# SOLIDARITY, CLASS AND LABOUR AGENCY: MAPPING NETWORKS OF SUPPORT BETWEEN LONDON AND THE COALFIELDS DURING THE 1984-5 MINERS' STRIKE

**Diarmaid Kelliher**

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

School of Geographical and Earth Sciences

College of Science and Engineering

University of Glasgow

March 2017

# **Abstract**

From March 1984 to March 1985, over 150,000 British coal miners walked out on strike in protest at plans for widespread closures in the industry. Alongside the strike developed a large and diverse support movement, both within Britain and internationally. This thesis focuses on the solidarity campaign in London, a city far from the heartlands of the coal industry. The support movement outside of the coalfield areas has been relatively understudied in the years since the dispute, and this thesis is a contribution to recuperating this important history. The four central empirical chapters are organised thematically. The first explores relationships developed between London and the coalfields from the late 1960s, arguing that the support of 1984-5 must be rooted in ongoing mutual relationships of solidarity. The second describes the diverse spaces and sites in which the support movement was enacted, and how distinct tactics such as twinning and forms of politicised mobility reduced the distance between London and mining areas, enabling the development of personal relationships across space. The third focuses on the weaknesses of the support movement, working-class opposition to the strike, and the relationship between this absence of solidarity and the anti-union rhetoric of elites. In the fourth empirical chapter, I emphasise how the intersecting politics of class, race, gender and sexuality were raised through the miners' strike solidarity movement, and the forging of new relationships across spatial and social boundaries.

Through a study of the miners' support movement, this thesis makes a number of central theoretical contributions. It is concerned firstly with developing an account of translocal solidarity as a generative relationship that can construct connections across social and geographical boundaries, and develop new political theories and practices. Secondly, I argue for an intersectional approach to class as a way of rejecting simplistic divisions between the politics of class, gender, sexuality and race. In particular, I highlight intersectionality as a historical process whereby relationships of solidarity across space inform a politics that is simultaneously able to recognise differences and develop commonalities. Thirdly, I emphasise how translocal networks of solidarity contribute to relational constructions of place, but that such an understanding is not inimical to a deep, historically rooted local development of class. Fourthly, I argue that a spatially and temporally dynamic understanding of the construction of cultures of mutual solidarity can contribute significantly to how we think about labour agency.

# Contents

# Acknowledgements

Thanks firstly to my supervisors David Featherstone and Andrew Cumbers. Their continued enthusiasm for this research has given me renewed energy repeatedly over the years. They have been very generous with their time, knowledge and ideas. It has been extremely enjoyable and rewarding to work with them. The department at Glasgow more generally has been a welcoming and interesting place to do my PhD.

I have spent considerable time in archives and libraries in various parts of Britain in the past few years. I would like to thank all the staff that directly or indirectly helped me, without which this research would have been impossible.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of the PhD has been meeting lots of people and talking geography, history, politics, film and everything else. I can't list everyone, but I would like to acknowledge those people that I have organised events, talks, seminars or conference panels with: Hannah Awcock, Ewan Gibbs, Catherine Grant, Paul Griffin, Hannah Ismael, Ada Okoye, Di Parkin, David Selway, and Rob Waters. Extra-special thanks to my radical history comrades Tank Green and Luca Lapolla, who have been a lot of fun to organise events with and great friends as well.

Frequent travel between London and Glasgow has had the benefit of allowing me to see considerably more of my family in Newcastle. Thanks to my parents Antoinette and Joe, my sister Róisín, brother Matthew, and Scout the Staffy, whose support has been invaluable. Finally, particular thanks to Kim Bonnar who has had to listen to me talking about the miners' strike far more than is reasonable. For all your support, which has made this PhD feel considerably more manageable, I am very grateful.

## Author's declaration

I declare that except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.


Diarmaid Kelliher

# Abbreviations and acronyms

Asian Youth Movement (AYM)

Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF)

Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians (ACTT)

Black Delegation to the Mining Communities (BDMC)

Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA)

Colliery Officials and Staffs Area (COSA)

Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB)

Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunications and Plumbing Union (EETPU)

Gay Liberation Front (GLF)

General, Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trades Union (GMBATU)

Government Communications Headquarter (GCHQ)

Greater London Association of Trades Councils (GLATC)

Greater London Council (GLC)

Hall-Carpenter Archives (HCA)

History from below (HfB)

Iron and Steel Trades Confederation (ISTC)

Lesbians Against Pit Closures (LAPC)

Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM)

Mineworkers' Defence Committee (MDC)

National Association of Colliery Overmen, Deputies and Shotfirers (NACODS)

National Association of Local Government Officers (NALGO)

National Coal Board (NCB)

National Graphical Association (NGA)

National Union of Mineworkers (NUM)

National Union of Public Employees (NUPE)

National Union of Railwaymen (NUR)

National Union of Seamen (NUS)

Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO)

Socialist Workers Party (SWP)

Society of Graphical and Allied Trades (SOGAT 82)

Southall Black Sisters (SBS)

South East Regional Council of the Trades Union Congress (SERTUC)

South Wales Miners' Library (SWML)

Trades Union Congress (TUC)

Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU)

Troops Out Movement (TOM)

Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians (UCATT)

Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC)

Women's Liberation Movement (WLM)

# Chapter 1

## Introduction: Translocal solidarity and the 1984-5 miners' strike

In March 1984, over 150,000 coal miners walked out on strike in protest against plans for widespread closures in the nationalised industry, only returning to work after twelve months. Ultimately unsuccessful, it was arguably the most significant industrial dispute in post-war British history. Alongside the strike developed a large and diverse support movement, both within Britain and internationally, as the dispute became a focus for opposition to the political project of the Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher. This thesis focuses on the solidarity campaign in London, a city far from the heartlands of the coal industry. It is a labour and radical history and geography of the coalfields, the London left, the 1970s and the 1980s. It is also centrally a study of the development of translocal solidarity. This research highlights the networks of mutual solidarity constructed between the capital and the coalfields, and how these relationships shaped the political and social cultures in these places. Through an approach attentive to both the spatial and temporal aspects of solidarity, the thesis contributes conceptually to questions of class and intersectionality, the relational development of place-based political cultures, and to the theorisation of labour agency.

In the first section of this introduction I provide a brief overview of the 1984-5 miners' strike and the solidarity movement. In the second section I outline how the support campaign was understood during and in the immediate aftermath of the dispute, and the ways the strike has been written about in geography and other disciplines subsequently. I argue throughout the thesis that characterisations of the support campaign in terms of charity or humanitarian aid are flawed, relying on a mechanical understanding of solidarity and an overly simplistic geography of class in Britain. In the final section I provide an outline of the thesis, which in contrast presents a historically and spatially dynamic view of solidarity as a political practice that can create relationships of mutual support across differences, and construct new understandings of shared aims and experiences.

### The 1984-5 miners' strike and the support movement

By the mid-1980s employment in the British coalfields had been declining for decades but strike action over pit closures had been almost impossible to organise on a national basis (Hudson and Sadler 1985). This had remained stubbornly true in the early 1980s, with the leadership of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) losing national ballots on the issue

(Beynon 1985a:9–11). One woman from South Wales active in the 1984-5 strike explained that she had initially been sceptical because it was twenty years too late: 'I didn't see any point in it, this valley was dead anyway' (Headon and Thomas 1985). Yet there were important differences between the 1980s and earlier periods. The high level of unemployment under Thatcher's governments, the worst since the 1930s, meant that there were comparatively few alternatives if the mines were closed (Phillips 2012a:11). This gave a much stronger impetus to resist the expected job losses. The connection between pit closures and the destruction of communities more broadly was powerfully made (Francis 2015:40).

Shifts in industrial relations and political developments were crucial as well. The comparatively consensual, or at least corporatist, approach of the National Coal Board (NCB) was undermined by a newly combative management at both national and local levels (Beynon and McMylor 1985; Phillips 2012a:53). This change partly reflected increased government hostility towards state-owned industries. In opposition in the 1970s, the Conservatives had prepared for confrontations with trade unions as part of a plan aimed at introducing market relations into the public sector and a programme of 'denationalisation'. This plan was pursued following the electoral successes of Margaret Thatcher's Conservatives in 1979 and again in 1983 (Gallas 2016; Nationalised Industries Policy Group 1977). On the trade union side, the 1982 election of Arthur Scargill to President of the NUM in place of Joe Gormley represented a victory for the radical rank and file movements that had developed in the coalfields since at least the late 1960s. If the government and employer's side was increasingly belligerent, with Scargill working alongside the Derbyshire left-winger Peter Heathfield and Communist Mick McGahey in the three most senior positions of the union, the leadership of the NUM was also less inclined towards conciliation.

However, the strike was not Scargill or any other union leader's personal battle, with much of the impetus coming from activists among the membership and lay NUM officials. The historian Raphael Samuel argued that during the strike 'all of the crucial initiatives came from below […] The real nerve centre was not the National Union of Mineworkers headquarters in Sheffield […] but the Miners' Welfare in the villages' (Samuel 1986a:xii–xiii). Localised strikes were already underway in a number of areas, notably in Scotland where over fifty per cent of miners were in dispute in March 1984 (Phillips 2012a:1). Escalation into a national strike was sparked by the threatened closure of Cortonwood Colliery in Yorkshire, which was then the largest coal mining area in Britain. Activists from

Yorkshire in particular sought to roll out the strike by picketing throughout the country. The dispute spread unevenly across the British coalfields. It was strongest in the left-wing areas of Yorkshire, South Wales, Scotland and Kent, but also in the traditionally moderate Durham coalfield (Renouf 1989). Pits in the Midlands remained a weakness for the strike throughout the year. Leicestershire, South Derbyshire, and most famously the large Nottinghamshire area had a majority that continued to work (Howell 2012). Nevertheless, at its peak around 80 per cent of miners were on strike (Department of Energy 1984). Significant numbers of striking miners only started to return to work in late 1984. A number of possible turning points—dock strikes, a vote for industrial action by the colliery deputies' union NACODS, the declaration of support at the September 1984 Trades Union Congress (TUC) conference—passed without the NCB or government's capitulation. With an increasing number of miners working, representatives of the areas narrowly voted to end the dispute in March 1985 with no agreement on pit closures (Francis 2015:68–72).

Alongside the dispute, a large and diverse support movement emerged that helped sustain the strike for twelve months. This movement was strongest in Britain but also had a significant international dimension (Saunders 1989). Much of the support was informal and difficult to quantify. A Labour Research Department (1985) survey received responses from over three hundred organisations involved in supporting the miners, but this is probably only a fraction of the total. Within London there were miners' support groups for almost every borough of the city. This was coordinated to some extent through a central London NUM Support Committee, which distributed up to £40,000 a month through the coalfields (London NUM Support Committee 1984). Again, this represents only a small proportion of what was collected in the capital, as donations were often given directly to mining areas by supporters. Solidarity was organised by trades councils, trade union branches, the Labour Party, the Communist Party (CPGB), the Trotskyist left, anarchists, feminist groups, black organisations, lesbian and gay activists, musicians, students, unemployed workers, and others. The support movement outside of the coalfield areas has been relatively understudied in the years since the dispute, and this thesis is a contribution to recuperating this important history.

**Writing the miners' strike**

Doreen Massey and Hilary Wainwright wrote one of the most comprehensive overview accounts of the solidarity campaign at the time. They argued that the strike of male, manual workers looked like 'the old working class with a vengeance […] And yet around this struggle a massive support movement has grown up—almost unreported—with as broad a

social and geographical base as any post-war radical political movement' (Massey and Wainwright 1985:149). The different social structure of large cities, Massey and Wainwright suggested, had produced a politics that contrasted with coalfield labourism: 'often anarchistic, socially adventurous, with a commitment to politics outside the workplace as well as within. It is the radical, as opposed to the labourist, end of the labour movement' (Massey and Wainwright 1985:151). This confluence of different political traditions through the strike and the support networks is a central concern of this thesis, although I argue that sometimes these distinctions have been mapped onto specific places too simplistically.

London was often perceived as the coalfield's antithesis: a large, cosmopolitan and diverse city with a substantial middle class, as opposed to the small, socially conservative, working-class pit villages associated with mining areas. This view shaped how the historian Raphael Samuel understood the support movement. He argued that 'it was not affinity which drew sympathy and support for the miners, but in the first place difference – the uniqueness of the pit villages in the landscape of contemporary life' (Samuel 1986a:x). Support, Samuel argued, was 'predicated on the miners' weakness rather than their strength', and 'owed more to a humanitarian spirit of Good Works than, in any classical trade union sense, solidarity' (Samuel 1986a:x). Samuel continued this theme in a further essay in the same book. He again rejected the label of 'solidarity' for the support movement, asserting that it was more akin to Christian notions of charity than class-consciousness 'as classically conceived'. The high point, he believed, was the Christmas appeal for the miners, with support expressed through aid not industrial action. This aid 'fed on difference rather than affinity, a sense of miners' otherness'. It resembled conscious money, and reflected regional inequalities of wealth. That much of this support came from London and the prosperous south east was significant for Samuel: he argued that 'it seems to have been cross-class in character, more akin to the 1920s adoption of pit villages in the Rhondda by places like Bournemouth and Hampstead, than to solidarity' (Samuel 1986b:33; see also Millar 2016).

The difference between Massey and Wainwright's enthusiastic portrayal of the support movement and the downbeat assessment developed by Samuel was partly a matter of timing. Massey and Wainwright wrote their account in the midst of the struggle; Samuel was attempting to account for one of the most significant defeats in the history of the British left. Developing our understanding of the failure of the miners' strike and the weaknesses of the support movement is an important element of this thesis. In particular, I attempt to account for popular opposition to the strike in a more comprehensive way than has been offered before. Nevertheless, Samuel's account of the support campaign for the miners is empirically

and theoretically limited. For Samuel, solidarity appears to be a relationship between pre-existing groups of similar people. In contrast, I argue that solidarity can help establish new commonalities across social and geographical boundaries. At the same time, the gulf in class experience represented by the contrast of Hampstead and the Rhondda is a mischaracterisation of the solidarity campaign. Middle-class Londoners supported the strike but so did Fleet Street printworkers, inner city black youth from places like the Broadwater Farm Estate in Tottenham, cleaners at Barking Hospital, working-class Polytechnic students, and large numbers of unemployed people in the city. Developing a more nuanced geography of class in Britain has an impact on how we understand not only the miners' strike, but also the politics of the left in the 1980s more widely.

The early geographical literature on the miners' strike was concerned in particular with the nature of regional political cultures within the coalfields (Rees 1985, 1986; Renouf 1989; Sunley 1986). The analysis of 'spatially uneven' participation in the strike continued to be a theme in later research (Blomley 1994:154; see also Griffiths and Johnston 1991). On occasion such work could feel geographically bounded, emphasising the dynamics contained within particular coalfield localities and regions. By concentrating on the translocal networks that were crucial in sustaining the strike, I highlight the importance of thinking relationally about the construction of regional and local political cultures. Nicholas Blomley's work on the dispute introduced a greater sense of mobility, arguing that a struggle over space and movement through space was central to the strike (Blomley 1994:150–188). He emphasised the attempt by police to restrict pickets from travelling across the country, but also the ideological conflict over rights based around movement, most notably the 'right to go to work' (Blomley 1994:171). I expand on this sense of mobility and a struggle over space to emphasise the diverse activities that brought people from London and the coalfields together. Influenced by traditions of labour history, however, I place a greater emphasis on recounting individuals' experience of constructing these translocal relationships from below.

Beyond the discipline of geography, an extensive literature has been produced on the strike over the last three decades. Jim Phillips (2012a:2–5) suggests that we can distinguish between work that has focused on the high politics of the dispute, and that which is rooted in a 'popular agency' tradition. This thesis is concerned primarily with the latter, but I argue nevertheless that to understand popular agency it is necessary to consider the role of the state, the government, and political and trade union leaderships. Moreover, as I suggest in Chapter 2, foregrounding the support movement suggests that accounts from below do not have to be limited to a constricted sense of the local. Phillips and Francis have produced

important recent studies of the strike in Scotland and South Wales, which move beyond the focus on Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire that tend to dominate more general accounts of the year (Francis 2015; Phillips 2012a, 2012b; see also Curtis 2013). Phillips (2012a) has foregrounded the moral and material resources within Scotland that miners replied upon during the dispute, and more broadly how the violation of the coalfield 'moral economy' was a central factor in the strike. Hywel Francis (2015), himself a support group activist at the time, similarly emphasises the regional specificity of the dispute in South Wales and the resources developed within the area, but also the wider connections that were mobilised during the strike. These works provide a strong sense of the traditions and histories of coalfield areas and the crucial role they played in 1984-5. By focusing on the networks constructed between coalfield areas and London, however, this thesis develops a more relational way of thinking about the development of these political cultures.

This work contributes to the literature on the miners' strike empirically by developing an in-depth account of the support movement outside of mining areas. As a result, it also builds on recent research on the urban left in 1980s Britain (Frost and North 2013; Payling 2014). The London left in this period tends to be characterised as particularly concerned with what came to be termed 'identity politics'. Jerry White, for instance, has argued that the Labour administration of the Greater London Council (GLC) alienated most Londoners by pursuing 'ideological purity on gender, sexuality and race' (White 2008:397). The distinction between a politics based on class and one influenced by post-1968 liberation movements has often been drawn too starkly. By showing the importance of the miners' strike for the London left I demonstrate the centrality of class to the capital's politics, but the form this took was shaped by feminist, anti-racist and LGBT liberation activists. This less rigid form of class politics is of continuing relevance, and recounting the miners' support movement can therefore be a usable past for contemporary political organising.

Through a study of the miners' support movement, this thesis makes a number of central theoretical contributions. It is concerned firstly with developing an account of translocal solidarity as a generative relationship that can construct connections across social and geographical boundaries, and develop new political theories and practices. Secondly, I argue for an intersectional approach to class as a way of rejecting simplistic divisions between the politics of class, gender, sexuality and race. In particular, I highlight intersectionality as a historical process whereby relationships of solidarity across space inform a politics that is simultaneously able to recognise differences and develop commonalities. Thirdly, I emphasise how translocal networks of solidarity contribute to relational constructions of

place, but that such an understanding is not inimical to a deep, historically rooted local development of class. Fourthly, I argue that a spatially and temporally dynamic understanding of the construction of cultures of mutual solidarity can contribute significantly to how we think about labour agency. The next section of this chapter outlines in more detail the structure of the thesis and its central arguments.

**Outline of the thesis**

Chapter 2 sets out the conceptual framework and central theoretical contributions of this thesis. It engages centrally with debates around the nature and meaning of solidarity, but also with related questions on difference, place, space, scale and working-class agency. I argue that an approach informed by traditions within labour history, and historical analysis more broadly, together with labour and wider social movement geographies, offers productive possibilities for rethinking the 1984-5 miners' strike. I highlight how solidarity can be a mutual relationship, and has the potential to forge commonalities across spatial and social boundaries. I argue for a historically dynamic approach to the construction and contestation of solidarity, political spaces, and of the development of place-based identities. Understanding the temporalities of solidarity does not simply mean tracing the development over time of networks and relationships, but also how this process is memorialised and mobilised as a resource during particular struggles. Such an approach, I suggest, can contribute significantly to how we think about working-class agency, moving beyond existing debates within labour geography that either assert the existence of labour agency or claim that it has been exaggerated.

Chapter 3 develops a methodology for reconstructing the miners' strike solidarity movement based on archival research. I outline a translocal approach, tracing the networks developed between London and mining areas in archives across England and Wales to uncover the mobility of metropolitan and coalfield activists. I consider questions of power and voice in the archive, highlighting how power imbalances create an uneven record skewed towards the elite. Nevertheless, I emphasise the diverse ways activists, archivists, librarians, film makers and others recorded the strike from below, giving voice to the thousands of people involved in constructing translocal networks of solidarity. I argue for an approach that is both empirically rigorous and politically committed. This political commitment has shaped the kind of research I have done in seeking to uncover the diversity of the solidarity movement. This approach to recovering translocal solidarities across geographical and social differences, I argue, can offer a new perspective on the miners' strike, which is too frequently

portrayed as simply the last gasp of a traditional—and implicitly white, heterosexual and masculine—labour politics.

Chapter 4 focuses on the development of relationships between London and the coalfields from the late 1960s until the 1984-5 strike. I emphasise in particular the 1972 and 1974 miners' strikes and the support given by Londoners during those disputes, and the solidarity coalfield activists provided for the 1976-8 Grunwick dispute in London. During these earlier disputes we can see precursors of the feminist, black and LGBT solidarities that were developed in 1984-5. This history helps reposition the 1984-5 strike in the context of longer and more reciprocal relationships compared to accounts that overemphasise the novelty of that year. I highlight how these longer standing connections were drawn upon both practically and rhetorically during the 1984-5 strike to catalyse support networks. This account helps us understand the construction of a culture of solidarity that was rooted in the labour movement, but a labour movement which was reshaped through diverse solidarities.

Chapter 5 focuses more closely on the 1984-5 strike itself, exploring the sites and spaces in which solidarity was enacted. I argue that the strike can be understood as part of an ongoing contestation of political and social space. I discuss the picket line as a key space of solidarity that highlighted the material entanglement of London and the coalfields, but which was also challenged by the state. One crucial way that translocal solidarity was organised was through twinning arrangements between support groups and particular mining areas, a distinct approach which allowed for greater personal interaction. I discuss the bookshops, miners' welfares, workplaces, women's centres, and other spaces in which the solidarity movement was organised. This physical presence of the labour and broader social movements, I argue, highlighted how rootedness in localities and the ability to construct relationships across space were mutually reinforcing. The state, I argue, played a contradictory role in this process. The central state often tried to restrict these spaces, while left Labour councils in particular provided or supported spaces for extra-parliamentary activism.

There were significant divisions and limitations in the solidarity movement, and Chapter 6 focuses on these tensions. I discuss the questions of violence, political extremism and democracy that were often highlighted by the Conservative government to undermine the strike. The meaning of such terms was contested throughout the dispute. These debates were part of longer term attempts by the political right to delegitimise the more radical sections of the labour movement. I show how such elite constructions resonated with some trade union members. I suggest that in part this reflected genuine democratic limitations within the trade union movement. This chapter highlights the importance of understanding the

absence of solidarity from below, in contrast to accounts of the 1984-5 miners' strike that focus on the hostility of the government or the betrayals of the trade union leadership.

Chapter 7 foregrounds the generative possibilities of solidarity in forging new relationships across social and geographical boundaries. It focuses on the activism of women, black and LGBT Londoners in the alliances they developed with people from the coalfields during the 1984-5 strike. These relationships, I argue, had the potential to be mutually transformative. While an appreciation of difference is important, I question whether a theoretical emphasis on fragmentation and strict anti-essentialism helps us conceptualise or develop such practical solidarity relationships. Rather than treating women, black, LGBT and working class as discrete categories, an intersectional approach is more useful for thinking about the complex interactions that I describe. While intersectionality has often been used to highlight differences, however, I argue that it can also be a theory that illuminates the articulation of commonalities and development of solidarity.

The thesis concludes with Chapter 8, which draws together a number of themes from the study to think about its relevance to current social and political concerns. I describe how the solidarities of the miners' strike have been used to inspire activism today. The central issues raised throughout this thesis—the construction of spaces of solidarity, the embedding of struggles in collective cultures, the lessons to be learned from the absences of solidarity—are of continuing relevance. I also argue, however, that the history of the 1970s and 1980s has become the site for a more general ideological struggle, one that it is necessary for the left to intervene in. Histories of mutual support between London and the coalfields can help break down political geographies that strictly divide the metropolitan left from the former industrial heartlands of Britain. The diversity of these relationships can also contest attempts to root class politics in either socially conservative appeals to family and nation, or overly dogmatic rejections of so-called identity politics.

# Chapter 2

## Solidarity, class and labour agency

**Introduction**

The word 'solidarity' was invoked repeatedly during the 1984-5 miners' strike among activists in the coalfields and supporters in London. Despite the ubiquity of its use, and the sense that solidarity was central to any possible victory, the word did not have a fixed meaning. It was, as in Raymond Williams' (1989) keywords of the strike, a contested term that was shaped in part by the experience of the dispute itself. Through a study of the miners' support movement, I develop an account of the construction of solidarity relationships between diverse places and people. This chapter therefore critically interrogates discussions in geography and other disciplines on the nature of solidarity, which provides the basis for outlining a number of conceptual themes that frame this thesis around questions of difference, place, space, scale and agency. I highlight how an approach attentive to historical processes, and informed by the tradition of 'history from below', can significantly contribute to debates in labour geography, political geography and social movement studies.

This chapter outlines the conceptual framework and main contributions of the thesis. In the first section, I argue that experience, identity and politics can simultaneously form the basis for developing solidarity. I then show how an intersectional approach can foreground the articulation of both commonalities and differences through translocal solidarities. In the next section, I emphasise the importance of viewing solidarity as potentially a mutual relationship, which can be best understood as developing over an extended period of time. Rather than a simple returning of past support, I point to the construction of cultures of mutual solidarity as constituting a broader, shared political project. The third section highlights the utility of a dynamic approach to class formation, influenced by EP Thompson, and the role of translocal solidarities in this process. At the same time, I consider the limitations of class solidarity, both where such solidarity has been absent and how it has been used to reinforce forms of oppression. More nuanced theories of labour agency, however, should take into account not only its limitations, but also how working-class movements have developed resources, relationships and institutions to sustain struggles. The construction of cultures of solidarity, I argue, can therefore make a significant contribution to debates on the nature of agency in labour geography.

In the next section, I show how recounting solidarities from below allows a greater focus on individuals and personal relationships, which in turn foregrounds the emotional aspects of solidarity. Recovering the translocal solidarities developed at a direct personal level during the miners' strike, I argue, can also emphasise that the small scale need not be spatially restricted. The development of these networks of support across space helped shape a sense of place both in the coalfields and London. I emphasise the role of memory and tradition in embedding relationships of mutual solidarity in place-based identities. This suggests that relational conceptions of place and a sense of the historical construction of class in particular localities can develop together. In the final section, I argue that the construction of translocal solidarities from below depended on distinctly working-class forms of politicised mobility. At the same time, these networks of solidarity often relied on the development of physical spaces in particular localities. The local, physical rootedness of political movements was the basis, therefore, for developing relationships between different localities. The nature of these spaces, the places and the people involved were profoundly affected by the development of translocal solidarities. This thesis therefore emphasises the potential for translocal solidarity to be a generative and transformative relationship.

**Solidarity, difference and intersectionality**

The central concern of this thesis is how the construction of networks of solidarity can refigure relationships between diverse places and people. This section explores key literatures in geography and other disciplines on the nature of solidarity, and shows how considering questions of difference and intersectionality in such a context can be theoretically productive. Some writing on the 1984-5 miners' strike has reflected a tendency to understand solidarity as a relationship based on similarities within pre-existing groups (Samuel 1986a, 1986b). This way of thinking has been challenged by David Featherstone (2012:21–22), who argues that assuming 'solidarities are forged through emulation risks ignoring how likeness is actively produced'. This understanding of the creation of common bonds through resistance and struggle is one element of thinking about solidarity as potentially generative and transformative (Featherstone 2012:19). I emphasise in this thesis how geographical and social differences overlap, so that the translocal solidarities constructed between London and the coalfields could be understood as crossing boundaries of race, class, gender and sexuality. As a result, such networks of support across space can produce distinctively intersectional solidarities.

A generative conception of solidarity does not preclude attempting to understand the basis on which such relationships can be constructed. Some accounts suggest a tension between

identity, experience and politics, often elevating one as the predominant foundation for solidarity. Tommie Shelby (2002), for example, has argued that black identity is too diffuse to provide a basis for solidarity, emphasising instead shared experiences of oppression and to some extent political principles. Shelby argues that gender, class, and other differences make attempts to sustain a common black ethnic or cultural identity difficult. Yet all black people are vulnerable to racism and therefore have an interest in racial equality. 'While a joint commitment to fighting racial injustice in all its forms can help create interracial solidarity', he contends, 'it is often the common experience of specific forms of racial oppression that creates the strongest and most enduring bonds among victims of racism' (Shelby 2002:262).

In contrast, bell hooks (1986) suggests that experience is a weak foundation for solidarity between women. There are some similarities with Shelby's argument here in that hooks highlights the heterogeneity of women, and the need for a theory that addresses 'interlocking systems of domination like sexism, racism, class oppression, imperialism' (hooks 1986:126). Unlike Shelby, however, this heterogeneity leads hooks to explicitly reject common oppression as the basis for solidarity. Such an approach mystifies 'the true nature of women's varied and complex social reality', and is predicated on victimhood rather than women's strengths and resources (hooks 1986:127–8). Instead of shared victimization or false notions of a common enemy, hooks argues, 'we can bond on the basis of our political commitment to a feminist movement that aims to end sexist oppression' (hooks 1986:129). Sally Scholz (2008:131–2) also resists any determination of solidarity based on experience, supporting hooks' critique of 'sisterhood'. Scholz suggests that even when people do share an oppressed condition, this does not automatically lead to political activism to resist that oppression (Scholz 2008:133). This explicitly political sense of solidarity, which Scholz distinguishes from civic or social solidarity, foregrounds activism over common traits in binding people together. She argues that 'instead of group consciousness causing the collective action, collective action in political solidarity causes group consciousness' (Scholz 2008:134).

There is a risk of attempting to develop a general theory of solidarity from accounts that are addressed to geographically and historically specific political movements. Tactics of solidarity that are effective and appropriate in one situation may not be universally valid, and this specificity can be elided in overly abstract theorising. The complexity of solidarity in practice can also be missing in theoretical works whose empirical engagement is at best oblique. Rather than arguing for the primacy of politics, experience or identity in constructing solidarities, I show the multiple, overlapping and sometimes contradictory ways

in which alliances can be built. What brought together activists from London and the coalfields in 1984-5 is explored throughout this thesis, but included shared experiences of state oppression, common class identities, an attachment to the labour movement, feminism, and socialist politics. Discussions around the basis for alliances can focus heavily on discourse, whereas solidarity is not simply an articulation of sympathy but a practical activity (Gould 2007:157). It is necessary therefore, as Brown and Yaffe (2014:40) have argued, not to separate the way solidarity is framed discursively from how it is enacted.

While I emphasise how commonalities can be developed through networks of solidarity, it is important nevertheless not to elide differences. Geographers and others concerned with 'decolonizing solidarity' have sought to understand how more equitable alliances can be forged despite significant power inequalities (Land 2015; Mott 2016; Sundberg 2007). This work has particularly focused on racialized differences, and relationships between whites/settlers and indigenous peoples in the Americas, Australia and New Zealand/Aotearoa. These analyses could be extended to include, for example, class, gender and sexuality, and crucially how such categories overlap and shape each other. The theory of intersectionality, which aims specifically at such an understanding, has been taken up by a number of geographers (Brown 2012; Valentine 2007). Within labour geography, and geographical research on class more broadly, there have been significant attempts to take seriously how gender, race, sexuality and other social cleavages shape the experience and politics of class (Dowling 2009; Ince et al. 2015; McDowell 2008a; McDowell, Anitha, and Pearson 2012).

It is important to consider how solidarities across space can have a particular relationship to intersectionality. Differences can be understood spatially, and as Pratt and Hanson (1994:11) argue, this often hardens boundaries between social groups. The politics of racial, gender, and sexual liberation within Britain have often been conceived of as concerns of the south east of England, and London especially (for example, Frost and North 2013:97). A particular geographical understanding of class in Britain can position these movements as both southern and external to working-class politics. Jane Wills has argued that in culture, and popular and policy discourse, 'geography is often used as a surrogate for the question of class' (Wills 2008:28; see also Binnie 2011:24). Such a conflation of geography and class in Britain is often regional. Sally Munt (2008:133) suggests that since the Industrial Revolution 'northern' has been a pseudonym for 'working class poor'. The corollary to this is that London and the south east are consistently understood, sometimes by sections of the political left, as middle class. This is not entirely without justification: significant regional

inequalities exist in Britain and the lived experience of class varies geographically. Places and regions, however, are not homogeneous, and relationships of solidarity between London and the coalfields contested simplistic geographical understandings of class. In turn, this suggested more complex intersections between the politics of class, gender, sexuality and race.

Much intersectional research has viewed it primarily as a tool for understanding difference. Intersectionality is fundamentally anti-essentialist in highlighting that experiences of gender, race and class shape each other and are therefore significantly heterogeneous. Considered in the context of solidarity relationships, however, intersectionality can be considered as a theory simultaneously of differences and commonalities (Roberts and Jesudason 2013). In particular, this thesis emphasises how the process of constructing relationships of solidarity across space enabled the forging of intersectional alliances. Lesbian and gay Londoners, for instance, drew attention to shared working-class identities with miners, while emphasising how their experiences of sexuality and class were mutually constitutive. This is an intersectional approach to class that simultaneously allows for the development of translocal solidarities and the contestation of homogenised constructions of sexuality and class in particular places. Such an understanding positions intersectionality as a spatial and historical process.

**Mutuality and deference in solidarity**

Theorists of solidarity have been concerned to develop approaches that avoid the power imbalances that are often associated with charity. Some argue that a deferential approach mitigates this risk, while others emphasise at least the potential for solidarity to be a mutual relationship. Accounts of solidarity focusing on relationships across difference have been particularly attentive to the possibility of 'power asymmetries' in these interactions (Sundberg 2007:145). In contrast, Bayertz (1999:19) has suggested that a 'fundamental equality' between those involved distinguishes solidarity from charity, and as such is based on a '*mutual* right to expect help'. This connection between equality and mutuality in solidarity has been a recurring theme among researchers, even where there is an acknowledgement that reciprocity may be more theoretical than actual (Gould 2007:157; Routledge and Cumbers 2009:163; Scholz 2008:93).

Brown and Yaffe (2014:35) have emphasised that rather than 'an asymmetrical flow of assistance travelling from one place to another […] relations of solidarity can travel in more than one direction simultaneously, building complex webs of reciprocity'. In addition to the

simultaneity of reciprocal solidarity, however, mutuality can be developed over longer periods of time. In any particular struggle there tends to be a group of people primarily receiving support, but this group may have given solidarity to others in the past, or perhaps will do in the future. It is therefore important to historicize the development of relationships between people and places. This does not mean solidarity is a straightforwardly reciprocal relationship, with past support returned like settling a debt. I argue instead that cultures of ongoing mutual support can be developed between diverse places. The labour movement of the 1970s and 1980s, the focus of much of this thesis, is an important example of such a culture. This is not, of course, to ignore the unevenness and weaknesses of the labour movement in this period.

Research on solidarity relationships that involve significant power imbalances has been more reticent about mutuality. Nevertheless, both Sundberg (2007) and Land (2015) suggest that even in such circumstances mutual learning and a shared interest in challenging oppression can be present. Such mutuality is somewhat complicated by arguments promoting deference in solidarity. This is evident, for instance, in Mott's contention that white/settler activists should allow 'indigenous partners in multiracial projects to take the lead' (Mott 2016:197; see also Land 2015:117). Such an approach is articulated most explicitly by Carol Gould (2007) in her work on transnational solidarities. She argues that those receiving support should determine the form this support takes. This requirement of 'deference' protects against the impositions often associated with aid, and suggests that those in need are best able to decide on the support they require (Gould 2007:157). In some contexts this should be uncontroversial: white supporters of indigenous struggles should not take the leadership. Where such a conception of deference moves from thinking through specific relationships to a more generalised theory about solidarity, however, it can be problematic. There is a risk of viewing those who receive support as a homogenous group with one perspective to which solidarity activists can defer. Clare Land suggests humility but not subservience on the part of white supporters of Aboriginal struggles, not least because 'we cannot continue to agree with all Aboriginal people, given their contrasting views' (Land 2015:195). It is necessary to be attentive to the differences within those receiving support and the complexities of the relationships developed.

Deference implies that critical support is unjustified and can privilege one form of oppression over others. Land (2015:72–5) argues, for instance, that feminist white women supporting indigenous struggles should refrain from gendering the issues being campaigned on. It is important to recognise the problem of relatively privileged groups imposing their

ideas on others, but deference suggests that sexism, homophobia, racism and other forms of prejudice and oppression could be ignored in the name of solidarity. Such an approach positions those who provide solidarity and those who receive it as static and distinct groups, and mitigates against the possibility of solidarity as a mutually transformative relationship. The implicit assumption is that those providing solidarity are in a more privileged position. It is necessary, however, to pay attention to the ability of people who are themselves subject to oppression to construct relationships of solidarity (Featherstone 2012:5). Historicising solidarity can again challenge such straightforward binaries by situating individuals and groups in different positions within solidarity relationships at different times.

While appropriate in some instances, therefore, making deference central to solidarity is excessively limiting. Foregrounding mutuality, in contrast, suggests a more complex but potentially richer relationship. It allows for the possibility of solidarity as a dynamic practice that can re-shape relationships within and between places and social groups. It emphasises that solidarity can develop over time, travelling in multiple directions. What I describe as a culture of mutual solidarity can depend on a shared emancipatory vision for challenging multiple forms of oppression at the same time. In 1970s and 1980s Britain, it was often socialism that played this role (Rowbotham et al. 2014:145). Importantly, foregrounding mutuality also emphasises that solidarity is not necessarily the activism of the privileged but can be developed from below.

