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'Off the Model': resistant spaces, school disaffection and 'aspiration' in a former coal-mining community

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Abstract: Discussions of 'aspiration' influencing contemporary education policy and practice are framed almost exclusively in terms of individual - or, at most, familial - ambitions towards economic prosperity. The failure to achieve 'social mobility' in British society is often posed as being due to the 'low aspirations' of working class children, particularly in formerly heavily industrialised areas. In a classic case of 'blaming the victim' the social exclusion that undoubtedly exists in such areas is blamed on those who suffer it. Things would be different, the argument goes, if only people aspired to 'get on'. This paper looks at material from an intergenerational ethnographic study of some former coal-mining communities in the north of England which are often popularly characterised as insular and lacking in ambition. In contrast to this stereotype, however, the data suggests that working class teenagers growing up in the impoverished and abandoned utopian geography of Victorian colliery model villages, rather than suffering a failure of aspiration, often angrily and powerfully aspire - but for something contrary to the dominant model. Reviewing the ethnographic data in the light of a sociological and historical literature that attests to the exceptional nature of coal-mining communities, I suggest that such exceptionality impacts on young people's dispositions towards the educational project as a whole through a complex process of cultural transmission. A historically and locally situated notion of counter aspiration - that I call, here, resistant aspiration - is evident. I propose, in conclusion, that an acknowledgement of such resistant aspiration might help understand the widespread 'school disaffection' of working class youngsters not only in these former coal-mining communities but also in other post-industrial settings - nationally and internationally - that are similarly characterised by contested histories.

There seemed to be about a dozen kids there when I got there. The youth workers were locked out of the minibus which was parked up outside Cavendish Hall. The kids were huddled together in small groups getting cold and impatient, one lad whacking a football against the side of the bus. As we talk, it's clear they are mainly from the Model Village itself and there's clearly a bit of a thing about being 'off the Model', as they call it. They see themselves as a distinct group and in one interchange we were talking about school - where there's a new Head Teacher - and they were saying 'Aw, it's shit!' and 'it's wank!' or 'it's all about uniforms' and I said, 'Oh, they're sorting you out, are they?' and they said, 'They'll not sort *us* out! We're off the Model!' - Field notes, 22 January 2010.

I want, here, to explore aspects of how some young working class teenagers - powerfully disaffected from schooling - are living the key years of their teens and 'making meaning' in the particular physical, cultural, historical, imaginative and embodied space that is available to them in the former pit villages where they live. I will make the argument throughout that this particular post-industrial setting - three neighbouring former coal-mining villages in the Beldover¹ district of Derbyshire, England - is exceptional in some key ways, particularly in relation to the questions of

‘aspiration’ and ‘social mobility’ currently exercising politicians and education pundits alike. Such exceptionality, I suggest, significantly impacts on children’s and young people’s attitudes to education in the broadest sense and is at the root of what I describe as a form of *resistant aspiration* evident in this local space - a space I call here ‘the Model’².

Before beginning that discussion, however, it’s probably worth saying a little bit about why - as an ‘ethnographer of education’ - I come as enthusiastically as I do to those various inter-disciplinary contributions identified by Taylor (2009) as still moving ‘*towards* a geography of education’ (my emphasis), particularly those focussing on the study of children and young people as ‘key actors in society and space’ (Taylor, 2009, 651) brought together in *Children’s Geographies*. My interest is to do with specific aspects of ethnography.

According to Paul Willis,

The ‘ethnographic impulse’ is to be so moved with curiosity about a social puzzle ...that you are seized to go and look for yourself, to see ‘what’s going on’...Physical and sensuous presence then allows observation and witness...

- (Willis, 2000, xiii)

Ethnography’s methodological edge, *par excellence*, is in getting close up and providing rich descriptions of social worlds. It is particularly effective in social moments when

...profound processes of re-structuration and de-traditionalisation...are eroding the certainties of previous transitions and inherited cultures, as well as inciting them to re-establish themselves in new forms.

- (Willis and Trondman, 2000, 7)

At such points ethnography can make a very significant contribution to understanding how a ‘...particular culture works - how it maintains itself and adapts to changing circumstances’ (Walford, 2009, 273). Ethnography is not, of course, merely descriptive. At its most powerful it is both theoretically informed and capable of ‘*grounded* imaginings’ (Willis, 2000, xii, original emphasis).

In the case of my own work which occurs at precisely such a moment - a generation after the year-long strike of 1984-85 that presaged the end of the UK coal-mining industry - the physical and sensuous presence necessitated by ethnographic immersion has constantly abutted against recalcitrant questions about the complex, paradoxical, contested and uncertain nature of the ‘space’ that my study occupies. On a day-to-day basis, I have found myself inhabiting a dimension where the primary *real* would be at one moment simultaneously invested with past *and* present; with the remembered *and* forgotten; the physical, the imaginative *and* the affective; the material *and* the discursive.

Being able to draw on notions of space originating in the work of Lefebvre and Soja, both of whom stress that space is socially constructed and that social relations are constitutive of that space, has been essential in exploring some of the ‘luminosities’ that are ‘resonant with *enigma, paradox or absurdity*’ (original emphasis, Katz, 2001. p. 447) in my work. Geography’s increasing interrogation of the relationship between

space and time - and, related to that, liminality - is also pertinent to themes that are brocaded in the fabric of my own empirical data. What is more, ideas coming out of what arguably constitutes an 'affective turn' in the humanities and social sciences (see Ticineto Clough, 2007) - some of which, such as Thrift's elaboration of 'spatialities of feeling' (see Thrift, 2008, 171- 197), have originated on the fringes of geography - have been particularly valuable in coming to grips with the sheer emotional energy of the data. My geographical enthusiasm is, therefore, empirically driven. In being so, I hope it doesn't contribute accidentally to that rather unsatisfactory borrowing of vocabulary that Taylor, following Massey, warns against (Taylor, 2009, 652). It is just that notions of space as multi-layered, constitutive, active, uneasy and contested seem really *useful* to me. They help get an ethnographic purchase on the slippery empirics of growing up on the social margins in contemporary Beldover.

