north Nottinghamshire miners. These perceptions were to become an area of conflict and intervention by the NUM and NCB during the

[46] P. Ackers and J. Payne, Before the storm: the experience of nationalisation and the prospects for industrial relations partnership in the British coal industry, 1947—1972 — rethinking the militant narrative, _Social History_ 27 (2002) 184—209; V.L. Allen, _The Militancy of British Miners_, Shipley, 1981.

[47] A.R. Griffin, _The Miners of Nottinghamshire: A History of the Nottinghamshire Miners' Union, 1914—1944_, London, 1962; R.J. Waller, _The Dukeries Transformed: The Social and Political Development of a Twentieth Century Coalfield_, London, 1983.

[48] D. Parker, _The Official History of Privatisation: Popular Capitalism, 1987—1997_, London, 2012; R. Turner, Post-War pit closures: the politics of de-industrialisation, _Political Quarterly_ 56 (1985) 167—174.

[49] Richard Wood to NUM, November 1960, Notts NUM Minute Book 1960, The East Midlands Collection, Manuscripts and Special Collections, University of Nottingham [hereafter EMC], 33.

[50] J. Mitchell, Farewell to 'Cotia: the English folk revival, the pit elergy, and the nationalisation of British Coal, 1947—70, _Twentieth-Century British History_ 25 (2014) 594.

[51] A certain future for East Midlands coal, _Coal News_, May 1960, The National Archives [hereafter TNA], COAL 71/13.

[52] Waller, _The Dukeries Transformed_.

[53] _Coal News_, August 1983, TNA, COAL 71/91.

[54] _Coal News_, TNA, COAL 71/75, 79, 83, 87. Note: The NNA had fifteen collieries before the closure of Teversal in 1980.

[55] Modern methods at Bevercotes Colliery 1965, _British Pathe_, http://www.britishpathe.com/video/modern-methods-at-bevercotes-colliery last accessed 12 August 2016.

[56] R.C. Taylor, The implications of migration from the Durham Coalfield: an anthropological study, unpublished PhD thesis, Durham University, 1966.

[57] Former Rufford miner, 12 July 2016; former Welbeck miner, 4 September 2016; former Bilsthorpe miner, 22 September 2016.

[58] J. Purdon, Farewell To 'Cotia [song], 1965. Note: Robens refers to Alfred Robens, not Robin Hood.

[59] Taylor, The implications of migration from the Durham Coalfield, plate 4, 72.

[60] Mining Review 10th Year No. 1, 1968, The Media Archive of Central England.

[61] Twenty-Sixth Annual Demonstration and Gala Programme, NUM Notts. Area, Saturday 7 June 1975, personal collection.

[62] 1978 Demonstration Resolution, Notts. NUM Minute Book 1978, EMC.

1984–1985 miners' strike. The responses of Nottinghamshire miners to these conflicts would have lasting effects on the experience of colliery closures and their aftermath.

The 1984–1985 miners' strike and colliery closures

Jorg Arnold argues that political and public perceptions of the miner changed from reverence to disdain following the strikes of 1972 and 1974 which both ended in decisive victories for the NUM.[63] In 1979, a Conservative government under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher was elected on a mandate to reorganise the nationalised industries and challenge the power of the unions, the most powerful of which was the NUM. The government first tested the NUM's resolve for strike action in 1981 by releasing a list of proposed colliery closures. Unsurprisingly, given that Ezra demonstrably favoured the north Nottinghamshire coalfield, no collieries in the NNA were on the list.[64] Although a potential strike was averted when the government realised that the NUM held the better hand, the friction between the government, NCB and NUM was intensified the following year when the moderate Joe Gormley retired as the president of the NUM to be replaced by the vastly more militant Arthur Scargill.

When Ezra then resigned in 1982, his replacement as NCB chairman, Norman Siddall, was seen as a conciliatory choice. However, due to poor health Siddall lasted only a year in office. In his short time he used the north Nottinghamshire edition of *Coal News* to restate that the area was safe, writing that '[w]e have to … concentrate on modern pits producing cheaper coal, high wages and a secure future for coming mining generations'.[65] Following Siddall's resignation, Thatcher appointed Ian MacGregor, angering the NUM since he had already earned a reputation as a 'butcher of jobs' after the mass redundancies of steelworkers under his chairmanship of British Steel.[66] Sensing a rundown of the industry, the NUM began to mobilise resistance.[67] MacGregor, however, acted quickly to assuage anxieties in north Nottinghamshire and to reinforce the pervasive sense of security. On a visit to Thoresby Colliery at the beginning of his tenure, MacGregor stated that:

> This Area has a great future, both for the industry and the people who work for it…. The coalfields around here represent the future of the industry…. It is from the core of the industry in this Area that we are going to see the future of the industry built.[68]

It was these persistent and duplicitous assurances of the future, reinforcing perceptions of indispensability, that contributed to the north Nottinghamshire coalfield being at the centre of the miners' strike the following year.