**Class and the limits of solidarity**

This understanding of solidarity, as a relationship that can be constructed from below, resonates with what Phillips (2012a:5) describes as a 'popular agency tradition' of writing on the 1984-5 miners' strike. I emphasise throughout the thesis the ability of working-class people to develop networks and cultures of translocal solidarity. This section outlines a dynamic approach to class formation, emphasising how diverse forms of political activism can redraw the perceived boundaries of working-class politics. This extends further my approach to intersectionality as a political process described earlier in the chapter. I engage in particular with the traditions of 'history from below' and labour geography in developing this account. Both sub-disciplines have been accused of romanticising working-class politics. This problem can be exacerbated by excessively normative accounts of solidarity. I emphasise instead that we should understand the limitations of solidarity: both understanding how it can be used to entrench privileges, but also accounting for absences of working-class solidarity.

History from below (HfB) in Britain is associated primarily with the Communist Party Historians Group, History Workshop, and historians such as EP Thompson, Sheila Rowbotham, and Raphael Samuel (Iles and Roberts 2012). It was and, in so far as it still exists as a distinct historiographical current, is an approach committed to recovering non-elite histories. It contains an explicitly political impulse. Davin and Parks (2012) argued that the History Workshops from the 1970s to the 1990s 'were devoted to the study and development of "history from below" for use as a weapon in left-wing political campaigns'. One of the key works in the HfB tradition is EP Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class*. Thompson's (1980a:8) famous insistence on class as 'an active process, which owes as much to agency as conditioning' is important here. This was fundamentally a rejection of mechanical interpretations of class formation as simply a reflection of autonomous economic changes (Palmer 1994:94). Thompson (1960:28) believed that working-class 'political consciousness is not a spontaneous generation, it is the product of political action and skill'. The working class is present at its own making, Thompson argued, and *The Making of the English Working Class* explores through corresponding societies, utopian socialism, early trade unionism, Luddism and so on, the diverse forms of political activism that fed into this construction of class consciousness.

While a broader sense of experience was clearly important for Thompson (Sewell 1990:55), this insistence on a working class active in its own formation tends to foreground political struggles and emphasise working-class agency. Class for Thompson (1980a:10) is therefore fundamentally historical, the development of relationships, ideas, and institutions that cannot be captured by static accounts. As has long been recognised, Thompson's theory of class is not without its ambiguities and weaknesses, and needs to be recognised as a polemic within a specific political context (Sewell 1990:58; see also Efstathiou 2014). *The Making of the English Working Class* has been criticised for a lack of attention to gendered and racialized constructions of class (Featherstone and Griffin 2016). Nevertheless, Thompson's insistence that working-class agency plays a crucial role in class formation is worth retaining. Despite some of the absences in Thompson's own empirical account, this approach allows for diverse political activism in shaping class consciousness, which I argue here can be deployed to emphasise how the social and spatial boundaries of the labour movement were contested through solidarity relationships. An important element of this involves thinking about how political activists who foregrounded questions of race, gender, and sexuality could contest dominant white, heterosexual and male constructions of the working class. It is necessary then to see working-class formation as an ongoing and contested process, not something that was completed in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The HfB tradition has been explicitly drawn upon within labour geography, often around questions of working-class agency, but also by broader historical geographies with an emancipatory political agenda (Bressey 2014; Cumbers, Helms, and Swanson 2010; Hastings 2016). While HfB challenged a dominant conservative historiography concerned primarily with elites, labour geography critiqued both mainstream and Marxist economic geographers who assigned agency to capitalists but presented workers as largely passive (Herod 1997). A now standard criticism of labour geographers is that they pushed back too far in emphasising the ability of working-class people to shape their economic geographies (Castree 2007; Peck 2013; Rogaly and Qureshi 2017). Don Mitchell (2011:566) has argued that labour geography requires a greater sense of realism about workers' agency under capitalism: 'the world must be depicted, analysed, and understood not as we would like it to be but as it really is'. The accusations of romanticisation that have been aimed at labour geography and HfB, however, can miss the central question of perspective that is foregrounded in both: the world as it really is for who? In their research on food sector workers, Rogaly and Qureshi (2017) argue that the earlier optimistic perspective of labour geography has been sufficiently tempered in more recent accounts. They claim, however, that the voices of workers are too often absent in these more theoretically nuanced studies. In particular, they argue for a greater use of oral history, a methodology strongly associated with HfB, in foregrounding workers' own accounts of their lives.

The equation of labour geography with a lack of realism is echoed in Linda McDowell's (2008a) discussion of 'new working class studies' (see Russo and Linkon 2005). McDowell's (2008a:21) unease about a return to class in geography 'lies first in its focus on the working class *per se*—rather than on the interconnections between multiple class positions—and what I feel is an inevitable romanticisation of the transformative potential of working class politics'. This has been a common criticism of HfB, which Andy Wood (2013) argues 'valorized resistance and largely ignored questions of subordination, social integration and hegemony'. I argue that there is transformative potential in working-class politics, without seeking to ignore its limitations. Nor do I focus on working-class people exclusively. While the centring of Margaret Thatcher in many accounts of the miners' strike limits our understanding of this history, the government played an important role in shaping popular reactions to the dispute. This reflects Stuart Hall's (1985:119) contention that Thatcherism was a hegemonic project, albeit only partly successful as such. It is necessary therefore, as Anderson (2015:50) argues, to situate labour struggles in 'broader patterns in the power-geometry of capital-labour relations', without positioning such broader relations as 'above' working-class people.

It is also necessary to recognise that solidarity can be employed 'to entrench as well as challenge privilege' (Featherstone 2012:12). In particular, solidarities based on white, masculinist constructions of class have frequently been deeply exclusionary. Work on 'white labourism', for instance, has highlighted how class politics could be both militant and deeply racist (Hyslop 1999; Money 2015). David Roediger's writings on early twentieth-century USA emphasises that 'escape' from racialized divisions within the labour movement could be attempted 'by way of a heightened emphasis on gender' (Roediger 1994:131). Despite a reputation for presenting an overly positive view of class politics, some labour geographers have been attentive to how class has been framed nationally at the expense of broader solidarities. Ince et al. (2015), for example, have discussed the use of the nationalist slogan 'British jobs for British workers' during a wildcat labour dispute at the Lindsey Oil Refinery. In different ways, both Herod (1997) and Johns (1998) have highlighted the extent to which US labour activism has been to the detriment of workers in South America. This more broadly fits into longstanding concerns about the privileging of place over class (Hudson and Sadler 1986).

These accounts therefore highlight how solidarity can be simultaneously unifying and exclusionary. Such an understanding is in tension with approaches, particularly prevalent in political philosophy, that present strongly normative versions of solidarity. Rippe (1998) has insisted that solidarity is not a straightforward social good like justice, and therefore cannot be a proper focus for moral philosophy. Solidarity, in this argument, should be rejected partly because of its particularism. In contrast, both Gould (2007) and Wilde (2013) argue for a normative definition of solidarity based on the pursuance of social cohesion. Gould recognises the risks of an overly prescriptive conception of solidarity, but nevertheless relates it to 'norms of equal freedom and human rights', arguing that 'some reasonably egalitarian or nondominating significances of justice would seem to be necessary in order to rule out solidarity in support of inhumane, dominating, or pernicious projects' (Gould 2007:156). Such a theoretical approach can lead to an ambivalent relationship with actually existing solidarities. Scholz acknowledges that political solidarity has on occasion been exclusionary, but nevertheless argues for a definition of solidarity based on unity, and obligations of mutuality and cooperation (Scholz 2008:109, 139). This provides a basis on which we may be able to judge political movements and offers a legitimate critique of regressive practices. Nevertheless, an automatic rejection of any activity that appears unjust risks providing misleading empirical accounts of solidarity.

Scholz (2007, 2008) develops such an argument particularly around the question of violence, which she sees as inimical to solidarity. Recognising that solidarity can often be exclusionary, however, suggests that while violence may be destructive of unity it does not mean that solidarity and violence are fundamentally contradictory. This is particularly relevant in the miners' strike as violence became central to a number of arguments around the dispute (see Chapter 7). The violence of striking miners and their supporters, both real and invented, was both a cause and effect of the lack of support for the strike among sections of the labour movement and the public more widely. As well as being attentive to the 'dark sides' of solidarity (Featherstone 2012:12), it is also necessary to understand this absence of support. Exploring these two aspects—exclusionary solidarity, and the absence of solidarity—can help provide a more rounded understanding of solidarity, and in the context of trade unionism further complicate what has been perceived as the overly optimistic views of labour geography. This thesis is therefore concerned with working-class solidarity, and how it has the potential to refigure the labour movement and society in more equitable ways. Nevertheless, I also emphasise the need to appreciate and understand the limits of this solidarity.

**Political research, labour agency and solidarity resources**

Central to both HfB and labour geography is the foregrounding of working-class agency. Criticisms of romanticism and excessive optimism directed at labour geography, however, can mean that developing our understanding of working-class agency becomes simply a matter of elaborating on its limitations. The political purpose of researching labour geographies can also be bypassed by questions of realism. The critique that labour geography exaggerates working-class agency is paralleled by concerns with 'generalizing from isolated cases of success' (Anderson 2015:48). There are of course good reasons not to focus exclusively on unrepresentative success stories, not least that political lessons can be learned from failures. Nevertheless, if we genuinely do not believe that working-class people have significant agency, at least potentially, and our work simply amplifies the fact, it would be— to borrow Davin and Parks' (2012) terminology—a weak weapon for the left. To insist simply that we present the world 'as it really is' (Mitchell 2011:566) suggests academic research as detached observation rather than political intervention. Engagement with past struggles, even consciously highlighting and celebrating working-class resistance, can help contest ahistorical neoliberal narratives that there is no alternative. As Doreen Massey has argued, one strategy for challenging conservative views of the character of a place can be 'to install our own version of these stories, of these relationships between past and present,

which can lay an alternative basis for a (different) future: the strategy of writing a radical history' (Massey 1995:190). This is not about falsifying the past for our own ends, but recognising that there is always a political choice made when we decide what to research.

However, it is of course necessary for labour geography to explore the nature of working-class agency beyond simply asserting its existence. There are a number of useful ways in which this has already been done. For example, labour geographers have employed Katz's (2004) schema to distinguish practises of resilience, reworking and resistance (Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2011; Cumbers, Helms, and Swanson 2010; Kiil and Knutsen 2016; Rogaly and Qureshi 2017). This is helpful in highlighting that restricted and limited forms of agency can be present even where there is not open rebellion. It is also necessary however, as Cumbers, Helms and Swanson argue, not to simply valorise all forms of apparent agency. It is worth distinguishing, even in minor forms of resistance, between potentially reactionary actions and those that are 'suggestive of new forms of social relations' (Cumbers, Helms, and Swanson 2010:59).

Work in labour geography has also drawn on Erik Olin Wright's distinction between working-class associational and structural power, where the former refers to collective class organisations and the latter to the location of workers in the economy (Wright 2015:190–191). Cumbers et al. (2016:96) argue to spatialize Wright's approach so that structural power is understood as labour's ability to disrupt capital flows based on its location at key or vulnerable points within production, distribution and transport networks; whereas associational power is developed through mobilizing broader spatial networks to support local actions and struggles (see also Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2011:218). The 1984-5 miners' strike can be understood as an attempt to utilise both forms of agency: targeting the power supply central to the economy through miners and other workers' power at the point of production (Cumbers, MacKinnon, and Shaw 2010), and simultaneously constructing a socially and spatially diverse solidarity movement within and beyond workplaces as a radical precursor to forms of community unionism (Wills 2001). It is also necessary to consider the relationship between associational and structural power, instead of seeing them as distinct and mutually independent.

Rather than delineating forms of agency, other accounts have returned to considering the relationship between structure and agency. Coe and Jordhus-Lier (2011:214) have argued that it is necessary to situate workers' capacity for action in formations of capital, state, community and the labour market. Rather than positioning structure simply as restraint, Kiil and Knutsen (2016:105) emphasise that the conditioning of agency by structures and context

can both 'constrain and enable successful action' by workers. It is necessary to have a temporally dynamic understanding of structure and agency, and recognise how working-class struggles themselves impact on structures. For Featherstone and Griffin (2016:381) it is important not to see constraints on agency as given, 'rather than constantly renegotiated, reworked and politicized in different ways'. Similarly, Cumbers et al. (2010) argue that class and class struggle is not fixed and ahistorical, but dynamic and fluid. Through a discussion of EP Thompson, they highlight that capital accumulation is 'an unfolding and open dynamic of class struggle, not a "script" being played out according to some abstract laws of capital' (Cumbers, Helms, and Swanson 2010:55). Such an approach is not predicated on an exaggerated sense of working-class agency, but understands class in relational terms and recognises the struggles within that relationship.

An attention to the historical development of class relations can include considering the construction by labour activists of cultures of solidarity. The picket line, for example, is a particularly important space for enacting solidarity during industrial disputes. It needs to be understood as a moral and political space produced over a long period by working-class activism. The culture of respecting picket lines, while it has certainly fluctuated, has been crucial in enabling labour struggles to overcome classic collective action problems (Olson 1965). In a similar way, Jim Phillips' (2012b) work has adapted EP Thompson's (1971) idea of the 'moral economy' to help understand the 1984-5 miners' strike in Scotland. A conception of the coalfield economy based on community ownership that stood in contrast to market individualism, and challenged the right of miners to 'sell' jobs (i.e. accept redundancy) that should be passed to the next generation, was a powerful moral resource on which the strikers could draw. Such cultures of solidarity and moral economies had to be constantly renewed but nevertheless were deeply rooted historically, and in Gramscian terms sought to counteract hegemonic discourses of capital that undermine class consciousness and solidarity (Magnusson, Knutsen, and Endresen 2010:170–171).

These cultures therefore helped create the context in which industrial action became possible. Working-class activists also developed relatively permanent labour organisations and institutions to support their aims. In Britain these include the Labour Party, but perhaps most importantly trade unions. Labour geography has been accused of seeing working-class agency exclusively through trade unionism. Andrew Herod (2010:25), for example, has argued to move beyond 'unionised workers' to 'develop a wider conception of working-class people as geographical agents'. Others have critiqued an excessive reliance on trade union archives or the voices of trade union officials (Featherstone and Griffin 2016; Rogaly

and Qureshi 2017). There is a risk not only in terms of agency, but a more general problem of conflating working-class experience with trade unionism. Despite focusing on a trade union dispute, this work attempts to avoid such limitations by highlighting how different forms of activism, sometimes with only a loose connection to official trade unions, operated through the strike. However, the problem of a narrow focus on trade unionism should not be paralleled by an equally restricted conception of trade union activism itself. Working-class activists have often been involved in trade unions and other organisations and forms of struggles at the same time, with one informing the other. Featherstone and Griffin (2016:376) note that EP Thompson's work intervened 'in an existing field of labour history which was dominated by a rather arid sense of official trade union histories'. This is a provocation towards a richer understanding both of working-class agency beyond trade unions, but also of trade unions themselves.

This research, as I elaborate further in the next chapter, is motivated by political commitments shared with many who work in labour geography and the tradition of history from below. Such a commitment is predicated on the possibility of working-class agency. As I have argued, this does not necessitate a myopically positive view of the ability of working-class people to shape and contest the geographies of capitalism. Nevertheless, I highlight the construction of networks of mutual solidarity across space from below in the 1970s and 1980s. These networks significantly influenced the political geographies of Britain, and were a powerful resource on which the labour movement could draw upon. A more nuanced understanding of agency within labour geography therefore requires paying attention to the historically and geographically specific resources developed by labour activists themselves. Historicising the development of these solidarity networks emphasises that labour agency is not fixed even in the context of a capitalist economy.

**Scale, the everyday and emotions of solidarity**

A concern with recovering history from below brings to the fore questions of scale. This section argues that an emphasis on considering trade union struggles through grassroots members does not require excessively valorising the rank-and-file. One of the values of smaller histories and geographies, however, is that they can allow for an engagement with the personal and emotional aspects of solidarity. At the same, I argue that the small scale should not be conflated with the spatially bounded or ignore the broader political impact that struggles from below can have. More generally, I suggest that an excessively strict distinction between the everyday and the political misses the important ways in which the two shape each other.

Geographers of labour have tended to approach scale in terms of the relationship between local, regional, national and international campaigning, but also the internal hierarchy of trade union organisation (Aguiar and Ryan 2009; Castree 2000; Hastings 2016; Lier 2007).[1] Cumbers et al. (2010) have emphasised the risks of a 'scalar chasm' between leaders and membership in unions, and the need to develop 'new spatial fixes' to reduce this distance and draw together local workplace struggles with broader campaigns. This sense of a 'scalar chasm', I argue in Chapter 6, helps explain the resonance of Conservative attacks on trade union democracy during the miners' strike. For some trade unionists who felt they had little control over their own union, the accusation that the NUM's approach to the miners' strike was anti-democratic made sense and contributed to a reluctance to offer support (Hyman 1986).

Advocates of HfB have often been associated in labour studies with what might be described as 'rank-and-filism': a commitment to the radical potential of grassroots members, and antipathy towards the bureaucracy, of trade unions.[2] Brenner et al.'s (2010) recent collection of US working-class history, *Rebel Rank and File: Labor Militancy and Revolt from Below During the Long 1970s*, shows this strong connection between a sense of history 'from below' and the union 'rank and file'. The revolt of the rank and file, crucially, is seen as directed at both employers and the union leadership (Brenner 2010:1–2). Perhaps one of the most forceful recent assertions of the rank-and-file/trade union bureaucracy binary comes from Darlington and Upchurch (2012:91), who see a suitably nuanced version as 'the most useful way of understanding intra-union relations'. They argue that 'one of the most important obstacles to the emergence and/or development of workers' struggle over the last thirty years […] has been the unwillingness, hesitation or limited commitment of union leaders to mount an effective fight back, combined with rank-and-file workers' lack of confidence to act independently' (Darlington and Upchurch 2012:91).

This dual analysis of a lack of rank-and-file confidence and the conservatism of trade union leaders is present in some accounts of the miners' strike, most obviously Callinicos and Simons (1985). Thinking through the relationship between members and the various layers of officials in trade unions helps provide a more rounded picture than either an exclusive focus on grassroots members or the union as an institution. Nevertheless, Darlington and Upchurch's (2012) account is rooted in an assumption of a progressive rank-and-file—

---

[1] There is a much broader debate on the utility or otherwise of scale as a concept that would take too much space to address here (Jonas 2006; Marston, Jones, and Woodward 2005).
[2] See the late 1980s debate on 'rank and filism' in the *International Journal of Social History* (Cronin 1989; Hyman 1989; Price 1989; Zeitlin 1989a, 1989b).

hampered only by levels of confidence—and an inherently conservative trade union officialdom. In so far as generalisations go, the latter seems more plausible than the former, although any suggestion that the average British trade union member was more militant than Arthur Scargill would be unconvincing. A commitment to the importance of rank-and-file trade unionism should not slide into simplistic assumptions about either ordinary trade union members or officials. One of the empirical contributions of this thesis, in Chapter 6, is an investigation into popular working-class opposition to the miners' strike. As I argued earlier in the chapter, this makes an important contribution to thinking about the absence of solidarity from below.

The question of scale is relevant in another sense here, as there has been a strong connection between HfB and attention to small, or micro, histories (Gentry 2013:194–5). Such an approach often allows for more personal and everyday studies. Recounting history from below, at the level of individuals, can allow us to explore the relationship between solidarity and emotions. There is a strong sense in some geographical work in this area of how experiences in politicised spaces shape emotions (Leitner et al. 2008:165). Brown and Yaffe have argued for attention to be paid to the 'micropolitics of the practices' through which solidarities are enacted (Brown and Yaffe 2014:40). In the context of a picket against apartheid South Africa in central London in the 1980s, they highlight how the act of standing on the picket together for extended periods of time 'fostered strong social solidarity amongst the group' (Brown and Yaffe 2014:49). They argue that the 'intense passions' of activists' shared experiences on the picket 'enabled them to develop mutual trust across social difference, which enhanced their ability to act in solidarity with those resisting apartheid in South Africa' (Brown and Yaffe 2014:40). Routledge in particular has drawn attention to the role of emotions in understanding solidarity, arguing that 'shared emotions of activism create shared collective identities and are mobilized strategically' (Routledge 2012:430). Attention to the small-scale, personal experiences of activism in particular sites and spaces can therefore allow us to explore the emotional aspects of solidarity and the political effect that these have (see also Featherstone 2012:36).

This is an understanding that sees the political and personal as overlapping spheres, and as such owes much to feminism (Wright 2010). The role of emotions is explored in particular in Chapter 5, in which I argue that the direct personal relationships established between the coalfields and London, often through the tactic of twinning, led to the frequent formation of friendships and as a result the intensification of solidarity. Some theorists, however, have questioned a desire for friendship in solidarity relationships. Clare Land has suggested that

where social inequalities exist, friendship is an inappropriate goal for solidarity and can be interpreted as a desire to eliminate differences (Land 2015:117–8). As I have already suggested, differences do not always equate to obvious hierarchies of power. Friendships developed during the miners' strike—for example between LGBT Londoners and heterosexual miners—suggested the possibility of developing greater understanding across social differences than impersonal political relationships might achieve. This risks restating what Jacqueline Rose (2016:5) describes as one of liberalism's most potent myths: 'that knowing – finding oneself face to face with something or someone outside one's usual frame of reference – is the first step on the path to understanding.' When the personal interaction occurs in a situation of solidarity however, while certainly not a panacea for all prejudices, there is a greater chance for mutual learning.

Questions of scale are of a more general relevance for this study. Hayden Lorimer has argued for the importance of 'small stories' in his historical account of the discipline of geography. He argues that such attention can tell of broader 'epistemic shifts on personal and intimate terms' (Lorimer 2003:214). This sense that we can understand broader societal change as it impacts on individuals is important. However, on its own this suggests a somewhat passive reflection of larger changes onto individuals. Within history, attention to the small scale has been used to retain a sense of non-elite agency, but on occasion only by reflecting a pessimism that the activities of working-class people can have a broader impact (Gregory 1999:101). The small scale can also be understood in quite a bounded spatial sense, with the micro perceived as synonymous with the local (Ginzburg 2012:194–5; White 1981). For Lorimer (2003:200), his small story can be seen as part of wider trends but argues that 'particularity and mundanity are […] the qualities that matter most'. As Raphael Samuel (2012:416) argued in relation to social history, it is important not to make 'a fetish of the ordinary'. Attention to the experiences of 'ordinary' people who were actively involved in the miners' dispute, both as strikers and supporters, can open up small stories spatially in terms of recognising the construction of translocal solidarities at a personal level. And more broadly, it highlights how working-class people and their supporters fundamentally shaped one of the most important events in post-war British history.

This thesis therefore focuses on a relatively spectacular, albeit unsuccessful, example of working-class resistance, known for its exceptional nature rather than its ordinariness. Criticisms of labour geography, that it emphasises the spectacular over the typical, echo differences within HfB, where there has often been a tension between accounts based on 'ordinary', everyday life and those based on political activism (Davin 1981; Shave 2013).

Selina Todd, whose recent work on twentieth-century working-class Britain deals both with the everyday and the more spectacular, has questioned whether recent approaches to social history imply that individual subjectivity is 'more "authentic" than the collective expression of aspiration held in trade union records or memories of rent strikes' (Todd 2013; see also Todd 2014). Spectacular or unusual forms of resistance, as I argued above, have merit in and of themselves. However, the division between everyday life and political activism can be drawn too starkly (Waters 2016). By placing events such as the 1984-5 miners' strike in the context of a longer history we can understand how large-scale solidarity connections can in part develop out of more everyday relations. In addition, such events often bring into the open discussions about everyday conditions of life and attitudes; in this case, for example, attitudes towards race, gender, sexuality and class both within London and the coalfields. An interest in the everyday and the more spectacular are therefore not contradictory but can usefully inform each other.

**Place and the temporalities of solidarity**

This thesis is concerned centrally with translocal solidarity, the construction of networks of support across space between different places. It is therefore important to think about how to conceptualise place, and the nature of the British coalfields and London in particular. A key theorist here is Raymond Williams, whose work has been influential for a number of geographers (Featherstone 2005; Harvey 1995; Tomaney 2013). Often understandings of the British labour movement have been rooted in what Raymond Williams described as 'militant particularism', a form of working-class politics strongly grounded in particular localities. Williams argued that theories of socialism should escape an 'overnarrow emphasis on the bond of economic experience' and instead should 'centrally involve *place*' (Williams 1989:123, 242). Reflecting on his knowledge of car workers in Oxford, and Williams' depiction of Wales, David Harvey (1995:339) argued that socialism in Britain was always driven by these kinds of militant particularisms.

The coalfields of South Wales were a crucial example for Williams in his conception of place and militant particularism. During the 1984-5 miners' strike, he argued that 'what the miners, like most of us, mean by their communities is the places where they lived and want to go on living, where generations not only of economic but of social effort and human care have been invested, and which new generations will inherit. Without that kind of strong whole attachment, there can be no meaningful community' (Williams 1989:123). This can risk valorising a particular type of community in a way that has been critiqued by feminists in particular. Marilyn Friedman (1989), for example, has argued that communities of choice

have tended to be less oppressive for women than communities of place. However, it is important here that Williams develops a deeply historical sense of how relationships, communities, and a sense of place can be developed.

The British coalfields, and mining areas more generally, have often been understood in quite a bounded way, with a solidarity rooted in geographical isolation (Nyden 2010:174; Richards 1996:16–17). Doreen Massey has been central in developing a contrasting conception of place. Massey argues that 'places, in fact, are always constructed out of articulations of social relations (trading connections, the unequal links of colonialism, thoughts of home) which are not only internal to that locale but which link them to elsewhere'. She suggests that a radical history of a place would recognise it as 'a conjunction of many histories and many spaces' (Massey 1995:191). David Featherstone has suggested that this more relational conceptualisation of place can be developed in our understanding of militant particularism. He argues for a consideration of 'the relational construction of place-located activity' that 'leads to a focus on how militant particularisms recombine networks of activity through distinctive political practices' (Featherstone 2005:264). This suggests that the kind of translocal solidarities explored in this thesis could be constitutive of political cultures in London and the British coalfields, rather than simply networking those that already existed.

Doreen Massey's writing in *World City* is particularly important here in how we think about London in the late twentieth century and its relationship to the rest of Britain. Massey argues that the struggles in the city in the 1980s, alongside pivotal events including the 1984-5 miners' strike, were central to the development of neoliberalism. The success of the neoliberal project was, in a sense, a victory for London and the South East over the rest (Massey 2007:80). This could clearly be perceived in class terms, as a defeat for the working class in the old industrial heartlands (Martin, Sunley, and Wills 1993). However, Massey also emphasises that neoliberalism was the project of one section of London and the south east, and indeed some of the strongest resistance to Thatcherism took place within the capital (Massey 2007:17, 31). More generally, she rejects 'the notion that regions are coherent entities that compete against each other'. Rather than regions meeting each other pre-formed, 'an alternative geographical imagination would argue that the character of a region, or the economy of a place, is a product not only of internal interactions but also of relations with elsewhere' (Massey 2007:20). One form these relations with elsewhere take are the political networks actively constructed through movements such as the miners' strike solidarity campaign. These solidarity relationships could contest the way class was understood regionally, by emphasising common class experiences and identities. By simultaneously

challenging homogeneous constructions of class, these relationships could undermine the perception of class politics as inherently in conflict with gender, sexual and racial politics.

Such relational understandings of place, however, have been strongly critiqued by John Tomaney (2013:659), who seeks 'to rescue local attachments and a sense of belonging from the condescension of the cosmopolites and, instead, to present a defence of *parochialism* as a mode of dwelling'. Tomaney's arguments are worth consideration as they could be seen as a direct challenge to the emphasis on translocal solidarities in this thesis. Moreover, his position is developed specifically with communities such as those developed in the British coalfields in mind (Tomaney 2015a:512). Tomaney (2015b:531) believes that an exaggerated emphasis on relational understandings of place is part of a normative orthodoxy in human geography, 'which, influenced by a cosmopolitan ethic, generally disparages local attachments for their tendency to be exclusionary'. He provides a strong defence of the importance of a sense of belonging to local community, of the ways that local solidarities help people to deal with practical problems in their lives, and argues that generating broader solidarities depends upon the existence of local attachments (Tomaney 2013:669).

While Tomaney justifiably critiques those cosmopolitan theories that pay little attention to place, there is a risk of overgeneralising about researchers who foreground the relational construction of localities. Some theorists who propose a relational understanding of place are strongly invested in the transformative potential of local struggles. Featherstone's relational version of militant particularism, for instance, rejects an equation of the local with the particular and the global with universalism. Such a definition of universalism against local struggles, he argues, 'makes it impossible for local political activity to break out of this prison-house of particularism in ways which shape political imaginaries' (Featherstone 2005:263). Williams' deeply rooted historical sense of class constructed in place is not incompatible with the kind of relational and cosmopolitan arguments developed by Massey and Featherstone. As Francis and Smith's (1998) work on the early twentieth-century South Wales coalfield highlights, cosmopolitanism and the construction over time of a strong sense of community and class were  mutually constitutive. It is important then to think spatially and historically together. In this sense, Tomaney (2013:662) is right that a strong attachment to a locality is not inherently exclusionary, but such an argument is not inimical to relational conceptions of place.

At the same time, the thick attachments to which Tomaney (2013:663) appeals against cosmopolitanism—including nations, ethnicities and religions—often have a tenuous relationship to the local. It is clear that solidaristic attachments are often particularistic, but

not necessarily rooted exclusively in localities. Tomaney (2013:662) calls for more evidence for relational understandings of place or critiques of the local. While he is justified in insisting that theoretical understandings of place are empirically grounded, it is difficult to see how the predominance of local or broader attachments could ever be proven. Nor does his employment of primarily literary sources, including James Joyce, feel entirely conclusive as evidence of popular attachments. There is a need to historicise such discussions. Tomaney (2013:669) justifiably argues that beyond the local the 'obstacles to achieving larger solidarities are formidable'. Yet there are historical periods or moments when broader solidarities seem more likely, and others when they become considerably more difficult to construct. For those on the political left interested in the possibilities of developing both locally-grounded politics and relationships of solidarity across space, understanding those times and places where such a politics has seemed possible is important.

A historical understanding of the construction of place and solidarity is therefore crucial, and the importance of thinking about temporality more broadly is developed throughout this thesis. There have been some attempts in recent geographical work on labour and social movements to foreground temporality. Antentas' (2015) has argued, via the theories of Daniel Bensaïd, for the need to pay attention to temporalities of internationalist political activism. The emphasis is comparatively short term, however, and largely about how international political movements that are connected across space do not necessarily overlap straightforwardly in time (Antentas 2015:1116). Coe and Jordhus-Lier (2011:220) argue for an understanding of temporality in relation to working-class agency by highlighting questions of political context, the permanence or transience of particular gains, and labour organising as a learning process over time. This is, however, still a comparatively restricted way of thinking about the relationship between temporality, solidarity and agency.

A different sense of the impact of temporality is given by work on colonialism that emphasises the political importance of forgetting and remembering, and how situating colonialism as past erases it in the present (Mott 2016). A more positive view can be taken, however, of historical memory as a resource. Cumbers et al. (2010:68) have discussed how old industrial cities contain latent reserves from past processes of activism and class consciousness that can be drawn upon during struggles. There is a sense more broadly in historical geographies of the labour movement and political left of constructing 'usable pasts', that such histories can be a resource for today (Featherstone 2008; Griffin 2015). It is important to recognise that struggles in the past were themselves shaped by their relationships to history. Personal memories, stories passed down through families, and the

active and collective memorialisation of struggles can all shape political cultures and a sense of place.

Work on the British coalfields often highlights a strong sense of historical memory embedded within labour activism and coalfield communities more broadly (Phillips 2012a:33). As Ferrall and McNeill (2015:179) argue in relation to the 1926 General Strike and miners' lockout: 'The Strike, in this concentrated form of memory, never ends. The Welsh poets of 1984-5 […] recognise the futility of acting "as if the past were what is finished with."' On occasion, such accounts suggest a fairly insular conception of how history and memory could embed a sense of place in the coalfields. It is worth supplementing this with attention to the memorialisation of solidarities constructed between mining areas and other places, both within and outside Britain. Such a focus would contribute to our understanding of how militant particularism can be constructed relationally (Featherstone 2005). This research therefore develops an account of the role of translocal solidarities in the construction of a sense of place. I emphasise how paying attention to the temporalities of solidarity in a broad sense, including memory and tradition, can develop an understanding of place that is both relational and historically rooted.

**Political mobilities and spaces of solidarity**

Developing accounts of class as historically rooted in place should not mean seeing working-class people as fundamentally geographically restricted. The development of translocal networks around the 1984-5 miners' strike depended on distinctively working-class forms of politicised mobility. There can be a tendency to equate cosmopolitanism and relational understandings of place with elitism, which suggests that the local is considered the proper scale for understanding ordinary people. This is present, for example, in some of the literature on mobilities, where 'the division between those who are mobile (the cosmopolitans) and those who are not (the locals) is thus a division that expresses and reinforces power inequality' (Franquesa 2011:1016; see also Cresswell 2010:22). Elites can of course be strongly rooted in particular localities. Creswell (2015:82) has suggested that the elite may be no more mobile or cosmopolitan than the poor, but it is necessary to attend to the different ways they move. It is also necessary to consider the attitudes towards different types of mobility. The view that movement is dangerous has tended to be directed towards poor migrants, refugees, vagrants, Roma, and so on (Beier and Ocobock 2008; Taylor 2014). Even where such movement is recognised there can be a limited sense of agency attached to non-elite mobilities. There is a need for accounts of the distinct forms of working-class movement that have been employed during labour struggles, from flying

pickets to workplace speaking tours. These forms of movement can be crucial in constructing relationships of solidarity across space from below.

For Franquesa (2011), it is necessary to be attentive to both mobility and immobility, and the relationship between the two. Some versions of working-class mobility, in particular the flying picket, created fairly transient spaces for political activism. In other instances, solidarity relationships were developed in the comparatively fixed sites of trade union buildings, welfare halls, women's centres and so on. It was often such spaces that hosted reciprocal visits between London and the coalfields during the 1984-5 miners' strike, emphasising that fixity and mobility were not necessarily in conflict. Brown and Yaffe (2014:50) have argued that greater attention should be given to 'how solidarity is enacted and practised in specific sites'. A historical-geographical approach can contribute here by highlighting how activists developed physical rootedness in particular places, which Stephen Brooke (2014) has suggested was a notable practice of post-1968 liberation movements in London. Lucy Delap's (2016) research on feminist bookshops from the mid-1970s to 2000 similarly challenges interpretations of the Women's Liberation Movement as fluid and ephemeral by emphasising that it was grounded in spaces that blurred boundaries between the commercial and the political (see also Eley 2002:375). Such a consideration can be extended to the labour movement, and to the relationship between labour and other social movements. However, the value of a historical approach is not simply to find such examples in the past. Katrina Navickas' (2016) work on late 18th and early 19th century popular protest in Britain is important in emphasising both the appropriation of particular public spaces by protesters, and the establishment of distinct working-class spaces for organising, as a dynamic and contested process. She argues that her work 'is a narrative of the closing down of public space from the 1790s' (Navickas 2016:5–6).

We can see an analogous process in the 1970s and 1980s, where social movements and the left attempted to open up space for oppositional politics, while particularly the Conservative government from 1979 attempted to close down such spaces (see Chapter 5). The centrality of contested space was foregrounded in Blomley's account of policing in the miners' strike. He argued that 'space, or more specifically, movement through space, became an essential tactical concern for both union and antistrike forces', understood in both a material and a representational sense (Blomley 1994:152). Yet this conflict over space and movement can be considered in a wider frame across the diverse social groups involved in the solidarity movement for the miners. Jeffrey Weeks' (1990:238) pioneering work on the history of homosexual politics, for instance, noted that in the mid-1980s obscenity raids on Gay's the

Word bookshop in London, the use of so-called 'pretty policemen' to entrap gay men, and aggressive policing of lesbian and gay pubs and clubs, contributed to a 'distinct closing of social space'. The miners' strike and the support movement brings together such seemingly disparate histories, making it possible to develop a broader picture of the contestation of space in the 1980s. It is therefore necessary to be attentive to the sites and spaces in which solidarity can be enacted, but also how these sites and spaces are a result of struggles over time. Such struggles can create deep roots in particular places, and enable the construction of solidarities across space, but such achievements are not irreversible.

The role of the state in this process is to some extent ambivalent. Labour geography has been critiqued for paying insufficient attention to the state (Herod 2010:25). In a review of the field, Lier (2007:819) has argued against understanding the capitalist state as a neutral regulatory body, recognising instead that on some occasions 'it actively engages in and intensifies the exploitation of labour'. The miners' strike provides rich empirical evidence for such an assessment. For many commentators on the left, the dominant view of the state during the miners' strike was as a highly repressive body carrying out the kind of restrictive practices highlighted by Blomley and others (Blomley 1994; Fine and Millar 1985; Green 1990). However, there is a risk of presenting the state as a singular entity. While the state was centrally involved in attempting to restrict political spaces, in other cases the Labour left used the resources of the local state to support the strike, and more broadly to create spaces for oppositional politics. Rather than a neutral regulatory body, it makes more sense to see the state as a site of contest, as 'multifaceted, with many possible subjectivities in relation to any particular conflict', and therefore potentially 'a tool of resistance' (Martin and Pierce 2013:67). Cumbers (2015), who similarly rejects a sense of the state as a homogenous entity, places a particular emphasis on the possibilities of the local state in contesting neoliberalism. This resonates with the political project of municipal socialism in 1980s Britain, which highlighted the possibilities and limitations of using local authorities for oppositional politics (Frost and North 2013; Panitch and Leys 2001; Payling 2014; Thompson and Allen 1986). The state can be understood, as I emphasise in Chapter 5, as simultaneously helping to sustain spaces of solidarity and attempting to close them down.