The Model

So, what about 'the Model'? Now, I have tried to represent the almost impenetrably dense, multiply stranded, interwoven, braided texture of this space – with its hauntings and injuries³, its 'geography of gender relations'⁴ (Massey, 1994, 181), its iconography of collective unity, and its utopian dreamings - elsewhere (see Bright, 2009, 2010a and 2010c). Literally, the term denotes the three Victorian model villages built by local coal companies in the neighbouring villages of Cragwell, Beldover and Coalbrook that constitute the boundary of my study. Two of these, Cragwell Model Village and New Beldover – built by the Beldover Coal Company under the patrician but none the less acquisitive eye of the local coal-owning aristocracy in the last decade of the nineteenth century - are particularly celebrated in architectural terms. The now structurally restored oval village at Cragwell - designed under the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement and built just prior to the publication of Howard's *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Social Reform* in 1898 - is a classic of its kind. New Beldover, a slightly earlier square of 200 houses overlooked by the castle at Beldover, reminds sharply of the stern 'moral quadrilaterals' that informed even these apparently enlightened social architectures (see Fishman 1999, 14).

So, 'the Model' is a group of very specific places. But it is already more than that. At first description even, it spills beyond its own literal content and reveals itself as a remnant, as the concretised *desideratum* of model coal-mining labour and social relationships as envisaged in the hey-day of the great 'vertical', privately owned coal and steel companies like the Beldover Coal Company. At this first level then, the Model is a frozen map of the labour hierarchy of extracting coal. As testament to the rigidity of that hierarchy, the dwellings in each Model Village vary subtly in design from the village's centre to its periphery as collier's houses give way in a precisely measured way to larger accommodation intended for officials.

At a second level, I extend the term 'the Model' to include also the other 'pit rows' and 'white city' estates that were developed at different times to accommodate a growing workforce in this part of the Derbyshire coalfield. But 'the Model' is more than that, too. It's a key example, in fact, of the broader 'spatial apartheid' (Skeggs, 2004, 180), that Beverley Skeggs, not mincing her words, recognises as powerfully impacting on lives in contemporary Britain. It is also a locus of celebrated, belligerent, identity as we see in the field note excerpt that I've used as an epigraph to this piece. Equally it's a space of denigration. All the kids that cause trouble, it seems,

are ‘off the Model’. The ‘druggies and thieves’ live on the Model. It has its concentration of Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs), its high numbers of teenage pregnancies, its surveillance and its curfews⁵. It’s a space of anecdotal fascination and reputation, an abandoned front line where time slips backwards and forwards, where nothing changes and everything has changed. It is a space, perhaps most significantly, steeped in the present absence of its own truncated history. And, arguably, that is having an impact on the way that young people envisage the possibilities of their lives - their aspirations - in ways that are complex and can’t easily, in the local idiom, be ‘reckoned up’. It’s as a contribution to that reckoning up that I hope to tease out some of those complexities here.

A coalfield ethnography

To do that, we’ll have to come in much closer to the space of the Model. First though, a few words on the focus of my research study as a whole⁶ and the methods employed. It is an *intergenerational*⁷ ethnography of class, education and youth transitions in part of the British coalfield - a setting that has been seen not only as paradigmatic of working class ‘community’ in modernity (see Lockwood 1966, Bulmer, 1975, Kamanka 1982) but even as ‘archetypally proletarian’ (Dennis *et al* 1956). This is a setting, furthermore, shaped by a ‘context of *singularity*’ (Strangleman, 2001, 255, my emphasis) relating to an exceptional history of workplace and community resistance (see the standard national and area histories: Page Arnot, 1961, Griffin, 1962, Williams, 1962). Indeed, Fentress and Wickham identify the coalfields as characterised primarily by ‘a very clear sense of the past as struggle [which] constitutes a memory that goes back at least a century’ and that has the strikes of 1926, 1972, 1974 and 1984-5 as a ‘common touchstone’ and ‘the imagery of the strike as defiance of the state [as]...a constant one’ (Fentress and Wickham, 1992, 115-6).

At its core, my research looks at the continuities and disjunctions between that particular *resistant* history and the structures of meaning shaping present day young lives. The study assembles data drawn from ethnographic fieldwork material gathered between 2006 and 2010 in the specific geographical setting already mentioned. The empirical material has been generated as part of a doctoral study itself arising from a long-term engagement with the studied communities – as a member of a pit family, as a trade union activist (particularly during the miners’ strike of 1984-85), as an adult and youth educator working in the Further Education sector throughout the 1990s and, more recently, as a senior development manager with the youth support service, Connexions.

Fieldwork

Acknowledging ethnography as a repertoire of methods characteristically involving *direct* and *sustained* social contact with agents, concentrated fieldwork has been carried out over a four year period in a variety of settings including an out-of-school 14-16 project, informal education and youth work venues, a youth service mobile unit, a community venue, private homes, a miners’ welfare club and in the street. Two key sites, however, have generated the bulk of the data:

- i. A sustained link (2007-2009) with staff and learners at a community based 'pre Entry to Employment'⁸ programme - *Go 4 it!* - recruiting 14-16 and 16-18 year-olds from the three communities who are either still at school but at 'risk of becoming NEET' (not in education, employment or training) or who have finished school and are NEET.
- ii. A sustained (2009-2010) participant observation of staff and young people of mixed ages involved with local authority 'detached' and club-based informal youth work provision in the three communities.

The former generated a series of semi-structured interviews with young people and staff, as well as a series of participant observation opportunities. The latter has generated regular observations, conversations and involvement in activities as well as semi-structured and unstructured interviews with groups and individuals. As might be expected in an ethnographic study, other methods have also been employed including spontaneously arising conversations; unstructured, small group informal discussions, 'go-alongs' (Kusenbach, 2003) and reference to biographical ethnographic material generated by the writer.

The Derbyshire Coalfield

Interestingly, any mapping of Derbyshire as a whole on *any* selected indicator of deprivation always happens to generate a map of the coalfield on the eastern side of the county. The core of what became the modern coalfield lies in what is now the Beldover District Council area of Derbyshire, though most of the large villages or small towns that grew rapidly in the last quarter of the nineteenth century have now been 'rebranded' as increasingly desirable 'historic market towns' since the pits closed in the Nineties⁹. Certainly, the pattern of deprivation within the Beldover District Council area plots the specific contours of coal extraction. Deeper still within the mapping of the district, impoverishment and marginalisation shows up as concentrated in the former colliery villages themselves. Within the villages, the shadow concentrates darkly around the scoured sites of former pits in the rows and estates of colliery housing.