The strike was premised on the sole issue of proposed colliery closures and job losses, not on pay and conditions like the strikes of the early 1970s.[69] Due to both the coalfield's productivity and the perceptions of its security, whether Nottinghamshire miners went on strike was seen by both sides as being decisive.[70] From the beginning of the strike in early March 1984 miners from other coalfields and police from across the country flooded into Nottinghamshire and violence and intimidation outside colliery gates and in mining villages was commonplace.[71] The rapid escalation of the strike caught the Nottinghamshire NUM leadership and its members unprepared and, finding themselves at the centre of a national dispute, resolved to hold an area ballot on strike action. The result was seventy-two per cent against the question 'Do you support strike action to prevent pit closures and massive run down of jobs?' The majority went back to work immediately, most of those that stayed on strike drifted back over the proceeding months, but a couple of thousand men stayed on strike until the end. Over the course of the year friendships forged in childhood were irreparably destroyed and sibling and parental relationships were torn apart.[72] For the majority on strike, Nottinghamshire miners were seen to be acting out of conceited self-interest, convinced they were indispensable to the industry. When the NUM called off the strike without securing any of its demands the 'scabs' of Nottinghamshire were widely blamed for the defeat.

What must be acknowledged, however, is that the strategy of the NCB and government was to reinforce the perception of security in Nottinghamshire in order to keep the coalfield's miners at work. From the outset, a Ministerial Group on Coal was established of all cabinet members who met regularly to discuss the strike and their responses to the unfolding events.[73] Of specific concern was the situation and developments in Nottinghamshire, and the group remained 'alert for any change in the position' of the miners who were working.[74] While still maintaining the appearance of being outside a dispute which was supposedly between the NUM and the NCB, the government resolved on several occasions to press the NCB to improve the effectiveness of its public relations in Nottinghamshire. The NCB propaganda strategy focussed on ensuring that north Nottinghamshire miners continued to believe that their jobs and collieries were secure by emphasising the necessity of coal to the nation and its abundant reserves, as the full-page advertisement in the programme of the Mansfield and District Trades Union Congress May Day March 1984 illustrates (Fig. 2). Indeed, the government itself resolved that it would 'take particular care to highlight … Government confidence in the future of the industry at every opportunity'.[75] So, when Mrs Thatcher said that '[t]he real way to keep jobs in coal is to concentrate production on the newest and most excellent mines' the subtext intended for working miners in Nottinghamshire was that their jobs were safe.[76]

By the end of the summer it was reasonably certain that Nottinghamshire miners would not be joining their colleagues on strike. Thatcher then began public and private communications to give the appearance of solidarity with working miners and further divide them from their counterparts. Whilst vilifying the NUM as the 'enemy within', she used her 1984 Conservative Party conference speech to describe working miners as 'lions' and proclaimed, in a personal thank you note to the Nottinghamshire miners, that

[63] J. Arnold, 'The death of sympathy': coal mining, workplace hazards, and the politics of risk in Britain, ca. 1970–1990, *Historical Social Research* 41 (2016) 91–110.

[64] Sir Derek Ezra speech to Notts. NUM, 1976, Notts NUM Minute Book 1976, EMC; NCB and AEC meeting, 3 March 1977, EMC, 78; Joint meeting between the AEC and the NCB, July 1978, Notts NUM Minute Book 1978, EMC, 197–201.

[65] See the front page of *Coal News*, July 1983, TNA, COAL 71/85.

[66] Arthur Scargill on MacGregor coal board appointment, 1983, LBC/IRN Digitisation Archive, British Universities Film and Video Council, http://bufvc.ac.uk/tvandradio/lbc/index.php/segment/0007200264007 last accessed 3 March 2017.

[67] *Coal News*, August 1983, TNA, COAL 70/91.

[68] Work together to stay on top, *Coal News*, December 1983, TNA, COAL 70/92.

[69] Taylor, *The NUM and British Politics*.

[70] K. Coates and M. Barratt Brown, *Community Under Attack: The Struggle for Survival in the Coalfield Communities of Britain,* Nottingham, 1997.

[71] H. Paterson, *Look Back in Anger: The Miners' Strike in Nottinghamshire 30 Years On*, Nottingham, 2014.