The struggle over space and its meaning was not simply between the state and the labour movement. It is also important to think about how solidarity can allow the character of politicised spaces to be negotiated and contested within social movements themselves. The picket lines, labour clubs, and trade union demonstrations described in this thesis helped assert what EP Thompson (1980a:491–915) described as a 'working-class presence' (see

also Crossan et al. 2016; Featherstone and Griffin 2016; Griffin 2015). This sense of 'presence' runs through Ruth Percy's (2014) work on early twentieth-century labour disputes in London and Chicago. She highlights the different ways that strikers used urban space, noting that 'their most obvious strategy was to establish their presence in public spaces' (Percy 2014:466). Percy is also attentive, however, to the gendered and racialized construction of this working-class presence. In some instances, she argues, 'gatherings of strikes reaffirmed conventional organizations of space, particularly in terms of gender' (Percy 2014:466). She notes, however, that 'the streets were a more inclusive space than the union hall or negotiating table and enabled marginal workers to find a place to voice their demands and make their presence known' (Percy 2014:458). The use of space by working-class movements can therefore reassert certain forms of social hierarchies while challenging others.

It is important, however, not to think only about the exclusionary practices of the spaces in which class politics are enacted. The marginalisation of working-class people within LGBT spaces, which are frequently commercial, has been noted by geographers of sexuality for example (Oswin 2008). This again emphasises the utility of thinking about space, intersectionality and solidarity together. Relationships of solidarity can of course reaffirm and contribute to such exclusions. Nevertheless, I argue that the solidarities constructed during the miners' strike offered opportunities to contest dominant uses of space in ways that would have otherwise been unlikely. This thesis therefore foregrounds the construction and contestation over time of political spaces. The development of such spaces can root movements in particular localities, but can also form the basis for networks of translocal solidarity through which distinct forms of working-class mobilities are enacted. Through the production of translocal solidarities, the nature of such spaces can be refigured.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined the conceptual framework and core theoretical arguments of this thesis. First and centrally, I have emphasised that this work contributes to understanding solidarity. Building on recent work in geography (Brown and Yaffe 2014; Featherstone 2012), I have argued that solidarity can create new relationships between geographically distant places, and across social boundaries of class, gender, sexuality and race. Theories of intersectionality that have been developed most explicitly in geographical work on gender can be useful here in analysing labour solidarities (Brown 2012; Valentine 2007). I have argued that through the construction of translocal solidarities, intersectionality can be used to understand the simultaneous articulation of common bonds and differences within and

between places and groups of people. Second, I have foregrounded the potential mutuality of solidarity, and how this is best understood as developing over time. The mutuality of solidarity suggests a more equal relationship than accounts that focus on the principle of deference (Gould 2007). A sense of ongoing, mutual relationships makes possible a wider emancipatory political project. It also contests the view that solidarity necessarily travels from the relatively privileged to the oppressed, as particular individuals and groups can receive and provide solidarity in different instances.

Third, this construction of solidarity over a longer time frame contributes to a broader analysis of the temporalities of solidarity. In particular, the construction of a culture of solidarity can rely on histories, memories and traditions of mutual support. The mobilisation of such histories develops a deeper sense of the importance of temporality for labour and social movement geographies (Antentas 2015; Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2011). Fourth, I have argued that the memorialisation of translocal solidarities makes a distinct contribution to the relational construction of a sense of place (Massey 1995). This suggests that a deeply embedded and historically rooted sense of class in place is compatible with the development of translocal relationships (Featherstone 2005; Tomaney 2013). Fifth, I have shown how this thesis can develop debates within labour geography on agency (Featherstone and Griffin 2016; Kiil and Knutsen 2016). I have emphasised the need for accounts of the construction of supportive institutions but also cultures, traditions, and norms of behaviour within the labour movement that provided resources for working-class struggles. A distinctly geographical aspect to this includes the development of networks of translocal support, physical spaces for activism, but also moral norms in more transient spaces such as the picket line. These networks and spaces depended upon and shaped working-class forms of politicised mobility.

The emphasis in this thesis on popular experience and agency reflects the shared concerns of HfB and labour geography, and also forms a significant strand in writing on the 1984-5 miners' strike itself (Featherstone and Griffin 2016; Herod 1997; Phillips 2012b:5). In this chapter I have discussed some of the criticisms of these approaches, particularly that there is an unhelpful romanticisation of working-class agency, and a failure to situate popular experience in relation to elites and to structural factors (McDowell 2008a; Mitchell 2011). I have suggested how some of these problems can be attenuated across a number of themes central to this work: for example, by recognising the limitations and negative aspects of solidarity from below, paying attention to how elite discourse helps shape popular attitudes, and by highlighting how the power of the state can be used to restrict the spaces available

for progressive activism. Nevertheless, with such complexities embedded in our thinking, I believe that theoretically and politically an emphasis on the potentially transformative nature of working-class politics is ultimately justifiable. The next chapter more explicitly argues for a politically committed form of research, and outlines a methodology for recovering the diverse translocal solidarities constructed during the 1984-5 miners' strike.

**The miners' strike in the archive: tracing networks of translocal solidarity**

**Introduction**

This thesis uses extensive archival research to reconstruct the solidarity movement during the 1984-5 miners' strike. A wide range of sources—pamphlets, letters, newspapers, flyers, minutes of meetings, filmed documentaries, audio recordings, strike bulletins, diaries and other material—have been employed to develop my account of these networks and relationships between London and the coalfields. This chapter outlines how I have done this in practice, in the context of methodological debates on the nature of archives and on politically-committed research. The first section considers questions of power and voice in the archive. I argue that while elites have often dominated the archival record, it is necessary to recognise that this process has frequently been resisted. Raphael Samuel (2012:8) insisted that history is 'a social form of knowledge; the work, in any given instance, of a thousand different hands'. This social production includes activists who have recorded and preserved history as part of their political practice. I outline some of these practices as they relate to the 1984-5 miners' strike and the support movement. I argue that this activism makes it possible to find the voices of ordinary people through archival research, particularly for an event like the miners' strike during which those involved produced a multitude of written materials. Theories of the archive that emphasise elite domination can present an overly homogenous view. Even state archives, I argue, do not simply represent the views and experiences of elites.

In the second section, I discuss how the miners' strike has been researched and what is new in my approach. I emphasise the contrast between accounts that offer a Britain-wide view of the year, which tend to focus on a small number of trade union and political leaders, and those that attempt to reconstruct the experience of the strike from below. The latter have been rightly attentive to the local but often in overly spatially bounded ways. In contrast, by focusing on the comparatively understudied miners' support movement, I am able to develop a translocal approach (Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013). I highlight how the mobility of activists during the strike has left its mark in archives both in London and the coalfields. By reconstructing these links through extensive archival research, I present a geographically expansive picture that still focuses on the experience of the strike from below. I am able to bring the politics and experiences of London and mining areas together and show how they were mutually constitutive. It is a methodology that highlights how geography can contribute

to debates in labour history. At the same time, I argue that a historical methodology can usefully inform labour geography. Rather than presenting the solidarities of 1984-5 as a snapshot, I have investigated their development over time.

In the third section, I acknowledge that the archival record is necessarily fragmented, and that as a result any historical research can only create a partial picture. I argue, however, that the aim of my research is not to recreate the past in its entirety, but rather to ask particular questions that are relevant to current political and social concerns. These questions are shaped by my position socially and politically. In the context of long standing debates on the need for reflexivity in research, I outline the political motivations of this work (Rose 1997). I reflect on the research process itself, and how the interaction between my theoretical concerns and empirical findings shaped the structure of the thesis. I argue for a self-critical and self-reflexive approach that is empirically rigorous and open about the contemporary political importance of research into the past.

**Power and voice in the archive**

Most of the empirical material used in this thesis comes from the approximately twenty different archives I visited across England and Wales, primarily in London and former coal mining areas.[1] Other primary material was sourced in more ad hoc ways; for example, I use documentaries made during the strike that have become available on the internet or on DVD, and published strike diaries (for example LGSM 1986; Strike 2009; Wakefield 2002). The archives that I have used are owned and maintained by a range of institutions: central state bodies, local authorities, universities, and more independent organisations such as the George Padmore Institute. A frequent theme in theorising the archive has been to understand it as a political site in itself. Chaudhuri et al. (2010:xiii) argue for the need to 'challenge the tired assumption that an archive is simply an immutable, neutral, and ahistorical place in which historical records are preserved'. It should instead be understood as 'a site for the production of knowledge.' There has often been a particular concern with the role of the state and elites in this process (Ogborn 2003). As my research seeks not to simply reproduce elite constructions of the past, it is important to consider such understandings of archival research and how they relate to this specific project.

Carol Ann Stoler's work on colonial archives has been influential here. She argues for attention to be paid to the 'relations of power in which archives are created, sequestered, and rearranged' (Stoler 2009:32). Her account is a complex one, which acknowledges state

---

[1] For a list of the archives consulted, see p. 189.

power in the archives but also insists that this power, like the colonial governing practices it was part of, was not monolithic (Stoler 2009:51). Despite these nuances, Stoler still gives a strong sense of elite domination of the archive. Gyanendra Pandey has insisted even more forcefully on such an understanding. He argues that 'the narratives preserved by the state in archives and other public institutions—that is, the narratives most commonly used by historians—belong overwhelmingly to the ruling classes, and owe their existence to a ruling class's need for security and control' (Pandey 2000:282). The subordinated, in contrast, leave only fragments, while alternative narratives can be found among storytellers, balladeers, and folk memories (Pandey 2000:284).

There is a need to temper some of these claims. Carolyn Steedman (1998:67) has argued that within the quiet folders and bundles of the archive resides 'the neatest demonstration of how state power has operated'. She nevertheless suggests that the archive 'is made from selected and consciously chosen documentation from the past *and* from the mad fragmentations that no one intended and that just ended up there' (Steedman 1998:66; see also Withers 2002:305). Archives may be sites of power, but there can also be an element of randomness to what you find. Moreover, as I suggested in the previous chapter, there can be an ambivalent relationship between local and central state institutions. This can be reflected in their archives, where the perspectives and struggles of working-class activists can sometimes be found. It is in the Kent local authority archives, for example, that the Kent Area NUM records are held. The council run archives in Brent were exceptionally useful for material on the miners' support movement, and for the 1976-8 Grunwick dispute, a crucial event for understanding relationships between the capital and the coalfields in the period before the miners' strike. The archive contains, for example, the bulletins created by the Grunwick workplace strike committee.[2]

Archives have not simply been left to national elites. Raphael Samuel (2012:5) complained about those who fetishized 'the act of research while ignoring its condition of existence'. An important element enabling my research is how historians, archivists, librarians and others, often animated by the same impulse as history from below, have frequently contested the dominance of elites in the archival record. A couple of examples can be provided from the material used in this thesis. The South Wales Miners' Library (SWML), now hosted by Swansea University, was established in the 1970s by the historian Hywel Francis in reaction to the decline of the old miners' libraries. In response to 'the need for urgent action in the field of proletarian records', Francis wrote, the decision was made to focus on collecting

---

[2] The strike bulletins are in Brent Archives, 198722/GSC/2/1.

material relating to the labour movement and miners in particular (Francis 1976:183). This does not mean only the institutional records of the NUM. For example, there are hundreds of tape recordings of interviews with people from the coalfields from a number of different projects. The material at the SWML also includes newssheets produced by support groups in the area during the 1984-5 dispute, all of which is invaluable for reconstructing the strike from below.

The second example is the extensive archive of London Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM), deposited in 1991 at the National Museum of Labour History, which subsequently became the People's History Museum in Manchester. The archive contains minutes of weekly meetings, pamphlets, leaflets, correspondence and a range of other material. It was collected by the group themselves, in particular by the secretary Mike Jackson, reflecting an appreciation of the need to record this history (Kelliher 2014:252–3). Jackson wrote about the political importance of this practice at the time of donating the material to the archive. He argued that maintaining this historical record was a way to contest the oppressive invisibility of the lesbian and gay movement. 'This made me wonder', he wrote, 'how much precious material kicks around our homes, workplaces etc. Local lesbian and gay organisations from CHE, GLF, trades union groups etc must have loads of letters, press cuttings, badges, banners, photos etc. They shouldn't be lost or hidden – get them in the museums and local library archives. Bequeath all those embarrassing love letters and birthday cards to the nation!' (Jackson 1991:23). It is important to recognise that activists themselves can be involved in the creation of archives, and perceive this as part of their political practice (Lorimer 2010:265).

Tony Kushner (2006:22) has written about the establishment of Black History Month in the 1980s as a meeting of anti-Thatcherism and history from below. This dual context has a wider resonance, as Kushner recognises, reflecting a broader political impulse to record the views of people that were often marginalised from the historical record. The Black Cultural Archives, for instance, were founded in Brixton in the wake of the 1981 inner city uprisings (Waters 2016). The Hall-Carpenter Archives, which has developed into an extensive archive of material on LGBT life and politics, were established in 1982 to document gay activism in the UK (Donnelly 2008). As the example of the SWML library suggests, this process was of course not confined to the 1980s. Chaudhuri et al. (2010:xiii) argue that the new social and women's historians of the 1960s and 1970s promoted archival practices that preserved previously excluded voices and experiences.

There were a range of other endeavours in this period that were not framed in historical or archival terms, but nevertheless aimed to record non-elite lives and opinions. Tony Harcup has written about the alternative press during the 1984-5 miners' strike as an early form of citizen's journalism. In a study of the coverage of the dispute in *Leeds Other Paper*, he argues that their journalists frequently went to the coalfields and interviewed people, giving space to those 'typically rendered "voiceless" in much of the mainstream media'. These were 'the "ordinary" men and women involved in the strike in the villages, on the pickets lines, in the kitchens and in the support groups' (Harcup 2011:31). There was also extensive grassroots filmmaking at the time, from groups like LGSM creating their own video documentaries to the more extensive *Miners' Campaign Tapes*, which feature interviews with strike activists (LGSM 1986; Miners' Campaign Tape Project 2009). Such varied and rich attempts to record and archive the strike from the perspectives of those actively involved at a grassroots level means there is considerable material available for researching the strike now.

The question of voice is clearly important here. Juanita Sundberg (2007:145) has highlighted the need to understand 'what solidarity looks and feels like from the insiders' perspective'. She argues that previous accounts of solidarity in geography have rarely included the narratives of activists, except where this includes the researchers themselves. This can mean that 'the researcher is in the awkward position of authoring and even authorizing these movements, while the activists' voices are muted' (Sundberg 2007:148–9). Sundberg (2007:146) argues for critical methodologies to overcome this absence, highlighting the collaborative manner in which she worked with solidarity activists through all stages of the research process. In a similar register, Rogaly and Qureshi (2017) have criticised the absence of workers' voices in much labour geography, and foregrounded the value of oral histories. They argue that it 'seems ironic that in a subfield that originated as a committed project of the left, more attention is given to fellow scholars' academic productions, organizational perspectives, and governmental, employers' and union archives than to the experiences of workers as they themselves saw them' (Rogaly and Qureshi 2017:189–90).

I share this concern to foreground the perspective of solidarity activists and working-class people themselves, although my methodology is somewhat different. This thesis highlights the utility of interrogating the existing archival material, including previous oral history interviews, for such a project. I have used a number of different interviews, including collections at the SWML, the Sheffield Archives, and the 'Sisterhood and After' project at the British Library. Re-using other researchers' interviews is not without limitations. Many

of the interviews on cassette tapes that I listened to in Sheffield, for example, were in poor condition, and substantial sections of several interviews were inaudible. In some cases, the interviewing process itself is extremely opaque. I have made extensive use of a set of interviews held in the Women's Library at the LSE conducted by Betty Heathfield in the aftermath of the strike.[3] There are only transcripts of the interviews available and these are incomplete, with no record of the questions being asked. More generally, I of course had no control over who was interviewed and what was discussed, and often little evidence of how these decisions were made. There were some advantages though. It was encouraging when interviewees thirty years ago independently raised a theme or debate that I was interested in, unprompted by interviewers who were looking for information on something quite different. Moreover, it can be preferable to use interviews conducted close to or during an event, rather than looking back decades later. Memories can become uncertain over thirty years and, especially in an event so widely discussed as the miners' strike, opinions can be shaped as much by the intervening period as the events themselves.

The voices of ordinary trade union members and grassroots activists can be found in other archival material as well. Rogaly and Qureshi (2017:190) criticise labour geographers' use of trade union archives, listing them alongside government and employers' archives as failing to represent 'the experiences of workers as they themselves saw them'. The assumption appears to be that trade union archives primarily record the concerns of the trade union bureaucracy. It is certainly important not to conflate the institutional views of trade unions with the opinions of members, or with working-class people more generally. Nevertheless, the trade union archives used extensively in this thesis are extremely varied and do not consist exclusively of the views of union officials. The TUC Library Collections at London Metropolitan University, for example, is distinct from the official TUC archive based at the Modern Records Centre in the University of Warwick. The latter primarily consists of the organisational records of the TUC. The material on the 1984-5 miners' strike at the TUC Library Collections, by contrast, contains a range of material, including a considerable amount of support group activist ephemera. Even in the official union archives, workers' voices are not necessarily absent. For instance, I have made use in Chapter 6 of a large number of letters in the National Union of Seamen (NUS) archive at the Modern Records Centre, written by members protesting against their union's support for the strike.

---

[3] Betty Heathfield was active in Derbyshire organising women's support groups during the strike. These interviews were for a projected book, 'Women of the Coalfields', which only exists in draft form. The Women's Library at the LSE, 7BEH/1/1 and 7BEH/1/2. At least some of the material in these interviews, however, was used for a book published soon after the strike (Salt and Layzell 1985).

Oral interviews can therefore be usefully used alongside printed archival material to gain some access to the opinions and views of 'ordinary' workers. This is particularly true during an event like the 1984-5 miners' strike. A vast amount of literature was produced during that year, from political tracts of established left-wing parties to poems written by miners' children. Support groups in the coalfields and elsewhere often had their own newsletters or bulletins that described their activism. Such material is not without its limitations of course, but it can give an in-depth insight into the activities of the strike quite distinct from the high politics of the dispute. As I argued in the previous chapter, researching an extraordinary event like the miners' strike is in part worthwhile because it tends to produce such material, which can also reflect on more everyday attitudes and conditions of life.

While it is important to recognise that trade union archives themselves can contain a broad range of material, I have nevertheless looked beyond such resources. My commitment to developing an account that reflects the diversity and breadth of the support movement means that I have actively sought out archives and sources that are rarely used in studies of the labour movement. For example, I consulted the Hall-Carpenter Archives, the George Padmore Institute, the Black Cultural Archives, the Women's Library and the Archive of the Irish in Britain in an explicit attempt to integrate LGBT, black, feminist, and Irish politics into my account. I looked to newspapers and journals including *Capital Gay*, *Caribbean Times, West Indian World, The Voice, Lesbian and Gay Socialist, Spare Rib*, and the London listings magazines *Time Out* and *City Limits*, to create a broader picture. Unsurprisingly, especially with the less explicitly political publications, the results were uneven. In the left press—publications like the *Tribune, New Statesman, Morning Star, London Labour Briefing*—the miners' strike was a central focus of their reporting that year. Similarly, visiting archives with specific collections on the miners' strike was more straightforwardly fruitful than some of my more speculative efforts. Nevertheless, this work helped open up the research in ways that would have otherwise been less likely.

**Translocal threads and traces**

The extensive amount of archival material available is one significant reason for focusing my research in that direction. The 1984-5 miners' strike is an event about which a large amount has been written but much of this archival record has been underused. The nature of research on the strike has been extremely varied. The traditional distinction between primary and secondary sources is frequently blurred here, with some of the most insightful analysis produced during the strike or later by people who were participants to varying degrees (for example Beynon 1985b; Francis 2015; Rowbotham and McCrindle 1986; Samuel,

Bloomfield, and Boanas 1986). There have also been a number of journalistic accounts of the year, often by people who reported on the dispute at the time (Adeney and Lloyd 1986; Beckett and Hencke 2009; Milne 2014).[4] Beckett and Hencke's (2009) book, published to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the dispute, has been perhaps the most prominent general mainstream work on the strike. A largely top down account, concerned in particular with figures like Scargill, Thatcher and McGregor, it contains little original documentary research.

There has been a recent spurt of interest in cultural legacies of the strike, which has highlighted not only artists' subsequent representations of the year, but also how people in the coalfields produced their own art in response to their experiences (Popple and Macdonald 2012; Shaw 2012). Spence and Stephenson (2013) have emphasised in particular the extensive writing of women involved in the strike, and such work has importantly expanded researchers' sense of the sources available (see also Leeworthy 2012). Spence and Stephenson's study is one of a number examining coalfield women's involvement in the strike, which has rightly received a substantial amount of attention (Davies 2010; Holden 2005; Rowbotham and McCrindle 1986; Seddon 1986; Spence and Stephenson 2007, 2009, 2013; Stead 1987). As Davies (2010:3) notes, this literature is largely based on interviews. More in-depth historical accounts based on extensive archival and oral research have started to emerge, most notably in Jim Phillips' (2012a, 2012b) work on the strike in Scotland, and to a certain extent Ben Curtis' (2011, 2013) research on the South Wales miners from 1965-85. Nevertheless, in terms of the support campaign the literature is quite undeveloped, apart from work on the activism of women in the coalfields.[5] A significant amount of the archival material in this thesis has therefore been underutilised, or in many cases has never been used.

Those accounts that attempt to present a broad overview of the strike often operate within a national framework and are concerned primarily with dominant personalities. In contrast, there can be an equation between recounting this history from below, an attention to the strike at a grassroots level, and a commitment to the local (Leeworthy 2012:826). Raphael Samuel's preface to a History Workshop collection on the strike expressed this sentiment well: 'The real nerve centre was not the National Union of Mineworkers headquarters in Sheffield [...] but the Miners' Welfare in the villages' (Samuel, Bloomfield, and Boanas 1986:xii). There is a risk in this, however, of presenting an overly spatially bounded account

---

[4] Critical commentary on the role of the mainstream media in the strike has also become its own small subgenre (Jones et al. 1985; Jones, Lazenby, and Williams 2014; Williams 2009).
[5] Although on the international support movement see Saunders (1989), on London LGSM see Robinson (2007:164–8), Kelliher (2014) and Leeworthy (2016).

of the strike. The emphasis of this thesis is on the translocal connections of solidarity developed between London and the coalfields. In contrast to the national narratives, this means taking seriously local contexts and activism, and emphasising the importance of the strike as it was experienced and constructed from below. It also means, however, paying attention to the networks and relationships developed between localities through the support movement.

The notable mobility of activists during 1984-5 has left its mark in the archives. By excavating these sources in repositories across Britain, I have been able to reconstruct this translocal and networked activism. In one sense, my approach has been to trace connections back and forth between a series of different archives. For example, I first came across references to LGSM in archives in London and in the left-wing press. I then researched the group in their archives at the People's History Museum in Manchester. The group twinned with Dulais in South Wales, so I visited archives in Swansea that contain the records of the Neath, Dulais and Swansea Valley Miners Support Group and interviews with local activists. This gave a view of the relationship from both the London and the South Wales perspective, and allowed me to develop a strong sense of the emergence of translocal networks. This is, however, an unusually neat and comprehensive example. Sometimes connections were difficult or impossible to follow, with archival material only available from one side of the relationship.

Nevertheless, the translocal relationships have substantially shaped the archival record that does exist. For example, I found copies of *Here We Go*, the bulletin of the Nottinghamshire Women's Support Groups, in Martin Walkers' papers at the People's History Museum in Manchester, Rodney Bickerstaffe's archive in the Modern Records Centre in Warwick, and the TUC Library Collections in London.[6] Among the anarchist miner Dave Douglass' papers in Doncaster are reports from the London Stop the City campaign; the SWML contains the newsletter of Greenwich NALGO; the Kent NUM archive holds a copy of a Women's Liberation Movement appeal in support of the 1972 miners' strike written by the London-based feminist Selma James.[7] These are only small examples, but the presence of London in

---

[6] Martin Walker worked for the London Borough of Greenwich on policing issues and gave advice to Yorkshire miners during the dispute (Martin Walker Papers n.d.). Rodney Bickerstaff was the General Secretary of the National Union of Public Employees. *Here we Go* can be found at: Labour History Archive and Study Centre, Manchester People's History Museum, MS84/MW/5/4; Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick, MSS.389/6/B/38; TUC Library Collections, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'Women Against Pit Closures and Women's Support Groups' folder.

[7] These can be found respectively in: Dave Douglass' papers (uncatalogued at the time of consulting), Doncaster Archives; SWML, 1984-85 Miners' Strike Leaflets and flyers Dr Hywel Francis Box 1; Kent History and Library Centre, 'The Terry Harrison File', Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/72.

the archives of the coalfields and vice versa gives a strong sense of the complex translocal connections that were forged before and during the 1984-5 strike.

Sherry Katz has discussed a process of researching radical women in turn of the twentieth-century California that resonates with my experience and approach. Unlike political elites, such radical activists rarely have their own dedicated archives. She describes a method of 'researching around our subjects': mining the small number of manuscript collections and oral histories available, then working out in concentric circles of related sources, from socialist movement newspapers and manuscripts to broader material of campaign organisations and movements that the individuals she was interested in were involved with (Katz 2010:90). The absence of sources is not as significant a problem for me, nevertheless this sense of following threads and connections through a range of archives and sources has been important in reconstructing the history of the miners' support movement. This has included seeking to trace connections over a period longer than the strike itself.

Rather than offering a frozen snapshot of the 1984-5 dispute, I situate the support movement in that year in the context of ongoing relationships between London and the coalfields. I draw on archival material from earlier periods in the capital and mining areas, but I also interrogate sources from the dispute itself to show how these previous struggles were invoked to mobilise support for the strike. Pulling together these longer trajectories and the process of memorialising solidarities between different places highlights the importance of considering time and space together. Sometimes this means highlighting the connections between particular localities: for example, the relationship between Kent and the London Borough of Brent, which can be traced through from the 1972-4 miners' strikes, then the Trico and Grunwick disputes in the late 1970s, and into the 1984-5 strike itself. While my approach is not as consistently biographical as Katz's, nevertheless I also highlight some of these ongoing connections through the accounts of particular individuals. For example, through Di Parkin who supported the Kent miners in 1972 and continued the relationship through to the 1980s, or Nigel Young who joined the Grunwick picket line as part of Gay Left and was also active in LGSM. Such individual lives can be used to make larger points about the construction of solidarities. In part, I discovered these ongoing relationships because they were invoked during the 1984-5 strike itself. It was also necessary, however, to undertake specific archival research on struggles particularly during the 1970s that had brought London and the coalfields together. In this way, it was possible to present an explicitly historicised account of the construction of these translocal solidarity relationships.

**Archival fragments and political commitments**

The archival record is of course uneven. To return to my two earlier examples: there is ample material in the SWML on the Neath, Dulais and Swansea Valleys Support Group because Hywel Francis, who established the library, was the chair of that organisation. There were perhaps a dozen lesbian and gay miners' support groups across Britain, but the London one—as well as being the first and the largest—was the only that kept extensive records and donated them to an archive. Support groups that had links to an institution, for example a trades council, were probably more likely to leave some record in an archive. There are, therefore, a range of reasons why some histories leave a stronger archival trace that may have at best a loose relationship to their importance.

The fragmented nature of the archive, and how researchers deal with this, has been a repeated concern for historical geographers and others. Alan Baker (1997:235) has observed that historical geographers cannot create new data. Unlike the natural or social scientist, 'our knowledge of the past will, therefore, always be incomplete.' This is true, although the implication that we can have a complete knowledge of the present is unconvincing. All research deals with fragments of information, although historical research, especially into the distant past, may have less control over the nature of those fragments. There can be problems, however, when attempts are made to hide the limitations of historical research. Mbembe (2002:21) worries about archival based research that uses 'a montage of fragments' to create 'an illusion of totality and continuity'. One answer has been to avoid creating seamless narratives, and instead integrate the absences and decisions made in archival research into the account (Robertson 2005:166). Carlo Ginzburg (2012:204) has described his own approach: 'the hypotheses, the doubts, the uncertainties became part of the narration; the search for truth became part of the exposition of the necessarily incomplete truth attained'.

I am not sure how compelling a narrative can be developed from recounting my time in the archives, and it is certainly less interesting than the history I have researched. Nevertheless, an awareness of the limitations of the sources is important. Using a large amount of empirical material, I have attempted to corroborate the evidence from a number of different sources where possible, to create as robust an evidence base as I can. Online databases allow for a systematic approach to the archival record to a certain extent. Resources such as Archives Hub and the National Archives Discovery site allow researchers to quickly explore a large volume of archival records across the country. Yet this is still far from comprehensive and research can still depend on a significant degree of chance. For example, the archive of the

Kent Area NUM held by the Kent Library and History Centre, which has been very useful for this thesis, is uncatalogued and there is little evidence of its existence. I only became aware of this significant resource by seeing it referenced in Di Parkin's (2007) book on Betteshanger Colliery. Such issues are of course not entirely arbitrary. The Margaret Thatcher Foundation website, which I have also made use of, has digitised vast amounts of archival material on the Conservative politician from a number of different repositories. The money behind such a project, and as a result the comprehensiveness and accessibility of the website material, contrasts dramatically with the position of the Kent NUM archives, not even catalogued never mind digitised. While I have questioned excessive claims about elite domination of the archive, this is nevertheless a stark example of how inequalities of wealth can shape our access to the historical record.

I have tried to acknowledge throughout the thesis where there are particular problems with evidence, and not make excessive claims where the sources are not as extensive. As I have outlined above, I also argue that it is important to pay attention to the processes through which the miners' strike was recorded at the time, as an element of the political practice of the activists involved. In this sense, I have not sought to remove from sight the work of others that underpins and enables this thesis. At the same time, the anxiety that we cannot reproduce all of history is misplaced in one significant sense. Howard Zinn (1970:50) argued that recreating the entirety of the past should not be the aim of radical history, which must engage with concerns relevant to today. 'Only if *no* present question is asked' he claimed, 'does all the particular detail, the rich, complex, endless detail of a period become important, without discrimination.' Such an approach 'is a surrender to the absolute of professional historiography: Tell us as much as you can.' A historical geography that is concerned to illuminate issues of contemporary concern, therefore, while still requiring extensive empirical research, can perhaps be less worried about some of the gaps in knowledge that inevitably exist.

As there is a definite political impulse to this work, then, it is worth some brief reflections on the position I approach these questions from. As Gillian Rose (1997) argued, reflexivity in research is both important and extremely difficult. To fully appreciate all the experiences and biases that I bring to my research would require an excessive amount of personal information. Lorimer has criticised overly self-reflexive historical geography writing, which at its worst he feels indulges a cult of personality. 'An excess of subjectivity', he believes, 'can prove just as discomforting reading as the earlier untroubled objectivity assumed by the researcher' (Lorimer 2010:253). Nevertheless, politically orientated research should be self-

critical, as well as methodologically robust and rigorous. Darlington and Dobson (2013) argue for a 'self-conscious examination of the basic value-commitments that inform research', and a public declaration of membership, affiliation or support for any social or political party/movement (Darlington and Dobson 2013:294).

I come to this research as a socialist whose sympathies are firmly with the miners, their communities and the solidarity movement during the strike. I have a personal investment in the British left and labour movement. I joined the Labour Party at the beginning of the third year of this PhD, having previously been involved in various left organisations. I worked for a couple of years for the TUC, before which I had briefly been a trade union representative for Unison while working as a public library assistant. In terms of research methods, this experience clearly shapes my commitment to the importance of public archives and libraries that feature throughout my work. There is a broader impact however. I take seriously the relationships and networks of solidarity constructed by activists in the labour movement and the left broadly defined. Having been involved in different organisations on the left, I can attempt to be as fair as possible in assessing the involvement of various groups but I cannot pretend to be a detached observer. My position shapes the kind of sources I have sought out, and it also considerably impacts the questions with which I have interrogated this material. There is, of course, no way of approaching the archive from an entirely neutral position. Whether implicitly or explicitly, specific questions must be asked of archival material and it is necessary to have some theoretical framing for understanding what you find (Farge 2013:12; Kearns 2007:11).

The question of positionality should not simply be a matter of personal biography, however. It is also necessary to be explicit about the intended political importance of the thesis and how this shapes the research process. As a study of the 1984-5 miners' strike and the labour movement in the 1970s and 1980s more broadly, this work is unsurprisingly concerned with a politics of class. Attempts to think about class politics have arguably been more prominent within the mainstream left in recent years than at any time since the 1980s. Sections of the Labour Party have been keen to develop a flag and family style of class politics, perhaps most consistently articulated by 'Blue Labour' but certainly not limited to explicit adherents of that grouping (Geary and Pabst 2015). This is predicated on the need for a socially conservative politics to appeal to working-class voters, and is sometimes counterposed explicitly to metropolitanism (Hunt 2016). On the more radical left, hostility to 'identity politics' can sometimes seem like a reassertion of the primacy of class, and tends to relegate gender, race and sexuality to secondary concerns (Emanuele 2016; Hobsbawm 1996).

A more nuanced left history, I believe, can help contest both these positions. First, emphasising the links between London and the coalfields challenges simplistic critiques of elite metropolitan detachment from 'ordinary' people. Second, highlighting the ongoing relationships of mutual solidarity through the 1970s and 1980s that involved black activists, feminists, trade unionists, LGBT liberationists and those who fit into more than one of these categories, challenges the idea that class politics must be aligned to patriotism, the nuclear family, and so on. I do not present a picture of a homogenised working-class solidarity, but instead have highlighted the diversity of activism that took place in that year. This does not mean simplifying such a history or suggesting that such a project is easy, but nevertheless it does mean showing that these alliances have been constructed in the past. The kind of support activism that I focus on in this thesis is shaped by such an approach.

There are of course significant risks with having such explicitly political motivations. Arlette Farge (2013:71) has written about 'the imperceptible, yet very real, way in which a historian is only drawn to things that will reinforce the working hypotheses she has settled on.' The problem may be exacerbated when an explicitly political concern frames the research. Farge (2013:69) argues that it necessary to remain sufficiently open within the archive to 'notice things that were not *a priori* of interest.' I have tried to follow this advice, and the structure and argument of the work has developed significantly under the influence of the archival material. This is particular true of Chapters 4 and 6. My initial research plan was to focus almost exclusively on the year of 1984-5 itself, while contextualising this year within broader historical developments. Research in the archives, however, made me very conscious of how support in 1984-5 was concretely and discursively shaped by ongoing relationships and memories of past struggles. As a result, I extended my research into the relationship between London and the coalfields from the late 1960s onwards, which formed the basis for Chapter 4 on the temporalities of mutual solidarity.

Chapter 6 similarly reflects my encounter with material in a range of archives. My feeling before starting the in-depth research was that the relative lack of support for the miners was the dominant narrative of the strike. On the left, or at least the more radical section of it, there was a sense that the support movement could be compared negatively to the solidarity during the successful miners' strikes of 1972 and 1974 (Darlington 2005). For the right, the strike was simply unpopular among the general public, reflecting a growing antipathy towards trade unions in general. I felt both views ignored the large, widespread and dedicated support movement for the strike, which was significant even if it was ultimately unsuccessful

and did not reflect majority opinion. I still believe this is true, and this thesis is primarily concerned with that support movement.

Yet two experiences made me feel this was insufficient on its own. The first was attending a seminar remembering the solidarity campaign which, I believe, managed not to mention that the strike was defeated. I worry about the support movement being used as a way of glossing over that failure. This is not necessarily only a phenomenon of looking back decades later. In the immediate aftermath of the strike, Samuel (1986a:xvii) observed that books produced by support groups were celebratory, corresponding 'to what supporters of the strike would have liked it to be – a new page in a heroic history. They take no account of the sombre stories that come from the pit villages; of the mysterious dissensions which have rent the support groups; of sacked miners who feel abandoned; of the divisions within the NUM itself; about the seeming fatality about loss of jobs.' Secondly, I was confronted by the depth of working-class resistance to the strike when I read a collection of NUS members' letters protesting about their union imposing a levy for the miners.[8] Throughout the archival material, the weaknesses, conflicts, and absences of the solidarity campaign were persistent themes. While it was never my intention to present a simplistic and straightforwardly positive view of the support movement, I felt that it was necessary to engage more substantially with this aspect of the year, and therefore it has become the focus of one chapter.

**Conclusion**

This thesis is therefore a result of an ongoing interaction between my political and theoretical concerns and aims, and the archival research. This engagement has produced the resulting account of the 1984-5 miners' strike. A research method with a political motivation does not mean simply fitting ideas into a preconceived framework. This worry that politics distorts history is long standing and still stubbornly held by some. The historian Peter Burke declared that he was a socialist and an historian but not a socialist historian: 'I believe that to use history as a weapon in political struggle is counter-productive. One comes to believe one's own propaganda, to overdramatise the past, and hence to forget the real complexity of the issues at any time. One comes to idealise one's own side' (Burke 1981:8; see also Kidd 2016). As Gerry Kearns (2007:11) has argued, however, 'all knowledge is purposeful; it is never innocent of the intentions behind its acquisition.' Rather than affect impartiality, I have argued that it is more useful for researcher's to acknowledge their political position and

---

[8] Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick, MSS.175A/164-6.

motivation. This expectation should be placed on researchers across the political spectrum, although in practice it has tended to be of greater concern for those on the left.