Surprisingly though, a drive through Beldover district takes you through a rural scene redolent even of the Cotswolds. Quiet, minor roads skirt the edge of Dukeries estates. Hedgerows circumscribe worked agricultural land, each salient hillock capped by pheasant coverts planted in the nineteenth century. 'Beauty spots' are prominent as the roads run into Sherwood Forest. The former pit villages sit rudely in the middle of this contemporary commuter idyll. Deep-rooted inequalities, which worsened abruptly and, in some ward areas catastrophically, with the end of coal-mining, persist. Regeneration projects, demolition, site clearance and landscaping have erased the worst scars but the coalfields remain blighted by severe socio-economic problems, relating to unemployment, long-term sickness and poverty. Beldover District Council *as a whole* – its bucolic rural reaches notwithstanding - compares unfavourably with national averages (Derbyshire County Council, 2006) on indicators of health, benefit dependence, GCSE achievement, teenage pregnancy and 'lifestyle indicators' such as obesity, smoking, life expectancy and mental health. At a smaller scale within the small towns and large villages, the geography is increasingly one characterised by the tightly boundaried micro-sites of multiple exclusion that I'm calling The Model.

Coalbrook, Cragwell and Beldover all saw their pits close in early 1990s. Coalbrook, one of the largest communities and formerly the site of one of Derbyshire's biggest pits, has a population of around 10,000. Here, more than a third of the working age population are inactive¹⁰ while more than 50%¹¹ possess no qualifications. Three of Coalbrook's five wards are in the top 4%, 3% and 2% nationally. A fourth, Coalbrook North East ward - containing the colliery model village - is placed in the top 1% most deprived. Cragwell, with a population of about 5,000 has 32% inactive due to illness, disability or caring responsibilities, 52% with no qualifications and similar levels of deprivation at ward level. Beldover, the largest community, shows the same characteristics in the former colliery housing estates. Basically, deprivation in these localities reaches the very worst urban levels - a decline described at its nadir as a fall from 'model village to brown [heroin] city'¹² - in a setting, often, of classic rural isolation.

The global has impacted on the local here, too, in quite dramatic ways with significant East European economic migration into some former coal-mining towns and villages¹³, an issue that has been exploited, with some success, by the extreme right. All of these facts are compounded by the tendency for these 'villages Santa Claus has forgot'¹⁴ to be represented imaginatively, even by local professionals, through what Skeggs (2009, 37) has called a 'moral and discursive positioning of all types of the working class with degeneracy'. They are 'hillbilly country, yeah, get your banjo out!'¹⁵ People are described as trapped in a web of dependency and benefit claims in a landscape where, because of the levels of disability, 'Market day in Coalbrook [is] call[ed] "stick Wednesday"'¹⁶. The places 'are still stuck in 1972', people 'won't change', kids 'won't travel out o' their village'. Nobody, it seems, wants to 'get on.'¹⁷

Coal is now desperately unfashionable¹⁸ and coal-mining communities have long fallen from their 1980s position as the *cause célèbre* of the liberal intelligentsia. Overall, any questions of class exclusion and contested access to power in places such as these have largely been collapsed into a racialised discussion (see Páll Sveinsson, 2009, Gillborn, 2010) about the 'white working class'. This fails to connect in any way at all with the broad traditions of radical dissent and militant political action in British working class and labour history generally, never mind with the specific resistance histories of the coalfield. Consequently, there has been no attempt to situate the contemporary experience of growing up in these particular places in relation to that history. Youth disengagement and the apparent failure of aspiration that is supposedly to blame for the UK's lack of social mobility is rarely, if ever, seen as situated in differentiated local settings. Indeed, it is rather too often modelled as symptomatic of a near pathological – even congenital – intellectual *and* moral deficit extending to the white working class as a whole. In contrast, my work suggests, rather, that the unwillingness of young people 'off the Model' to embrace the aspirational project of 'resourcing the entitled middle class self' (Skeggs, 2004, 135-154) is *deeply* entangled with the specifics of local working class culture and history. To begin to see this web of connections in operation we need to enter the lived space of the Model. These characteristic excerpts from the ethnographic data will hopefully help us do that. I'll let them speak for themselves.

Entering the space¹⁹

Yeah. When I first started I walked up, come out o' police station went up Model Village an' this bloke din't [didn't] recognise me at first but I'd actually worked with 'im in past an' e' says 'Were tha goin' youth?' [Where are you going, mate?] I says, I'm goin' on Model. He says 'They'll fuckin' kill thee'[you]. He says 'Nobody's walked up there since 1984' [the year of the strike]. I says 'There is today'. That were two years ago [2005] An', er, it weren't accepted. You couldn't walk round there. But it's, like, *Model Village!* - Chris Stevens, adult, Police Community Support Officer, Coalbrook

Well, that come[s] up a lot. Cragwell, you bloody scabs, and UDM lot! And this was kids, that didn't know anything about the bloody pit. Yeah, you're dad's a scab, quite a lot of them said that to our kids. And I said, hey, some of their dads have never worked at the bloody pit. - Ivy Nichols, adult, Model Village community activist, Cragwell

Talking to some of the girls who came in to the evening drop-in session. One, Gemma, whose dad now works at a pit in the Midlands. So he's commuting around ninety miles each way. Interestingly, quite a political girl, she clearly knows about the strike. She's already talking about 'This new, bastard President' [Prime Minister, David Cameron]. It's day one of the coalition. She was talking about how she wanted to work in care, or as a teaching assistant but 'This bastard President is getting rid of teaching assistants' These girls all knew about the pit disaster at Cragwell, one of them saying 'They don't tell you nowt about it at school but I think me grandad were in it'. - Field notes, Youth club, Cragwell Model Village, 12 May 2010

The Community House on the Cavendish ('The Cavs') estate in Beldover, Derbyshire on a bitter cold Wednesday night in February, 2010. Cocker ('Cock o' the Estate'), Kandy, Potpot, JimJam, Heartbreaker and some other kids off the Cavs are sitting in the stifling, fart laden, artificial heat of the Community House watching the film short they made earlier in the year. It's called *Sticking together*. *Sticking together* came out of the experience that a couple of the kids - Cocker and Kandy - had in a locally made feature film of lives blighted by negative educational experiences, made by a noted progressive film-maker and starring an internationally acclaimed lead. Fired by the taste of it, they wanted to make something of their own that said something about themselves and about life in Beldover. Supported by a network of youth work practitioners and managers, the group of young people now huddled on the Community House settee, eventually scripted *Sticking together* from the fabric of their own lives and acted it over a couple of days under professional direction. We watch the DVD with the kids enunciating every line perfectly just before it's said, fascinated again by the space between them as kids and their screen personas as the kids who they aspire to be - kids 'that have it rough but *aren't* 'idiots'. Kids that stick together and together 'can do it, why can't you?' The dark tale unfolds. A gaggle of noisy teenagers, one bullied and abused by her alcoholic father, hang out together, look out for each other. They drink from large bottles of cider 'up the woods'. Roxy goes missing after witnessing her dad crashed out drunk again. She tries to kill herself. The kids find her before her father does. They confront him - 'Wanker!' He backs off. Three months later. They're hanging out again, heading for the woods, swinging the big plastic bottles. Roxy is with them. When the bottle goes round, she doesn't take a drink. She smiles, having all she needs - the solidarity of her mates. - Field notes, Cavendish Community House, 7 February, 2010