[72] J. Symcox, *The 1984–1985 Miners' Strike in Nottinghamshire: 'If Spirits Alone Won Battles'– The Diary of John Lowe*, Barnsley, 2011; L. Beaton, *Shifting Horizons*, London, 1985.

[73] Cabinet Ministerial Group on Coal, TNA, CAB130/1268 f8-f290, CAB130/1285. J. Phillips, Containing, isolating, and defeating the miners: the UK Cabinet Ministerial Group on Coal and the three phases of the 1984-85 strike, *Historical Studies in Industrial Relations* 35 (2014) 117–141.

[74] Cabinet Ministerial Group on Coal, 28 March 1984, TNA, CAB130/1268 f6.

[75] Cabinet Ministerial Group on Coal, Meeting Seven, 4 April 1984, TNA, CAB130/1268 f40.

[76] M. Thatcher, Prime Minister's Questions, Engagements, HC DEB 15 March 1984, *Hansard* Volume 56 cc. 503–506.
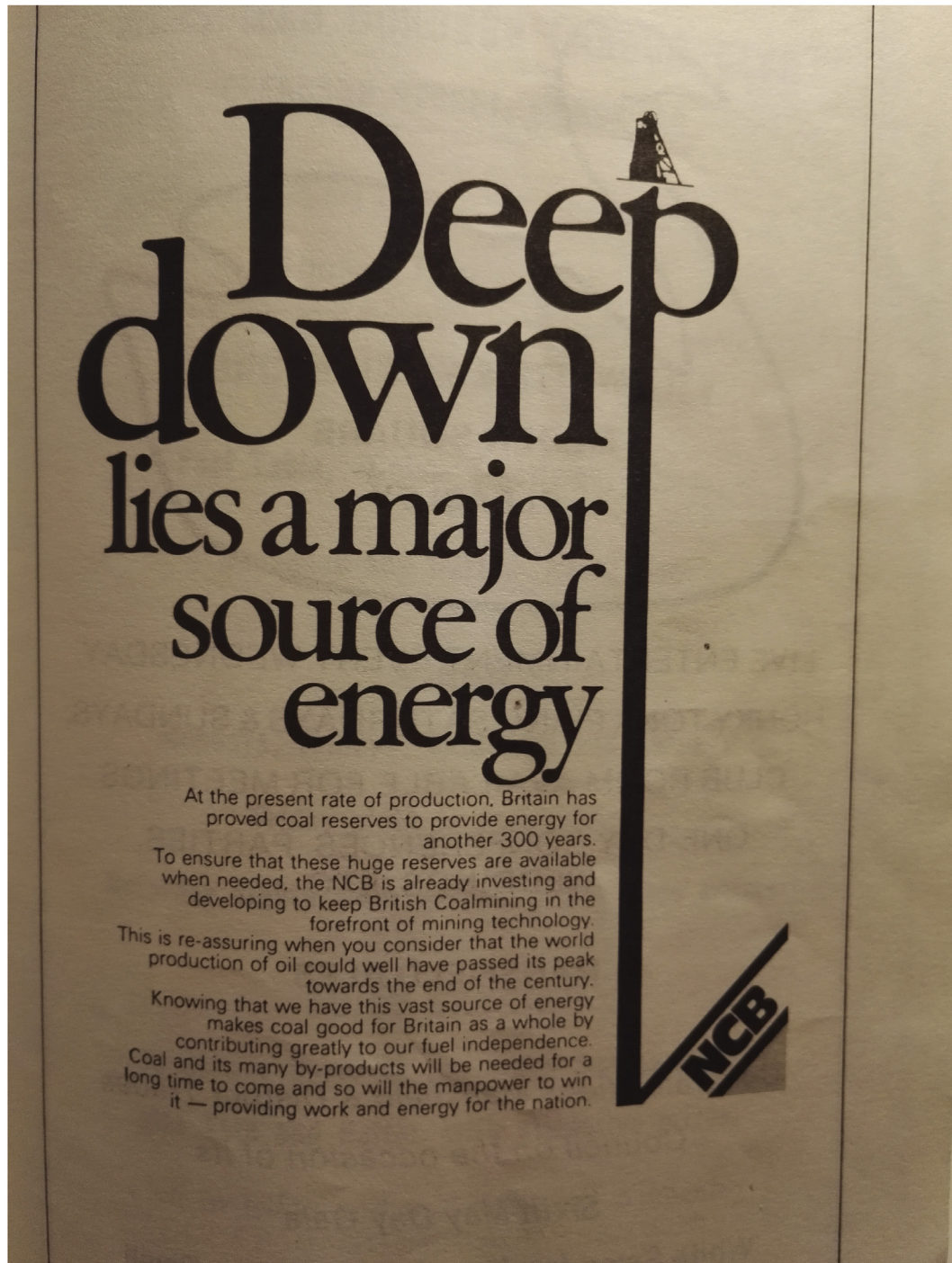
Fig. 2. Mansfield & District TUC May Day 1984 Event Programme, 7 May 1984.
Source: personal collection.