The motivation for researching the support movement during the miners' strike is clearly not a neutral one. It partly reflects a commitment to the importance of history from below. I have outlined an approach that uses a wide range of material held in archives and libraries, from oral interviews to printed ephemera. The ability to develop a strong empirical base from archival material reflects a number of factors, not least the intentional efforts of historians, archivists, librarians, activists and others to record the activities and opinions of the thousands of miners and supporters involved in the strike. This, I have suggested, needs to be understood itself as part of the history of activism. As a result, the empirical basis for my research is substantial, and despite the extensive literature on the miners' strike, little of it has been used before. I have foregrounded a translocal approach that follows threads of connections between archives in London and the British coalfields, reflecting the mobility of activists themselves. This methodology, I have argued, allows us to move beyond accounts that restrict working-class or grassroots activists to their localities, giving a spatially broader sense of the history of the miners' support movement from below.

<div align="center">**Chapter 4**</div>

<div align="center">**Constructing a culture of solidarity: London and the coalfields in the long 1970s**</div>

**Introduction**

Speaking to the 1984 Union of Communication Workers national conference during the miners' strike, Yorkshire NUM President Jack Taylor appealed for solidarity: 'we need your support […] and I'm going to be arrogant and say that we deserve it […] We've never turned us backs on anybody in our union, never. We've always stood with anybody who wanted to fight' (Union of Communication Workers 1984). The belief that miners had consistently supported others was invoked repeatedly during the dispute by the NUM at national and local levels, and by their supporters. Yet this was not a one-sided history of solidarity. A sense of mutual support was recalled by London activists to describe longstanding relationships between the miners and their city. This chapter explores how a relationship of solidarity was developed between the coalfields and the capital from the late 1960s until the mid-1980s, and how this history was drawn upon in promoting and activating support in 1984-5. Against portrayals of coalfields as isolated places, this chapter more broadly highlights longstanding activism in mining areas that connected them to broader political networks.[1]

Recounting this longer history has important consequences both for how we view the 1984-5 dispute and more generally for thinking about the temporalities and spatialities of solidarity. Tracing these connections and networks through an expanded timeframe rather than focusing narrowly on the year itself allows us to better grasp the mutuality of solidarity, giving the sense of a more equal relationship between London and the coalfields. This mutuality constituted a culture of solidarity, albeit an uneven and contested one, in which labour activists could and did expect to receive support during struggles. Understanding the construction of such a culture points to how working-class activists helped shape the structures in which they operated. This can therefore contribute significantly to recent debates within labour geography on the nature of working-class agency (Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2011; Featherstone and Griffin 2016). This sense of a culture of solidarity was signified in the idea of a 'labour movement', but I explore how in this period the spatial and social boundaries of this movement were contested, allowing in some instances a more diverse conception of working-class politics. While London and the coalfields were significantly

---

[1] A version of this chapter was published as Kelliher (2017).

different places in many ways, I argue that this history highlights how identities can be constructed relationally through political activism from below (Featherstone 2005).

In the first section of this chapter, I outline the theoretical basis for thinking about the mutuality of solidarity and its temporality. I then discuss the emergence of militancy within the labour movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s, particularly focusing on the miners' strikes of 1972 and 1974 and the solidarity given by people in London. I emphasise how personal and family links between London and the mining areas, and histories of migration, contributed to the development of networks of solidarity, and argue that this undermines representations of the coalfields as entirely isolated. In the second section, I show how this support was returned by miners during the 1976-8 Grunwick dispute, and discuss how this and other struggles were memorialised, creating a resource that was drawn upon in 1984-5. In the third section, I foreground the role of feminist, black and LGBT activists in challenging the terms on which labour movement politics was conducted. In highlighting the importance of historicizing the development of mutual support, this chapter emphasises how a conversation between labour geography and labour history can contribute to our understanding of solidarity, relational constructions of identity, and debates around diversity and working-class agency in labour geography (Featherstone and Griffin 2016).

**The 1970s, solidarity and coalfield diasporas**

This chapter is centrally concerned with the possibility for solidarity to be a mutual relationship. In their work on the anti-apartheid movement in London, Brown and Yaffe (2014:35) have made the case for the mutuality of solidarity powerfully, arguing that rather than 'an asymmetrical flow of assistance travelling from one place to another' as it is often conceived, 'relations of solidarity can travel in more than one direction simultaneously, building complex webs of reciprocity'. Solidarity relationships may therefore 'seek to enact concrete social change in more than one location simultaneously' (Brown and Yaffe 2014:38). They describe how activists in the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group highlighted British economic and political support for apartheid South Africa and drew connections between racism and oppression in both countries. The City Group were embedded in broader networks of campaigners in Britain and internationally who supported each other, as well as offering solidarity to the black majority in South Africa (Brown and Yaffe 2014:38-9-47).

However, despite these entangled activist networks and the ways in which City Group drew connections between oppression in both countries, there is, understandably, little sense of

mutual relationships of support with South Africa's black population. As I discussed in Chapter 2, some work on de-colonising solidarity has been at least cautious about the possibility of mutuality across inequalities of power (Land 2015; Mott 2016; Sundberg 2007). Gould has suggested the need for deference in solidarity more generally. She argues that those receiving solidarity should 'determine the forms of aid or support most beneficial to them' in order to avoid the imposition 'of the customary expectations and practices of those offering aid' (Gould 2007:157). Such a deferential approach, while understandable in certain circumstances, potentially runs counter to attempts to construct mutual relations. Reciprocal solidarity may be more likely in relationships that do not involve large asymmetries of power and privilege (Bayertz 1999:19; Routledge and Cumbers 2009:163; Scholz 2008:93).

Case-study approaches can also reinforce a one-sided impression of solidarity, as in any one instance there is usually a group that is primarily receiving support. Although even during 1984-5 itself, as I will show, coalfield activists provided solidarity to other struggles, they inevitably and understandably received more support than they gave. Rather than emphasising the simultaneously reciprocal nature of solidarity, therefore, it can be more useful to see this mutuality constructed across time (Brown and Yaffe 2014:35). A broader attention to the temporalities of political struggle is therefore necessary (Antentas 2015). As Cumbers et al. (2010:68) have argued, 'past processes of activism and class consciousness remain as latent reserves that can be drawn upon for present and future collective struggles'. Such latent reserves are central to an understanding of the labour movement, an important example of mutual solidarity. While reciprocity and mutuality are sometimes used synonymously, mutuality suggests a more temporally expansive relationship that better describes the development of a culture of solidarity. This chapter describes the construction of such a culture, both through an account of labour struggles in the 1970s, but also by showing how these experiences were invoked in 1984-5.

The late 1960s and early 1970s in Britain saw growing trade union membership and shop steward power, and high levels of often successful industrial action (Samuel 1987:87). For Darlington and Lyddon, the British strike wave of 1969-74 constituted 'the most intense period of class struggle in Britain' since the early twentieth century. It was 'one fragment of the international revolt of the late 1960s and early 1970s', which included the Vietnam war, the 1968 French general strike, the Italian 'hot autumn' of 1969, the overthrow of fascist and military regimes in Portugal, Spain and Greece, and challenges to the Czechoslovakian and Polish states (Darlington and Lyddon 2001:2). These were disparate events and not every

trade unionist in Britain or elsewhere connected wage struggles with the war in Vietnam, but a minority did.[2] In the context of the United States, Steve Early (2010) has highlighted the construction of alliances between the social movements that developed in the late 1960s and militant trade unionism, which had a significant impact on the nature of the labour movement. An analogous and connected process took place in Britain, and these overlapping trajectories are important for understanding the nature of solidarity in this period. This broader picture helps situate the specific connections developed between London and the coalfields. More generally, it highlights the need to historicize arguments about the predominance or otherwise of local attachments (Tomaney 2013). The political and economic upheavals of this period provided the context in which significant relationships of solidarity could be developed across diverse groups and places.

There were major changes in the coal industry in the first two decades after the Second World War, with the newly nationalised industry concentrating production in fewer pits and significantly reducing the number of employees. Despite the later vanguard reputation of the NUM, however, there was comparatively little resistance to this process, with no official national strikes until the 1970s. Jim Phillips has argued that while the 1950s and 1960s could be fractious, change was 'conducted through dialogue and agreement with trade union officials, and in the wider context of economic growth' (Phillips 2012a:32). However consensual, some miners felt that there was growing frustration in the late 1960s at pit closures, job losses, and comparatively poor wages. Arthur Scargill believed that 'the situation was festering, smouldering' (Scargill 1975:8). Unofficial industrial action over wages started in Yorkshire and spread to many other parts of the coalfield in 1969, arguably the first national action in the industry since 1926.

Yorkshire miner Dave Douglass explicitly linked this growing frustration to the politics associated with 1968: 'something of the something in the air which was disaffecting the college kids was also catching the pulse of young workers, miners included' (Douglass 2009:47). This unofficial dispute highlighted the distinct mobility of the new working-class militancy. The Yorkshire miners have been credited with pioneering the 'flying picket' in 1969 and 1970, a tactic that itself spread in the early 1970s and would significantly shape the 1984-5 dispute (Beckett 2009:70). As the site of the National Coal Board, the capital was a focus for protest as miners 'flooded into London, much to the amazement of London cab

---

[2] For example, a 1980 visit from Vietnamese officials to Tilmanstone Colliery in Kent was reported in *The Miner* (1980). The article explained how during the Vietnam war, 'Kent miners were among those most active in the trade union movement organising blood donor sessions, collecting money for medical aid, and campaigning for United States withdrawal from South East Asia.' See also Douglass (2009:24–31).

drivers and station staff who assumed there were no coal miners left in Britain' (Douglass 2009:47). If Londoners became aware of the continuing existence of coal mining in 1969, more significant connections were developed through the 1970s. In 1972 and 1974 there were official national miners' strikes primarily over wages, both of which were largely successful. They drew on significant solidarity from others within the labour movement. The refusal of transport workers to move fuel, for example, was crucial (Darlington and Lyddon 2001:215; Phillips 2006:194).

One important way Londoners supported the 1972 and 1974 miners' strikes was to provide accommodation for the miners picketing in the capital, as was done by some trades councils, left organisations and student unions (Knowles 1974; Pitt 1979:177; Webster 1974). At the peak of the 1972 strike, car-loads of two hundred miners travelled from Kent to London daily. Kent miner Malcolm Pitt commented that it was 'on the gates of Longannet, Barking, Battersea and West Thurrock [power stations] that the battle of the miners was won' (Pitt 1979:17, 150).[3] While the capital and the coalfields were, mostly, far from each other, the extensive picketing of power stations nevertheless highlighted their significant material entanglement (Brown and Yaffe 2014; Featherstone 2012:18). Picket lines were important spaces in which solidarity could be enacted. One of the most famous examples during the 1972 miners' strike was at the Saltley coke depot, which was closed when miners' pickets were joined by thousands of Birmingham engineering and car workers (Darlington and Lyddon 2001:56–64). Somewhat hyperbolically, Arthur Scargill claimed that the 'picket line didn't close Saltley, what happened was the working class closed Saltley' (Scargill 1975:17).

This experience was invoked frequently during the 1984-5 strike, including on Socialist Worker placards which implored miners and their supporters to 'turn Orgreave into Saltley' (Strike 2009:77). Saltley did not happen spontaneously however, it was argued for by networks of local activists, especially those in the Communist Party, and by miners speaking to trade union meetings in the city (Douglass 2009:169; Scargill 1975:17–18). Recent historical studies have emphasised the active construction of cultures of solidarity within workplaces and industries, with left-wing activists and shop stewards often playing a crucial role (Darlington 2002; Saunders 2015). The experience at Saltley and other examples, such as Dave Douglass' (2010:21) description of South Yorkshire miners discussing industrial action in support of NHS workers in 1982, similarly shows the importance of activists arguing in mass workplace meetings for constructing solidarity across industries. Such

---

[3] Longannet is in Fife, West Thurrock on the Thames in Essex, Barking and Battersea in London.

meetings were key spaces for developing networks of solidarity in the 1970s and would continue to be so during the 1984-5 dispute.

Within London, support for the miners in the early 1970s developed in ways that prefigured the 1984-5 solidarity movement. For instance, Hackney Trades Council, based in a largely working-class London borough, 'adopted' Nottinghamshire's Clipstone Colliery during the 1974 dispute (Knowles 1974). This is an example of how trades councils as institutions, although organised specifically in geographical localities, have been capable of developing broader connections (Wills 2001). As I discuss in more depth in the next chapter, the idea of groups of supporters twinning with or adopting particular collieries became especially popular in 1984-5 (Labour Research Department 1985). The tactic had associations with official town linking, but also had more overtly progressive connotations in the 1980s, being used to develop solidarity relationships between Britain and Central America (Clarke 2009). Some trade unions also used the tactic to develop grassroots, international connections that forged 'deep and well-established transnational links and personal connections' (Routledge and Cumbers 2009:169). The 1974 Hackney-Clipstone link is an early example of such an approach. It is a tactic directly concerned with the central themes of this chapter: an attempt to create more mutual and enduring relationships. After visiting Nottinghamshire, Hackney Trades Council representatives described how they had developed links of trade union solidarity, as well as 'foundations of warm personal relationships' (Hackney Trades Council 1974).

The emphasis on personal relationships here is important, with solidarity developing through direct interactions between people in different places. Understanding the influence of personal bonds among activists requires attention to small stories that can highlight how broader issues are played out 'on personal and intimate terms' (Lorimer 2003:214). The development of such connections through the 1970s as the basis for solidarity in 1984-5 is evident, for example, in Di Parkin's recounting of her relationship with miners in her history of the Betteshanger Colliery in Kent (Parkin 2007). She recalls first meeting miners as a Kent student supporting the 1972 dispute. She then moved to Oxford, joining a miners' picket of the Didcot power station in 1974; further developed this relationship with miners attending Ruskin College; met them again on the Grunwick picket line in 1976-8; and in 1984 was living in Hackney, working for the GLC, and provided accommodation for a picketing Kent miner who she had met twelve years previously (Parkin 2007:iii).

Parkin's account gives a sense of the deeply entangled networks of activism and mutual support developing throughout this period that could form the basis for solidarity in 1984-5.

Attention to such stories can enhance our understanding of the solidarities developed during exceptional circumstances. Peter Linebaugh has pointed to the tendency of disasters to produce forms of commoning and class solidarity, 'starting in the kitchen' (Linebaugh 2014:211; see also Solnit 2009). There is a parallel during such an extended dispute as the 1984-5 miners' strike, which out of necessity produced communal kitchens, and brought together individuals and groups who may never have met otherwise. An emphasis on such an event, however, can miss how support in exceptional times depends at least in part on the networks built up over a longer period.

The personal aspect of these relationships was also evident in the extent to which familial connections were evoked in the 1970s and 1984-5 in particular, suggesting that the boundaries of the coalfields were more porous than is often allowed for. Some may have called on distant memories of 'great great grandfathers' as miners, but elsewhere connections were more direct.[4] For example, while picketing a London power station in 1972, Kent miners were fed in Woolwich Polytechnic because the Student Union President was a Welsh miner's son (Pitt 1979:156). In 1984-5, twinning arrangements made by the Neath, Dulais and Swansea Valley Miners Support Group with the Brent branch of the local authority workers' union NALGO were at least initiated because of a family connection (Donovan 1986). Although seemingly sceptical about its significance, Raphael Samuel noted that support from London and the south-east in 1984-5 'often call[ed] upon family associations with the miners or with mining districts' (Samuel 1986b:33).

Even where it was not directly responsible for forging solidarity relationships, the expression of family connections nevertheless sought to break down the distance between coalfields and elsewhere by recalling a shared history. One Yorkshire Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC) group in 1984-5 received a cheque from Bow, East London with an accompanying letter: 'My husband is the son of a South Yorkshire miner, and the stories of his Thirties childhood are being re-enacted now! I am glad to say that it was from my own son that I got your address—he also has been involved in a support group here in London. The solidarity of the mining community spreads far beyond the coalfield!' (Barnsley Women Against Pit Closures 1984:16). Supporters of the 1984-5 strike in Oxford invoked longer histories of a politicised coalfield diaspora, pointing to the crucial role migrant Welsh miners played in organising trade unionism there in the 1930s (Thornett 1985a).

---

[4] This quote is taken from one of the letters to the 1984 miners' Christmas appeal at the Labour History Archive and Study Centre (LHASC), WAIN/1/1.

The extent to which these shared histories could be drawn upon is in one sense unsurprising. Employment in the UK coal industry peaked at nearly 1.2 million in 1920, declining by approximately three quarters by the turn of the 1970s and still further into the 1980s (Department of Energy and Climate Change 2015). High levels of migration into the expanding coalfields at the turn of the twentieth century was likely matched by significant movement outwards during the subsequent contraction (Francis and Smith 1998:7). Gwyn Williams noted the hundreds of thousands that left South Wales, some to London, during the depression of the 1930s: 'Women were streaming out to the servants' quarters of the English south-east in a "maiden tribute" and men, women, whole families were decamping to Dagenham, Slough, Canada, anywhere where there was work and some dignity' (Gwyn Williams 1985:252–3).

Representing mining areas as enclosed and geographically isolated has been a mainstay of thinking about coalfields in Britain and more broadly, with miners sometimes considered almost a race apart (Beynon and Austrin 1994:27; Massey and Wainwright 1985:150; Pitt 1979:22). Solidarity and militancy within the coalfields is often ascribed to geographical isolation, directly or indirectly invoking Kerr and Siegel's 'isolated mass' hypothesis (Church, Outram, and Smith 1991; Kerr and Siegel 1954; Nyden 2010). The extent to which miners were isolated from other workers has long varied between different regions. Howell has highlighted, for instance, that in Lancashire 'mining was an industry of city and towns as well as pit villages' (Howell 1989:6). Migration both into and out of the coalfields also contradicts excessive claims for the isolation of mining areas. The family connections in London to mining and mining areas described here help us understand better the development of networks of solidarity, rooting them in longer standing connections.

**Grunwick and memorialising the movement**

A central dispute for establishing relationships between the coalfields and the capital in the 1970s was the 1976-8 Grunwick strike in the London Borough of Brent, during which the Scottish miners' leader Mick McGahey reportedly called for 'another Saltley Gates' (Grunwick Strike Committee 1977b). This strike in a photo processing plant, largely led by Asian women, including most famously Jayaben Desai, received significant support from the labour movement. Grunwick strikers undertook what local trade unionist Jack Dromey described as an 'unprecedented' tour of the country, speaking at possibly thousands of workplaces seeking support for the strike, including addressing miners from Kent to Scotland (Thomas 2007). This way of mobilising support would be employed on perhaps an even greater scale during the 1984-5 miners' strike. Together with flying pickets, this

movement across Britain—and internationally during the miners' strike—helped generate solidarity networks, suggesting a distinctively working class form of politicised mobility (Cresswell 2010). A different type of mobility was evident in the life histories of the strikers, many of whom were 'twice migrants': people of Gujarati descent who had come to Britain from Uganda (Anitha, Pearson, and McDowell 2012). This dispute in a factory in Brent was therefore shaped by relationships between multiple places. The case for solidarity at Grunwick was not only made by travelling activists from London, however, it had to come from within the coalfields as well. Articulating a strong sense of the need for reciprocity in the labour movement, one miner from Wheldale Colliery, Yorkshire, argued presciently in their trade union journal: 'to those who say Grunwick has nothing to do with them, I say: don't ask other trade unions, then, for support when we miners need it' (Harrison 1977). In relation to the temporalities of solidarity, this emphasises that it was not only past disputes that exerted a pull on trade unionists but also the anticipation of struggles in the future.

Anitha et al. (2012:769) have challenged the 'celebratory accounts of Grunwick as a turning point in British labour history' that were 'subsequently constructed by the trade unions'. The strike certainly highlighted significant fractures in the labour movement and the limits of the support were evident. A period which apparently exemplified the excessive power of trade unionism saw a small company, backed by the National Association for Freedom, seemingly defeating the entire labour movement. Jayaben Desai commented that 'support from the TUC is like honey on your elbow: you can see it, you can smell it but you can't taste it!' (Pearson, Anitha, and McDowell 2010:409). One account has suggested that Grunwick highlighted moderates 'attempting to hold back the tide of the two ideological behemoths-in-waiting of the early 1980s': both the militant left and the Thatcherite right (McGowan 2008:392). TUC General Secretary Len Murray certainly believed that divisions had been created by 'the antics of the ultra-left politicians' (*Race Today* 1987).

Differences within the labour movement were evident over potential confrontation with the law and sympathetic action. The strike committee sought for unions to cut off essential supplies to the company including water, gas and electricity (Grunwick Strike Committee 1977a). Merlyn Rees, then Labour Home Secretary, insisted that 'the labour movement that I belong to hasn't the right to break laws'. One striking worker believed that when the dispute gained attention there was pressure from the union to run it in a certain way because 'they wanted to show that they're law-abiding citizens or law-abiding unions' (*Race Today* 1987). These tensions and attempts to police the respectable boundaries of the labour movement were evident in 1984-5 as well, which I discuss in depth in Chapter 6. As well as rooting

solidarity in longer trajectories, it is important then to recognise that divisions within the labour movement had their own complex histories.

Critical accounts however, such as Sivanandan's (1982:129–131) argument that labour movement support at Grunwick was aimed at propping up the social contract, only portray one side of this division. Recognising the limitations of the solidarity for the Grunwick workers should not mean dismissing it entirely. In the middle of 1977, 'miners, dockers, engineers and building workers swelled the picket' at Grunwick to thousands strong (Grunwick Strike Committee 1977b). In July 1977 a 'Day of Action' was apparently initiated by the South Wales NUM. The largest contingent of miners seems to have come from the Yorkshire coalfields, estimated by one picket to number 1300 on 24 coaches. One commented that they came to support fellow workers, and they would have come even 'if they were Scotsmen, and that says a lot' (Newsreel Collective 1977). Reflecting thirty years later, a Yorkshire miner recalled that there was not enough space on the buses for everyone who wanted to go (Thomas 2007). Miners came as well from Scotland and Kent, the other left-wing areas of the NUM (Phillips 2012a:37). Mick McGahey spoke at the picket line, announcing that 'the whole of the Scottish miners will come here if necessary' (Ramdin 1987:300).

This support had a direct impact on the 1984-5 miners' strike. One Brent activist commented that 'we had people, the Indian community in particular, saying they were supporting the miners because of the support they gave at Grunwick' (Baxter 1984). A letter to the journal *Race Today* in 1984 asked 'what contribution have the miners given to the women's struggle, and the anti-racist struggle? Is it too much to ask that solidarity operates both ways'? The editor responded by pointing to the 'mass support from the miners on the picket lines' at Grunwick. 'Indeed, a member of the Race Today Collective found himself in a cell with several miners following clashes between police and pickets' (*Race Today* 1984). During the 1984-5 strike, the Race Today Collective paid for the wives of striking miners to visit London to talk about their experiences, as well as featuring the dispute in the journal (Browne 1984; Bunce and Field 2014:166; La Rose 1985).

The varying political cultures of mining areas, which have been considered by geographers largely as internal to the coalfields, significantly impacted the likelihood of miners supporting other struggles (Renouf 1989; Sunley 1986). Yet these political cultures should not be understood statically, rooted solely in an immutable tradition. Yorkshire in particular belied its previously moderate reputation within the NUM to take a leading role in activism from the late 1960s onwards. These Yorkshire activists were crucial in disputes both within

and beyond their industry, as can be seen by the numbers travelling to Grunwick. The memorialisation of such support within the coalfields suggests an example of how relational solidarities between localities could help shape political cultures within those places (Featherstone 2005). An image of NUM officials leading the miners' pickets at Grunwick was used for a Yorkshire Area NUM banner (Douglass 2009:406). Kent NUM hung a painting in their office donated by Grunwick strikers and other trade unionists from Brent who had visited the area to show their appreciation for the support (Parkin 2007:79). In an example of the 'complex webs of reciprocity' (Brown and Yaffe 2014:35) built by solidarity, Kent NUM official Jack Dunn, in donating to a fund for London post workers who had blacked mail to Grunwick, wrote that 'it is in part a grateful small reciprocal gesture on our part for the tremendous help given to us on the occasion of the Miners [sic] Strike' (Dunn 1978).[5]

Past struggles were invoked repeatedly during the 1984-5 strike by coalfield activists and their supporters. Some miners could draw direct family connections to the defeat of the 1926 General Strike and miners' lockout. Jim Phillips (2012a:24) has described a Scottish miner recounting how in the welfares, pubs and clubs in his area he would meet veterans of 1926, and that after 1984-5 he felt he could look them in the eye. The strong sense of the coalfield past was maintained through oral traditions, the miners' banners, the galas and the union supported histories (Francis and Smith 1998; Pitt 1979). This created a powerful sense of communities of solidarity across time, both in localities and throughout the coalfields, which contributed significantly to the ability of mining areas to maintain a strike for twelve months. The construction of place and industry-based identities and communities, however, also involved memorialising broader solidarities. Grunwick is an important example of this in the 1970s, but longer histories of solidarity for others were also commemorated, not least those miners who fought on the republican side in the Spanish Civil War (Mates 2006; Francis 1984; Stradling 2004).

Such memorialisation also took place in the labour movement in London, for example among Fleet Street workers who were strong supporters of the miners in 1984-5. Jim Douglas, of the EETPU at the *Sun¸* noted in a newspaper produced to raise funds for the miners that 'our chapel's recently constructed Museum of Struggle, containing miners' memorabilia, will long serve to remind those who come after of the struggles that have taken place.' He emphasised that *Sun* electricians had 'supported the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders,

---

[5] It is not clear whether this refers to the 1972 or 1974 strike. 'Blacking' the mail means that post workers refused to deliver to Grunwick.

the Pentonville Five, health workers and many more who have requested and received our help' (Douglas 1985). This activity was arguably part of a broader memorialisation of struggles and histories from below evident both in the 1970s and 1980s. As noted in Chapter 3, Tony Kushner has argued that the establishment of UK Black History Month in 1987 emerged from the dual context of anti-Thatcherism and 'history from below' (Kushner 2006:22). Kushner focuses on migrant histories but this understanding could be expanded. For example, the establishment of the Hall-Carpenter Archives (HCA) founded in 1982 to document gay activism and life in Britain reflected a similar conjunction of politics and grassroots history (Donnelly 2008). The Labour-led GLC gave one of the largest early grants to HCA, and also helped fund the London Lesbian and Gay Centre in which the archive was based for a few years. One HCA project in the 1980s recorded life stories of a number of gay men, including Mark Ashton, the founder of Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (Farnham 1989).

A central influence on such politicised recording of life and activism from below was the History Workshop movement, established at Ruskin College in 1967 (Samuel 1980; Schwarz 1993). The History Workshops were, as Anna Davin and Luke Parks recently described them, 'devoted to the study and development of "history from below" for use as a weapon in left-wing political campaigns' (Davin and Parks 2012). The fact that the movement was based at Ruskin College meant that it had a strong connection with labour activists who were sponsored by their trade unions to study there. An early History Workshop pamphlet, for example, was written by the north-east and Yorkshire miner Dave Douglass, whose memoirs and archive have been used extensively in this thesis (Douglass 1973). The memorialisation of events such as Grunwick was therefore part of a wider construction of 'usable pasts' that helped develop the sense of a culture of mutual solidarity rooted in the labour movement.

A parallel thread through from the 1970s to the 1980s can be seen in radical filmmaking. The *Miners' Campaign Tapes*, for instance, were produced during the 1984-5 strike both to record the voices of those involved in the strike and the support movement, but also as a practical form of solidarity (Miners' Campaign Tape Project 2009). Katy Shaw has described how these films developed from avant-garde film and video workshops established in the 1970s. The workshops, which were 'focused on, and often integrated into, working class communities up and down the country, […] formed a network of democratic, de-centralised co-operative film and video facilities' (Shaw 2012:165; see also Dickinson 1999; Kidner and Bauer 2013). During the 1970s, Cinema Action, one of the most prominent of such groups,

produced extensive work on the labour movement, including *The Miners' Film* (1975) looking at the 1974 miners' strike, *UCS1* (1971) and *Class Struggle: Film From the Clyde* (1976) about the Upper Clyde shipbuilders, *Arise Ye Workers* (1973) on the 1972 dockers' dispute, and *Fighting the Bill* (1970) on the campaign against the Industrial Relations Bill (BFI n.d.). Based in London and established in 1968, Cinema Action's work with trade unions highlights the interaction between a countercultural London left and the labour movement. Such documenting of struggles on film provided another significant contribution to developing cultures of solidarity in this period.

In a similar vein, the Newsreel Collective made *Stand Together* (1977) specifically about the mass solidarity picket at Grunwick in July 1977, including interviews with miners. Grunwick fits into the broader sense of coalfield identities shaped both by internal solidarity and supporting others. In 1984-5, national mining officials and local coalfield activists appealed to both traditions. Kent Communist Miners (1984) recalled local and national disputes from 1941 to 1974 but also insisted that Kent miners had never 'rejected an appeal from fellow workers for unity and help.' Those urging support for the miners in other industries also pointed to times when miners had helped them. The NUS's Jim Slater for example insisted that 'we will not desert a union which has helped us financially in the past and which would be the first to help again should the need to arise' (Slater 1984). At the same time, the NUM would appeal for 'all our brothers and sisters in the power stations to give the NUM the same support as in the miners' strikes of 1972 and 1974' (NUM n.d.-c). London activists would similarly point to support they had given to miners in the 1970s, evoking an entangled history of mutual solidarity rather than a simple returning of support (Brent Trades Council 1984). Recounting such relationships helped catalyse the support movement but activists also drew on the idea that historically miners had a 'very special place in the British Labour movement' (*UCATT Viewpoint* 1984). Within the polarised political landscape of the early 1980s, this historical understanding put the miners' strike in the forefront of the struggle against the Conservatives, making it a focus for opponents of Thatcherism.

Such narratives were not always accepted and an alternative could certainly be constructed. Dave Douglass (2010:13) noted that miners 'were rarely if ever called into other workers' disputes, although we always thought every other worker in the country should be called into ours'. Roger Harper, an activist in Birmingham Trades Council and the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, suggested he felt some initial reluctance in supporting the miners at Saltley in 1972 because the 'NUM was a very insular union. It was never affiliated

to the Trades Council' (Beckett 2009:80). In response to an NUS levy in support of the miners in 1984-5, one seafarer wrote that he opposed the levy as during the 1981 seafarers' dispute they were told to 'get [the] hell back to work' by miners when collecting around the pits in the Edinburgh area (M.F. 1984). Similarly, arguments over the level of support miners gave steel workers in 1980 became heated when the NUM called for greater solidarity from the ISTC steel union in 1984-5 (Collins 1984a, 1984c; Sirs 1984a, 1984b). The counter-narratives of those who questioned the miners' historical solidarity were themselves not unproblematic, on occasion providing justification for refusing to provide support during 1984-5. Just as mining communities were 'fragile and imperfect' social achievements (Tomaney 2015a:512), broader relationships were themselves uneven but nevertheless not entirely fictive, as the Grunwick dispute showed. The discourse of mutual solidarity was a political tactic that did not always acknowledge the limitations of these relationships but it was not simply rhetoric. Historical understanding of 1926 still clearly played a role, but at least as important was the direct impact of solidarity networks developed through the 1970s.

This creation of a culture of mutual solidarity, however uneven, is crucial for understanding 1984-5. While 'potential for workers action should always be seen in relation to the formations of capital, the state, the community and the labour market' (Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2011:214), such efforts to construct cultures of solidarity must also be taken into account. While returning a sense of agency to working-class people was foundational to labour geography (Herod 1997), concern has been expressed that this agency has been unproblematically asserted or insufficiently theorised (Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2011; Peck 2013). Rather than simply re-emphasizing constraints, there is a need to historicize structure and agency even within the confines of capitalism. Featherstone and Griffin (2016:381) highlight the risk of seeing constraints on agency 'as given rather than constantly negotiated, reworked and politicized in different ways'. The structures in which labour activists operate are a matter of contestation over time and therefore agency depends on previous struggles. The creation of a culture of solidarity is an important example of how labour activists helped shape the context in which they operated. The growth of militant grassroots trade unionism from the late 1960s, rooted in long-standing conceptions of the 'labour movement', was the basis on which this could happen. However, as I argue in the next section, this developed in parallel with movements challenging conventional constructions of working-class politics.

**Contesting the labour movement**

It is important to consider the labour movement as a dynamic formation, always in the process of being defined and constructed. EP Thompson's influential insistence on class as

'an active process, which owes as much to agency as conditioning' is important here (Thompson 1980a:8). As I argued in Chapter 2, it is an understanding that allows for diverse political activism in shaping class consciousness, and key in this context is how a number of movements from the late 1960s sought to contest the boundaries of labour movement politics. In their work on the 1976-8 Grunwick dispute and the 2005 Gate Gourmet strike, both led predominately by Asian women, McDowell et al. (2012:134) have argued for the need to engage with 'the complex intersections between class, gender and ethnicity at different historical moments' (see also Griffin 2015; Ince et al. 2015). By focusing on the interaction between women, LGBT, black, and working-class activists, both autonomously organised and within the trade union movement, I emphasise how forms of intersectional politics are constructed across space and time through relationships of solidarity.

The Grunwick dispute is particularly important because the labour movement support was, according to the strike committee, 'unprecedented for a struggle of Asian and West Indian Workers for basic Trade Union rights' (Grunwick Strike Committee 1977a). Certainly, as argued at the time and since, the strike did not eliminate all problems with race or gender in the labour movement (Parmar 1982; Sivanandan 1982:126–31). Pearson et al. (2010:425) have argued that neither Grunwick nor the much later Gate Gourmet dispute heralded the 'workplace solidarity for women and minority/migrant workers that many have claimed'. The trade union movement 'ultimately abandoned these women'. That thousands of miners would travel to London to join the Grunwick picket, however, should not be dismissed lightly, and seems to have marked a shift from earlier Asian-led disputes such as at Leicester Imperial Typewriters or the Mansfield Hosiery Mills. Rather than a complete transformation, Satnam Virdee has argued that Grunwick helped to reinforce the movement among sections of organised labour in the 1970s towards a language of class that could include racialized minority workers (Virdee 2014:135).

Mass pickets such as those at Grunwick provided spaces in which diverse groups could come together. In an analysis of early twentieth-century disputes in Chicago and London, Ruth Percy has argued that strikers' parades and picket lines 'enabled marginal workers to find a place to voice their demands and make their presence known' (Percy 2014:458). One Yorkshire miner expressed in a comparable manner the sense of the diverse Grunwick picket line in an interview thirty years after the strike: 'There were students, women demonstrators shouting … an actual gay group, who we got talking to. A group of guys standing there who were obviously gay. Standing there in unity with sacked workers. I'd never met people like that. There were good feelings there. There were working-class people regardless of race,

age, colour' (Beckett 2009:403). Part of the novelty of Grunwick was this coming together of trade union and radical London activists around an industrial dispute in ways that prefigured the alliances described by Massey and Wainwright (1985:151) and others during 1984-5. The feminist Mandy Merck recently drew explicit connections between this 1970s milieu and the support movement for the miners: 'In 1977 mass pickets of the [Grunwick] plant brought together trade unionists (including large contingents of miners), members of revolutionary and centre left parties, anti-racist campaigners and many feminists. Some of us here today picketed with Lesbian Left […] Later on we would join other gays and feminists in support of the 1984 Miners' Strike' (Merck et al. 2016:97).

Picket lines can also be conflictual and exclusionary spaces, even for those ostensibly on the same side (Ince 2006). At Grunwick, Gail Lewis was among the significant number of feminist activists present, and she experienced on the picket line both solidarity and care, and sexism (Campbell and Charlton 1977:46). Lesbian activists who supported the miners in 1984-5 contrasted the warm welcome they received in that dispute with Grunwick, where 'members of the Gay Left Collective were turned away from the picket line by workers who would not link arms with them' (Vittorini, Field, and Methol 1986:46). Others, however, suggested a more positive experience. Nigel Young, who would be involved with LGSM in 1984-5, joined a number of picket lines in the 1970s including Grunwick, where lesbians and gays 'have been in much evidence […] which not only gives us a feeling of mutual solidarity but also shows other workers our presence' (Young 1977:15). There is arguably a politics of agonism here, but perhaps more interesting is how picket lines could offer the sense of a common purpose when in other spaces conflict may have been anticipated (Askins and Mason 2015). The feminist Sarah Greaves felt that 'if you bumped against some miners in a pub there would be all sorts of sexist stuff. But at Grunwick you thought they had the same feeling that we did' (Campbell and Charlton 1977). This sense of a common feeling created on the picket line highlights how 'shared emotions of activism create shared collective identities' (Routledge 2012:430).

Coalfield activists were also in London in July 1972, five months after the end of the miners' strike, when five dock shop stewards were jailed in Pentonville, north London, for ignoring an injunction by the National Industrial Relations Court to stop picketing a site in Newham, East London. This was greeted by strikes and demonstrations, with at least South Wales and Yorkshire miners threatening industrial action if they were not released (Darlington and Lyddon 2001:164; Douglass 2009:177). With mounting pressure and a General Strike called by the TUC, the five were released in under a week. This was another of the events invoked

during the miners' dispute. In the short film *Solidarity*, one of the *Miners' Campaign Tapes* produced to support the 1984-5 strike, footage of the mass picket at Saltley Gates is followed by images of protests for the Pentonville Five and their release (Miners' Campaign Tape Project 2009). Tony Merrick, one of the jailed, recalled a demonstration outside the prison: 'I can remember the Welsh miners coming down, and we could hear… It was a terrific effect […] this Welsh choir of men came above the crowd and this was really really great' (Merrick 1980). This was the assertion of a distinctly Welsh working-class presence in north London.