The other youth worker, he's from Coalbrook. When I said 'You're from Coalbrook are you?' one of the kids piped up: 'Scab!' The youth worker - he'd not been a miner but was from a pit family - just looked at him. I later asked this lad what that meant and he mumbled evasively 'Oh, I don't know, a scab's just like, er, summat [something] on your arm, a sore or summat that's not got better'. - Field notes, Model Village, Beldover, 22 January 2010

An insubordinate space

These extracts touch paradoxes that are commonplace in the ethnographic material that I have available. The past intersects constantly with the present in ways that are obvious but unacknowledged. Hidden insubordinate histories - still densely affective - assert themselves almost by rote. There is a belligerent sense of exceptionality and a feeling that there are important aspects of what it is to be 'off the Model' that school, for example, 'tells you nowt about.' A 'solidarist' colouring - as potentially

collectivist as it is communitarian²⁰ - leaks vaguely through a home-made vision of what a group of young people might become if only they stick together. In doing so, it references - not directly, but through something like an embodied *gnosis* of social memory – a contradictory iconography of stridency and plaintive impeachment commonly woven through the silks of miners’ trade union banners²¹ from villages in this area (see Gorman, 1973). ‘It’s still there’ as Stacey tells us,

People have still got wounds that are quite raw. Even though [the kids] don’t know about it. [T]hey’ve not told the kids the reason why, but deep down, if they’re honest, it’s back to miners’ strike. – Stacey, youth worker, Coalbrook.

If we are to understand the unevenness and complexity of young people’s attitudes towards aspiration and mobility then we need to acknowledge that meaning-making in communities such as these occurs within a powerful framework of social memory (see Passerini, 2006). The ‘tradition of resistance’, however complicatedly constituted, remains active even if the forms of transmission have been blunted by the demise of the industry and disrupted by the particularly conflicted nature of its history locally.

Notably, that tradition has been unevenly memorialised throughout the coalfields, with some areas developing a substantial and multi-sited public remembrance of the industry and its landmark ‘struggles’ (see Roberts 2007) and others very little. In the Beldover area, the resistance history of the coalfield is more complex and occluded than it is in other areas. These villages share a history as sites of sharply contested political, work-based and community disputes running back to the earliest days of the coal-mining industry and before that to the machine breaking of Luddism (see Thompson, 1963). These conflicts run from syndicalist influenced ‘direct action’ during early twentieth century strikes (see Holton, 1976, 106) through the strikes, lock-outs and general strike of the Twenties, bitter internecine disputes between the Miners’ Federation of Great Britain (MFGB) and the ‘Spencer’ union in the Thirties (see Williams, 1962) to the events of the 1984-5 national strike (see Richards, 1996) during which picketing, policing and local divisions were the most intense anywhere in the British coalfield²². Throughout this history, large-scale confrontations involving local men, women and children in open conflicts with ‘occupying’²³ police forces, even troops, have been not been uncommon. Memorialisation is thus in this locality, complex, dangerous and, as yet, incomplete. The necessary work of remembering ‘to remember in order to forget’ (Passerini, 2006, p. 240) has not yet been carried out.

The very real tradition of insubordination locally is, as a consequence, enigmatically both absent and present. In pit families it is almost a condition of everyday life, but is barely referred to. Yet it is transmitted, and at least partially legitimated, through the conduit of social memory. The groups of young people – ‘over a hundred’ in a Community Police Support Officer’s accounts - confronting the police in Coalbrook recreate, in scale at least, the confrontations of the 1984-85 strike. Similarly, youth gang conflicts crudely reprise the conflict between largely striking and largely working villages. For those over 30, the severity of 1984-85 strike is easily and vividly recalled. Kelly, then a girl in infant school, now a probation worker recalls

...someone built a house and they smashed that down... Yeah someone was working. Someone was working two streets from us and they went and put their windows through. The clearest thing I can remember from the strike and my mum can’t believe I can remember it, was we went up to X pit, wives and husbands, and my dad got arrested and I leant back on a wall and I can just remember seeing my mum jumping on a copper’s back attacking him, my

uncles being locked up...²⁴

While some young people, as we've already seen, have a clear knowledge about past conflicts and historical legacies many others, though - not surprisingly given the studied intergenerational silence - know little, if anything. 'Nobody talks about pit round Longthorne anymore' according to ASBO Jonnyo.²⁵ Leanne²⁶ has 'never 'eard' of the strike. Cocker²⁷ has, but 'It kind o' went straight through'. Knowledge is ghosted, rather, in an unhappy combination of intergenerational disconnection, a severing of young people from their own history ('I've only seen Billy Elliot' - Dave²⁸) and the acting out of a stagnant, unspecified grievance - an 'attitude' - that still carries a blunt and surly currency. If, though, as Diane Reay (2009, p.27) has suggested, 'children negotiate schooling not only directly through their own experiences but also through the sedimented experiences of parents or even grandparents' then we would expect to see this history influence young people, and it is there. There *is* a transmission of resistance:

Yeah, definitely, definitely, you know I've had kids that were second generation, you know, their parents weren't [even] miners, but you know, they will still say: 'Aye, fucking miners strike! - Stacey.

What is more, resistant power, as a magnetically attractive, if dangerous force, is collusively reproduced through a set of narratives that, while arguably true to the facts of marginalisation, dramatise life around the Model. Police mythology has Coalbrook, according to PCSO Chris Stevens, as a 'vicious, fighting town' where you get sent for punishment. Professionals exchange anecdotes about young people who now exercise masculinity through unemployment and allegedly learn to labour at crime through a form of apprenticeship to their fathers. This labelling is parodied here by Liam Mc Cain:

...white trainers, tracky bottoms, baseball cap. Always playin' on his *X Box*. Workin' class. Always out robbin' or stealin'. Broken family and all the rest of it.