they were 'an example to us all'.[77] In letters written to wives of Nottinghamshire's working miners she repeatedly stated how the Conservative Party would 'never forget' the role they played and there would be 'no betrayal of the working miners to whom we owe so much'.[78]

However, following the end of the strike collieries in Nottinghamshire began to close and the workforces at those remaining were significantly reduced. Meanwhile, the antipathy between other coalfields and Nottinghamshire continued unabated leading to the Nottinghamshire Area ceding from the NUM in July 1985 and

[77] M. Thatcher [speech], Conservative Party Conference, 12 October 1984, Margaret Thatcher Archive [hereafter MTA], http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/136240 last accessed 12 September 2016, reprinted in The Chad, 7 October 1992, Mansfield Library [hereafter ML], 1.

[78] M. Thatcher to A. Hopkins, 26 October 1984, THCR 2/6/3/143 Part 1 f20, MTA; M. Thatcher to P. Linton, 4 February 1985, TNA, PREM 19/1579.

the establishment of the Union of Democratic Mineworkers (UDM) under the leadership of Roy Lynk and David Prendergast, who had actively opposed the strike.[79] The UDM automatically represented all Nottinghamshire miners and, following a High Court ruling, sequestrated all of the Nottinghamshire NUM's property, assets and funds. Unperturbed, Nottinghamshire's striking miners organised to keep an NUM presence in the coalfield. What resulted was another bitter struggle as the UDM vehemently opposed and obstructed the NUM's efforts for representation and recognition by blocking NUM elections on NCB property, removing their promotional material and retaining possession of and defacing union banners carrying the name Nottinghamshire NUM.[80] Crucially, the UDM, accepting the economic arguments of the NCB at face value, offered no meaningful resistance to the deindustrialisation of the coalfield, believing the NCB's assurances that only loss-making collieries were closing and that north Nottinghamshire, at least, had a bright future.[81]

By the beginning of 1992 rumours began to circulate that further colliery closures were imminent. By this point eight collieries in the north Nottinghamshire area had closed since 1985. In March, *The Chad*, the local newspaper for north Nottinghamshire, published a letter from the secretary of state for energy which drew on the strike to again pacify miners in the coalfield:

> During those dark days in 1984 and 1985, miners here earned a reputation for reliability, for courage and for perseverance. That reputation, along with the striking productivity improvements that Notts miners have made, will be the key to securing the future of the industry in this county…. Here in Nottinghamshire the foundations for the future are as solid as they come.[82]

Yet, in October 1992, it was announced that thirty-one collieries would close with immediate effect in preparation for privatising the industry. Nine of the thirty-one pits employed north Nottinghamshire miners. The immediate reaction was one of betrayal, shock and disbelief.[83] Roy Lynk, president of the UDM, stated that he had 'been betrayed by the government and British Coal [NCB]' who had repeatedly promised him that Nottinghamshire collieries would be safe from closure.[84] Due to widespread condemnation of the announcement the government gave a stay of execution to consult on closures. Despite this, six years later only four collieries employing approximately two thousand miners remained in the Mansfield area, less than ten per cent of the 1984 total. A miner at Bilsthorpe summed up the feelings of many at the time: 'I came down from Cumbria in 1967 for job security. That's what British Coal [NCB] told us'.[85]

This section has argued that throughout the period of nationalisation government and NCB discourses, physical geography and experience all acted to produce a sense of job security in the north Nottinghamshire coalfield.[86] Due to its advantageous geological conditions and productivity, from 1947 the NCB looked on the coalfield as the 'jewel in the crown' of the industry. Actively

pursuing an industrial strategy which promoted north Nottinghamshire collieries as the future of the industry, the NCB promised migrating miners in the 1960s and 70s and the existing workforce 'jobs for life', continually reassuring the Nottinghamshire NUM and its members. These perceptions of security engendered forms of belonging anchored in place futures as opposed to place histories. Also, to the detriment of miners across other coalfields, these senses of security were seized upon to ensure Nottinghamshire played a dissonant role in the 1984—1985 miners' strike. Nottinghamshire's decision to continue working under the promise that the coalfield would not be betrayed led to both its turbulent breakaway from the NUM and the distressing shock of eventual colliery closures. The next section, based on psychosocial life history interviews, shows that these turbulent and fractured historical processes have resulted in complex affective memories and troubled forms of belonging produced by them.