Picket lines and labour protests are important spaces in which a working-class presence is asserted, but also where the nature of this presence can be negotiated (Featherstone and Griffin 2016; Griffin 2015). Members of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) also attended pickets outside Pentonville. Nettie Pollard recalled that they faced hostility but also gained some support for offering solidarity, and started debates on sexuality that would not have happened had they not been there (Power 1995:80). Similarly, GLF activists attended a large trade union march in London in 1971 protesting the Conservative government's Industrial Relations Bill, where they experienced significant antagonism from the left but again some support for their presence, particularly from Durham miners (Robinson 2007:83). These were not easy meetings, with hostility recalled by GLF participants more than anything else, but they began conversations between diverse political activists, including from different coalfields, that could only happen in these spaces of solidarity. It is notable that Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners in 1984-5 drew explicitly on the legacy of the GLF. One LGSM member noted that they 'took politics of all sorts, socialist, trade union politics, and the politics of the strike in particular to people who very often hadn't been exposed to those, hadn't been thinking about them, hadn't really been canvassed since the days of the Gay Liberation Front' (LGSM 1986).

We can see earlier, perhaps smaller, incarnations of the black, feminist, and lesbian and gay support around Grunwick and the 1984-5 strike during the 1972 coal dispute. The Indian Workers Association in Birmingham collected money, provided accommodation for miners' pickets, and hired buses to take members to the Saltley picket (Dar n.d.). Lancaster University GLF developed a relationship with Parkside Colliery near Preston during the same dispute (Goodspeed 2014). Women's Liberation Movement (WLM) activists asserted that they 'unconditionally support the miners and their families in their struggle against the government' and planned practical support (James 1972). Rather than seeing the diverse solidarities of the 1984-5 strike as entirely novel then, this situates them as part of a longer

engagement between post-1968 liberation politics and the labour movement (Humphrey 2000; Rowbotham 2006; Virdee 2014).

The WLM support was unconditional but it was not uncritical, highlighting the marginalisation of women within the NUM. In a similar way, when the GLF joined picket lines or trade union demonstrations they both 'showed solidarity with the workers of the world and challenged the machismo of the Left' (Robinson 2007:82). While the idea of deference in solidarity (Gould 2007:157) may be appropriate in certain circumstances, it is too static to capture this relationship, which rather highlighted the potentially 'generative, transformative character of solidarity' (Featherstone 2012:19). In the context of offering solidarity, these activists challenged the exclusionary practices and limited perspectives of trade unions and the left more broadly. It is important, however, not to conceive of these challenges to the labour movement as being entirely external, nor to reductively label often explicitly socialist activists as engaged in identity politics (Rutherford 2010:771).

The solidarity networks developed between women in the coalfields and London in 1984-5 relied in part on the existence of coalfield women who were already politically active. Even within the NUM itself, although overwhelmingly a male union, there were some women actively involved, perhaps most notably in the clerical COSA section. It seems to have been in the early 1980s that NUM/COSA started sending an official delegation to the TUC Women's Conference. A report from their delegates in 1982 claimed that 'there is a large cross-section of women in our Union (in catering, cleaning and clerical work) who we believe are anxious to be involved in both the NUM and the trade union movement as a whole' (Atkins and Heavey 1982). Coalfield women outside of the NUM had a long history of political activism in a range of struggles in the nineteenth century, the early twentieth century and during the 1970s coal disputes as well, including Kent miners' wives joining picket lines and protesting in London in 1972 (Beynon and Austrin 1994:227–230; Bruley 2010; Pitt 1979:141).

Some of the women who would help organise support groups in mining areas in 1984-5 were already trade unionists, members of Labour or the Communist Party (Ali 1986:88; Goodman 2006; Heathfield 1985a:7, 16). One Kent woman interviewed about her activism in 1984-5 by Betty Heathfield noted that 'in the village of Aylesham they've still got their Support Group from the 1974 strike' (Heathfield 1985j). This demonstrates the direct impact in 1984-5 of coalfield women's activism in the 1970s. This is not to deny that the 1984-5 campaign involved large numbers of women who had not been previously active. Nevertheless, it is important to be aware that WAPC drew on existing traditions of working-class women's

activism in mining areas. Spence and Stephenson's interviews with women involved in miners' support groups in 1984-5 in the north-east of England showed that some 'were influenced by a family tradition of female activism associated both with mining and with the labour movement in general', and that 'some of the women themselves were already community or political activists at the outbreak of the strike' (Spence and Stephenson 2007).

It is also worth noting that miners themselves had provided solidarity to a number of industrial disputes led predominately by women, including at Grunwick, in the period before the 1984-5 strike. Just prior to the Grunwick dispute, in the same part of London, Kent miners had supported the successful 22 week equal pay dispute at Trico (Butler 1985; Stevenson 2016b). A reported 50,000 Yorkshire miners took sympathetic industrial action in sixty-seven out of seventy pits in support of NHS workers in 1982 (TUC 1982:300-307-591; *Yorkshire Miner* 1982a). Arthur Scargill wrote that 'NUM Areas have responded to the NHS workers' call for support. Miners have joined picket lines outside hospitals; they have marched in demonstrations of solidarity. We've done it before – we are proud to do it again' (Scargill 1982). This suggested a broader conception of the labour movement than the predominantly masculine industrial unions with which the NUM was associated.

The union's coverage of the NHS strike, however, highlighted some tensions in at least the attitude of Yorkshire NUM towards women. Since the launch of *Yorkshire Miner* in the late 1970s it had carried a 'pin-up' picture of a woman related to the Yorkshire coalfield, often daughters or wives of miners, on page three. The August 1982 issue featured on page three a striking National Union of Public Employees female nurse with the title 'humanity's real pin-up' *(Yorkshire Miner* 1982b). This was the last of the pin-ups, a practice that had received significant criticism from feminists and the left more broadly. *Yorkshire Miner* editor Maurice Jones and Arthur Scargill debated feminists Anna Raeburn and Ann Coote on the issue at a meeting in London in 1979 organised by the National Union of Journalists (*Yorkshire Miner* 1979b). One letter to the paper by a miner criticising sexism in the union in general, including page three of *Yorkshire Miner*, asked 'when are the so-called socialists in this union going to stop being such hypocrites?' (Douglass 1980).

This does, however, suggest that there were at least some debates about sexism and broader feminist concerns within the union, beyond supporting women in industrial disputes, prior to the 1984-5 strike. *The Miner* and the *Yorkshire Miner* supportively, if tentatively, covered abortion rights, while letters from miners and miners' families both for and against were

published (*The Miner* 1979).[6] Dinnington miner John Cunningham argued that the union should support the right to choose: 'Let us go forward to enlightenment and emancipation – for men and women – not back to the Dark Ages' (Cunningham 1980). Arthur Scargill was quoted in praise of women at the Greenham Common peace camp in 1982, and in 1983 Yorkshire NUM sent a letter of support and a donation (*The Miner* 1982b; *Yorkshire Miner* 1983). Women and supporters from Greenham Common would develop strong connections with coalfields during the 1984-5 strike. The camp had originated, however, in a march of women from Cardiff, many of whom were apparently from the Rhondda (Wales Congress in Support of Mining Communities n.d.). This says little about broader gender relations in mining areas. It nevertheless suggests that at least the more politically active miners and their union were engaging with feminism before 1984, albeit often in limited and contradictory ways.

It is necessary to recognise, therefore, that expanding understandings of class politics in this period included labour movement involvement beyond industrial disputes, which could be seen in some interactions between London and the coalfields in the 1970s. Of course, many coalfield activists were already part of broader political networks, most obviously through the Labour and Communist parties. It is significant nevertheless that in the late 1970s a Miners Against Nazis meeting held in Sheffield to discuss combating the fascist National Front, attended by 200 delegates from across the coalfields, was addressed by Alec Biswas from the East London Asian Defence Group. Peter Heathfield, then Derbyshire NUM Secretary and in 1984 national NUM General Secretary, told the meeting that 'the NUM could not dissociate itself from the worldwide struggle against racialism' (*Yorkshire Mine*r 1979a). Four coachloads of Yorkshire miners were among the trade unionist who joined the 1978 Anti-Nazi League/Rock Against Racism carnival in London, with the NUM's Arthur Scargill as one of the platform speakers (*The Miner* 1978). Scargill had supported the formation of the Anti-Nazi League and several NUM lodges signed up to the campaign in the late 1970s (Renton 2004:221).

A few months after the Miners Against Nazis meeting, Heathfield resigned from his role on a committee involved in investing mineworkers' pension funds on the basis that money was going to support apartheid South Africa (Heathfield 1979). There was a long standing involvement with anti-apartheid politics in the coalfields. In 1970, South Wales miners had demonstrated against the South African rugby team playing in Cardiff. South Wales NUM's Dai Francis commented that 'it is a very sorry spectacle to see rugby football, which is a

---

[6] See the letters page in the June-July 1975 edition of *The Miner* for an example of debates on abortion.

people's game in Wales, being played by a racialist team from South Africa behind barbed wire' (*The Miner* 1970). In 1979, the NUM Secretary at Kellingley, David Miller, heard that a South African official would be visiting the pit as part of the International Organising Committee of the World Mining Congress. He told management that the South African official would be boycotted by NUM members, so the delegation arrived without the South African representative (*Yorkshire Miner* 1979c). The African National Congress's UK representative Ruth Mompati was presented with a miners' lamp in 1982 by Scargill after addressing the annual conference at Inverness on behalf of Nelson Mandela, who had been invited by the union's National Executive Committee (*The Miner* 1982a). Such activism continued into the 1984-5 strike, during which four Kent miners were arrested for dumping coal on the doorsteps of the South African embassy in London in protest at a visit by South Africa's Prime Minister Botha (Haylett 1984).

This politics fitted into much longer traditions of internationalism in mining areas stretching back to the Spanish Civil War and beyond. Certainly these longer traditions still had an influence. For example, Paul Robeson Junior, son of the famous black American singer and activist Paul Robeson, visited South Wales in 1985 to commemorate the links developed between his father and the Welsh miners fifty years previously. This connection, he argued, symbolised more than anything the 'unity of the coloured peoples and working peoples the world over' *(The Valleys' Star* 1985b). While Herod (2010:25) has argued that labour geography needs to look beyond 'unionized workers' to 'develop a wider conception of working-class people as geographical agents', there is also a need to recognise where trade unionists have operated outside the boundaries of what is usually considered labour politics. This is not to argue that all miners were anti-racist by 1984, or indeed afterwards. Mukhtar Dar of the Asian Youth Movement (AYM) in Yorkshire, for instance, recalled visiting miners in solidarity during the 1984-5 strike: 'when we arrived […] one of the miners turned round and said, "what the hell are these "Pakis" doing here?"'(Ramamurthy 2013:77–8). The National Front's 'industrial organiser' Nick Griffin claimed that a 'small number' of striking Nottinghamshire miners were National Front members *(New Statesman* 1984b). Nor was there an absence of homophobia or sexism, as discussed elsewhere in the thesis. There was, however, at least an activist minority within the coalfields involved in making diverse political connections in the late 1970s.

This history of diverse solidarities can have a significant impact on the way we think about the relationships between mining areas and women, black, and lesbian and gay activists from London and elsewhere in 1984-5. First, it points to the need to situate these connections

within a longer term project not to by-pass class politics but to reshape the labour movement so that it was more fully representative of the working class. Second, it suggests that a minority of coalfield activists were beginning to engage with some of these issues before the strike. The journalist Gary Younge wrote about the 1984-5 dispute that he could 'still recall the conversations of Nottingham miners as they adjusted their worldviews – or at least their language – to the arrival of lesbian and gay, black and feminist support groups' (Younge 2009). Such transformative experiences during that year are crucial, as I discuss centrally in Chapter 7. Yet some people in the coalfields had already begun to make such connections and as a result actively sought diverse alliances during the 1984-5 strike (Francis 2015:110–111). Younge's characterisation leaves coalfield activists as fairly passive and points towards forms of solidarity that travel in one direction. Taking account of the longer trajectories of activism unsettles this view, and offers a more complex and reciprocal sense of relationships of solidarity.

**Conclusion**

I have argued centrally in this chapter for a greater attention to the temporalities of solidarity. While it is possible to see solidarity as a simultaneously reciprocal relationship (Brown and Yaffe 2014:35), understanding solidarity between diverse places as more than singular events requires attention to its development over time. A culture of solidarity, however uneven and contested, was actively constructed in particular sites and spaces during the long 1970s. Attending to such a historical context suggests a different way of thinking about the significant issues Tomaney (2013) raises in his defence of parochialism. Rather than simply arguing for the predominance of local or broader attachments ahistorically, I have suggested that there are contexts in which solidarity across space between diverse groups becomes more prominent. Moreover, I have pointed to how the memorialisation of struggles in the 1970s and earlier sought to embed these solidarities in coalfield identities, an example of the 'relational construction of militant particularisms' (Featherstone 2005).

Activists attempted to create and enforce norms of behaviour within the labour movement, most obviously 'the basic principle of the trade union movement – thou shalt not cross a picket line' (Scargill 1984a). A more nuanced sense of labour agency, therefore, does not only involve re-asserting constraints but also being attentive to the development over time of particular cultures within, between, and outside workplaces, in which labour activists operate (Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2011). Of course, such principles were only ever unevenly abided by, but they were certainly important, for example, in the successful miners' strikes of 1972 and 1974. In the aftermath of the failure of the 1984-5 strike, one British newspaper

article suggested injunctions to respect picket lines were 'ancient rubrics' appealing to 'instinctive loyalties' (Harper and Wintour 1985). Rather than being instinctive, however, I have argued that cultures of solidarity within and between workplaces had to be constructed by labour activists.

The solidarity of the 1984-5 miners' strike is unimaginable without the activism of the previous fifteen years. Such longer lasting, reciprocal relationships, contradict Samuel's contention that the 1984-5 support movement was at root charity rather than solidarity (Samuel 1986b:33). Conversely, the defeat of the strike and the limitations of the support movement highlight the increasing weakness of this culture. The reasons for this erosion of solidarity are explored in more depth in Chapter 6. However, in the context of high levels of unemployment, new legal restrictions on trade unions, increasingly belligerent policing of industrial disputes, disillusionment with the 1974-79 Labour government, and popular antipathy to the alleged power of trade unions, the extent of support evident in 1984-5 is testament to the continued resilience of this culture of solidarity.

Agency does not only concern the relationship between labour and capital. I have highlighted how those often excluded from 'the labour movement' sought to broaden class politics through solidarity. Rather than seeing post-68 liberation movements as distinct from, or even destructive of, class politics, I have emphasised how they interacted and overlapped with the labour movement, a relationship that could be difficult but nevertheless productive. This generative aspect of solidarity (Featherstone 2012:9) is elided by understandings that attempt to make 'deference' a key component (Gould 2007:157). More useful is a conception of solidarity as at least potentially a mutual relationship. This mutuality, the way it is constructed and the way it is productive of new relationships between diverse places and groups of people, becomes clearer with a dynamic sense of the intersecting temporalities and spatialities of solidarity.

## Chapter 5

## Contested spaces and networks of solidarity

**Introduction**

The successes of the 1972 and 1974 miners' strikes in part reflected the ability of the trade union movement to exert control over space, disrupting energy distribution networks. With the newly elected Thatcher government in 1979, the Conservatives sought to counteract this power. The ability to control movement through space, Blomley (1994:152) has argued, became a crucial concern for both sides in the 1984-5 strike. This chapter develops a broader analysis of how spaces of solidarity were developed through the miners' support movement, but also how the government and elements of the state sought to close down these spaces. The development of political spaces is therefore understood historically, as constructed and contested over time (Navickas 2016). I highlight how spaces that root political movements in particular places can also be deeply shaped by translocal relationships. Such relationships of solidarity have the potential to refigure what may otherwise be considered politically neutral spaces and, in the context of a labour dispute, assert a working-class presence.

The first part of this chapter discusses the picket line as a space that drew attention to the material entanglement of London and the coalfields, and in which solidarity could be enacted and powerful connections made between people from distant places. I argue that instead of a chaotic space, as it was frequently represented at the time, the picket line had deeply rooted norms and expectations. At the same time, the picket line was reshaped both through the solidarity movement and by government attempts to restrict its effectiveness. The second section expands the picture of spaces in which solidarity was performed, highlighting the women's centres, bookshops, pubs, student unions, workplaces and unemployed workers' centres in which support for the strike in London was organised. This allows us to understand the diverse ways in which translocal solidarity was constructed, mapping radical networks within and between the city and the coalfields.

The third part of this chapter focuses on the practice of 'twinning' between different support groups and mining areas. This distinct tactic, which became popular during the strike, was an attempt to reduce the distance between the supporters and the coalfields, bringing people from both sides of the relationship into more direct contact. There were problems with this approach: it tended to entrench a somewhat romanticised understanding of the coalfields, and could create uneven levels of support for different areas. Nevertheless, I argue that the

personal relationships it engendered deepened commitment to the strike, raised morale on both sides, and encouraged more reciprocal relationships. In the final section, I emphasise the contradictory role of the state during the miners' strike. While much attention has rightly focused on the role of the police in controlling space to weaken the miners, I argue that integrating the activities of left Labour local authorities complicates the picture of an entirely repressive state. Such authorities played a dual role: directly using the resources of the state that they controlled to support the strike, but also helping financially to sustain the diverse political networks in which the miners' strike solidarity campaign was rooted. The contest over space described throughout this chapter was therefore both a struggle between the state and progressive political movements, and simultaneously a conflict carried out within and between the institutions of the state itself.

**The contested space of the picket line**

Throughout 1984-5 picket lines were set up across the country at mines, power stations, docks, steel works and elsewhere in an attempt to control the movement of fuel and make the strike effective. The picket lines were often the most public and visible expression of the strike, and as I discuss in Chapter 6, the representation of the picket line as a violent space was a key element in attempting to delegitimise the dispute. For Samuel (1985a), the focus on picket lines in portrayals of the dispute was a distraction from understanding the development of the strike in the mining villages. Yet rejecting the more lurid emphasis on picket line violence should not mean ignoring picketing entirely. In contrast, in the previous chapter I argued that pickets could be spaces of solidarity. Understanding the nature of picketing, and the distinctive spatial relationships the practice engenders, is an important element of a labour geography that seeks to understand how workers leverage their power at the point of production (Cumbers, MacKinnon, and Shaw 2010).

During the early part of the dispute in particular, before miners started returning to work in previously solid areas, much of the picketing in the coalfields was merely symbolic. This freed up miners to picket areas where a majority were not on strike, most notably Nottinghamshire, but also sites outside of mining areas. Just as in the 1972 and 1974 strikes, this included picketing power stations and coal depots in London where miners were joined by supporters in the capital. Such activities highlight how solidarity can draw attention to the complex overlapping interests and material relations between distant places (Brown and Yaffe 2014; Featherstone 2012:18). Despite the sense of London and the coalfields as geographically separate places, picketing foregrounded the networks of transport and electricity production that already connected them. Mark Ashton, the founder of LGSM,

explicitly invoked such material relations to explain his support: 'The miners dig coal which creates fuel, which actually makes electricity […] I mean, would you go down a mine and work? I wouldn't like to go down a mine and work. One of the reasons I support the miners a lot is because they go down and do it' (LGSM 1986). Featherstone (2012:18) has shown how solidarity can refashion material relations in more equitable ways; this, in contrast, was solidarity that sought to valorise, highlight and conserve these connections.

Significant attempts were made to enforce the NUM's picket lines and make them effective. National Union of Railwaymen (NUR) General Secretary Jimmy Knapp's claim that 'if a cow were to cross a field with "NUM picket line" painted on it, we would not pass' may have been a slight exaggeration, but railway workers did take action (TUC 1984a:401). Six months into the strike there were reportedly 1384 claims by ASLEF members and 130 by NUR members sent home by British Rail for boycotting oil, coal or iron ore (Labour Research Department 1984). Perhaps the best known example is the boycott of coal enforced by railway workers in Coalville, Leicestershire, despite a majority of miners in the area continuing to work (Bell 2009; Socialist Action 1985). Among the Londoners involved was Paula Frampton, a freight guard at Stonebridge Park in Brent, who was thanked by Kent miners for refusing to move a train carrying coal (*Kilburn Times* 1984; van Gelderen 1984).

Steve Forey, a member of King's Cross ASLEF, claimed that they had been at the forefront of the union in blacking fuel. Towards the end of the strike, he wrote that British Rail had tried to 'sneak a coal train through the King Cross area' in June 1984. 'That train is still standing in the platform at Finsbury Park Station!' (Forey 1985). The strike was observed by seafarers as well. Eighteen collier ships that would have usually brought coal from the North East to power stations around the capital sat unmoved in the Tyne, Tees, Medway and Thames rivers (NUS 1984). Recovering such efforts can temper accounts that lament the lack of industrial solidarity in 1984-5 compared to the 1970s (Darlington 2005). Yet, despite reports of limited power cuts in London and elsewhere, which were denied by the electricity board, there was no dramatic three-day week to compare with 1974 (Dibblin and Hollingsworth 1985). The direct impact of picketing in terms of disrupting the electricity supply was clearly limited.

Picketing at power stations and coal depots, however, was important for bringing people from the coalfields to London during the strike. Kent miners in particular travelled to the capital partly in an attempt to disrupt the movement of coal. Charringtons in Brent, for example, was targeted early in the dispute due to its perceived importance in distributing coal around north London (Evans 1984). The connections between London and the coalfields

went beyond fuel, though, and the nature of pickets and demonstrations in the capital also highlighted its centrality in relationships of power in Britain. There were protests outside Hobart House, the headquarters of the NCB; Price Waterhouse, the company involved in sequestrating the NUM's funds; and the Department of Health and Social Security headquarters in Elephant and Castle, as an alleged £49 million of benefits had been withheld from miners' families during the strike (Adams 1984; SERTUC 1984). As discussed below, the Metropolitan police also played a prominent role in attempting to reduce the effectiveness of the strike. London in this sense had an extremely ambivalent relationship to the coalfields throughout the dispute: while it was an important hub of solidarity for the strike, it was nevertheless also crucial to its suppression.

While the picket line is in one sense a transient space, temporarily occupying and resignifying a particular place, it has a distinct meaning and set of rules that have been constructed over time (Cresswell 2015:5; Percy 2014). Picket lines appealed to a shared, historically rooted moral code: the picket line was, or should have been, 'sacrosanct' (Douglass 1986:53). One Coventry miner who voted against the strike in an area ballot explained why he came out anyway: 'when I seen the rest of the miners coming from other areas to picket my colliery, being a trade unionist as I am, I could not cross the picket line' (Ware 1985). Rather than understanding the picket line as unruly, it can instead be seen fundamentally as a space of collective discipline. Miners were expected to act in particular ways in this space by their union. This disciplined behaviour, however, could differ significantly from the Conservative government's view of what a picket line should be (Howell 1984; NUM n.d.-a). Supporters of the miners were also called upon to follow the NUM's lead in terms of picketing, with the Kent area of the union insisting that non-miners could attend 'only on the STRICT understanding that the AUTHORITY OF THE N.U.M. IS OBSERVED' (Kent Area NUM 1984). This was a clear example where 'deference' was expected from those offering solidarity (Gould 2007:157).

There was certainly an element of bureaucratic control and positioning among elements of the London support movement in their attitude towards picketing. When the Mineworkers' Defence Committee (MDC), a group that sought to co-ordinate solidarity efforts, called for mass pickets, representatives of the South East Regional Council of the TUC (SERTUC) asked the Kent NUM 'to write to this organisation […] requesting them not to call pickets of Power Stations as this is the sole prerogative of the NUM in conjunction with the TUC bodies and after discussions with the appropriate unions' (GLATC 1985). Perhaps partly as a result, picketing in London remained on a fairly small scale during much of the dispute,

although there were some attempts at mass pickets particularly towards the end of the strike. However, at the same time as mass pickets were starting to take off in London, alongside attempts to link the dispute to campaigns over the rate capping of local authorities, the strike was crumbling in some mining areas (Donovan 1986). This highlights the different speed at which a solidarity campaign can move when compared with the struggle it is supporting, an important element in thinking about the temporalities of solidarity (Antentas 2015).

The development of the MDC in late 1984 and its encouragement of mass pickets was in part a reaction to the perception that the strike was drifting. There was an attempt to inject new energy into the solidarity movement. One notable example was the picket at Neasden Power Station, not far from Grunwick, on 11 February 1985. The mass picket was promoted by the MDC and Pit Dragon, a group of artists and musicians supporting the miners. The *New Musical Express* described the scene: 'As part of the TUC Day of Action, over a thousand pinkos, Commies and other enemies of "responsible and caring Government" stood around in sub-zero temperatures under the bleary eyes of young constables and the odd camera crew.' A stage was set up near the power station entrance 'upon which prance[d] a seemingly endless stream of comics, non-poets and bands […] Scab lorries turned back by a variety show? Surely a first in the annals of industrial struggle' (S. Williams 1985). The nature of the picket line as a space could therefore be reimagined through the solidarity movement.

As shown in the previous chapter, picket lines could be spaces of encounter between diverse groups and individuals. They could be important for creating deep personal connections. Siân James, the wife of a striking miner and activist in the Neath, Dulais and Swansea Valleys Support Group, recently reflected on her experience of the strike and the period more broadly. She explained that her last memory of Mark Ashton, the founder of LGSM who died in 1987, was 'at a Wapping [printworkers'] picket line where we were all being pushed around […] everybody grimly holding on to everybody else.' She explained that the experience of Wapping, the dispute at GCHQ, and the miners' strike meant that the way she now judged people was: 'Do I want this person standing next to me on a picket line?' (James et al. 2014). This reflects on how the picket, as a space of solidarity, can create intense emotions and thick attachments between diverse individuals (Brown and Yaffe 2014:40; Routledge 2012:438). Rather than solidarity emerging because of affective connections of care and concern, solidarity can be productive of such bonds (Gould 2007:157). These encounters produced important political and personal relationships even if the picketing of the miners' strike ultimately failed.

The establishment of picket lines was in part an attempt to recreate the successes of the early 1970s. The context and the results, however, were not the same. Darlington has argued that there was a failure to revive the militant tactics of 1972, and together with the relative lack of sympathetic industrial action by other trade unionists, this was the main cause for the defeat of the strike (Darlington 2005:73). It is necessary to recognise as well, however, that the government had made greater preparations for strikes in coal and other industries. In opposition in the 1970s, the Conservative's Nationalised Industries Policy Group, chaired by Nicholas Ridley, produced what would become an infamous report aimed at introducing market relations into the public sector and a programme of 'denationalisation'. The confidential annex on 'Countering the Political Threat' set out ways to resist any potential challenge through industrial action to this programme. The 'Ridley Plan' involved building up coal stocks, recruiting non-union haulage companies to transport fuel, installing dual coal/oil firing in power stations, cutting benefits for strikers, and developing a mobile squad of police to counteract flying pickets, 'the likes of the Saltley Coke-works mob' (Nationalised Industries Policy Group 1977:25; see also Gallas 2016).

The employment of these tactics significantly decreased the ability of miners and their supporters to control the movement of coal. Energy policy more broadly was also used to challenge trade unionism. A meeting of the Ministerial Committee on Economic Strategy early in Thatcher's first government discussed increasing nuclear power provision, noting that such a 'programme would have the advantage of removing a substantial portion of electricity production from the dangers of disruption by industrial action by coal miners or transport workers' (Ministerial Committee on Economic Strategy 1979:2). As Cumbers et al. (2016:93–4) have observed, while labour activists have often taken comfort in the inability of globalization to displace workers in transport, infrastructure and utilities, other tactics have been used to undermine their power. The miners' strike meant not just the weakening of the NUM, but an attempt to undermine the ability of the labour movement to act in solidarity. Despite the aim of 'denationalisation', the state played a key role in this process, which arguably would have been considerably more difficult had coal not been a publicly owned industry (Cumbers 2012:21). The ability to control the movement of individuals and materials through space, then, was a central concern for both trade unionists and the Conservative government (Blomley 1994:150–188).

This was not simply a desire to bypass the picket line, however; it was fundamentally a struggle over the terms on which the space of the picket line itself was produced. The Thatcher government legislated against mass pickets and secondary action to essentially

outlaw solidarity strikes (Cumbers et al. 2016:101). Laws do not automatically create norms of behaviour, however, and there was some uncertainty within the trade union movement over how new legislation would be enforced. After all, the Pentonville Five, who had been imprisoned for ignoring an injunction against picketing in 1972, were freed after threats of industrial action (Darlington and Lyddon 2001:160–177). Laws seeking to restrict the numbers of people on picket lines directly aimed to reduce the physical control labour could assert over space, and could be perceived as an attack on 'traditional picketing' (SERTUC-NUM Support Committee 1984a). Trade unions had agreed at a special conference in Wembley in 1982 that they would support any union resisting these new laws. Such a commitment was soon undermined, however, by a failure to back the National Graphical Association (NGA) during the Stockport Messenger dispute the following year (Gennard 1990:486–492; *Labour Briefing National Supplement* 1985).

Despite the promises at Wembley, mass opposition to the law was always unlikely to be co-ordinated by the TUC. Nevertheless, sections of the trade union movement were yet to internalise the logic of the new legislation. This was clear on both a small and larger scale during the coal dispute. Unofficial action in a railway depot in Willesden, north west London was sparked by reports that British Rail was going to sue their union for loss of revenue during the miners' strike (Socialist Action 1985:15). Most spectacularly, the NUM had its funds seized for refusing to accept court judgements.[1] Later in the 1980s, the NUS attempted to resist secondary picketing legislation during the 1988-9 P&O Dover strike, resulting in large fines and ultimately the collapse of the strike (Berlin 2006:68–73). The miners' strike should therefore be understood as part of a longer term project to refigure the picket line. Tactics such as flying pickets, which, as I argued in the previous chapter, were a particularly working-class form of politicised mobility, have largely died out in Britain.[2] Legislation and its interpretation by the courts sought to make pickets essentially token presences restricted to workers' immediate place of work. This was an attempt to negate the effectiveness of picketing in part by containing and limiting it spatially.

**Constructing spaces and networks of solidarity**

Social movements, as Leitner et al. (2008:161–2) argue, often seek to 'manipulate, subvert and resignify places', and 'to produce new spaces' in which their politics can be practised. Both elements can be seen in the miners' support movement. The picket line was, as I have

---

[1] Although these injunctions did not rely on recent legislation, they should still be seen as part of a general use of the law and courts to undermine strikes in this period (TUC 1985:48).

[2] Although for the use of flying pickets in the 2009 Lindsey Oil Refinery dispute see Cumbers et al. (2016).

suggested, in one sense a relatively transient space. The solidarity campaign in London, however, also depended on projects to create more permanent sites for political intervention. Stephen Brooke has observed that post-1968 black, women's and gay liberation movements sought to establish a physical presence in London in the 1980s, particularly through the construction of centres. 'If there were enterprise zones' he argues, 'there were also social democracy zones' (Brooke 2014:28). This introduces a distinctly spatial understanding to the conflict in London between two competing visions for moving beyond the post-war settlement (Massey 2007:17).

Thatcherism was represented in east London's docklands, a section of which, having lost its original function, was reconstituted as a low regulation, low tax, 'government free' enterprise zone (Beckett 2016:307; see also Wetherell 2016). In contrast, the Women's Liberation Movement in particular sought to root itself in localities through the development of centres, spaces that offered a distinctly different social vision. Such physical presence in the city was important for the development of networks of translocal solidarity, emphasising the ability of political movements to be simultaneously rooted in places and capable of developing spatially broader relationships (Routledge and Cumbers 2009:197). The King's Cross Women's Centre, for example, hosted a benefit for the strike, showing films and holding a discussion led by Nottinghamshire miners' wives (*Time Out* 1984c). Similarly, a women's only social and meeting about the dispute was held in the Women's Centre in Waltham Forest (Waltham Forest Miners Support Group 1984). One London women's miners' support group, which was linked with Ammanford miners' wives, met weekly in the South London Women's Centre (*City Limits* 1985a; *Spare Rib* 1985b).

Radical and alternative bookshops formed another element of these more embedded spaces, providing room for miners' support meetings and collections points for food and money. Jane Cholmeley, the founder of the feminist bookshop Silver Moon in 1984, recalled recently how they controlled a small amount of space in front of the shop in which they allowed men and women from the coalfields to fundraise, providing some protection from police harassment (Cholmeley 2016). Housmans bookshop, which still survives near King's Cross, gave accommodation to miners during the strike.[3] In his strike diary, the Yorkshire miner Arthur Wakefield wrote about drinking tea with the staff of Collet's bookshop on Charing Cross and collecting outside (Wakefield 2002:160–1). Such shops were part of the broader political milieu in which solidarity for the miners was rooted, and reflected the diversity of

---

[3] Nik Gorecki, co-manager of Housmans, discussed the history of the shop at a meeting I helped organise as part of the Applied History Network: 'Sites of Resistance: Radical Bookselling', University College London, 9 February 2016.

this support. New Beacon Books, a small independent and radical bookshop in Finsbury Park specialising in Caribbean, African, Afro-American and Black British material, donated to collections for the miners (White 1984). Gay's the Word, which opened in 1979 in central London, was used as a collection point by Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners, who also held meetings there and took regular collections for the strike outside (Kelliher 2014:245).

It is not unusual for geographers to note that lesbian and gay, or queer spaces, are often commercial (Oswin 2008:93). Gay's the Word and the other bookshops that helped sustain the miners' support movement, however, often sought to blur the boundary between political and commercial spaces (Delap 2016). LGSM's activism did this in other ways. Much of the group's fundraising took place outside of lesbian and gay pubs and clubs, some of which were more straightforwardly commercial than others. As I emphasise in Chapter 7, members of LGSM sought to contest what they perceived as the middle-class domination of the London lesbian and gay scene (Bradley 1984). In part, they did this by taking the politics of the miners' strike into a diverse array of lesbian and gay spaces in London. Not all of these spaces were necessarily dominated by middle-class people, however. The group's most lucrative collections were held outside a pub called The Bell in King's Cross, which LGSM's Mike Jackson explained was 'a pub that is mainly used by young people and unemployed people, quite poorly paid young people' (LGSM 1986; see also Kelliher 2014:245; Leeworthy 2016:271).

Places such as The Bell should complicate notions that LGBT spaces are necessarily gentrifying (Binnie and Valentine 1999:176; Bradley 1984). Some of these spaces were also already more explicitly political. According to one review, The Fallen Angel bar in Islington, for example, hosted 'half the gay movement', including groups like NALGAY (the first self-organised trade union group), Icebreakers, Gay Youth Movement, Police Monitoring Group, and LGSM. The owners hosted their own miners' fundraiser, and staff apparently wore 'Dig Deep for the Miners' badges (Gordon 1984; LGSM 1984a; Presland 1984a). Political radicalism in London could be developed and sustained in such commercial spaces, then, in a way more complex than allowed for by an understanding of social movements as resignifying corporate places (Leitner, Sheppard, and Sziarto 2008:165).

The generative aspect of solidarity, the way in which translocal relations can reshape particular places, can be seen in how the miners' solidarity movement was part of this process of politicising particular spaces. In a similar way, the performers who joined the Neasden picket line in February described above had often been fundraising for miners across the pubs, bars, theatres, student unions, and labour clubs of London since the start of

the strike *(The Valleys' Star* 1985a). Left-leaning London listings magazines *Time Out* and *City Limits* were full of cabaret, comedy, music, and poetry supporting the strike. Towards the end of the year there was an attempt made to draw together this cultural politics into some coherent form with the creation of Pit Dragon. The *NME* described how 'Pit Dragon has managed to harness the talents of almost every worthwhile artist on the seamier side of the London cabaret circuit and the potential exists to develop into the most dynamic political/cultural organisation since Rock Against Racism' (S. Williams 1985). Although the group was short lived, it does suggest a connecting point between Rock Against Racism and Red Wedge later in the 1980s.

Cultural politics was of course also being performed in miners' welfares and elsewhere in the coalfields during the strike. Such events could be occasions of mutual learning and exchange. Billy Bragg, for example, who toured the coalfields performing in support of the strike, was greatly influenced by the music he discovered in the north east of England in particular, not least 'the miners' poet' Jock Purdon (Bragg 2015). Purdon, retired at this point, in turn played in London, on one occasion at Goldsmith's College with the Betteshanger Colliery Band from Kent (*Time Out* 1984b). Musicians from the coalfields visiting London could be useful advocates for the cause. David Donovan described the South Wales Striking Miners' Choir performing in London and winning hundreds of friends. He believed that they embodied people's idea of what South Wales miners were (Donovan 1986). There were of course long standing associations between subcultures and the left in London and elsewhere (Hughes 2012; 2014). The support campaign produced comparatively new intersections of art and politics however, with a distinctive interaction between the heterogeneous cultures of both the capital and the coalfields. As these relationships were developed in the context of an industrial dispute, the experience suggests that workplace and cultural politics need not necessarily be counterposed (Rutherford 2010:773).

Such a politicising of cultural spaces was not always welcome. An accountant for Price Waterhouse, the firm involved in sequestrating NUM funds, complained about a collection for miners at a Christmas performance of Dracula at the Half Moon Theatre in East London: 'I don't feel the stage is the place for this sort of thing, especially when the majority of the audience is children. Even the programme had a great tirade about the abolition of the GLC' (Absalom 1984). Sometimes, however, the sceptical could be won over. One miner described appealing for support at a 'kind of night club, a weird place in London, there was a lot of what the older generation called weirdos, pink hair and all sorts, whites and blacks. I didn't know what to expect. I went on stage and some-one booed "bloody miner,

communist" straightaway, and I started to describe what was happening on the picket line and all of a sudden they're all cheering. It was the best experience for me personally throughout the strike' (Farrar n.d.:53). At least at a local level, such accounts make it clear that miners were not simply appealing to those that were already convinced.