Undoubtedly, too, young people are often happy to perpetuate these stereotypes, at least initially, sharing in the sinister frisson of living in a 'shit hole', a 'Bronx' a 'Beirut'²⁹ like the Model and engaging in excitedly contested discussions about the comparative status of the various localities - which is worst for drinking, which for 'smackheads', which for 'theiving'. Indeed, I've sat with two detached youth work groups on two different estates in Beldover - the Cavs and the Model (both of which are subject to the same anti-social behaviour order banning gatherings of more than three under 18s after nine o'clock at night) - on two different nights of the same week and heard each group use exactly the same phrase about the other: 'They'll pinch thy [your] shoe laces o'er theer! [over there]'

Resistant aspiration

This combination of, on the one hand a resistant history transmitted through the fabric of cultural memory and, on the other, a deliberately cultivated 'outlaw' status perpetuated through a celebratory, ironic, double identification with the worst denigratory stereotypes - a kind of *perruque* (De Certeau, 1984) of negative expectation - is common in the space of the Model. Indeed, it is noticeable enough to amount to a broadly coherent form of what, for want of a better term, I'd like to call

resistant aspiration. It takes a number of forms – being a ‘little bastard’, ‘sticking up for yersen [yourself]’, ‘not taking no shit’, ‘walking out’ and for the girls ‘not being plastic’ (see Bright, 2009, 2010b, 2010c). It is aimed at the world beyond the village generally but specifically at that world as it is represented through compulsory schooling. At its mildest, it attests to a persistent disconnection from school except that school provides desirable access to ‘yer mates’. At its most extreme, it amounts to what seems to be a straightforward, unambiguous *refusal* by young people of the education project *as a whole*, its values and practices, its visible and hidden curricula.

While superficially nihilistic, I would suggest that at a deeper level it constitutes a form of aspiration none the less. It is no mere underclass ‘incontinence’.³⁰ Its ‘ambition’ is to counteract the conventional framework of *individual* aspiration promulgated through the schooling system by pre-empting school’s many formal and informal exclusionary powers. If we *pre-exclude* ourselves, then the power of those that exclude is neutralised and the indignity of exclusion eliminated. It is defensive, to be sure, but not necessarily negative. In its very refusal it aims to protect and re-affirm through a range of tactics - including both direct disruption (‘just doing stuff’) and an exaggerated, resistant humour (see Dubberley, 1993) that echoes the pit demotic of ‘pillocking - a set of class-rooted values. As an aspect of the continuing singularity of coal-mining communities such resistant aspiration is richly active within community culture. It is also, I am suggesting, active in the school classroom, where it manifests primarily as resistance to the imposition of a set of class values imposed by ‘outsider’ teachers.

If we move on to consider some examples, we can see how this works. Firstly, though, it’s necessary to acknowledge that school disaffection in the localities that I’ve studied does, of course, have much in common with the experiences of working class kids in other areas and settings. As Diane Reay reminds us, state educative and associated processes take place in a *national* context where, as a result of a century of class domination, there persists a ‘historical legacy of being the inferior ‘other’that resonates in the present’ (Reay, 2009. p24). Reay’s own finding that

The vast majority [of working class young people]...talked about a sense of powerlessness and educational worthlessness, and feelings that they were not really valued and respected within education. (Reay, 2009, 24)

is constantly echoed throughout my work:

It were just teachers, used to do me ‘ead [head] in. Just used to talk to you like crap. Used to think they’re better... Well, they’ll just talk to you like you’re nothing. ..They don’t say ‘please’ or nothing. – Lianne, young person, *Go 4 it!*, Coalbrook.

She [the teacher] just thinks she’s reight [right] good, an’ she said that none of us are gonna get qualifications, none of us are gonna get jobs an things like that. An’ she used to say: *Yeah, and you think you can live off your Daddy’s money for rest o’ your life?* An’ fings like that. An’ teachers wonder why I got mad wi’ ‘er [with her]. - Josie, young person, *Go 4 it!*, Coalbrook.

Reay also notes the emphatic impact on boys specifically,

It [is] working class boys, in particular, who manifest [...] the alienation that continued domination within the educational field generates. - (Reay, 2009, 25)

Karl, P-J, ASBO Johnnny, Dave, Kandy and Cocker all talked about adopting a persistent low-level resistant behaviour in school that they called 'daft'. It took fairly inane forms, stayed within masculinised and often sexist boundaries, incrementally achieved a 'reputation' by virtue of escalation, and contributed inevitably in most of their cases to permanent school exclusion –something often met with a mix of anger and relief,

I used to like goin', just used to like goin' to mess about an' that... Yeah just to ay [have] a laugh... Daft stuff. Puttin' ...porno on their computers an' that, so when they go to lift their lap top up... – Dave, young person, *Go 4 it!*, Coalbrook.

Misbehavin' inside classrooms... Jus' like interruptin' people, putting people off their work, laughin', throwin' things, callin' teachers, walkin' out, walkin' back in again... Used to 'ave a laugh all time... – ASBO Johnny-O, *Go 4 it!*, Coalbrook.

We' just used to do like daft stuff and [eventually] nobody'd be bothered about doin' it anymore, so it just used to go to more serious stuff an' that... There were loads on us. We all got excluded. All at same time, really. I were happy 'cos all me mates were excluded wi' me. So I weren't really that bothered – Dave

So, I'm not saying that the experience of the Model is *completely* distinctive. But it *is* a very specific and singular case of this general phenomenon. The kids 'off the Model' refer to an ongoing, persistent struggle with teachers who come from 'elsewhere', represent alien values, don't understand what it had been like in what Cocker calls 'old nature'³¹ and talk to them 'like shit'

They come from round Chesterfield area an' stuff like that... Yeah. You'll get some from Chesterfield, some from Sheffield and places like that.
– P-J, young person, *Go 4 it!*, Coalbrook.

In a context of de-industrialisation and poverty this struggle is sharply instrumental, having its own bitter political economy,

I've 'ad teachers say to me: You're a waste o' space. You're not gonna get nowhere. They don't like kids from round 'ere, I don't think. They're just stuck up. All they're bothered about are getting their wages: 'I get £20 an hour!' [Incredulously] Up your arse! Alreight, then. That's *bull!* They [the teachers] say: We can sit 'ere all day and do nothing. We'll still get our wages. – Samantha, young person, Cavendish Estate, Beldover.