Affective memories and belonging

Steven High states that life history interviews can 'remind us that job loss was about more than wages. It was about identity and belonging, too'.[87] For those interviewed here, being a coal miner for a period of their lives has retained meaning and supersedes any belonging that they may potentially have formed from other jobs or roles. Interviewees make it known to me from the outset that they were a coal miner regardless of their current employment status. This identity, and form of belonging, is materialised and embedded in the mining-related ornaments and memorabilia which adorn the mantelpieces and walls of their homes and act as memory prompts of their time as miners. As one participant put it:

> I draw close affinity to [the colliery], to the fact that I've got my [commemorative] plate on the wall and my picture. I've not got a picture of Ashfield Council [where the interviewee worked after redundancy] and I wouldn't. But I have of Annesley colliery 'cause it means summat.[88]

Indeed, interviewees were also eager to talk at length and in detail about the technicalities of their former work. They spoke enthusiastically and didactically, leaning forward to engage and gesticulate to explain more effectively the types of machinery they had operated, the amount of training they had received and the different geological conditions they had encountered. These men were displaying and projecting in and between words and gestures their sense of pride in their labour.[89] They wanted to communicate, as did the mining banners they had marched beneath, how their job served a societal purpose, which gave their labour meaning and produced belonging (Fig. 3). Many gave unsolicited both the exact date that they left the industry and the date their respective collieries closed. These events had brought to an end the basis of personal and collective forms of belonging.

Participants were asked how they felt when their colliery closed. The most frequent reply was simply 'gutted', followed by a silence. It is certainly true that '[a]nyone who has interviewed displaced workers, … has seen or felt some of the pain and suffering that has resulted from deindustrialisation'.[90] Yet these emotions are often communicated non-verbally, in bodily dispositions, gazes and in

[79] Amos, The Nottinghamshire Miners.

[80] Notts. UDM Minute Books, 1987—1990, EMC; D. Allsop, Defeated but defiant: the continued resilience of the National Union of Mineworkers within the Nottinghamshire coalfield, *Capital and Class* 29 (2005) 97—123.

[81] D. Waddington, B. Dicks and C. Critcher, Community responses to pit closures in the post-strike era, *Community Development Journal* 29 (1994) 141—150.

[82] J. Wakeham to The Chad, *The Chad*, 11 March 1992, 4.

[83] King Coal - BGS on BBC - Inside Out - East Midlands, *British Geological Survey*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEOxJxhRtNw&t=131s last accessed 12 November 2016, 2:13—2:17; F. Childs, *The Chad*, 5 May 1993, ML, 3.

[84] See the front page of *The Chad*, 28 October 1992, ML.

[85] *The Chad*, 21 October 1992, ML, 9.

[86] Waller, *The Dukeries Transformed*.

[87] S. High and D.W. Lewis, *Corporate Wasteland: The Landscape and Memory of Deindustrialisation*, Ithaca, 2007, 14.

[88] Former Annesley miner, 28 October 2016.

[89] Former Mansfield miner, 14 January 2016; former Bilsthorpe miner, 15 January 2016.

[90] S. High, Beyond aesthetics: visibility and invisibility in the aftermath of deindustrialisation, *International Labor and Working-Class History* 84 (2013) 141.

Fig. 3. Mansfield colliery branch banner [scaled replica].
Source: Nottinghamshire Coalfields Banners Trust, http://nottsbannerstrust.org.uk/mansfield/ last accessed 15 August 2017.

the silences which follow previously animated dialogue. Being 'gutted', as an affective state of severe disappointment, tantamount in a metaphorically embodied sense to having their guts removed, must be understood in its localised classed and gendered distinctions and uses. For these former miners, to be 'gutted' by colliery closure meant that expected futures had been lost. The continuity of a livelihood as a stable breadwinner and of ways of life that were enthusiastically anticipated, as shown in the previous section, were no longer to be realised, for them or the proceeding generation. In the moments after saying 'gutted' interviewees would retreat into themselves to spend time with their own private memories. The questioning had prompted them to reflect on difficult affective memories.