As in the example of Goldsmith's College above, universities and polytechnics were important spaces for developing support networks. Raising the politics of the strike in such a space again did not simply mean speaking to existing supporters. David Donovan and Siân James from South Wales discussed receiving a 'very heated response' at a meeting in a London polytechnic, where one student wanted to hear from 'working miners' (Neath and District Miners' Support Group 1984b; see also Strike 2009:16–17). The politics of such a space, or the right for it to be considered political at all, was contested. Attempts to use student unions to support the miners could be met with resistance. The Polytechnic of Central London Miners Support Group noted that the institution's management had attempted to stop collections by students for 'political organisations' on Polytechnic property (PCL Miners Support Group 1984). At Essex University, where Yorkshire miners had been hosted in 1972, three hundred miners were accommodated but the university threatened to revoke the student unions' licence if they remained (Scargill 1975:12; Wagstaff 1984).

Polytechnics played an important role in the student support for the miners and their growth in this period may have encouraged alliances between student and labour struggles (Wood 1995:37). Activists at the Polytechnic of North London experienced perhaps the most serious confrontations. Support for the strike ran in parallel with attempts to prevent the National Front organiser Patrick Harrington from attending the polytechnic, which saw mass pickets, arrests and jailings, fines, and a contempt of court proceeding (Labour Research Department 1985:31; Wilson 1985). In December 1984, the student union received an injunction from the High Court seeking to prevent donations to the miners, and the Attorney General appointed a receiver 'to safeguard those funds' as he felt an injunction might be ignored. The matter was considered serious enough to be discussed more than once in parliament. Local MP Jeremy Corbyn asked the Attorney General whether he did 'not accept that members of a student union or any other democratic organisation have a right to express their support for those who are fighting for their jobs and communities' (Hansard 1985; see also Hansard 1984a). Powerful elements of the state were therefore used to suppress what in isolation seemed like relatively small scale attempts to support radical politics through student unions. This is an example of how the miners' strike demonstrated a process of

constructing political spaces through solidarity, but also how that process was resisted by those who sought to restrict the space available for opposition.

Massey and Wainwright (1985:151) highlighted the role of 'alternative networks' in the cities that supported the miners, as one element of a politics that was 'often anarchistic, socially adventurous, with a commitment to politics outside the work-place as well as within it'. As well as the cultural politics discussed above, alternative media was another element of these networks that supported the miners and sought to combat the general hostility of the established press (Jones, Lazenby, and Williams 2014). As I discussed in Chapter 3, independent newspapers sought to give space to the voices of people in the coalfields (Harcup 2011). As well as the left and independent press in London, the creation of the *Miners' Campaign Tapes* was significant, alongside a series of other videos made to support the strike (James 1996). The tapes developed from a revival of independent film making in the late 1960s, part of the countercultural left, from which emerged a workshop model of video production (Petley 2009; Shaw 2012:165). Chris Reeves was part of London's Platform Films, the group that initiated the campaign tapes, which brought together a number of workshops across Britain. He explained that they knew that the majority of media coverage would be against the miners. 'We felt we could play a part in redressing this imbalance by producing partisan material in support of the strike' (Reeves 2009:5).

Brown and Yaffe (2014:40) argue for attention to be paid 'not only to how ideas travel through key nodes in the articulation of transnational solidarities' but also the 'micropolitics of the practices through which these solidarities are enacted'. The two are directly connected here: the practical construction of alternative media networks and spaces were key in the articulation and transmitting of solidarity. Reeves was aware of 4,000 copies of the tapes circulating, distributed through Britain, Europe, Japan, the US and Australia, which suggests the tapes reached a significant audience (James 1996).[4] The tapes made the miners' case in a direct and polemical way, and were used for meetings and fundraisers. Their wide distribution pointed to how London could be a node for connecting different parts of Britain, but also developing international networks of support. I discuss this in greater depth in Chapter 7, although it is worth noting that while London did play this role, the coalfields did not rely upon the capital to develop solidarity outside Britain. There were long histories and

---

[4] For example, they were shown in late 1984 in West Germany: 'Zur Information and Diskussion: Videos Uber Den Britischen Bergarbeiterstreik 1984', TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'Overseas' folder.

traditions of internationalism in the coalfields, and direct trade union links existed between mining areas and working-class organisations in other countries (Saunders 1989).

The contest for space in the media was not only a battle of ideas, but a very material struggle. These alternative networks were one element. It is worth noting that while the *Miners' Campaign Tapes* bypassed the mainstream media, the video workshops that they emerged from partly depended on support from Channel 4, the British Film Institute and the video makers' union, the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians (ACTT). The vitriol felt towards the mainstream news by the miners created tensions within the ACTT, both in relation to the *Miners' Campaign Tapes* but also more broadly about supporting the miners when camera crews had experienced physical and verbal abuse on picket lines (Campbell and Campbell 1985; Jones et al. 1985:40–41; Reeves 2009:11). Some saw in the divisions between ACTT members in workshops and those in the mainstream media a contrast in class backgrounds, with the more middle-class workshop members liable to support a politicised form of trade unionism (James 1996). However, printworkers, another 'traditional' group of trade unionists in the media, were among the strongest supporters of the miners. The depth of support given by printworkers, particularly those in London's Fleet Street, was a notable feature of the strike. Dai Donovan described a 'Fleet Street scramble' among miners' groups as you could nearly support a pit from Fleet Street donations alone (Donovan 1986).

Support from printworkers was not limited to the very large amounts of food and money that they raised. As well as producing two issues of their own newspaper to support the miners, *Right of Reply Special*, the printworkers tried to mitigate the worst excesses of the press. Most famously, this included refusing to print one front page of *The Sun* that compared NUM President Arthur Scargill to Adolf Hitler (Jones 1984). In a number of newspapers, workers threatened industrial action to secure a 'right of reply' for Scargill and the NUM, which theoretically meant granting equal space to make the NUM's case with that which was used to attack them (Jones et al. 1985). Such activity was part of a broader campaign in which print and other media unions worked alongside the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom with the aim of securing a statutory right of reply. Rather than only creating alternative networks of independent news to contest negative portrayals of the strike, then, printworkers sought to use their industrial strength to force the mainstream press to make space for views antithetical to the establishment position. We can again see here how practices of solidarity can be productive of new spaces and networks, but can also attempt to reshape existing ones and challenge the power relations embedded in them.

Unsurprisingly, the printworkers' activism was not universally welcomed. Conservative MP Peter Bruinvels told the House of Commons in May 1984 that 'the unions must realise that the blacking of certain articles is censorship of the worst kind. Have they never heard of Voltaire? Britain needs editorial freedom in the press' (Hansard 1984b). Such hostility towards the print unions undoubtedly played a role in precipitating the next major industrial dispute after the miners' strike at Wapping in 1986. There was, however, also dissent from other trade unionists. The *Daily Express* National Union of Journalists chapel passed a resolution by 103 votes to 30 condemning 'the irresponsible threats of [SOGAT 82 General Secretary] Mr William Keys … to shut down the *Daily Express*'. They urged 'management to resist these crude blackmail attempts and to refuse to carry any right of reply in the *Daily Express* from the president of the National Union of Mineworkers until Mr Keys withdraws the threat' (Street 1984a). This in part reflected tensions between the roles of journalists and those of printers, but it also pointed again to a conflict over the use of political trade unionism.

I explore in more depth such conflicts within trade unions over their attitude towards the miners in the next chapter. What is particularly relevant here is that such discussions and arguments were taking place at workplace trade union meetings. Such meetings were primarily spaces for discussing issues at work, but also offered the opportunity to connect these concerns to larger political matters. They also allowed activists from the coalfields to appeal for solidarity and in some instances win over the sceptical. Norman Strike, a Durham miner who was in London raising support, described in his diary such a meeting at the Central Middlesex Hospital:

> my audience was a group of female office workers who I was warned were very hostile towards the strike. They stopped work and listened to me for about ten minutes as I told them about my own experiences of the strike […] They fired all the usual questions at me, i.e. why should taxpayers keep uneconomic pits open […] I felt really good when we'd finished, with them agreeing to pay a weekly levy to the Westoe kitchen. Not only that but a woman who had asked the hardest questions gave me a fiver from her purse. This has shown me yet again that even the most hardened of critics can have their views changed by hearing our side of the story (Strike 2009:132–3).

Translocal connections could be constructed through workplace meetings, going beyond the already established networks of supporters. The miners and the NUM were regularly accused of having little interest in public opinion (Harper and Wintour 1985). Blomley (1994:188)

has argued that the NUM were defeated in part because of their failure to engage in 'the battle of ideas'. Meetings such as this suggest that significant efforts were made to put forward the miners' case, although perhaps at a level that escaped the national press (see for further examples Donovan 1986). This is an example of why the scale of study matters; history from below can challenge such conventional narratives about an event like the miners' strike.

Norman Strike was invited into this particular workplace by the shop steward. Connections with shop stewards could be established through trade union networks, or political links through the Labour Party, Communist Party, or in Strike's case the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). Solidarity networks between London and the coalfields could develop in such relatively informal, small scale ways through the connections of radical left activists. Anarchist miner Dave Douglass (2010:50), for instance, noted that Beetham Miners Support Group in Yorkshire was launched with support from Class War and the anarchist lesbian and gay group Wolverine in London. Norman Strike described staying in Willesden Green on the settee of Chris Dean, a fellow SWP member and musician in the Redskins, while fundraising in London. Strike later moved from Dean's couch to stay with 'an SWP comrade' in Croydon who took him to speak to a large group of union stewards in a local factory (Strike 2009:132–6). He discussed how 'a London comrade took me to a DHSS office in Harrow and the workers have agreed to support the kitchen, which is brilliant'. He 'spent the week visiting colleges and factories from Kilburn to Croydon'. A report by members of Brent Miners Support Group complaining that 'various fringe bodies have been involved in taking "their" miners to workplace meetings, collecting money' suggests that Strike's experience reflected a broader pattern (Adams and Durkin n.d.). This echoes Jonathan Saunders' research on the international support movement, which notes how left-wing organisations helped organise speaking and fundraising tours internationally when the official trade union movement limited their involvement to messages of support (Saunders 1989:13–14).

Some feminist supporters saw an emphasis on workplace visits as exhibiting a limited conception of the spaces in which solidarity could be developed (*Spare Rib* 1985b). Nevertheless, understanding the workplace as a space for developing translocal solidarities can broaden our understanding of the continuing importance of workplaces as sites of resistance (Cumbers, MacKinnon, and Shaw 2010). The workplaces of London were changing rapidly however. In inner London in the 1970s, manufacturing jobs had declined by 41 per cent (White 2008:207). This had a contradictory effect: it diminished the possibility of constructing particular workplace links, but it also suggested that some Londoners were able to empathise with the fate of the coalfields. The Brent Miners Support Campaign wrote

that 'we too have seen workplaces closed down, jobs destroyed (about 15,000 in the past five years) and our Borough turned into an industrial graveyard. We are all in Thatcher's sinking ship and a victory for the miners will be a victory and an inspiration for us all' (Brent Miners Support Campaign 1984).

Deindustrialisation in London and elsewhere was an attack on the working-class presence in the city. Nowhere in London was this clearer than in London's docklands, with its new 'enterprise zone'. The registered dock labour force fell from 29,250 in 1960 to 2,315 in 1982 (White 2008:206). A support group in London's Docklands twinned with Durham using the slogan 'Don't let the mines go the same way as the docks' (Massey and Wainwright 1985:153). The sense that both struggles were not just about defence of particular jobs but about deeply rooted working-class communities made a powerful connection between these places (Barnsley Women Against Pit Closures 1984:37; Wainwright n.d.). The logo of the Mineworkers' Defence Committee bulletin, a dragon circling a power-station cooling tower, was designed by Sandra Buchanan of the Docklands Community Poster Project. The dragon, a document on the MDC explained, 'is the many-headed anger and solidarity of all the oppressed—stretching from end to end of the world' (Why "Black Dragon"? n.d.).

One result of this de-industrialisation was high levels of unemployment, 9.6 per cent in London in mid-1984 (White 2008:208). As Beckett (2016:147) has argued, the fact that unemployment trebled in London between 1979 and 1982, a quicker increase than the national average, contradicts the idea that Thatcherism was straightforwardly a pro-London project. Unemployed Workers Centres, which developed in part as a result of such processes, were the base for several London miners' support groups. The active solidarity of the unemployed for the miners was frequently commented upon (La Rose 1985; 'List of London Miners Support Committees' 1984; Massey and Wainwright 1985:153; Tipple n.d.). Such shared experiences of deindustrialisation and unemployment, and their role in constructing solidarity networks, contrasts starkly with Raphael Samuel's insistence that support from the wealthy London and south east relied primarily on their differences with the coalfields (Samuel 1986b:33).

Support for the miners' strike in London was a symbol of resistance to the process of deindustrialisation and an assertion of a working-class presence in the capital (Crossan et al. 2016; Featherstone and Griffin 2016; Thompson 1980a:491–915). Ruth Percy's work on strikes has emphasised how workers can assert their presence in urban spaces usually controlled by others through industrial disputes (Percy 2014). The miners' strike support movement highlights both the diversity of the ways in which a working-class presence could

be asserted, but also how translocal relationships of solidarity could play a central role in this process. Picket lines and demonstrations forced the strike into public spaces in the capital. Alongside these established tactics of the labour movement, however, the politics and people of the coalfields were also present in bookshops, theatres, unemployed centres, pubs and clubs, women's and lesbian and gay centres. Some of these spaces already had a strong working-class presence, and the history of the support movement allows us to map them and understand their role in developing networks of support. In other instances, as I discuss in more depth in Chapter 7 in relation to LGSM and the London lesbian and gay scene, the miners' strike enabled working-class Londoners to assert their presence in the city.

**Dancing in Dulais: Twinning and friendship**

The physical spaces in which the solidarity movement was sustained were important in allowing personal interactions between people from the capital and the coalfields. Direct relationships were established between activists in local groups, largely bypassing a mediating or coordinating national organisation. Perhaps the most distinctive spatial tactic employed to build networks of solidarity was the 'twinning' of support groups with particular coalfield areas. A survey of over 300 organisations involved in supporting the miners found that nearly half had such an arrangement (Labour Research Department 1985:37). Massey and Wainwright (1985:163) warned against thinking of twinning too strictly, as the reality was looser and more varied than the label may suggest. There was also resistance to the tactic from the NUM nationally, at least for distributing money, as it was felt it could lead to an uneven allocation of funds. As a result, some supporters avoided it (Heathfield 1984; Rouffiniac 1985). Nevertheless, many miners and supporters defended twinning, arguing that it increased commitment to the strike among supporters, improved morale in mining communities, and created closer personal relationships. The differences of opinion on the tactic highlights the difficulties of enforcing a deferential approach to solidarity (Gould 2007:157). While some activists sought to take their lead from the NUM, it was not a homogenous body with a single view, and miners and their families were even less so.

Twinning is usually associated with formal and official connections made between towns or cities, usually in different countries, in a comparatively de-politicised way. Twinning has also been used by trade unionists, however, to construct transnational relationships, developing networks of mutual support and aid (Routledge and Cumbers 2009:169). There also emerged, or re-emerged, a form of twinning in Britain in the 1970s and 1980s that sought to connect the Global North and South, rooted in a desire to develop solidarity with

politically progressive movements. There were, for example, ten twinning arrangements between towns and cities in Britain and Nicaragua in the wake of the 1979 Sandinista Revolution (Clarke 2011:118). This politicised form of twinning is most likely the context for its prevalence during the miners' strike. Clarke argues that twinning is best conceptualised as a way of 'producing topological proximity between topographically distant places' (Clarke 2009:497). The contact brought about by twinning, in contrast to others forms of encounter like tourism, 'is meant to produce mutual understanding, knowledge, affection, and, in turn, friendship, concern, community, and peace' (Clarke 2011:123). By bringing distant people into direct personal contact, twinning can encourage a more emotional relationship (Routledge 2012). Such an understanding can challenge distinctions between political project-orientated solidarity, and social solidarity based on interpersonal relationships (Scholz 2008:37).

David Donovan believed that their support group in South Wales proved that twinning was justified as it enabled people from London to see what the strike was about. Many people who visited them were sceptical, he claimed, but returned to the capital as their firmest supporters (Donovan 1986). More broadly, some trade unionists felt that the personal contact enabled by twinning allowed people from the coalfields to explain the situation directly to union members in London, counteracting distortions in the media (Elliot 1985). Twinning could deepen the commitment of those already involved in supporting the miners. One Camden NALGO member explained that she was 'not very political, but I've always had sympathy with the miners. Now after our visit to Bentley in Yorkshire, which is twinned with our branch, I feel much more strongly. It was very uplifting to see a whole community as one and to be treated with kindness and care by people who are suffering a lot of hardship.' She experienced policing on a picket line, commenting that 'I felt proud to be there, and in the light of real, personal experience I would urge others to rethink their attitudes. I've asked my friends to ignore the media and find out for themselves' (NALGO Miners Support Campaign n.d.). Visitors to the coalfields, therefore, could speak from experience about the reality of the strike (see also Dean 1984). As a result, anger at the role of the police could circulate and accumulate through the support networks.[5]

The direct contact was also potentially a morale booster for people in the coalfields. 'Just the news of two twinnings from Greenwich NALGO and the London Hospital has raised spirits', observed Leena Nixon from Ollerton. 'Seeing cash and food and, best of all, bodies

---

[5] This is to borrow terminology from Sarah Ahmed, although Ahmed argues that it is the objects of emotion that circulate rather than the emotions as such (Ahmed 2015:11, 45).

up there can rehearten the demoralised' (Greenwich NALGO 1984). As I discuss further in Chapter 7, the strike gave people the opportunity to travel across Britain and sometimes further, and twinning played a role in this process. Ann Harris from Nottinghamshire Central Women's Support Group wrote that 'as many people as possible have gone to where the twinning has taken place. A lot of these folk have never been outside Nottinghamshire – it's done people good to go to other parts of the country and mix and meet, and I think their horizons are going to be permanently widened' (*Spare Rib* 1985a:7). While it was frequently commented on that many people from mining areas visited London for the first time during the strike, the converse was also true.

Supporters visiting the coalfields commented on the kindness with which they were received. One LGSM activist visiting Dulais, the area they had twinned with, commented that they had 'been welcomed, really, so warmly' (LGSM 1986). This feeling of warmth was reinforced not just on the picket lines but also in the welfare halls. LGSM's Robert Kincaid, who wrote about the 'tremendous' welcome and hospitality they had received, described how 'an evening of entertainment was laid on at the miners' welfare hall and a riotous time was had by all. Lesbians dancing and kissing each other (and sometimes with women from the local community). The same applied for men' (Kincaid 1984). Women from LGSM and Lesbians Against Pit Closures (LAPC) wrote that this 'was one of the most moving experiences of all of our lives' (Vittorini, Field, and Methol 1986:144). Such experiences created powerful emotional bonds.

In her work on decolonizing solidarity, Clare Land has argued that friendship is inappropriate as a goal of solidarity, predicated on a desire to eliminate differences (Land 2015:117–8). Yet the development of friendships between supporters and people in the coalfields was frequently remarked upon from both sides of the relationship as a positive development (for example Brown 1984; French 1985; Jagger 1984). David Donovan, a former miner working in a coal washery at the time of the strike, was one of a group from the Dulais area that made significant links with supporters in London (Rose 1984). In the aftermath of the strike he explained that 'you built family ties, links with people in London, and it became a bond that was, I think, unshakeable in the end' (Donovan 1986). Rather than the activism of solidarity only producing affective ties between those within a solidarity group, the effect of twinning was to draw the supporters and the coalfields closer together, creating lasting personal relationships.

Twinning of course meant people from the coalfields visiting London as well, and the possibility of creating more mutual relationships (Brown and Yaffe 2014:35). Hilary Britten,

a supporter in Camden NALGO, described a twinning arrangement that they developed with the Bentley Women's Action Group. Once this relationship was established, women from Bentley began 'coming down regularly to speak at meetings, especially shop meetings, and to raise money in others.' Britten explained that 'both groups have supported each other and learnt from each other. We have stood on picket lines together not only at mines, docks, power stations and steelworks, but also in Camden during a fourteen week strike in our homeless persons unit, and in an occupation of our town hall by homeless families'. She wrote that she had personally learned a great deal from the relationship 'about sharing, solidarity, determination, collective creativity, giving and receiving and supporting other people in struggle' (Britten 1985). The importance of twinning in encouraging mutual relationships was also emphasised by LGSM, who explained that twinning had allowed personal contact with miners and their community, resulting in significant reciprocal assertions of solidarity (Jackson n.d.).

Despite these clear positives, criticisms of twinning were not simply bureaucratic attempts to control the flow of money, and some support groups in London purposefully avoided the practice (Rouffiniac 1985:35, 39). There appeared to be genuine concern that without centralised co-ordination some mining communities would receive more money than others. There was also a risk that mining areas would compete with each other to raise money, generating divisions and hostility (Collins 1984d). Perhaps more interesting, however, was how twinning relied upon and reinforced a particular notion of what a mining community was supposed to be. Ann Suddick of Durham and Northumberland Women Against Pit Closures felt that 'one of our major problems […] is that people like to twin with the sort of village where there is a pit and everyone lives in the area, but often it's not like that. We have a lot of places where there are perhaps 100 miners, but no pit and they travel a long way to work – those are the areas where we need more support' (Crail 1984; see also Durham Constituency Labour Party 1984).

Spence and Stephenson (2009:74) have argued that 'the frequent reference to "mining villages," usually in association with female action, in the discourse of the strike suggested the continuing vibrancy of historically discrete, spatially isolated and bounded places in the imagination of the Left'. This was despite the decline in the relationship between workplace and residency. Jim Phillips (2012a:11) notes, for example, that there was only one village pit left in Scotland. The idea of the 'mining community' was rhetorically powerfully in mobilising support for the strike, connected to the assertion that the dispute was not simply about jobs but defending a way of life. It was not uncommon for supporters to frame their

solidarity in terms of one community supporting another (Anthony 1985; LGSM 1986). However, such a conceptualisation meant that a somewhat romanticised image of the coalfields could be projected by the strikers and their supporters. Twinning as a tactic was not always suited to the reality of a geographically dispersed workforce that existed in much of the mining industry.

The scale of this problem should not be exaggerated, and it would be misleading to suggest that there was no awareness of this issue. The left press played an important role in trying to mitigate the geographical unevenness of the support. The *Tribune* for example developed a service to put Labour Party and trade union branches in contact with areas requiring the most aid, *Socialist Worker* carried a list of strike kitchens in need, and *Labour Briefing* listed pits that had not twinned (Crail 1984; Massey and Wainwright 1985:164). This is another example of how the left media did not simply articulate support and contest mainstream press accounts of the strike, but also served a concrete function in developing networks of solidarity. The unevenness was dealt with in more informal ways as well. Massey and Wainwright (1985:164) noted that later in the strike there was 'a growing bush telegraph and an acute awareness of the need to achieve an equitable distribution'. While twinning had its flaws, therefore, they were mitigated, and it was a tactic that helped reduce the distance between those offering solidarity and those receiving it. It is important to recognise that friendship is not ultimately the goal of solidarity, yet the personal relationships that twinning encouraged allowed for more reciprocal and equal interactions, while helping to sustain both the mining communities and their supporters.

**Solidarity and the state**

Among those who established twinning arrangements were a number of London Labour-run councils. On 8 September 1984, the councils of Greenwich (London) and Easington (Co. Durham) twinned. A public ceremony in Greenwich was reportedly attended by 1,000 people, including 70 Durham and 50 Kent miners, and a colliery band. As part of the arrangement, the council seconded a full-time trade union appointee to its campaigns unit, and established a regular liaison committee to co-ordinate the various support activities in the borough (Greenwich NALGO 1984). Labour councils in many mining areas supported the strike in a number of ways, such as providing free meals for miners' children and allowing those in council housing to fall into arrears (*Morning Star* 1984c; Phillips 2012a:12). In London, councils obviously had a different relationship to the dispute. The miners' strike coincided with a growth in progressive Labour run councils, which could be loosely grouped as municipal socialists or the new urban left (Boddy and Fudge 1984; Frost

and North 2013; Gyford 1985; Payling 2014). It was largely these more radical Labour councils in London that attempted to use the resources they had control over to support the strike.

This history suggests that there are myriad ways in which geographers of labour can integrate the state into their accounts. Labour geography as a body of work has been accused of paying too little attention to the state (Herod 2010:25). In some ways this reflects a central motivation of the subdiscipline: to foreground how workers themselves play a crucial role in shaping economic geographies (Herod 1997). This may have led to less attention being paid to the state's role in these processes (Adrian Smith 2015:290). Some geographers have insisted that a greater theoretical understanding of the state would emphasise its role in intensifying exploitation and retraining labour agency (Das 2012:21; Lier 2007:819). The miners' strike provides some of the clearest evidence in twentieth-century Britain of how state institutions have been used to support a political and economic project to the detriment of working-class interests. The use of legislation, the police, and the courts in particular to constrain the mobility of the miners and restrict the spaces available for organising support was crucial for the entrenchment of Thatcherite economics.

Attending to the role of the state, however, should not mean excessively broad generalising or abstract theorising. It is necessary to understand the state as a geographically and historically specific formation. In the late 1970s, Stuart Hall and others identified a fundamental shift in the operation of the capitalist state in Britain from a comparatively 'consensual' to a more 'coercive' management of the class struggle (Hall et al. 1978:218). At the same time, however, more radical elements of the Labour Party saw an opportunity to use state institutions to support resistance to the monetarist project. Labour geographers should therefore attend both to how the state has been used to repress and constrain working-class agency, but also to those places and times in which it has been used to support the labour movement. The state can therefore simultaneously restrict and enable solidarity. A narrow understanding of the labour movement would weaken such an understanding; the miners' strike in London was sustained in feminist bookshops with grants from the GLC, as well as trade union buildings.

In light of aggressive co-ordinated policing, punitive bail conditions set by courts, the cutting of benefits to strikers, and a government that seemed determined to defeat the NUM, it is hardly surprising that the state was largely perceived as antagonistic by miners and their supporters. The experience of the miners' strike, together with the banning of trade unions at GCHQ and the seizing of union funds during the Stockport Messenger dispute, led

supporters to claim that 'a clear picture begins to emerge of the State pursuing a class-based war against the working class and their trade unions' (SERTUC-NUM Support Committee 1984a). Yet the use of the local state by some Labour councils to support the strike can complicate this picture. The state can be understood, as I argued in Chapter 2, as a heterogeneous entity (Cumbers 2015; Martin and Pierce 2013). The local state apparatus in particular has, on occasion, been used to resist and offer an alternative to neoliberal projects (Cumbers 2015:73). The emergence of radical left councils in Britain in the 1980s was predicated on such an understanding, rooted in a pluralist conception of the state that offered opportunities for socialist intervention (Panitch and Leys 2001; Thompson and Allen 1986). The solidarity campaign around the miners' strike in particular emphasises how this conflict within state institutions could manifest in a struggle over space.

As I have already suggested, London's presence in the strike was partly felt as the site of central state power used against the miners. The primary experience some mining communities had of Londoners visiting was the arrival of the Metropolitan Police. Steven Murphy, a striking miner and Labour councillor in Wigan, described the policing of the coalfields: 'The ones from the Met are the worst. They roll up in their van and you see them putting on their shin pads, their chest pads and so on. They look like bloody American football players. Then they look at the lads on the picket line and say: "right, now we can get stuck into this lot".' He claimed that they were distinguished by the colour of their uniform, becoming known in the coalfields as the 'whiteshirts'. They also stood out for the colour of their language: verbally abusing miners' wives, boasting about holidays, waving £5 and £10 notes at pickets, and beating people in vans (Campbell 1985a). Dianne Hogg, of the Askern Women's Support Group in South Yorkshire, described police as 'just bully boys dressed up in a uniform; they're thugs'. She believed that 'those from down south were worse than anybody' (Hogg 1986).[6] The police sought to restrict the movement of miners. According to one survey, 11 per cent of roadblock arrests during the dispute were made by the Metropolitan police, and essential to this operation was the disciplined coordination enabled by the National Reporting Centre based in London (Blomley 1994:150–188). As well as road blocks and arrests on picket lines, some mining communities had curfews enforced by a mass police presence in their villages (Gordon 1985; Green 1990).

The policing of the support movement in London was on nothing like the same scale, although there was an echo of it during a large demonstration in February 1985. There were

---

[6] Despite this reputation, the 12 complaints against London Metropolitan Police officers in connection with the dispute up to mid-January 1985 were dwarfed by the 231 against South Yorkshire police, with 67 and 62 for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire respectively (Kirsch and Wolmar 1985).

apparently 131 arrests following what one supporter called a 'police riot' (MacIntosh 1985). A trade union journal carrying an eyewitness account of mounted police charges, police snatching people from crowds, and claims of police deliberately breaking a demonstrator's leg, was titled 'Orgreave comes to Whitehall', invoking the most famous clash of the strike (*Commentator* 1985). One person at the march claimed that they 'had never been so scared in all [their] life' (Guerin 1985). There was a less dramatic but more persistent attempt by police to deny space to the support movement in the capital by harassing people attempting to raise funds for the strike. Across many parts of London, collectors for the miners reported being moved by the police, having their money confiscated, being taken to police stations and released without charge, being threatened with arrest or actually charged for obstruction or begging under the 1824 Vagrancy Act (Greater London Council Police Committee 1984; *London Labour Briefing* 1984b; McGhie 1984).[7] The fact that the clampdown on collectors in different parts of London seems to have begun around the same time suggests it was coordinated.

On occasion, this attempt by the police to prevent miners' supporters space to campaign in London came into direct conflict with Labour councils who supported the strike. Three members of Lambeth Trades Council were apparently arrested and charged under the Police, Factories etc. (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916 after being invited to collect in local estates and factories by Lambeth Council (Charman 1984b). The Greater London Council Police Committee (1984) expressed concern that police were intervening to prevent collections on local authority property even when express permission had been given. The committee recommended taking control over street collection permits from the Metropolitan Police and giving the power to local authorities. Haringey Council allowed collections on the forecourt of Wood Green library in an attempt to minimise arrests (Rouffiniac 1985:14). In certain cases, organised interventions by councillors, MPs, mass complaints to the police and a general refusal to back down secured the right to collect on the streets, but such a struggle could distract from actually supporting the miners' strike (Cathie Lloyd 1984). Such conflicts were comparatively minor, but they add to a broader picture of politicised policing that sought to directly constrict the spaces in which the strike and the solidarity movement could operate.

Away from the streets, however, it was easier for councils to use their resources to support the strike. In at least Lambeth, Southwark and Haringey, council buildings were used as collection points for the miners, with collection bins distributed to sites such as libraries,

---

[7] Brent Archives, 19885/SC/4/1 is full of material on police harassment of street collectors during the strike.

schools and community centres (Rouffiniac 1985:14; SERTUC-NUM Co-ordination Committee 1984; Southwark Trades Council 1984). Spaces usually considered relatively neutral were therefore politicised in support of a highly contentious strike. The GLC's Royal Festival Hall hosted a '5 nights for the miners' series of fundraising concerts, and County Hall was frequently used for support events (SERTUC/GLC Miners Support Committee 1984). GLC leader Ken Livingstone noted that 'whenever we've had a major rally or concert we've provided platforms for the miners to speak, to collect money, we've given over the use of County Hall for them when they've been based in London undertaking activities here, we've done everything we possibly can' (Carpenter 1984).

Some councils also provided office space and facilities for miners organising support in London (Howells 1985; Smith 1984). London councils found other ways to give support despite being far from the coalfields. Southwark Council became the first local authority to announce they would blacklist from council contracts any firms involved in strikebreaking (*Tribune* 1984a). On being encouraged to follow their lead by NUM General Secretary Peter Heathfield, the leader of South Yorkshire County Council, Roy Thwaites, noted that while he agreed with the sentiment he 'was not aware that there were any pits in Southwark' (Thwaites 1984). Some local authorities also encouraged their workforces to support the strike, for instance by allowing donations to be deducted at source from wages (Camden NALGO Miners Support Group n.d.). Supporters of the miners were therefore able to use elements of the state to provide practical and symbolic forms of solidarity.

Labour left councils and the GLC in particular also helped sustain the strike in more indirect ways, providing funding for many of the spaces and organisations in which support activity for the miners took place. They played an important, if not uncontroversial role, in nurturing London's 'social democracy zones' (Brooke 2014:28). A number of Union Resource Centres, for example, were set up in London in the early 1980s with support from local councils (Thomas 1984). There were forty such organisations providing support for the labour movement across the country, growing out of a handful of independent projects in London, Coventry, Leeds and Newcastle in the mid-1970s. One resource centre in South London alone served four groups of miners, organising over a hundred local meetings, producing thousands of leaflets and badges, and reportedly raising more than a quarter of a million pounds (Trade Union Resource Centre Trust n.d.). A newly created West London Trades Union Club was opened in May 1984, partially funded with a grant from the GLC, and members of Kent NUM made it their base for activities in that part of the city (*UCATT Viewpoint* 1985).

The GLC in this period was known for its attempt to expand the politics of the Labour Party beyond traditional elements of the labour movement, and their approach to grants reflected this project (Ali and Livingstone 1984:108–9; Eley 2002:482). These included funding women's centres for example, and a GLC grant helped set up the feminist Silver Moon Bookshop discussed above (Beckett 2016:357; Cholmeley 2016). The GLC gave £750,000 to establish a London Lesbian and Gay Centre, which hosted events organised by LGSM (*Capital Gay* 1985b; Charman 1984a; LGSM 1985a). Such grants contributed to the creation of spaces and organisations that were not always narrowly political, but helped sustain the networks in which the miners' strike support movement was embedded. They also show that such an approach was not necessarily inimical to the politics of class. The GLC's approach contrasted even with some other left leaning Labour local authorities in this period. Daisy Payling has suggested that in Sheffield, the focus on the miners' strike and coal may have been a barrier to the 'cosmopolitan activism' promoted by Stuart Hall, and arguably attempted in London (Payling 2014:625; see also Hall 1988:196–219). In London, however, it was precisely those local authorities that were most actively using state resources to support the miners that were also pursuing a broader political agenda. What was relatively consistent in this approach was the attempt to use the resources of the local state to support extra-parliamentary, solidaristic, and arguably counter-hegemonic forms of politics (Wainwright 2013).

The strength of the left local authorities in London and elsewhere was undermined by a number of developments, but two, and the failure of the left to prevent them, were key: rate capping, and the abolition of the GLC and other metropolitan authorities. The Conservative government aimed to reduce the resources available to offer an alternative at a local level, and abolish or remove from democratic control elements of the local state.[8] The GLC's funding for community groups was part of the rationale for its abolition. Arguably most offensive to the right were the lesbian and gay organisations that received 0.8 per cent of GLC expenditure; support for Gay Teenage Group, Lesbian Line and the Gay Bereavement Project was evidence of a 'loony left' (Cant 1984; Tobin 1990:62).[9] Perhaps the central weakness of the GLC was that, as Sivanandan argued, 'despite constructing all sorts of social blocs and movements […] all that Mrs Thatcher had to do was abolish it' (Sivanandan 1990:42–3). The abolition of a layer of government, against the wishes of the majority, was

---

[8] Home Secretary William Whitelaw (1982) argued for abolition because the Metropolitan authorities accounted for 'a large proportion of excessive local authority expenditure', and were attempting to expand their role in ways which conflicted with central government.
[9] Although it was not only the right who criticised what could be a slightly haphazard approach to distributing grants (Beckett 2016:358–63).

a deeply anti-democratic move (Wainwright 2013:236–7). Perhaps rather than the failings of the GLC itself, this reflected the centralisation of state power in the UK, and the lack of a constitution to properly enshrine such local structures.

The defeat of the miners' strike and of the socialist local authorities were central and connected events in the construction of neoliberalism in Britain, crushing the space to develop alternatives (Cumbers, Helms, and Swanson 2010:61; Massey 2014:2036). The potential for resistance to rate-capping to open up a 'second front' against the Thatcher government evaporated with the return to work of the miners in March 1985, with deadlines for setting rates approaching (Kean 1985).[10] Writing in *Black Dragon* in February 1985, the magazine of the Mineworkers' Defence Committee that he had helped establish, Ken Livingstone argued that those leading local authorities threatened with abolition or rate capping faced a choice: 'Either we are prepared to combine with the miners in taking action which could be branded "illegal" by the Tory Courts, or we collude in devastating the communities we're supposed to represent' (Livingstone 1985). By the end of May 1985 only Liverpool, Lambeth, Camden and Southwark had refused to set legal rates, and the latter two settled in June (Frost and North 2013:104). The end of the strike was significantly demoralising for many on the left, and contributed to the collapse of the Labour councils' resistance (Fountain 1985; Samuel 1986a:x).

This had direct consequences for those organisations that had received funding. While many campaigning groups initially benefitted from the support of left-wing elements within the state, budget cuts and abolition could then threaten their existence. This had a deleterious effect on the spaces available in London for oppositional politics like the sort practised in support of the miners. Discussions within such organisations over whether they should take state funding became very bitter, and the lesson of the period for some was the importance of organising independently from the state (Ramamurthy 2013:172, 208). Southall Black Sister's Rahila Gupta commented that funding from progressive councils had been divisive and made paid service providers out of political activists (Gupta 1990:55). Despite the specific context, it should be noted that such concerns over social movements receiving state funding was not limited to Britain (Martin and Pierce 2013; Uitermark and Nicholls 2014).