They used to just, like, look down at you cos, oh, I'm higher than you so you do this and you do that... Teachers? They not bothered really about you. They just want to ...get their money - P-J.

Eventually the boys - and some of the more belligerent girls, such as Sophie from a Beldover pit family - pitch against this and decisively fight back in defence of what they feel are the intergenerational core values underpinning life in their communities,

That's wor it got to... Yeah, just thought : 'Fuck it!'... Not takin' no shit! ...they just talk to y' like shit... I thought 'I 'a'nt [haven't] been brought up like that... An' it's 'ow you get brought up really in't it. I got brought up to take no shit really, so that's what got me kicked out when I were in year 10.
– Karl, young person, *Go 4 it!* Coalbrook.

Half o' 'em are from Sheffield, like. Belder³² people they're like: We're *not bothered!* Belder's Belder! If you want to live in Belder you've got to

ger on wi' everybody! They pick on us 'cos, well, we speak us minds. Belder people speak their minds. If they get a bang, they get a bang. If they get put in 'ospital, they get put in 'ospital... Teachers don't like that. Like, you say what you think... you 'ave to fight back at 'em.

– Sophie, young person, Beldover.

Josie, here, refuses the educational project outright as did her youth worker, Stacey, a generation earlier,

[I'd] just walk out lessons. Walk in lessons late. Just don't do nowt [nothing]. Just sit there... I told 'em [emphatically] *I'm not doin' what nobody says!* – Josie

I could've had an easy life ... but I've got this voice in here, saying you're not telling me what to do! – Stacey

In more than one instance, both boys and girls refuse even to collect their GCSE results, stepping firmly and completely outside the credentialist valuation that they represent,

[Emphatically] No, I don't! I don't! I don't need me – what you call 'em? - GCSE grades, to get where I want to get. Like your teachers – what's it called? – [in whining voice] 'You know you need them grades to get that job and y' need this. You'll never get anywhere you won't', and stuff. And I *don't* need 'em. Do you know what I mean? – Lianne

This resistance is commonly embedded in peer and family culture too, as we see in this exchange among the members of the *Cavs Lasses Group*³³

Nicky: Me mum told teacher to 'Kiss my arse!'

Samantha: She's a legend, her mum!

Nicky: She's just like us... if you get me. She just 'as a laugh.

Samantha: She's sound. But she can be a bitch.

In that these refusals are 'infused with [a] sense of the righteous indignation that once underpinned a strong working class politics' to which Reay has recently drawn attention (2009, 26) they constitute a resistant ambition for something other. That 'something other' is often represented in the coalfields as something that has been irrevocably lost, but must still be fought over. Sometimes - as in the vision of *Sticking together* - it is glimpsed as something still sensed as redeemable. What I'm calling resistant aspiration is, therefore, complex. It seems to point simultaneously in a number of different contradictory directions, responding to at least three energies. There's the belligerent and direct refusal that we've just noted here. There's the instinctive collective solidarism of the Beldover young people's DVD and 'everybody sticking together dahn [down] Coalbrook'. But there's also a substantial element of radical conservatism that is powerfully present. Sharply curbing any tendency to romanticise the militancy of young people's disaffection, this latter merits a detailed description.

Radical conservatism?

In a remarkable piece in the early historical literature on the miners' strike of 1985-85, Raphael Samuel outlined what he argued were the backward looking themes that played out in that 'war of ghosts' where 'the miners, though stigmatised as the

“enemy within” were defending ...old fashioned’ values...the dignity of work, the sanctity of family, ‘roots’ (Samuel, 1986, 6). Samuel emphasised the significance of kinship networks and village localism rather than ‘community’ - itself *discovered* during the strike rather than already present - and argued that ‘the animating spirit of the 1984-85 strike, its ‘common sense’ or implicit ideology, was that of *radical conservatism*’ (Samuel, 1986, 22, original emphasis). The very ‘modesty’ of demands - for personal dignity and job security - and the potent mobilising appeal of ‘family hearth and home’ was strongly highlighted.

Nearly twenty years after the closure of the pits and the precipitous collapse of the local economic and social structure linked to coal-mining, the kids are still, for sure, defending the same hereditary, patriarchal virtues of ‘loyalty’ and ‘honour’ that Samuel (1986, 22) saw as the key elements of a widespread, radically conservative ‘common sense’. This protective defensiveness – exercised within a still extant, if attenuated, ‘ideology of virility’ (Massey, 1994) where ‘staying’ is a critical measure of loyalty, ‘moving on’ is *always* tantamount to betrayal and ‘mobility’ is a fundamental risk to identity - is characteristic:

...You know, you can’t better yourself and get out of this box in Coalbrook because of the effect that it would have on your family. And these family things, like my mum’s having a nervous breakdown because she can’t cope with all the stress of having to pay the bills and she’s a bag of nerves and she drinks and she smokes and what have you. It’s like, well, what does your dad do? Well, he sits in the [miners’ welfare] all day because you know, that’s what he knows best, he still wants to hold onto...that mining culture where he felt safe, but can’t afford to do it. He wants to go back to work but at that time, they were all going off sick because they got more benefits from going off sick with bad backs and, you know, pit did this to me, and the kids were saying to me: I might as well be on the dole, same as my dad. Who’s going to look after my dad if I go to work? Who’s going to fetch my dad’s fags if I go to work? - Stacey

Also discernible is a kind of scrupulously choreographed nostalgia. Although young people are supposedly running wild - their anti-social behaviour a strictly contemporary phenomenon – observation suggests the continuing operation of a repertoire of gestures and social routines recognisable from fifty years ago.