I would often fill these silences with follow up questions such as 'why is that?' [why did you feel gutted?]. Replying, participants would often point towards the visible industrial ruination of the area, connecting colliery closures and wider deindustrialisation to the processes of local decline:

> Well, Mansfield used to have a *strong* mining industry, it used to have a shoe company, it had a brewery, it had a very VERY strong hosiery trade *pause* Now *pause* we've no mining industry, we've no brewery, we've no Shoe Co, we've nothing.[91]

Experiences of heavy manual work were also compared with current employment opportunities. As one interviewee said, '[t]here's no jobs for the young ones now is there. *puts on a sarcastic tone* Oh wait, yes there is. You can work at McDonalds, or you can work at Sports Direct'.[92] Employment in precarious and menial roles

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[91] Former Sutton miner, 10 August 2016.
[92] Former Mansfield miner, 13 August 2016.

were not seen as 'proper jobs' which offered the belonging and security that mining once did. For these men, '[t]he dignity of a job, where you could tek [take] a mortgage, bring a family up, is so eroded'.[93]

It did not follow, however, that because former miners valued their occupation and mourned its passing that they especially enjoyed the work or advocated it for others; although, clearly, some did. For one, 'if the pits were open and I were fit, I'd go back for free. That's how much I loved it'.[94] Regarding the specific nature of mining work, interviewees most felt the loss of camaraderie and humour associated with mining, which was produced by the dangerous and inhospitable working conditions of the colliery. Yet, the danger and conditions themselves were not mourned, which strikes at the ambiguities of memories of mining and other heavy manual jobs. Despite the pride taken in familial traditions of mining, participants were conflicted about whether they would want their sons to do such a dangerous job. However, in the post-industrial labour market there is a lack of opportunities for well-paid, meaningful and, most of all, secure employment:

And I just think, well, if the pit 'ad bin open now … OK it was an 'orrible, dusty, dangerous job but it giv us a decent living. And it'd be better for them to be doing that than going about kicking their heels with nothing better to do. It was a job, and, OK, these things have gone now, but at one time it was a job for life.[95]

Further complicating these senses of loss and erosion, which might be shared with all miners, are memories of the role Nottinghamshire miners played in the strike and its aftermath. For the striking miners in Nottinghamshire the strike has become a defining event in their lives. One interviewee was eager to show me a room in his house full of proudly displayed badges, commemorative plates from numerous collieries in Nottinghamshire, framed posters and a wealth of other material relating to the strike. He joked that his partner would like to have their dining room back but that packing the objects away would 'break his heart'.[96] For some, affective memories of 'scabbing' are charged with an enduring animosity over thirty years on:

[T]hese particular people I shall never forget. I'll never forgive. And if thee dropped down int' street wi' an heartattack I'd walk straight over them to make sure it were final … cause I detest 'em for what they did so much. Now you might think that's evil but you need to experience what went off for them twelve months.[97]

Situated alongside this bitterness were affective memories of positive valance resulting in a complex and varied assemblage of emotions from anger to affection. As one interviewee answered in reply to the question 'did anything positive come out of the strike?':

A lot of friends, good friends, *large intake of breath and exhale* and that part of it will stay wi' me forever and I will always smile at that part of it *long pause*. On the other side, I know that there was some rats, and I call 'em rats 'cause I can't think of anything more demeaning.[98]

Such affective memories of the strike have led to the dislocation of belonging from place for striking miners in Nottinghamshire. In the minority in their localities, and unable to forgive the colleagues who remained at work, striking miners have sought to create social forms of belonging through bonds with miners and supporters outside where they live. The institutional embodiment of this is the Nottinghamshire NUM Ex and Retired Miners Association which only admits those who were NUM members when they left the coal industry. This association, based in Mansfield, acts as a meeting point for striking miners and engages in activities within the wider trade union movement and mining heritage. This includes social events to mark the anniversaries of the strike, annual trips to the Durham Miners Gala, the largest trade union gathering in Europe, and the restoration of NUM branch banners as 'monuments of working class history'.[99] To further this memory work, successful funding bids have been secured to produce oral histories and the opening of a museum is being pursued. Through these practices, Nottinghamshire striking miners have remained attached to the class based histories of trade unionism and the mining past, but have become disassociated and alienated from their own place histories which they feel shameful towards.

For miners that worked during the strike, refusal to join in solidarity with their fellow union members in other coalfields has meant that Nottinghamshire miners have been ostracised from the dominant collective memories of British miners. Contemporary narratives of the decline of the coal industry are inseparable from the 1984–1985 miners' strike, which has entered the popular imagination as the ultimate demonstration of class struggle and solidarity against the devastation wrought by Thatcherism. Sympathetic cultural representations, such as the films *Brassed Off* (1996) and *Pride* (2014), have cast the striking miners as honourable defenders of their communities.[100] Further, performances of memory and belonging within the British coalfields specifically target and exclude the UDM and Nottinghamshire miners. This is evident at football matches such as the one described at the beginning of this paper, on social media message boards which act as online community spaces for remembering the coal industry and in local history groups.[101] At a demonstration signalling the closure of the last remaining colliery in Britain, Kellingley, the marchers paraded, alongside their branch banner, a makeshift banner attacking the UDM as scabs.[102] This exclusion of UDM members from what it means to be a miner has led to painful senses of dislocation from the collective histories of mining and mining identity. As one interviewee put it:

I mean I was proud to be a coal miner. It sort of hurts me in a way that people don't see Notts miners as miners. You know, we all did the same job. And that hurts me.[103]

In their dissonant role, the Nottinghamshire miners of the UDM are viewed as complicit in the deindustrialisation of the coalfields. Whilst some rejected this interpretation, most interviewees connected the failure of the miners' strike to the subsequent colliery

[93] Former Rufford miner, 12 July 2016.
[94] Former Mansfield miner, 13 August 2016.
[95] Former Clipstone miner, 22 March 2016.
[96] Former Clipstone miner, 9 August 2016.
[97] Former Blidworth miner, 17 August 2015.
[98] Former Welbeck miner, 10 August 2016.

[99] K. Stanley, *Nottinghamshire Miners Do Strike!*, Nottingham, 2009.

[100] *Brassed Off*, Channel Four Films, 1996; *Pride*, BBC Films, 2014; K. Shaw, *Mining the Meaning: Cultural Representations of the 1984-5 Miners' Strike*, Newcastle, 2012.
[101] Former Welbeck miner, 7 August 2016; former Warsop Main miner, 8 August 2016.
[102] Image on https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2015/12/22/kell-d22.html, last accessed 10 August 2017.
[103] Former Sherwood miner, 8 April 2016.

closures.[104] This has resulted in feelings of shame, embarrassment and guilt compounded by the dislocation from wider class, labour and occupational histories and memories: 'We've got no Billy Elliot have we?'.[105] Many of those who continued to work are, therefore, still reluctant to discuss the strike. In one exchange, typical of others, an otherwise flowing interview was reduced to short considered answers when the strike was brought up:

Interviewer: Do you think you would've acted differently [during the strike] if you'd have known the collieries would shut?

Participant: *pause* Yes *averts eye-contact* *long pause*

Interviewer: Do you think a lot would have?

Participant: *looking contemplative* Probably *long pause* 'Cause there's still plenty of coal left [to mine] in Clipstone *short pause* And at Rufford and at Mansfield. Plenty of coal.[106]

Here, as before, memories of colliery closures are made more painful by the false belief that jobs were safe in north Nottinghamshire.

This is not to suggest that job security was all that lay behind decisions to cross picket lines, which has been the prevailing narrative among supporters of the strike during and since 1984.[107] Interviewees who were willing to offer explanations provided multiple reasons. Some claimed that they voted to strike but honoured the democratic vote, others voted against strike action because they disagreed with Scargill's militant leadership, and several felt that the timing of the strike at a time of low coal demand meant it was destined to fail anyway. The most common explanation given for not joining the strike, and voting against it, was because they refused to be intimidated into doing so by miners from outside the area. No one cited job security as the reason they did not follow the call to strike. Some, however, suggested that there was no point discussing it because people would not accept their reasons as genuine.

This suppression of expressions of social memory has, in some cases, been necessary for healing wounds between opposing sides:

I still have mates from my mining days. Some went on strike but others didn't. We don't talk about it, not because we'd fall out but I think the ones who didn't strike are embarrassed now. In the end we all got the chop.[108]

Some striking miners felt that their minority status meant that they had to partly reconcile their differences: 'In a way, you'd be a lonely bloke, I think, if you totally ignored every scab … 'cause the place is full of 'em'.[109] For whatever reason, a culture of silence surrounding the miners' strike still pervades north Nottinghamshire which stifles legitimate expression and social memories of personal pride in work. Where other coalfields and postindustrial places have attempted to alleviate the effects of deindustrialisation by celebrating past traditions and cultures of mining and manufacturing through heritage, north Nottinghamshire is devoid of any substantial or meaningful heritage focal points in which to practice or

mobilise social memory. Efforts by some groups to remedy this face struggles to overcome enduring animosities between striking and non-striking miners, and the shame of Nottinghamshire's mining inheritance. For striking miners, it is clear why memories largely remain immaterialised in heritage sites. Of the Clipstone Colliery's grade-II listed headstocks, whose preservation has been the issue of discussion since the colliery closed in 2003, one striking miner claimed:

I know a lot of people want 'em getting rid of, but I think they want 'em getting rid of because they helped to shut the bloody place [the colliery]. You know, to me, they want rid of any reminder of the past that they scabbed and, you know, created what's happened.[110]

Whilst correct that, as a forthright participant who worked during the strike stated, other coalfields and striking miners 'don't have the monopoly on working class history', miners in north Nottinghamshire on both sides of the strike continue to struggle to come to terms with their coalfield's own role in that history.[111]