...you see it on the skate park, it’s dead weird...they get these cans, and they go and sit on the skate park. The lads all sit around doing what they do, and the girls sit over here. There’s a clear divide... You know you see a lass come over and [she’ll] say: Can I have a light for my fag? And the [lads] say: No! Go over there! We’re with the lads! But it’s [his] girlfriend really, but [she’s] not allowed to come and sit over here. It’s like a having a taproom in a working men’s club – Stacey

This is the kind of ‘*nostalgic evocation* of [work] regimes, even in the aftermath of their disappearance’ noted in the work of Taylor and Jameson (1997, p.153). Astonishingly, there are numerous references within my data – even among the relatively extreme cases of young people who have finally been imprisoned after numerous breaches of anti-social behaviour orders – to street behaviour originating more in folkway ‘mischief’ going back a hundred years³⁴ than in any breakdown of ‘law and order’. While there is fairly widespread consumption of cheap alcohol and regular use of ‘weed’ and ‘phet’ among young people, the acme of ‘trouble’ is often still regarded as ‘hedge-hopping’ and ‘knock-a-door-run’:

I 'ant caused trouble ...I don't play knock-a-door-run anymore
– Milly, young person, Beldover

I 'ad an ASBO...soon as I left school. When you've got nothin' to do you keep getting' in trouble all time...But it all started, like, mischievous an' things like that...Knock-a-door-run, stuff like that. Then I jus' got, got out o' control ...they used to call me 'ASBO Johnno'...[The ASBO] just made me worse.
– ASBO Jonnyo

Personal ambitions, through this backward glance, like the aspirations of the strikers noted by Samuel, are modest. They're also - notwithstanding the changes in women's lives both as a result of their involvement in the strike (see Seddon, 1986) and relatively recent changes in employment - powerfully gendered. The young men's envisioned futures remind one of the National Coal Board's 'modernising' recruitment campaigns of the 1960s in their quaintness:

When my kids grow up I want to tell 'im [him] I've got a career behind my belt, not just as like a dole-er for rest o' me life. Gor [got] a nice missus [wife]. Hopefully get married, like. Get summat behind me belt. Nobody can say owt [anything] then, can they? - Cocker

I'll be able to get a nice car eventually, a nice place to live, even if I don't own it, I wouldn't mind renting, making it look really nice, and having a nice car and dressing well and looking after myself. I think after I've got that, a girlfriend and long term partner will come with it...I'll have options, I'll be able to get up and think what do I *want* to do, not what *can* I do...Yeah to enable you to do anything, I don't mean extravagant. I'd like to go for a nice quiet pint, with some nice people, to be happy. – Ryan, young person, *Go 4 it!*, Coalbrook

Young women's aspirations, too, are often tightly circumscribed. Melanie, in this exchange, looks to motherhood - and the male protection it brings - as a route to adulthood:

M - Well I have to admit, I've always wanted a kid since I was 13, but obviously I've never had one, because I've taken the pill and stuff and it takes about a year to come out of your system.

NGB - So you're not using anything now then?

M - No, not now.

NGB - And if you got pregnant you'd be happy would you?

M - Yeah. I've talked to Jimmy about it and I've talked to my mum about it.

NGB - Right. So what would that mean for you to have a 'little un' in your life?

M - More close and more trusting...I think it would bring us closer together, no paranoia, and if we walked in the street he wouldn't be watching lads if they were checking me out or anything like that.

NGB - Because you'd be a mother and you'd have a baby?

M - Yeah, and it would be different, we'd be more close anyway.

NGB - What else would you get from it?

M - Settling down, getting our own house and getting married.

NGB - It would be kind of like growing up, would it?

M - Yeah, it would.

- Melanie, young person, Coalbrook.

Clearly, the aspirations evident here are shaped in significant part by the kind of radical conservatism that Samuel identifies just as much as they are by the other strands we've already identified. At different times, both Cocker and his sister, Jimjam, make this unambiguously explicit,

When pit shut, it meant a lot o' consequences for everybody...but
to tell you truth, if pit ever reopened I think I'd be first 'un theer [first
one there]. - Cocker

I wish they'd open pit and them factories again, now. 'Cos we 'an't got
no jobs.
— Jimjam, young person, Beldover

Conclusion

As we have seen, teenagers in these former coal mining communities are framing their individual hopes in situations shaped more by complex, classed forms of cultural transmission and by social memory than they are by the kind of atomised biographies that are modelled in contemporary discourses of aspiration. What's more, the transmission is dense, uneven, messy and contradictory. Sometimes, too, it is only partial - scrambled by the elisions and silences of painful conflicts still impacting on families twenty five years after the 1984-85 strike. Knowing this, where does it leave us?

There are currently a number of reasonably well-funded, imaginative and enthusiastic projects in the Derbyshire coalfield area that are attempting to address aspects of 'raising aspirations' among young people in former coal-mining wards specifically. They bring together a host of practitioners and managers across a range of partner agencies working in both schools and the wider community and will probably be, given the change of UK government, some of the very last coalfield initiatives. Significantly, the staff employed to develop these projects generally share a view that there is something particular going on in these localities - something deep-rooted but rarely articulated that needs to be identified and taken into account in planning and practice if there is to be any lasting change.

In this piece, I have tried to articulate that 'something' as it arises as a set of paradoxes in my ethnographic data. In doing so, I have availed myself of an expansive notion of space that seems to me characteristic of the adventurousness of contemporary human geography. In taking that notion on board, I've argued in some detail for the 'grounded imagining' of a space called 'the Model' as a way of theoretically informing empirical data that emerges in convoluted ways from a site dense with layered meanings of various forms - material, imaginative, storied, remembered, embodied and erased.

Such an approach, I hope to have shown, enables us to *situate* the ways in which a group of young people make meaning in the richly lived quotidian circumstances of their lives. Specifically, I've suggested that attitudes toward aspiration and mobility, in these former coal-mining localities at least, can only really begin to be understood if they are seen thus, as situated. In fact, I've claimed boldly and with something of a polemical purpose that the cluster of influences operative in the Model effectively amounts – as tangled and convoluted as its roots are – to a form of resistant counter-aspiration. As such, it sets itself against the dominant discursive model of aspiration as individual economic advancement that predominates in current discussions. If that is the case, then the implications for practice models that fail to move beyond that discourse are fairly clear – they will likely meet the same forms of resistance.

As I've said throughout, the coalfields are exceptional in some very important ways but I don't think they're unique. There are other localities and other groups that have their hidden histories and their resistant identities and that also stand outside the dominant discursive framework of mobility as a central resource of the middle class self. Some, like those 'off the Model', are marginalised by de-industrialisation and class, others – nationally and internationally – are marginalised by gender, ethnicity and the dislocation of migration under the impact of globalisation. All are very specifically situated. Critical inter-disciplinary practice – possibly across the fertile hinterland of ethnography and the geography of education and, further, responding to bell hooks' exhortation to enter 'the margin as a space of radical openness' (hooks, 1990) – will be imperative in coming to an in-depth understanding of the complex needs, indeed 'aspirations', of any of them.