Conclusion

By combining archival research with psychosocial life history interviews this paper has made several methodological and analytical contributions to research on belonging and memory in the context of deindustrialisation. Through archival research studies can account for how historical processes mediate and shape the local specificities through which people produce forms of belonging. In this paper, archival work has evidenced that belonging was shaped by the particularities of the coal industry as it was experienced in the north Nottinghamshire coalfield. Rather than belonging being formed out of a deep connection to a collective past, as in other coal mining areas, prior to widespread colliery closures forms of belonging among north Nottinghamshire miners were produced through a sense of security and were situated in the anticipated collective future and continuity of ways of life. Belonging anchored in a surety about the present and future was a logical response to the industrial strategies and rhetoric of those with the power to assure its realisation. These strategies, manifested in the promotion of the coalfield as the future of the industry and the migration of miners to the 'promised land', continually reinforced the notion that mining was a 'job for life' in north Nottinghamshire. Further, for most of the post-war period, any time when senses of job security came under any threat the NCB under successive chairmen quickly sought to assuage concerns by reiterating the ostensible narrative that north Nottinghamshire's future was guaranteed. These sureties of a promised future were mobilised in the north Nottinghamshire coalfield by the NCB and government in attempts to deceive the majority of miners into not joining the 1984—1985 strike.

The decision of the large majority of Nottinghamshire miners not to strike impacted heavily on the final decade of nationalisation in the coalfield in important ways which intensified the emotional pain of colliery closure. The formation of the UDM in defiance of perceived victimisation by the NUM exacerbated and prolonged animosities between working and striking miners. The loyalties Nottinghamshire's miners shifted from the NUM to the NCB and government were then betrayed when the area experienced colliery closures comparable to other coalfields. Nottinghamshire miners then had to face a history where they had betrayed solidarity with other miners in order to side with the institutions

[104] Former Bilsthorpe miner, 19 May 2016; former Warsop Main miner, 8 August 2016; former Annesley miner, 28 October 2016.
[105] Former Clipstone miner, 30 April 2016. Billy Elliot, BBC Films, 2000, is a popular film and musical set during the 1984—1985 miners' strike in north eastern England.
[106] Former Clipstone miner, 15 April 2016.
[107] L. Bardill, Changing perceptions of the 1984/85 miners' strike in the Nottinghamshire coalfield, Journal of Regional and Local Studies 22 (2004) 47—64; Amos, The Nottinghamshire miners.
[108] G. Blore, in: A. Franks, Nottinghamshire Miners' Tales, Nottingham, 2001, 76.
[109] Former Welbeck miner, 6 September 2016.
[110] Former Clipstone miner, 22 March 2016.
[111] Former Annesley miner, 28 October 2016.

which orchestrated the eventual demise of the coal industry.

North Nottinghamshire's complex and divisive histories have, thus, resulted in a deeply conflicted range of affective memories, elicited through the psychosocial interviews. In miners' life histories positive affective memories of the coal industry were continually compared to the postindustrial present. The industrial ruination of the surrounding area, combined with memories of splits in solidarity and job loss, means that positive memories of camaraderie and community are intersected with complicated affective memories, mostly determined by whether the participant went on strike or not. Further, these opposing historical trajectories and memories have resulted in forms of belonging being temporally and spatially dislocated in ways unlike those found in other coalfields where communities have resisted collective loss through shared memories of community solidarity.[112]

The striking miners interviewed have navigated spatial dislocations from their communities by attaching their belonging to a wider union history where their actions during the strike bond them to each other. This has allowed them to remain loyal to affective memories of solidarity and division accumulated during the 1984–1985 miners' strike. However, by not fully reconciling these affective memories, striking miners have continued to feel alienated and 'out of place' in their localities. Conversely, due to their actions during the strike, and their assumed complicity in the deindustrialisation of the coalfields, working miners have been excluded from participating in and enacting belonging through their past occupation as miners and its associated meanings and histories. Affective memories of pride in their work have been internalised and silenced, resulting in a dislocation from the wider class histories which connect British mining identity with striking in 1984–1985. That many working miners in north Nottinghamshire also contend that colliery closures could have been prevented had the strike been successful has led to affective memories of shame, embarrassment and guilt. Not only are these affective memories compounded by the socioeconomic effects of deindustrialisation, they act as a barrier to seeking ways to alleviate them and form new social bonds through a positive relationship to the past in north Nottinghamshire.

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112 R. Power, 'After the black gold': a view of mining heritage from coalfield areas in Britain, *Folklore* 119 (2008) 160–181.