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¹ Names of all people and all places at a sub-county level have been changed. I couldn't resist borrowing 'Beldover' from D.H. Lawrence's *oeuvre*, some parts of which are set in the research locality.

² 'The Model' refers literally to the three Victorian colliery model villages and the other former colliery housing. It also refers, as I explain in the text, to a powerfully affective space of injury, betrayal, longing, belonging and dreaming.

³ Upwards of a 100 men were killed at a colliery near Beldover in the 1930s and around 20 at the same colliery at a later date. Scores of men were also killed in an underground disaster at 'Cragwell' Colliery in the period after World War 2. The vagueness of statistics here is deliberate and with a view to protecting identities of participants.

⁴ The question of gender is critically important in the ethnography as a whole. I presented a paper – 'Not takin' no shit!' Disaffected Masculinities and aspects of Gender, Resistance, Community and Schooling in a former UK coal-mining area – at the 2009 Oxford Ethnography Conference, St Hilda's College, Oxford and a linked paper – 'On refusing to be 'plastic': Educational disaffection and 'aspiration' as experienced by women and girls in a former UK coal-mining area- at the 2010 Oxford Ethnography Conference at New College, Oxford.

⁵ Beldover has a village-wide curfew preventing young people being on the street in numbers after 9pm. Other villages have spaces of controlled movement. Interestingly, the geography of curfew and surveillance very neatly reflects the ghosted social geography of the coal-mining industry and its conflicts, particularly the strike of 1984-85.

⁶ To be developed as a book length study in the Ethnography of Education series.

⁷ That is to say, it looks at issues affecting young people as they emerge from the accounts of both young people and the adults that work and/or live with them. Where quotations are given, the status of contributors will be made clear as either 'adult' or 'young person'.

⁸ Entry to Employment, commonly known as 'E2E', is a programme for those NEET (not in employment, education or training) 16-18 year olds aiming for an apprenticeship study programme but 'not yet ready'. *Go 4 it!* is a *pre-E2E* programme. I also studied the associated, 14-16, *Go 4 it!* programme aimed at those still in school but 'at risk of exclusion.

⁹ The 'Let's move to...' column in *The Guardian* of 20 March, 2010, focussed on 'Let's move to...Sherwood Forest and the Dukeries, and live the legend' It noted 'a hidden world of villages and market towns as picturesque as you'll find, and countryside rolling with gorges and copses'. Unfortunately, it registered 'The case against', namely 'the coal industry which has left swathes of countryside pretty bleak looking'.

¹⁰ The level of industry related illness and subsequent unavailability for employment is high enough in the northern part of Derbyshire - a county now without a single mineworker - to occupy three full-time National Union of Mineworkers officers in pursuing injury compensation claims.

¹¹ All statistics referred to in this section are derived either from the 2001 census or are publically available from Derbyshire County Council's website.

¹² Discussion with Stacey, youth worker, Coalbrook.

¹³ Coalbrook is an example. A major development, *World of Leisure* - funded significantly by regeneration money - occupies a site on the old colliery area in the heart of Coalbrook model village and employs a workforce the majority of which is made up of East European economic migrants.

¹⁴ Frank Lowe, adult, former coal miner now community tutor, Coalbrook.

¹⁵ Liam McCain, adult, 'fathers worker'.

¹⁶ Christine Wolf, adult, education manager, Coalbrook.

¹⁷ Such comments are completely commonplace, being a discourse of derision in their own right.

¹⁸ See Rebecca Solnit's 'What apocalypse are you nostalgic for?' in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, January 2010. That Solnit - a celebrated, progressive public intellectual - might so easily forget to mention the notoriously exploitative conditions of coal extraction, is remarkable.

¹⁹ I'm deliberately echoing bell hooks' (1990) exhortation in *Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness* which runs thus: 'Marginality as a site of resistance. Enter that space.'

²⁰ I am drawing on Byrne's account (Byrne 1999). Byrne distinguishes between various 'solidarisms', both 'collectivist' and 'communitarian'. Some viewpoints regard market capitalism as reformable, others do not.

²¹ Beldover's 'lost' banner shows the pit being handed over – by a handshake - from the coal owners to the workers on vesting day, 1 January, 1947, when the National Coal Board was established. The motto under the scroll 'National Union of Mineworkers, Beldover Branch' is 'Our heritage'. I am indebted to Nottinghamshire NUM and their Retired Members Section for searching for an image of the banner and to the former secretary of 'Beldover' branch of the NUM, for finally providing me with one. Beldover's modern NUM banner shows the arrest of Arthur Scargill at the Orgreave mass picket during the 1984-85 strike. These two contrasting images represent the uneasy coincidence of plaint and militancy in coalfield iconography.

²² Gary Charlesworth, then the NUM Branch Secretary at Coalbrook pit, describes the period: 'It were terrible...what you'd got, you'd got people goin' to work from out o' village and then you got [long pause] people breakin' their windows, painting black crosses on their doors...all this and that. They

[the police] were marchin' 'em in [to work] from village an' all. Oh, aye, Model Village, aye. They were walkin' 'em [working miners] down, youth. Aye, used to get more abuse in their families an' all. It were just, well, horrendous'. Gary also described the storming of Coalbrook police station and the burning of 'scab' buses in Coalbrook during the strike, the latter of which led to custodial sentences for strikers.

²³ The term used by Neville, a former miner from Cragwell. He described Cragwell 'as occupied for a whole year by the Metropolitan police' during 1984-85.

²⁴ Karen, at the time of interview a learning support assistant with young people, now a probation worker. Interviewed in Coalbrook.

²⁵ ASBO Jonnyo, young person, interviewed in Coalbrook.

²⁶ Leanne, young person, Coalbrook.

²⁷ Cocker, young person, conversation in Beldover Community House.

²⁸ Dave, young person, interviewed in Coalbrook.

²⁹ Names used by young people to describe their home villages.

³⁰ See Bright, 2010c where I review some key concepts from Paulo Virno's work which looks at 'exodus' and 'defection' as forms of political refusal. Virno uses Aristotle's distinction between 'incontinence' and 'intemperance' to drive a wedge between apolitical and politically potent refusal.

³¹ The past. This usage seems to be unique to Cocker.

³² The local name for Beldover.

³³ An informal after-school, girls only, youth group in Beldover.

³⁴ Growing up in the same locality, I played 'knock-a door-run' and went 'hedge-hopping' in the 1960s. My mother (1916-1996) spoke to me of doing the same things in the 1920s.

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