The limitations of attempting to initiate radical politics at a local state level in the face of overwhelmingly hostility from the central state were made clear. It would be unfair to suggest that those involved were all unaware of this problem. The attempt to distribute funds

---

[10] The government's desire to resist such an alliance arguably explains concessions made to Liverpool Council (Frost and North 2013:84).

to non-state groups in some ways reflected a more sceptical view of the transformative capabilities of the state than that held by post-war social democrats (Wainwright 2013). For Ken Livingstone, leader of the GLC at the time, the point was to give an example of a practical alternative to Thatcherism, rather than imagining that they could actually resist central government policies (Ali and Livingstone 1984:95–6). Municipal socialism was not, therefore, pursued in the belief that power in the local state was sufficient. It is also necessary not to place excessive emphasis on the tactics of the municipal socialists as the cause for a more general breakdown in community and left organisations. The experience of the miners' strike shows that the resources of the local state were directly and indirectly used to create the spaces that helped sustain a significant extra-parliamentary challenge to the Thatcherite project. This is a significant history that can expand our understanding of the Labour left in the 1980s, but also labour geography's conception of the role state institutions can play in industrial disputes and the development of relations of solidarity.

**Conclusion**

Labour geographers and historians have expressed a renewed interest in the ways in which, borrowing from the work of EP Thompson, a 'working-class presence' is produced (Crossan et al. 2016; Featherstone and Griffin 2016; Thompson 1980a). Ruth Percy (2014) in particular has reflected on how industrial disputes in cities can allow for the resignifying of spaces on a class basis. The history of the miners' support movement shows the important role translocal solidarity can play in such a process. The miners' strike was almost the archetype of an old-fashioned working-class struggle: 'male manual workers, the old working class with a vengeance' (Massey and Wainwright 1985:149). The strike may have seemed geographically distant for those in London, but the miners and their supporters brought it into the capital's workplaces, streets, pubs, clubs, and housing estates. By picketing coal depots and power stations they highlighted the deep dependence of London on miners (Brown and Yaffe 2014; Featherstone 2012:18). The picket line is a key space, I have argued, in understanding both the construction of solidarities and the establishment of working-class power at the point of production. As a result, it was a deeply contested space, which the Conservative government sought to constrict and neutralise as far as possible. The picket line worked to reduce the apparent distance between London and the coalfields, and could be a space of encounter that produced powerful bonds. This was also true of 'twinning', a practice that I have argued was important in establishing personal connections, deepening solidarity, and forging more mutual relationships.

In some instances, translocal solidarity politicised spaces that may otherwise have been perceived as comparatively neutral, like libraries or pubs. However, I have also argued that the support movement depended on the establishment of physical spaces by political activists in the 1970s and 1980s. Women's centres, radical bookshops, and trade union resource centres were all used to support the miners. This raises two central points. First, a working-class presence could be asserted in diverse ways, in lesbian and gay bars as well as trade union clubs. Second, the physical rooting of political movements in particular localities can help them develop relationships across space. Bringing the dispute into these spaces allowed miners and their supporters to make the case for the strike against the backdrop of a generally hostile press. Trade unionists in the media also did this by establishing alternative networks for expressing the miners' point of view, from independent newspapers to polemical videos. In addition, however, print workers in particular used their industrial strength to force newspapers to carry the views of Scargill and the NUM. Space for a working-class presence was therefore made, very tentatively, in even the most hostile of environments.

I have argued throughout this chapter that these various ways in which space was made for the miners' support movement was contested, especially by state institutions. The police arrested street collectors, occupied mining villages, stopped pickets from travelling, and attacked demonstrators in London. They did this largely with the support of a Conservative government that legislated against solidarity picketing and tried to cut off the funding that helped establish feminist bookshops, the lesbian and gay centre, and other spaces that were used to support the miners. In this way, I have suggested, the miners' strike highlights the role of the state in suppressing the labour movement (Lier 2007). Nevertheless, I have argued that a more nuanced understanding of the state is required. The municipal socialists of the 1980s often attempted to blur the boundaries between parliamentary and extra-parliamentary politics. The spatial politics of this process was important: the GLC and other local authorities sought to financially support spaces in which oppositional politics and solidarity could be sustained. The state is not homogeneous, and it is crucial to understand both the successes and failures of those times when socialists have attempted to use the resources of the state to provide solidarity and further working-class and broader emancipatory movements (Cumbers 2015; Martin and Pierce 2013).

<center>**Chapter 6**</center>

<center>**Uneven geographies of solidarity**</center>

**Introduction**

The support movement for the miners can appear paradoxical. Alongside undoubtedly widespread solidarity there was also significant antipathy towards the strike, even within the labour movement. While many people were drawn together through the campaign, sometimes in quite novel ways, there were also fractures and disagreements among those who backed the NUM. Some have argued that the root cause of the strike's defeat was the absence of trade union solidarity (Darlington 2005). This chapter explores some of the tensions, particularly among trade unionists, that help explain these divisions. In doing so, I argue that thinking about the limitations of solidarity can contribute to a more complex understanding of working-class agency. Labour geographers have been accused of focusing too frequently on success stories, exaggerating labour agency and in turn missing the lessons that can be learned from defeats (Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2011; Das 2012; Lier 2007; Peck 2013; Tufts 2007). For Anderson, this has reflected a failure to connect 'isolated cases to broader patterns in the power-geometry of capital-labour relations' (Anderson 2015:50).[1] This chapter explains the failures of solidarity in 1984-5 in terms of broader ideological shifts, emphasising how the anti-union rhetoric of particular elites resonated among trade union members.

The golden era of class unity has always been something of a myth, but it is not unusual to note a disintegration of class identification and attachment from the 1960s onwards, often explained in structural, economic terms (Eley 2002:400; Richards 1996:6). Labour geographers and others have highlighted a fracturing in this period along lines of race and gender, in part due to the failure of the labour movement to reconcile so-called identity politics (Jonas 1996; McDowell 2008a; Rutherford 2010; Wright 2015:97). In this chapter, I emphasise a different set of political and ideological divisions that were expressed through the miners' strike. In the first section I argue, against Scholz (2007), that violence and solidarity are potentially compatible. At the same time, I suggest it is necessary to understand how the meaning of 'violence' was contested, and recognise that for some trade unionists the perception of unjustified violence by the miners was alienating. I also argue that an

---

[1] There is a risk of exaggerating the homogeneity of the field. Some work has, for example, specifically engaged with 'both the opportunities but also the ambivalences and constraints of union agency in contesting economic globalization' (Cumbers et al. 2016:97).

emphasis on physical violence in the strike can obscure the use of shaming to restrict strike breaking. Shaming could play an important role in maintaining collective discipline, but along with violence it was a practise that also reinforced regressive norms, particularly in relation to gender.

The chapter then explores how politicised trade unionism was linked to other forms of 'extremism', reinforcing boundaries between the political and the economic that performed an important ideological function for Thatcherism. This found a parallel, however, in attempts to police the boundaries of respectability within the labour movement, which, alongside competition between different organisations and traditions on the left, could be destructive of solidarity. In the next section, I emphasise the contradictions inherent in a struggle specifically over jobs and connect this to the uneven geography of trade union organisation. Finally, I discuss the question of democracy and argue that the 'scalar chasm' between trade union leadership and membership helps explain why some trade unionists accepted characterisations of the strike as anti-democratic (Cumbers, MacKinnon, and Shaw 2010:129). Some of these antagonisms and contradictions were deep rooted, and I do not suggest that there was a straightforward way in which the strike could have been conducted to assure unity. Nevertheless, I argue that there are lessons for the labour movement more broadly to be drawn from the fractures of the 1980s.

**Violence, shaming and solidarity**

Carrie Mott (2016) has argued that engaging with the conflicts that develop among activists may enable us to construct solidarity relationships more effectively. Such tensions during the miners' strike are explored in this chapter. Yet if we want to understand how to reach out more broadly, it is important to move beyond such networks and in addition think about the wider popular resonances of political movements. While the voices of activists may be muted in some accounts of solidarity, those who refuse solidarity are often entirely absent (Sundberg 2007). There are of course good methodological reasons for this, as absences can be difficult to identify. Writing about opposition to the miners' strike from below is more difficult than narrating either grassroots support or elite hostility. While it is relatively commonplace to recognise the dominance of ruling-class narratives in archival records, as I suggested in Chapter 3, the voices of the political left are comparatively well preserved in the material remnants of activism. Those 'ordinary' people who did not support the strike are harder to access. It is important for labour geography to engage beyond official trade union voices, including where possible not only activists of the left (Featherstone and Griffin 2016). Using a number of sources—polling data and union correspondence in particular—I

attempt to do this. The picture developed is necessarily partial, but it gives important insights into the reasons some trade union members did not support the strike.

For those who opposed the miners' strike, and even critical supporters, violence was often a central concern. Margaret Thatcher's speech to the 1984 Conservative Party conference decried the 'thugs and bullies' of the miners' strike who were 'organised into flying squads around the country', identifying a trend evident during the Grunwick and Stockport Messenger disputes as well (Thatcher 1984b:51). Thatcher emphasised the 'sheer bravery' of those 'lions' who transgressed picket lines to keep 'the mining industry alive' (Thatcher 1984b:42–3). The picket line was therefore portrayed as a space of intimidation and violence, particularly threatening in its most mobile form. As noted in the previous chapter, the Ridley Report argued that violent picketing could only be dealt with by a large, mobile squad of police to counteract 'the likes of the Saltley Coke-works mob' (Nationalised Industries Policy Group 1977:25). Characterising trade unionism as violent, extremist and anti-democratic was central to the construction of the labour movement, or at least its more confrontational manifestations, as a 'folk devil' in this period (Samuel 1986a:2–3; see also Hall et al. 1978:312–3). A specific geography of violence, as essentially a surrogate for class, could be built into such a narrative. According to one Conservative commentator, picket line violence 'fit all too neatly into the Southerner's picture of the miners as violent and lawless' (Mount 1984). However, such an understanding of what constituted violent spaces, or how such spaces became violent, was contested.

In contrast to the Conservative Party, supporters of the strike often emphasised that it was the police that were responsible for violence on the picket line.[2] This state violence was crucial in reducing the effectiveness of picketing, although, as I argue in Chapter 7 in more depth, it was also important for the development of new alliances. Less common than emphasising the role of the police was an acknowledgement and defence of a certain degree of violence on the miners' side. The first edition of the *Rank and File Miner* newspaper, which was established in the aftermath of the dispute, argued that one merit of the strike was that it dealt a blow to British society's code of good behaviour. 'The ransacking of NCB premises and surveillance equipment, the mass pickets which became street battles, the raids against the convoys of scab coal, the riots which heated whole villages, the ambush on cop convoys, the sabotage of pits, the rough squaring of accounts with journalists – all this

---

[2] Callinicos and Simons (1985:173), for instance, commented on a speech by the Home Secretary Leon Brittan referring to 'jackboot' pickets that 'anyone who had any contact with the policing of the strike knew only too well that the "jackboots" were worn by the police.'

justified violence which excited the imagination, extended the offensive initiated by the '81 rioters' (*Rank and File Miner* 1985).[3]

The invoking of 1981 was important. Rather than the alienation of 'the Southerner' from the 'violent and lawless' miners, this article situated Brixton next to Orgreave (Mount 1984).[4] It allied the coalfields with the inner city working class, not only in terms of the experience of police harassment and violence, but also in the form of resistance. The ability to formulate such connections partly reflected the personal relationships developed through the solidarity movement (Farrar n.d.). One way that miners' supporters explained this 'justified violence' was to invoke the principle of self-defence (*Rank and File Miner* 1985). The Mineworkers' Defence Committee condemned 'those speeches made by leaders of our movement in which legitimate self-defence in support of the inviolability of the picket-line has been shamefully equated with the deliberately-planned and executed state violence of the Thatcher government and its illegally-constituted police force' (Mineworkers' Defence Committee 1984). This again resonated with movements based among inner city black youth, not least the Asian Youth Movements (AYM), which had insisted on the right of self-defence as a response to violence (Ramamurthy 2006, 2013). As I show in the next chapter, organisations connected to the AYMs were important in developing solidarity relationships with the coalfields.

Such support for disobedience as expressed in the *Rank and File Miner* was undoubtedly a minority position, although certainly violence did play a role in the strike on all sides. Unsurprisingly, miners and their supporters have tended not to discuss too openly the less legal aspects of their activities. Yorkshire miner Dave Douglass is perhaps more forthcoming than most, describing for instance the construction of a roadblock by striking miners, which when a 'scab convoy' approached 'was torched and a huge volley of bricks met the bus and the convoy' (Douglass 2010:97). On occasion supporters of the miners joined in with some timely violence. Norman Strike described a protest in Wearmouth where one miner 'was chased down the river by 3 pigs and was overjoyed when shipyard workers came out and started pelting the pigs with nuts and bolts, forcing them to retreat! Now that's solidarity for you, and it DOES work' (Strike 2009:104). Hostile commentators may have exaggerated the scale of violence on the part of striking miners and their supporters, and ignored the extent to which it constituted self-defence, but nevertheless there was violence.

---

[3] On the National Rank and File Miners Movement, see Douglass (2010:134–6). The group developed out of the justice campaign for miners sacked during the dispute. Sacked miners from Hatfield in Doncaster were apparently prominent in the leadership.
[4] On the 1981 uprisings in Brixton and elsewhere, see Ebke (2016).

Norman Strike was clear that pelting police with nuts and bolts was an effective form of solidarity. Sally Scholz, in contrast, has argued that violence, defined capaciously as 'the intentional infliction of harm or injury to another person or property', does not constitute solidarity (Scholz 2007:46). Scholz recognises that in practice violence is used, and she suggests justifiably, in response to oppression and injustice (Scholz 2007:50). She argues, however, that 'in opposing the violence of oppression', solidarity 'cannot in principle utilize violent means'. As violence 'has the potential to undermine the movement by splintering the unity of solidarity', it 'is contrary to the obligations of mutuality and cooperation' (Scholz 2007:47–8). This is a strongly normative conception of solidarity, which has an important role to play in guiding the development of political movements, but risks limiting our understanding of the complexity of solidarity as it has been practised. Solidarity can in certain circumstances both unite and divide simultaneously. As Featherstone has suggested in relation to the exclusion of women in some labour organising, solidarity can marginalize some people while solidifying the power of others (Featherstone 2012:21).

Violence is not uniquely destructive of unity. Scholz argues that she does not rule out disruptive or militant forms of activism, including protests, boycotts and pickets (Scholz 2007:48). Yet during the miners' strike, calls for non-violent sympathetic industrial action, up to a general strike, were among the most contentious. Trade union leaders accused of providing too little practical solidarity for the strike could be heckled with cries for a general strike, which other supporters dismissed as a 'mad, adventurist line' (Brent Unemployed Workers Centre n.d.; Campbell and Hall 1985). This chapter outlines a series of divisive issues over which solidarity floundered: political trade unionism, democratic practice, and competing economic interests. Many of the ways in which solidarity was practised and articulated during the strike, therefore, had the potential to result in divisions. Wilde has argued that solidarity is paradoxical for invoking unity and universality while in practice relying on antagonisms between different groups (Wilde 2013:18). Recognising the irreducibility of antagonism may free solidarity from an impossible requirement for universality (Askins and Mason 2015; Mouffe 2013). The miners' strike appealed to solidarity based on class interests, and a broader coalition of those resisting Thatcherism. By definition, such an alliance was not universal. Such conflicts of material and ideological interests went beyond such comparatively simple divisions, however, as this chapter repeatedly highlights. With antagonism so prevalent, therefore, the divisiveness of violence does not in itself make it antithetical to solidarity.

Nevertheless, the question of violence revealed and exacerbated fissures within the labour movement. It was raised repeatedly by those in the trade union movement who were hostile to the strike more broadly. The electricians' union, the EETPU, whose leadership had spoken out against the strike at the 1984 TUC conference, balloted their members on whether or not to take supportive action (TUC 1984a:403). 84 per cent voted against. The ballot paper explained that the union had opposed the TUC General Council's statement supporting the strike because it failed to condemn the miners' picket line violence. A letter accompanying the ballot reportedly warned that 'electricity supply members should not be used as shock troops in someone else's dubious battle' (Street 1984b:48). The EETPU was at the forefront of those embracing business trade unionism. It became notorious in the 1980s for signing single union agreements with employers where it had few members; one officer of the union claimed that 'we're in a free market for trade unionism' (Eley 2002:391). Such logic would lead them to actively undermine striking Fleet Street printers in 1986 by providing workers for the new Wapping Plant. Yet some individuals who may have been expected to have greater sympathy took similarly strong positions. Jimmy Reid, who like Arthur Scargill had come to public prominence as a rank-and-file trade unionist in the early 1970s, wrote a scathing attack on the strike. 'The violence is the logical outcome of the decision not to have a ballot. I'm talking of the violence of miner against miner – of people being beaten up in their homes by thugs masquerading as trade unionists.' He compared the daubing of miners' houses with the word 'scab' to the fascists' defacing of Jewish homes in the 1930s, while having little to say about violence travelling in the other direction (Reid 1985).

The Conservatives and the right more broadly often appeared to view the picket line, certainly mass picketing, as inherently violent. It was a space of coercion that disrupted business and violated the individual employee's 'right to go to work' (Thatcher 1984a). Sections of the mainstream labour movement, while undoubtedly more sympathetic, were keen to define respectable trade unionism in opposition to picket line violence. The leadership of the TUC and the Labour Party repeatedly insisted on criticising violence from both the police and the miners, suggesting an equivalence between the two. Neil Kinnock's assertion that 'violence is no part of British trade unionism' was historically dubious and contrasted with his own less emollient language during the 1972 coal dispute (Hansard 1972; Howell 1985:187, 192). TUC General Secretary Norman Willis told a rally in Aberavon that the TUC condemns 'all violence, from whatever quarter it comes […] I have to say that any miner too, who resorts to violence, wounds the miners' case far more than they damage their opponents' resolve. Violence creates more violence and out of that is built not solidarity but despair and defeat' (TUC 1984b). Such assertions were not new. The TUC had declared of

the Grunwick dispute, for instance, that 'it would be a tragedy if the use of violence or any confusion introduced by irregular elements on the picket lines were to divide and deflect the support given by responsible trade unionists all over the country aimed at achieving an early and peaceful solution to the problem' (Murray 1977). The importance of retaining respectability could mitigate solidarity.

In the aftermath of the strike's failure, even those apparently to the left of Labour could latch onto the issue of violence. Schisms and struggles within the Communist Party (CPGB) were reflected in open disagreements about the course of the miners' dispute (Samuel 1986a:x). The NUM Press Officer Nell Myers felt that the miners' strike had strayed 'in all innocence onto the battlefield upon which the Communist Party is waging internecine warfare' (Myers 1985). Among the most controversial contributions was the leaked draft of a pamphlet written by Pete Carter, the CPGB's industrial organiser. Carter (1985a) believed that it was the picket line violence against working miners and police, along with attacks on homes and property, that decisively weakened public support. This violence, he argued, was legitimated by the failure of the leadership to condemn it. The pamphlet tellingly employed the language of the right ('working miner') and, by not discussing the right to self-defence, essentially accepted the state's monopoly on legitimate violence.

The industrial relations scholar Peter Ackers recently reflected, as a former CPGB activist, on the Eurocommunist approach to industrial relation in the context of the 1984-5 miners' strike. Influenced by the Gramscian distinction between a war of movement and a war of position, he suggests that the NUM needed to develop a strategy for gaining 'popular hegemony' (Ackers 2014:165-166). Ackers argues that the Yorkshire strategy of picketing was based on physical force rather than persuasion, and this 'failure to fight a subtle war of position exposed the strikers and their families, in turn to state violence. In this sense, police violence – however much we deplore this – was not something inevitable, but the result of a misguided and dangerous [industrial relations] strategy' (Ackers 2014:166). As I argued in Chapter 5 in particular, this analysis risks missing the very substantial attempts from below by miners and their supporters to win popular support for the strike. Moreover, this activism included the construction of the kind of broad alliances that Ackers suggests were required (see Chapter 7). Members of the CPGB in South Wales and London, for instance, were among those responsible for the alliances developed between lesbian and gay activists in London and the South Wales coalfields during 1984-5 (Francis 2015:110-111).

Much of the commentary at the time and since over simplifies the relationship between violence and solidarity. Violence by striking miners did not simply cause the lack of broader

support, rather the two should be understood as mutually reinforcing. The refusal of senior labour movement figures to understand that violence could arise from the frustration and anger at a protracted and unsuccessful dispute, during which picket lines were frequently ignored, suggests at least a lack of empathy. TUC General Secretary Len Murray criticised picket line violence, noting that agreements between trade unions were 'much, much more effective', as shown in the 1974 miners' strike (TUC 1984a:399). This ignored precisely the failure of such orderly union agreements to stop the flow of fuel in 1984. The contrast with the early 1970s, when small numbers of miners' pickets were frequently enough to get the desired result, is instructive (Beckett 2009:64).[5] It was the inability of the labour movement to assert such disciplined control over space that resulted in clashes. Violence in this sense reflected uneven geographies of labour organisation and traditions (Martin, Sunley, and Wills 1993). As I argued in the previous chapter, the picket line was often symbolic, assuming that trade unionists would voluntarily not cross, or a space that allowed groups of workers to appeal to others for support. It was in those places where such trade union practices were lacking or made impossible, by large numbers of police for example, that picketers sought to physically prevent people crossing (*Morning Star* 1984b).

There were, therefore, a variety of ways in which picket lines were produced and experienced through the strike. Much of it was considerably more routine and mundane than the invocations of thugs and violence allow for. Nor was the picket line the only tactic used in an attempt to prevent strike breaking. Practices of shaming were used in an attempt to enforce community norms. In Kent, for instance, an anonymous leaflet was circulated about the strikebreaking couple Robert and Irene McGibbon. The McGibbons were politically motivated, had previously supported a campaign against left-wing shop stewards in the Cowley car plant, and actively sought to undermine the strike (Thornett 1985b:35–6). Borrowing the language that Thatcher used to suggest militant miners were a threat to the nation, the leaflet declaimed the McGibbons as 'the enemy within'. The fact that they were outsiders to Kent only reinforced their disruptive role in the community (Anon. n.d.). Picket lines also seem to have been placed outside their home to stop Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU) drivers taking them to the mine (McGibbon 1984).

Others of course broke the strike for less ideological reasons, and attitudes sometimes reflected these variations. South Wales miner Ali Thomas, for example, described taking a strike breaker with him to London, where Thomas was raising funds, and attempting to

---

[5] The distinction should not be exaggerated. Neil Kinnock noted in 1972 the contrast between the peaceful strike in South Wales where picket lines were respected, and conflict in Birmingham where employers had bribed people to drive lorries and boats across picket lines (Hansard 1972)

persuade him not to return to work. Thomas distinguished between such a man, a 'sad case', largely perceived as weak, and others who were properly considered 'scabs' (Headon and Thomas 1985). The distinction was of course not necessarily clear-cut, or accepted by all. A South Yorkshire women's support group activist described how one man had gone back to work for a week before returning to the strike. The group refused to give him a food parcel again because 'once a scab always a scab' (Crane 1986).

An article in the *Financial Times* explained, with astonishment, how violence was unnecessary in parts of South Wales because ostracism was so effective. The wife of one strike breaker in Aberdare discovered that when 'she visits Tesco's supermarket most of the shoppers and even the check-out ladies walk out […] When she gets onto a bus, the driver refuses to move, and so on. Or so I was told, gleefully', the journalist recounted, 'by union officials.' Another lodge member apparently described with 'no compunction' leading a group of over one hundred adults and children to meet another strike breaker when they came home from the pit, singing a funeral song 'because he was dead to us' (Hodgson 1984). This approximation of 'rough music' certainly had deep roots, but the *FT*'s attempt to portray such assertions of community norms as pre-Enlightenment irrationalism was exceptionally patronising (Phillips 2012a:131; Thompson 1992).

Crossan et al. (2016) have emphasised the role of shaming during strikes in asserting and shaping a working-class presence. Such emotional geographies of labour can be strongly connected to community and a sense of place, and defending communities was often foregrounded in the rhetoric of the strike. This sense of community was, as Raymond Williams highlighted, based on the investment of generations of economic and social effort and human care (Williams 1989:123). Hudson and Sadler emphasised how workers and trade unions privileged place over class in Western Europe in this period, an insight that has been invoked frequently in labour geography (Herod 2001:257; Hudson and Sadler 1986; Lier 2007; Tufts 2007). Yet this does not always account for a strong, historically embedded sense of class identity rooted in place. Defence of place and class in this sense could be intimately connected.

The enforcement of collective action by ostracism or violence may seem uncomfortably illiberal, but it was a recognition of the costs of division. Scargill repeatedly rejected encouragement to condemn those using violence to maintain the strike: 'I have heard reference to violence. I accept that we have had violence. Is it not an act of violence to threaten to destroy a man's job or that of his son or daughter?' (TUC 1984a:400). The violation of the 'moral economy' of the coalfields was in this sense an act of violence itself,

and therefore justified measures necessary to resist it (Phillips 2012a:11). The direct result of pit closures, including suicides and social disintegration in mining areas, was traumatic and predictably so (Gower 2014; Leeworthy 2012). Overt and structural violence were employed to weaken the power of miners and the trade unions more generally (Mitchell 2011). Tyner and Inwood have argued against the distinction between structural and direct violence, insisting instead on understanding violence in its historical and geographical totality and specificity (Tyner and Inwood 2014). The miners' strike shows how definitions of what constitutes violence can become a matter for political struggle.

There are, of course, very good reasons for progressive movements to avoid tactics of violence and community ostracism, not least because they are often highly gendered practices (Crossan et al. 2016). As Jim Phillips has written, taunting of 'scabs' in 1984-5, often by women, echoed the 1926 lock-out in questioning the masculinity of strike-breakers (Phillips 2012a:131; see also Salt and Layzell 1985:49). The violence of the picket line could reinforce it as a masculine space. Neil Kinnock's parliamentary speech during the 1972 strike exemplified this:

> Hon Gentlemen opposite have bemoaned picketing. If they had been on strike for five weeks, if their families' total income was £7 a week social security benefit, if they were worried about smoking their next cigarette, if they were worried about paying the rent, and they saw some cowboy coming along driving a bald-tyred wagon without a road fund licence, what would their reaction be? What would be the instinct of any *red-blooded man* [emphasis added] in this House, having put his family to all that inconvenience and near misery, if he saw someone riding roughshod over his picket line? I know what my attitude would be. In fact, I should be worried if it were not the case (Hansard 1972).

I highlight in the next chapter how coalfield women in 1984-5 challenged the idea that picketing was for 'red-blooded' men, but the enforcement of picket lines by physical force could exacerbate the tendency of labour movement spaces to be dominated by machismo (*Spare Rib* 1985b; Waddington, Wykes, and Critcher 1990:75). Violence and shaming, unlike some other tactics that might be divisive, do not prefigure more egalitarian relationships (Ince 2012). Such prefiguration arguably did exist during the strike, not least in the communal kitchens and translocal networks of support (Younge 2009). These experiences developed in parallel, however, with tactics that many perceived as necessary and justified in the situation, but which were certainly problematic.

It is also necessary to recognise that the issue of violence—however much a construct of a hostile media or a justifiable defence against the far greater violence of the British state— did play a role in reducing support for the strike. A MORI poll in September 1984 asked respondents who they primarily blamed for violence in the dispute. The NUM leadership came first (43%), miners second (28%), with the government (8%), police (7%) and coal board (4%) far behind (Kellner 1985). The government appears to have taken comfort in polling data in August 1984 that suggested trade unionists were only marginally more supportive of the strike than the population as a whole. Unsurprisingly, very few people (1-2%) approved of 'striking miners smashing car windows, setting fire to buses used to carry working miners, and intimidating working miners in order to make them support the strike'. Opinions on police beating pickets or 'working miners' assaulting strikers were not gathered ('Prime Minister' 1984).[6]

For all the evident bias of such polling, even those broadly sympathetic to the strike could raise the question of violence. One person donating to the miners' Christmas appeal wrote that 'if support for the miners & the Labour Party is to be continued <u>by older people</u> whose fathers were early members of trade unions – <u>violence must be halted please!</u>'[7] This suggested interesting generational dynamics; it was often young miners who were considered to be at the forefront of the picketing (John Lloyd 1984). More outright hostility existed as well. When the NUS attempted to impose a levy on their members to support the strike, they received over two hundred letters of opposition (Kinahan 1984).[8] These gave a range of reasons for opposing the levy. One member wished 'to complain, in the strongest terms, at your attempt to force our union members to back the striking miners. Striking miners are happy to use violence and intimidation to get their own way' (J.C. n.d.). At a support meeting in Camden, north London, it was acknowledged that the 'question of picket line violence clearly worries many who are unsure whether or not to support the miners and whether to give money to the collectors or not' (Camden NALGO Miners Support Group n.d.). While accounts sympathetic to the strike have rightly highlighted state violence during the dispute, understanding the limitations of solidarity in London and elsewhere means acknowledging that the perception of the strike as violent was damaging.

---

[6] In this poll, trade unionists were marginally more likely to either be completely in sympathy / in sympathy to some extent with the miners on strike (48%) than opposed to the miners on strike completely or to some extent (44%). However, only 17% were completely in sympathy compared to 32% completely opposed.
[7] Christmas appeal letters, LHASC/WAIN/1/2.
[8] The memo noted 232 letters against, 3 in favour.

## Extremism, sectarianism and political trade unionism

Emphasising the miners' violence was part of long standing attempts by the Conservative right to equate militant trade unionism with political extremism, and assorted enemies without and within. The end of the *détente* period in the Cold War at the turn of the 1980s undoubtedly gave renewed vigour to anti-Communist sentiments (Beckett 2016:84–5, 136). From the early 1970s onwards, Thatcher and her allies associated the NUM and other trade unionists with Communists who were trying to bypass the democratic process, the Argentinian dictatorship fought during the Falklands War, and the Irish Republican Army (*Finchley Times* 1972, 1974; Thatcher 1984b; *Tribune* 1984c).[9] Some on the left also saw connections between struggles in Ireland and the miners' strike, albeit with a very different emphasis. This was not always welcome. A letter to *Socialist Worker* criticised repeated attempts by the paper to draw such links: 'There is nothing in common between terrorists like the IRA and miners engaged in legitimate trade union activity' (Shepard 1984).

The connections were not only made rhetorically. Black Londoners who supported the miners held a meeting with speakers from the NUM, the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Sinn Féin, linking the strike with national liberation struggles. These alliances are discussed in more depth in the next chapter, but what is important here is the hostility this meeting received from some quarters (*Daily Mail* 1984; *East Anglia Daily Times* 1984; Meer and Webster 1985). The meeting was held in the GLC's County Hall, with the explicit support of Ken Livingstone. Roy Mason, an NUM-sponsored MP for Barnsley and former Northern Ireland Secretary, expressed himself 'horrified' and claimed that the PLO and Sinn Féin were using Livingstone to undermine the strike (*East Anglia Daily Times* 1984). Brown and Yaffe's work on the anti-apartheid movement in London in the same period highlights how these activists shared speakers and engaged in joint campaigning with gay rights, women's rights, anti-imperialist, Irish, Palestinian and Tamil national liberation activists. These complex networks, they suggest, created 'counter-topographies' of resistance (Brown and Yaffe 2014:44; see also Katz 2001). Such a process undoubtedly also took place during the miners' strike. Yet is worth recognising that such attempts can be contested, and that the construction of some solidarity relationships can be destructive of others. This again highlights the limitations of an approach to solidarity rooted in universalism. The forging of new connections may necessitate elements of antagonism and disunity.

---

[9] Thatcher's infamous labelling of the miners as 'the enemy within' during the 1984-5 strike seems to have been a staple Conservative designation of trade unionists since at least 1980 (Hoskyns 1980). See also Hall et al. (1978:25–6, and passim) on an early 1970s invocation of 'the enemy within' in the *Sunday Express*, and more broadly how militant trade unionists were among the groups blamed for economic and social crises.

The threat of political extremists was not just promoted by conservatives. While the right could construct the CPGB as a central element of the 'hydra that threatens liberty', some Communists were keen to represent themselves as part of the more responsible, mainstream left (Levin 1984; see also The Economic League 1984). The CPGB's Pete Carter argued that 'various Trotskyite groups played a despicable role' in legitimating violence during the dispute, joined by the Labour left of Livingstone, Benn and Skinner. 'Such a sectarian approach', he argued, 'actually brought about a realignment of the Left which involved sections of the Left in the Labour Party, the Parliamentary Labour Party and sections of the trade union movement, who found allies in, and spoke the same language as the Trotskyists' (Carter 1985a). This alliance was arguably the basis for the Mineworkers' Defence Committee, a group established by Ken Livingstone and other prominent London Labour lefts that sought to co-ordinate and intensify solidarity for the miners. Carter warned CPGB District Secretaries that the main group behind MDC was the Trotskyite Socialist Action. 'The policy and strategy of the Miners Defence Committee', he wrote, 'is very dangerous, adventurist and will do enormous damage to the trade union and labour movement if not challenged' (Carter 1985b). Such attitudes in part reflected long standing Communist hostility towards Trotskyism. Yet Carter's denouncements highlighted the fluidity of identifications on the left, where even elements of the Labour Party who were not organised Trotskyists were considered to be ultra-left by Communists.

Attempts to police the acceptable boundaries of the labour movement were also evident in some of the support groups. At a meeting with the police to discuss the harassment of street collectors for the strike, SERTUC's Tony Gould warned 'that the police could by playing into the hands of those groups which they all wished to see playing a small role' (Cohen 1984). As I suggested in the previous chapter, there was some hostility from SERTUC towards the Mineworkers Defence' Committee, which may have reflected the influence of the CPGB (Coultas 1985). Two activists in Brent Trades Council and Brent Miners Support Committee, where the CPGB were again influential, warned about 'fringe bodies' and 'fringe organisations' organising meetings in the area (Adams and Durkin n.d.). The language of 'fringe groups' and 'alien forces' to describe the 'ultra left', who appeared of significant concern to some in the CPGB, was echoed by prominent Communists and in the *Morning Star* (Arnison 1984; Baker 1985; Phillips 2012a:117; Ramelson 1985). Such

attitudes arguably reflected a broader attempt by sections of European communism to establish itself as respectable (Eley 2002:348).[10]

There is a sense of the construction of sectarian geographies of solidarity here. In some areas of London, such as Brent, particular left traditions clearly had a strong influence. Connections between London and the coalfields could be developed through the networks of various left organisations. There was a positive aspect to this, but there was also an element of competition, and translocal relationships were used to reinforce divisions on the left. As Saunders has noted, the various left organisations produced vast amounts of literature on the strike and tried to insist that their slogans or tactics were crucial for success (Saunders 1989:261). The attempt to be distinctive was not only theoretical but extended to the practice of solidarity as well. *Socialist Organiser*'s John O'Mahony argued that support groups were usually run by the Labour left, the Communists did their own thing, Militant never became involved in the support committees, which the SWP scorned as 'left-wing Oxfam' and the 'baked beans brigade' until October 1984 when they joined in (O'Mahony 1985). Mark Ashton, a member of the Communist Party, noted of LGSM meetings that the atmosphere could be 'poisonous', often due to sectarian differences (Ashton n.d.).

Some anarchists insisted on their practical superiority in providing solidarity compared to others on the left. Dave Douglass believed that 'when push comes to shove in dangerous situations on the picket lines, the "left" are way back with an arm full of papers while the Anarchist is stood to the end with you' (Douglass 2010:90). One London anarchist, Pete Ridley, highlighted the anarcho-syndicalist trade union networks of European support that were mobilised independently of the NUM. He argued that those in the Direct Action Movement were active collecting funds and joining picket lines. As a result, 'anarcho-syndicalism (anarchism) got a good name with the miners who were sick of the so-called "Left" who only pushed their particular brand of "bossism"' (Ridley 1985; see also Franks 2005). Despite such positioning, a number of support groups in London and elsewhere did successfully bring together people from a range of left groups, albeit on a temporary basis (Labour Research Department 1985:17; Rouffiniac 1985:2; Samuel 1986b:32).

While competition between elements of the extra-parliamentary left may seem of comparatively little consequence, the state of the Communist Party did matter. The Thatcherite right almost certainly had an exaggerated sense of the importance of Communist

---

[10] Support from left groups was not always welcomed by miners either. During a demonstration in London one Yorkshire miner apparently commented that such organisations were 'just scavengers', with stewards commenting that 'we just want miners here' (Campbell 1985b).

influence in post-war British trade unions, although the Labour Party were not exempt from red-baiting during industrial disputes either (Thorpe 2001). Nevertheless, CPGB activists did have influence in a number of industries, notably in engineering. Reflecting on NUM General Secretary (1968-84) Lawrence Daly's background in the West Fife Communist Party in the 1950s, EP Thompson observed that there was 'no comparable organization in which a young miner could enlarge his horizons both nationally and internationally, advance his political knowledge, effect contacts with intellectuals and with workers in other industries, while exerting a growing influence within his own community' (Thompson 1980b:71). The CPGB played an important role in developing spatially expansive networks of solidarity. Communist activists were key in organizing the support of engineering workers at Saltley in 1972 for instance (Douglass 2009:169). Raphael Samuel observed that during the 1966-7 Robert Arundel strike in Stockport, solidarity action organised by Manchester Communist engineers introduced tactics that would become widespread during trade union disputes in the 1970s: mass pickets, sympathetic demonstrations and the mobilisation of help from outside (Samuel 1987:87).

The Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions (LCDTU), a body established in the 1960s by the CPGB, had enough influence in 1970 that between 350,000 and 600,000 people responded to their call for unofficial strike action over the Conservative government's industrial relations legislation (Darlington and Lyddon 2001:18). The LCDTU still existed at the time of the 1984-5 miners' strike, and was involved in organising demonstrations in London, but was in no position to lead comparable resistance (Gould 1985). In part this of course reflected the broader political situation. Nevertheless, the CPGB itself was much weaker, lacking the workplace organisation it once had (Samuel 1987:54). The party may have been 'proud' of their record during the strike but others were less effusive (Carter 1985a:28). Bill Matthews from Hatfield Main NUM argued that the CPGB executive 'played little or no part in the dispute compared with the magnificent role they played in the 1972 and 1974 strikes. During those strikes their organisational contribution was a major reason why the NUM succeeded' (Matthews 1985).[11] Samuel noted that whereas in 1926 the CPGB doubled its membership, primarily among miners, despite the dedicated work of individual Communists the party managed to lose members in the coalfields during 1984-5, notably the senior Kent NUM officials Jack Collins and Malcolm Pitt (Samuel 1985b:28).

---

[11] However, Phillips points out that the secret service investigated subversion in the 1972 strike and found that the Communist Party had little impact on its development (Phillips 2012a:38).

The comparative weakness of the CPGB in part reflected internal frictions, with bitter arguments between the Eurocommunist influenced leadership of the party aligned with *Marxism Today*, and the more traditional supporters of the *Morning Star*. The nature of trade unionism was central to this dispute, and the miners' strike only exacerbated these tensions (Samuel 1987:54). Certainly, local Communist Parties in London undertook the kind of general support activity that many others did: raising funds, organising meetings, and twinning with mining areas (*Morning Star* 1984d). Yet it is striking how during one of the most significant industrial disputes in British history, correspondence in the *Morning Star* and within the London area of the CPGB was considerably more concerned with internal strife. The fighting within the London Communist Party undoubtedly consumed a lot of energy.[12] This not to argue that the CPGB played a lesser role than other parts of the extra-parliamentary left. Rather, it is to acknowledge the diminishing influence of an organisation that had more significant roots in the labour movement than others.

Solidarity has the potential to refigure political movements, breaking down divisions and constructing new coalitions. Yet this history shows how the miners' strike support movement was also used to police boundaries and reinforce divisions within and between different left groups. There was a broader struggle over the limits of acceptable trade unionism. A review of the strike in the *Guardian* suggested that its failure would be perceived as a landmark defeat for 'advocates of political strike action'. The authors explicitly equated political trade unionism with a desire to 'bring down governments' (Harper and Wintour 1985:15). These concerns were articulated within the trade union movement as well. The EETPU's Eric Hammond told the 1984 TUC Congress that he would have recommended supportive strike action by his members if there had been a ballot of NUM members, and if 'the political objectives of the strike' had been disavowed (TUC 1984a:403). Rarely did the mainstream of the trade union movement openly support the strike having political aims. The GMBATU's General Secretary Dave Basnett insisted that it was 'primarily an industrial dispute' and that the labour movement 'cannot be provoked into political strikes to bring down the Government' (Basnett 1985).

What distinguished the left from moderate, and therefore legitimate, trade unionism for some Conservatives was precisely this attempt to 'politicise' trade unions. In polling, interviewees were asked if 'Mr Scargill has brought the miners out on strike to safeguard miners [sic] jobs', or whether the 'reason is political' ('Prime Minister' 1984; see also Pascall 1984). This had been a central element of the Ridley Report's confidential annex, 'Countering the

---

[12] See the London District Communist Party Correspondence, LHASC/CP/LON/CORR/2/8.

Political Threat', which argued that trade unionists would use a wage or redundancy issue to try to challenge their privatisation plans. 'Political strikes do not get the same support from the membership', the report claimed, 'as strikes over issues which affect their pockets. Some issue of discontent will be found, where feeling is strong, and the full force of the communist disruptors will be used to exploit that discontent' (Nationalised Industries Policy Group 1977:24).

Supporters of the miners frequently emphasised that the government instigated the dispute for political reasons, and highlighted the political nature of the policing (Christian 1984). The SERTUC-NUM Support Committee (n.d.) urged power workers to recognise the government's wider political motivation in the coal dispute, which meant that their jobs were also under threat. Yet even ordinary trade union members supportive of the miners could be reluctant to support or debate the political nature of the strike. A GCHQ trade unionist supporting the Christmas hardship appeal commented that 'the individual miner and his family is caught in the middle in what is essentially a political struggle, through no fault of his own'.[13] This suggests a particular scalar understanding of politics, perceived as taking place among national leaderships of the unions and the government. In a similar way, the Mirror Group Graphics Chapel of the NGA, who had provided extensive financial support for the strike, claimed that they had 'never discussed the political merits of the dispute, they just feel the need to associate themselves with their fellow trade unionists' families who are suffering because of the situation that surrounds them' (Mirror Group Graphics Chapel 1984). Sequestration of the NUM's funds arguably made it necessary to emphasise that fundraising was purely for humanitarian reasons. Nevertheless, while the insistence that they supported trade unionists in need regardless of the merits of their case is impressive in one sense, the suggestion that solidarity should be de-politicised is instructive.

South African trade unionists observed that the battle for popular support in Britain had two major disadvantages compared to their country: in South Africa word of mouth communication was much stronger, and 'the level of political consciousness is higher and thus the lies of the bosses are not so readily accepted' (*Workers Unity* 1984). As I argued in the previous chapter, the issue of whether trade unionism should be political was a matter raised through the miners' solidarity movement. Despite the non-political supporters quoted above, the geographical unevenness of solidarity could reflect attitudes on this issue. Region One of the TGWU, which covered London and the South East, wrote an extensive report on the failure of solidarity during the strike. One issue highlighted was 'the problem of non

---

[13] Christmas appeal letters, LHASC/WAIN/1/2.

political Trade Unionism', shown clearly at Tilbury Power Station.[14] 'These members were hostile to the Union's support for the NUM, but very vocal in their own demands for pay and conditions. They were unwilling certainly, and unable maybe, to see the wider issues and implications for their own jobs' (TGWU 1985).

Just as pro-strike norms could be enforced in certain coalfield communities, other workplace cultures could encourage insular and anti-strike sentiments. In this vein, John Lyons of the Engineers and Managers Association insisted that the 'electricity supply industry is not, and never has been, available to solve industrial disputes external to it, not even for the miners. That is the tradition of the whole workforce of the industry. It is not available because it is a proud public service, and for our enormous power to be abused in this way would be to threaten democracy itself' (TUC 1984a:405). This echoed the argument most famously developed by Eric Hobsbawm that the British labour movement was dominated by an 'economistic trade union consciousness' that could 'set workers against each other rather than establish wider patterns of solidarity' (Hobsbawm 1978:286). Rather than a refusal of solidarity, it was perhaps a privileging of occupation over a broader class allegiance. However, it is important to recognise that the predominance of occupational or class solidarities is not a static question (Wright 2015:124). In particular, as I argue below, the presence of politicised shop stewards could have a significant impact in making the argument for translocal solidarities beyond the workplace or industry.

Some trade unionists were clearly hostile to mixing trade unions and politics, at least in a narrow sense of the word. Polls of trade union members in the early 1980s suggested that half believed trade unions should not have political funds. This may have indicated misgivings about the Labour Party, or indeed support for the Conservatives, rather than simply an apolitical stance.[15] It nevertheless suggests a considerable ambivalence among trade union members about the political role of their unions (Sherman 1984). The NUS sought to reassure members hostile to the strike that 'the executive approached the issue as trade unionists and not from any political standpoint' (NUS n.d.). One group of members, however, felt that it was 'bullshit' that the levy would go to miners' families in need. 'We feel that this levy will be used to finance Scargills [sic] greed for political power. We will not fuel that greed, in short keep your greedy political claws out of our wage packets' (ACT 2 NUS members 1984; see also Letter to Mr. C. Bennett n.d.). While it is frequently observed

---

[14] Tilbury is on the Thames in Essex. It was one of the nearby power stations that support activists in London were involved in picketing.
[15] 32% of trade unionists voted Conservative in the 1983 election, 39% for Labour and 28% for the Alliance (Massey 1983).

that the strike and the solidarity movement broadened the political consciousness of those involved, this was a process actively resisted by some trade unionists. One NGA member, writing on behalf of a group within his branch, criticised his union's journal: 'Whatever our political views we do not want to read about anti-Government measures, CND, Trident missiles, or articles written by other trade unions. There are plenty of political and social comment magazines that we can read if we want to do so' (Fleming 1984).

The assertion of a clear distinction between 'political' motivations and a defence of jobs was problematic. The attempt by the Conservative government and its supporters to construct and reinforce boundaries between the economic and the political was of evident utility for the new right. A central question raised by the miners' strike was about who had the power to decide whether jobs were destroyed or not. The Conservative government's answer was to appeal to an impersonal and seemingly natural market, encapsulated by invocations of 'uneconomic pits'.[16] Yet the process of pit closures was not an automatic one devoid of human agency. Raymond Williams believed that miners had fought for the right 'of any worker to be involved, from the beginning, in the long-term direction of the industry to which a whole lifetime is given.' Under the cover of the 'right to manage', what was insisted upon by the NCB and the government was rather 'the categorical and arbitrary right of an *employer*' (Williams 1989:122).

Similarly, Jim Phillips has argued that the 'moral economy' of the coalfield, based on the dual assumption that changes in the industry required the agreement of the workforce and that pits could only close if there was comparable alternative employment, was defeated along with the strike (Phillips 2012a:11, 161). The miners' strike therefore starkly posed, in class terms, questions of economic power and democracy in Britain that were fundamentally political. The strike almost certainly could not have been pursued on a very narrow economic basis ignoring these concerns, and it is worth noting that industries with less political trade unionism fared little better in protecting jobs. The ability to construct translocal networks of solidarity depended on a broader political meaning being embedded in the strike. Nevertheless, the taint of political strike action undoubtedly undermined the cause in the eyes of some trade unionists.

---

[16] For example, Thatcher used the phrase 'uneconomic pits' five times in a five-minute speech when she received the Aims of Industry National Free Enterprise Award in October 1984 (Thatcher 1984c).

**Jobs and the geography of trade unionism**

The potentially divisive nature of politicised trade unionism has tended not to be a concern of labour geography (although see Iveson 2014:997). Rather, labour geographers and others have emphasised how a narrow focus on jobs can be exclusionary and impede the construction of spatially expansive solidarities (Antentas 2015). In particular, as I have already noted, geographers have highlighted how the defence of jobs can lead to cross-class alliances rooted in particular places at the expense of class-based solidarity (Herod 2010:257; Hudson and Sadler 1986). Uneven geographical development can encourage competitive relationships between different groups of workers (Lier 2007). Such problems were certainly clear in the attempt to develop transnational networks during the miners' strike. The NUM and some supporters appealed to the 'national interest' in defence of the coal industry (NUM 1984). The danger to British mining was not only from other forms of energy but also 'foreign' or imported coal (Corbyn 1985a; Strike 2009:132–2). As Jonathan Saunders noted, the argument that foreign coal was heavily subsidised had to be abandoned at Dover when seeking international solidarity (Saunders 1989:244).

The defence of jobs could come at the expense of broader political or social concerns.[17] In his reflections on 'militant particularism' and the Cowley car plant in the 1980s, David Harvey (1995) highlighted the limitations of a politics rooted in the workplace. Harvey argued that protecting employment should not override the concerns of the wider working-class in the area, nor should socialists ignore long term thinking about economic issues or the type of jobs that are wanted. The commitment to coal as such had its own specific problems. As Harvey (1995) observed of the Oxford car factory, defending jobs can mean ignoring ecological issues.[18] The NUM still argues for the expansion of the deep coal mining industry and prominent former activists, notably Arthur Scargill and Dave Douglass, are deeply hostile to sections of the environmental justice movement as a result (Douglass 2010:451–4; Monbiot 2008; Scargill 2008).

Harvey primarily positioned this conflict as one between 'the politics of the workplace' and 'the politics of the community' (Harvey 1995:71–2). Yet alternative approaches were available in the 1970s and 1980s, and had been developed by the labour movement itself. The 1976 Lucas Aerospace workers' plan proposed defending jobs through socially useful

---

[17] A current example can be seen in debates around Trident nuclear weapons (GMB 2015).
[18] Ecological concerns had nothing to do with the Thatcher government's attack on coal. Nor do they justify how the British coal industry was dismantled. This does not mean, however, that environmental issues can be ignored or that an ever expanding coal industry would be ideal. Dave Elliot (1984) presented 'environmental arguments for keeping the pits open' during the strike, which largely saw coal as a bridge to a more renewable energy future. It is unlikely that the NUM perceived it in this way.

production, led by shop stewards and based on the ideas of the workforce (Wainwright and Elliott 1982). Contrasting narrow workplace politics with a broader community politics may therefore be somewhat reductive. The Lucas Plan should also help complicate any attempt to suggest that the wages militancy of 1968-72 produced nothing with a broader economic or political vision (Hobsbawm 1978).[19] Foster (2014:166–170) has argued explicitly against this characterisation of the 1970s, arguing that the decade was in fact unprecedented in terms of political strikes, solidarity actions and joint activity between the labour movement and community campaigns. The problems described here, then, did not represent the only response of trade unions to the threat of unemployment in this period.

The construction of cross-class national or regional alliances was not the only risk in defending specific forms of employment. The defence of deep coal mining jobs had the potential to be fractious within Britain, not least by alienating other trade unionists perceived to be in competition with coal miners. The NUM and supporters during the strike unsurprisingly emphasised the desirability of coal and repeatedly insisted on the imminent end of oil (Brent Miners Support Campaign 1984; Corbyn 1985b; Livingstone n.d.).[20] It was specifically the deep mined coal that the NUM supported however, and tensions with the TGWU and their members in opencast production were evident (Henderson 1984; Scargill 1984b). One TGWU member highlighted the NUM's opposition to opencast while calling for solidarity, commenting that Scargill 'put out his hand for our friendship, while preparing to stab us in the back with the other hand' (I.P. 1984).

The limitations of oil formed part of an argument that the government's real plan was an expanded nuclear power programme. While the miners' supporters were correct to argue that the government's preference for nuclear was at least in part a way of weakening trade union power, the converse is also arguably true. Arguments in favour of coal were surely influenced by the strength of the NUM and its perceived importance for the labour movement more broadly. As a result, the strike was strongly connected to an anti-nuclear position, which encouraged important solidarity relationships with elements of the ecological and peace movements (for example *Here We Go* 1984; Humber 1985). Workers in the nuclear industry, however, may have been surprised that nuclear was characterised as 'uneconomic' and 'inefficient' by the NUM and people in the coalfields (NUM n.d.; *The Valleys' Star* 1984). This, after all, was the same language used against the NUM by the government and the NCB. As a consequence, unions with members in the nuclear industry, such as the Civil

---

[19] Although for an argument that wages struggles are themselves deeply political, see Mann (2007).

[20] In a less exaggerated form, the Conservatives also believed oil would not last long (Ministerial Committee on Economic Strategy 1979).

and Public Services Association (CPSA), could be equivocal about the strike. A union fact sheet acknowledged that some CPSA members had expressed 'certain reservations' about supporting the NUM. In particular, they had 'taken issue with the NUM's declared preference for an energy supply based mainly on coal', but concluded that this should not prevent them 'standing shoulder to shoulder with miners in defence of *existing* jobs. The issue of the *future* shape of the energy industry is, in large part, a separate matter' (CPSA 1984; see also Sweet 1985).

As Antentas has argued, differences in interests can be the basis for competition between groups of workers, and simply asserting the existence of working-class unity is unlikely to diminish the persistence of such divisions (Antentas 2015:1105; see Das 2012:23; Mann 2007:xiv). The economic context of the early 1980s was important. Unemployment, in double figures for the first time since the 1930s, was one element of a 'many-headed malaise' facing the labour movement and contributed to a lack of trade union solidarity.[21] The absence of alternative employment may have solidified support for the strike within the coalfields, but it encouraged wariness among other trade unionists. Perhaps the most militant defence of jobs in opposition to the miners' strike came from within the steel industry. Employment in steel had been decimated in the preceding few years, dropping from 160,000 in 1980 to 71,000 in 1983 (Phillips 2012a:41). There were concerns that NUM demands of steel workers to stop production were excessive and exacerbated tensions. One London SOGAT member felt that Scargill was willing 'to sacrifice steel workers for his greater glory' (Paull 1984).

Bill Sirs, the right-wing leader of the ISTC, took up this theme, recalling in his memoir that he 'was not prepared to allow my industry to be sacrificed on someone else's altar' (Sirs 1985:28). Yet there is little evidence of sacrifice. Steel production in 1984 actually increased by 149,300 tonnes from the previous years, such was the weakness of support (Harper and Wintour 1985:17). One steel union official was reported to have said of the NUM: 'If they come picketing again to Scunthorpe, we'll fight them on the streets' (Hatton et al. 1984). It was in this context that Hywel Francis, chair of the Neath, Dulais and Swansea Valleys Miners' Support Group, noted that 'old-fashioned trade union solidarity has, at best, been reduced to 75 turkeys from Llanwern steelworkers. At its worst, it's the army of well-paid

---

[21] The 'many-headed malaise' quote is from Myers (1985). For unemployment statistics see Denman and McDonald (1996). On the impact of unemployment on solidarity during the miners' strike, see Leeworthy (2012:837) and Phillips (2012a:41).

faceless scab lorry-drivers trundling daily along the M4 to supply foreign coke to the Llanwern "brothers" who supplied the turkeys' (Francis 1985:12).

Fears over employment encouraged smaller scale requests to ease the burden of solidarity with the miners, such as at the Thames Foundry, which was being run down at the time (O'Flynn 1984). There was a contradictory and perhaps unresolvable weakness in building solidarity for the strike therefore, exacerbated both by high levels of unemployment and hostility towards the political left. On the one hand, if the dispute was understood entirely in terms of protecting jobs in the coal industry then solidarity could be resisted where it appeared to threaten jobs elsewhere. Overcoming this meant making a broader political argument about the centrality of the dispute for the labour movement as a whole, which might threaten jobs in the short term but if successful would be of benefit beyond the coalfields. This approach, however, alienated those who may have supported a narrowly conceived industrial dispute but were hostile to 'political' strike action. The agency of striking miners to develop effective solidarity relationships was therefore significantly constrained by this economic and ideological context.

Divisions within the labour movement did not just develop between the miners and others, however, they were present within the industry as well (Richards 1996:39–58). Even early in the dispute perhaps 20 per cent of miners were not on strike.[22] The threat to jobs in the industry was not uniform. The NCB apparently planned to abandon 'peripheral' coalfields— South Wales, Scotland, Kent and the North East—and concentrate on a more profitable core (Fine 1984:77). Opposition to the strike within the NUM was geographically concentrated, with a majority continuing to work in certain areas, most notably in Nottinghamshire (Howell 2012). This lack of unity could make it more difficult to appeal for solidarity from others. One Grimethorpe miner asked: 'how could we turn to anybody else and say "down tools" when we couldn't get us own out?' (Price and Whittaker 1986). An NUS member opposed to the union's levy for the miners argued: 'you say that solidarity is important. The miners them selfs [sic] have not got solidarity. That is my reason why I do not want to pay it, if the miners [sic] strike was a solid strike with 100 per cent backing, I would be all in favour of paying' (K.A. 1984). The uneven geographical development of coal mining in this way created problems in forging translocal solidarities.

---

[22] Precise figures were often disputed. However, as an example, the NCB reported on 27 June 1984 that 36,900 in the category 'mineworkers, WPIS, Canteens etc' (the jobs covered by the NUM except for clerks) were at work out of an estimated 181,100 (20.38%) (Department of Energy 1984).

There was not, however, a straightforward correlation between the threat to jobs and support for the strike, which also reflected the regional political geographies of the industry. For Howell, the structure and culture of mining trade unionism undermined a collective response and was the root of the NUM's defeat (Howell 2012:164). The NUM was notoriously a federal organisation with strong regional/national identities encouraged by the autonomous nature of NUM areas. Names of pre-NUM unions such as 'the Fed' in South Wales or the Durham Miners Association were still in use in the 1980s (Francis and Smith 1998:xv; NUM Durham Area 1984). While uneven regional economic development played into the 'spatial unevenness' of the strike, the political and organisational traditions were at least partially autonomous of such structural determination (Rees 1985:400). This was most obvious in Yorkshire, one of the central coalfields expected to suffer less harshly from closures, which had become one of the most militant despite its previously moderate reputation.

While NUM areas like South Wales and Scotland could draw on long histories of radical trade unionism to encourage support for the strike, some also pointed to what were considered less honourable traditions. Those with long memories believed that 'we have the same old Traitors of 1926. Derbyshire & Notts and the Spencer Union mentality' (Connolly 1984). The more conciliatory culture of industrial relations within Nottinghamshire clearly played a role in opposition to the strike (Sunley 1990). Embedded within this culture was a strong sense of area autonomy, and with a Nottinghamshire NUM ballot returning only 27% for the strike, Notts miners were unlikely to support a dispute that they considered imposed from outside. The picketing of Nottinghamshire pits by Yorkshire miners right from the start of the strike, arguably reflecting a historically informed perception that it would be an area of weakness, may have only exacerbated these tensions (Griffin 2005). Nevertheless, despite the idea that certain Midlands coalfields were simply repeating their historical role, contemporary economic issues clearly did matter. The main area to oppose strike action, Nottinghamshire, expected to be a significant part of the profitable section of the industry left after closures. Regional divisions had also been encouraged in the late 1970s by the introduction of an Area Incentive Scheme, which weakened some of the unity that had been developed in the early 1970s. It is also important to note that regional identities were not homogeneous themselves, and variations between and within particular pits become clearer the closer the level of analysis (Renouf 1989).

Strong regional and local attachments were undoubtedly crucial for sustaining the strike for a full year. Even among those supporting the strike they could also be divisive, however, and the competition between different areas played out in London and other places that were

a focus for fundraising. I already discussed the development of twinning arrangements, largely in a positive way, in Chapter 5. These were distinctly translocal relationships, largely bypassing a mediating or coordinating national organisation. It is worth noting again here, however, that those critical of twinning pointed out that it risked creating divisions, particularly in places like London where there was a lot of money to be raised. Particular London areas obviously became attached to 'their' miners, and could resent 'other areas coming into "our patch"', particularly as it was 'hard to say no to miners who turn up at your GMC[23] with heart-rending tales about their conditions' (van Gelderen 1984). The strong personal connections developed through translocal networks could therefore contribute to the unevenness of solidarity experienced by different mining areas. There were seemingly problems with less formal arrangements as well. A circular from 'official' NUM representatives in London highlighted the difficultly 'caused for all support committees by miners moving into London from particular pits without the authority of their area or in discussion with Headland House.[24] All must try to put a stop to this anarchism for in the long run it weakens support, creates divisions, and means less money for all areas' (Butler 1984). Others rejected such accusations, and believed that they had to operate independently as their areas were not receiving a fair share from the capital (Donovan 1986).

The tension around collecting in London was felt most keenly by Kent NUM, the closest coalfield, and the one that at least initially had the strongest connections to the city. While Kent was considered peripheral in terms of the coal industry, its location in the comparatively prosperous South East, and near to London, gave it an advantage in raising funds. There were rumours that Kent was raising disproportionate amounts of money from London and keeping it for themselves. Durham miner Norman Strike commented that he shared a London collection with some Nottinghamshire miners 'because the Kent miners refused point blank to give them anything! They disgusted me to be honest because there are fewer miners in Kent than at Westoe alone, and they have really milked the support from London. So much for solidarity!' (Strike 2009). Kent NUM Secretary Jack Collins defended the area from such accusations. He apparently told an NUM delegate conference that he 'was sick of Kent being attacked on finance – there was no collections being kept by the Kent Area – they were all being distributed' (Etherington 1984). He wrote to the MP Dennis Skinner, a former coal miner, concerned about a conversation they had during a demonstration in London. 'You accused me of not adopting a socialist attitude in relation to

---

[23] General Management Committee (constituency Labour Party).
[24] Representatives of the NUM areas active in London met in Headlands House to co-ordinate activity and share out collections.

finance during this strike, an accusation that I totally reject and feel offended by' (Collins 1984d).

Even in the more bureaucratic realm of the official trade union movement, the geographical unevenness of solidarity was evident. Regional affiliations and tensions had an impact on the relationship between the NUM and TUC co-ordinated solidarity. The NUM at a national level did not request substantial support from the TUC until the September 1984 TUC Congress. In contrast, there were often strong relationships between area NUMs and regional TUCs, with co-ordinated activity from early in the strike. For example, SERTUC, based in London, set up a support committee working with Kent NUM from the start. This led to evident tensions between the central and regional TUCs. TUC General Secretary Lionel Murray wrote to affiliated unions in May 1984 that regional bodies had 'exceeded their authority' in calling for a 'day of action' and a 24 hour stoppage for the miners (Murray 1984).[25] SERTUC secretary Tony Gould similarly noted that they had 'encountered certain difficulties over the assistance being given to the NUM because the TUC feels we have exceeded our authority in allowing our name to be linked with a call for [sympathetic] industrial action'. He had been told 'that the action of the Regional Councils over this dispute threatens the whole Regional Council concept' (Gould 1984).

Such unevenness highlights the complexity of thinking about solidarity and scale. Tomaney has emphasised the importance of local, or parochial, solidarities. He suggests that there is a significant problem of scaling up, that the 'obstacles to achieving larger solidarities are formidable' (Tomaney 2013:669). This argument echoes in certain ways David Harvey's account of 'militant particularism', where there is a loss in the shift from 'tangible solidarities' rooted in an attachment to place, to a universal and abstract solidarity (Harvey 1995:83–4). Featherstone (2005) has critiqued this approach of scaling up, which ignores the construction of tangible solidarities between localities. Such concrete translocal solidarity is evident throughout this thesis. Yet the miners' strike also highlights how the development of these translocal relationships could cause tensions and suspicions between different groups. Organisations that perhaps should have been capable of easing these problems could be too distant to provide practical help. During the miners' strike, the largest co-ordinating body within the British labour movement, the TUC, was in some ways least capable of providing solidarity. The regional councils in contrast had more direct

---

[25] Again, there was precedence for this. Murray criticised SERTUC in 1977 for agreeing to support a Day of Action called by the Grunwick Strike Committee (Murray 1977)

relationships with trade unionists in their area and as a result were more likely to offer active support.

**Democracy and the trade unions**

These uneven scalar relationships of the labour movement, and the geography of the coal industry, also fed into debates around democracy that undermined attempts to organise solidarity. The lack of a national ballot during the strike in part reflected the severe difficulties of organising a unified response to closures in the coal industry when the threat was so geographically varied. Opposition to a national ballot was often justified on the basis that there was no equal say on a matter that had an unequal impact. One Midlands miner who initially voted against the strike explained that he was persuaded by flying pickets from elsewhere: 'after talking to them and they explaining to me why they are fighting I realised what they were fighting for, because they were fighting for jobs. And when you think about it, it's their jobs that I would be voting out and I couldn't vote another man out of a job' (Ware 1985). Or in the more direct language of Kent NUM's Jack Collins (1984b): 'Voting another's job away has nothing to do with democracy but is the ethics of the rat cage.' It is worth noting that it was not only miners in predominately non-striking areas that called for a national ballot.[26] However, the idea that only the NUM leadership was hostile to a national vote is equally tendentious. One South Wales miner argued in 1983 to 'forget about your ballot […] the only strategy if the pit is nearing to close … is to come out on strike and get the rest of the coalfields and start picketing the pits out … the one comradeship we have got left is that a miner won't cross a picket line' (Samuel, Bloomfield, and Boanas 1986:65).

In the 1970s the labour movement was increasingly portrayed as a threat to democracy. The influential economic journalist Samuel Brittan recently reiterated this claim, arguing that the primary economic reason that liberal democracy survived in Britain was 'the weakening of union power' (Brittan 2013:66). Brittan and others provided an economic rationale for a broader attempt to demonise trade unionism. The equation of the miners' strike with violence and extremism was frequently connected with claims that the NUM was an anti-democratic force. About a week after the IRA had attempted to assassinate Thatcher in Brighton, the Attorney General Michael Havers suggested that while miners were not involved in killing or bombing, 'Scargill and the IRA have one ambition in common – to bring down the accepted democratic system of government' (Knight 1984). As I have already argued, the idea that the strike was political was frequently equated with the anti-democratic aim of

---

[26] For examples from Durham, see Beynon (1984:106), NUM Durham Area (1984), and Strike (2009:12). For South Wales, see Rose Heyworth NUM (1984).

removing the government (Dob 1984). The question of the miners' ballot therefore came to exemplify a wider narrative about the trade union movement. At the same time, I argue below, accusations of undemocratic practices aimed at the NUM resonated with some trade unionists' own experience of distant union bureaucracies (Hyman 1986).

Even many sympathetic observers criticised the decision not to ballot. Stuart Hall argued that precisely because of the evident divisions among miners the lack of a national ballot was a significant error both of tactics and principles (Hall 1988:204). In part such a view depended on the extent to which solidarity can be perceived as an obligation (Scholz 2008:18–21). For some on strike, it was incumbent on all coal miners to respect the picket lines of those whose jobs were perceived to be under threat. In contrast, Jimmy Reid argued that 'if you are denied the right to vote, it's impossible to be a scab' (Reid 1985:92). Polling data in the middle of the strike suggested that a large majority of British people believed there should have been a secret national ballot and, despite evidence to the contrary, that the majority of miners actually opposed the strike and were kept out by intimidation.[27] While the wording of the polling questions undoubtedly encouraged a particular answer, it nevertheless echoed similarly strong support for secret strike ballots among trade union members in polls earlier in the 1980s (Sherman 1984).

It is clear that this issue had an impact on attitudes among trade union members towards the coal dispute. One TGWU convenor, in the context of requests for steel workers to support the strike, commented that 'we are being asked by sincere members of the Union, Why have the miners not been given a ballot?' (Hastings n.d.). TGWU officials in the south east, however, believed members at Tilbury Power station hostile to the strike were using the ballot issue as a 'smokescreen' (TGWU 1985). Such motivations are difficult to disentangle. Where supporting the strike had the potential to threaten pay and even jobs, it is plausible that excuses would be found by trade unionists to protect their self-interest. Nevertheless, criticisms of the lack of a ballot clearly resonated both with sections of the bureaucracy and the membership of trade unions, having a significant impact on the extent of solidarity offered.

In many instances there were in fact votes at pit or area level, although not all of these went in favour of a strike. For example, Brothertstone and Pirani note that in Scotland democratic forums such as mass meetings and area delegate conferences had often initiated strike action

---

[27] For opinions on ballots, see reports of polling in July and August 1984 ('Prime Minister' 1984; 'Public Opinion Background Note 45' 1984). A poll for ITV's Weekend World in March 1984 suggested that in a national ballot 62% of miners would have voted in favour of a strike, 31% against. A poll in April 1984 found 68% of miners for a strike and 26% against (*Morning Star* 1984a; *New Statesman* 1984a).

(Brotherstone and Pirani 2005:105). There were competing articulations of democracy here. The Conservatives specifically promoted the secret ballot, exhibiting hostility both to delegated authority and to mass meetings. The democracy of the mass workplace meeting was not simply a mechanism for a militant minority to bully an acquiescent moderate majority. Nevertheless, intimidation was of course a possibility in such a space. Nor was the democratic ideal necessarily matched by the reality. Kent NUM's Malcolm Pitt, writing about the early 1970s, noted that the 'mass of men never turn up to "mass" meetings, but the men that do form a "vanguard" of activists back at work, a task force of agitators' (Pitt 1979:117). The secret ballot, however, encouraged a particularly atomised form of democracy, abrogating the need for collective discussion.

The conception of democracy presented by opponents of the strike was contested in other ways. Some who were critical of the miners organised ballots of workplaces or trade union members on whether to support the strikers, such as the EETPU discussed above (Street 1984b). Ballots were organised independently of the NUS on sixty-six ships on the issue of a levy in support of the miners. Many opponents of the NUS levy mentioned the lack of a ballot for miners, exacerbated by the fact that their own union had not consulted their members on supporting the strike.[28] The management at West Thurrock Power Station, another Essex station on the Thames, organised a ballot of their workforce over support for the miners' strike. The union instructed members to boycott the ballot unless management also organised votes on pay, closures, hours of work and staffing levels (TGWU 1985). This was an important point about the limits of the democracy being offered. Industrial action was seen as suitable for democratic decision-making whereas workplace matters were covered by the 'right to manage' (Williams 1989:122). Similarly, Kent NUM President Malcolm Pitt argued that 'there was a lot of talk about a national ballot but nobody had called for a ballot on whether an American axe-man should be appointed to head the National Coal Board or on whether 70,000 jobs should be destroyed in mining' (Lynch 1984). More broadly, the hypocrisy of Thatcher lecturing on democracy while she simply abolished local authorities that she did not like, and one of her closest international allies was the Chilean dictator Pinochet, was stark.

Nevertheless, pointing out the hypocrisy of the Thatcher government is not the same as exonerating trade unions from critiques of their own practices. A lack of consistent democratic engagement with trade union members made calls for solidarity particularly difficult, and was arguably the basis on which issues like the lack of a national ballot gained

---

[28] See the letter from New Zealand Star NUS Members (1984), and Kinahan (1984).

traction among ordinary members. Richard Hyman observed at the time that 'the alienation of so many trade unionists from their own unions, which they perceive as distant, bureaucratic and unresponsive structures, creates the ingredients for the appeal of Tory populism. If members want the opportunity to ballot, leaders and activists disregard this at their peril' (Hyman 1986:333). This reflects what Cumbers et al. (2010:129) have described as the potential 'scalar chasm' between leadership and membership in large and hierarchical trade unions. A Watford printworker wrote to his union journal that Scargill 'has greatly harmed the union movement in not allowing a democratic vote […] A little democracy would not go amiss in our union, but as we know, given a vote 70 per cent would vote against contributing to the miners' (Wright 1984). Whether this was true or not, it highlights how the perceived lack of democracy within unions damaged attempts to develop solidarity for the miners.

These debates during the miners' strike need to be understood in the context of a broader contestation over the meaning of democracy in this period. Criticisms of trade union practices came not only from the Conservative right but the more radical left as well. Within the trade union movement, the militancy of the 1960s and early 1970s, including within the NUM, partly grew in reaction to anti-democratic practices. As Therborn (2010:20) has suggested, the frequently noted decline of deference from the 1960s did not only result in individualism but also new forms of 'rebellious collectivism', of which grassroots-led trade unionism was one element. Arthur Scargill discussed how his early struggles in the NUM included having '2,000 miners demonstrating for the right to attend the branch meetings of our union'. The struggle, he argued, was both against the Coal Board and 'far more importantly […] within the union for democracy' (Scargill 1975:5–6).[29] Such a struggle had international dimensions, as can be seen in the USA, where the primary vehicle for the left to challenge the entrenched (and murderous) bureaucracy of the United Mine Workers of America in the 1970s was called Miners for Democracy (Nyden 2010).

A broader critique of the democratic nature of the post-war settlement was central to the 'new left', and manifested in a number of ways. As Cumbers (2012:40) has argued, the ideological conflicts of the 1960s and 1970s were not simply between Keynesian notions of a big state and neoliberalism. The post-1968 left in particular was critical of the

---

[29] Scargill was also very critical of the denial of 'basic freedom in the Soviet Union'. He argued that we cannot 'have democracy in a little box, taking it out and dusting it when we want it and putting it away when we don't. There are many times when I don't like the decisions that there've been in the NUM, but in the end we can get the right decisions adopted and we will have the membership fully supporting us' (Scargill 1975:32–3).

undemocratic nature of the post-war settlement (see also Black and Pemberton 2013). The conflict over nationalised industries, which at least the government saw as a central issue in the miners' strike, was complicated by the undemocratic form—from the perspective of workers, consumers or users—public ownership took post-1945 (Cumbers 2012:129). Partly as a result, there were prominent discussions on the left around workers' control and industrial democracy in the 1970s (Cumbers 2012:43; Wickham-Jones 2013).[30] Significant elements of the Labour Party, however, bolstered by the power of 'moderate' trade unions, were hostile to the increasing role of shop stewards and de-centralised organisation. The irresponsibility of unofficial strike action was a feature of Harold Wilson's 1964 election campaign and subsequent government (Panitch and Leys 2001:17–19).

Such an attitude continued into the 1970s. The Labour governments from 1974 tried to prevent the anarchy of 'free collective bargaining' through the implementation of a social contract. This form of corporatism suggested increased power for trade union leaderships, but a reduction of influence at shop floor level. Most problematically however, the so-called 'social contract' could appear little more than a euphemism for a strict incomes policy. The holding down of wages from the mid-1970s onwards was combined with increasing public sector cuts as part of a shift from Keynesianism to monetarism, and a vilification of public spending and trade unions (Eley 2002:388–389; Hall 1988:199; Panitch and Leys 2001:107–133). The 'Winter of Discontent' strikes of the late 1970s were at least in part a reaction to the unresponsiveness of national trade union and Labour Party leaderships to low paid public sector workers who were most squeezed by the incomes policy (López 2014). The Labour Party and trade unions were so intimately related that disillusionment with one inevitably reflected on the other. This may help explain why, while there were attempts to re-shape trade union democracy from the left and right, popular attitudes were inflected more strongly by the Conservative critique.

This background helps provide some context for understanding the traction gained by the question of the national ballot. As a consequence, NUS General Secretary Jim Slater's reply to members critical of the lack of a national vote that the NUS and other trade unions had also engaged in strikes without ballots, and possibly without the total support of their members, was unlikely to convince (Slater 1984). This broader lack of trade union democracy only reinforced suspicions of the NUM's methods. The idea that solidarity with the miners could be imposed on members by way of command from trade union leadership

---

[30] Although Scargill was 'totally opposed to workers' control' as it was a 'recipe for collaboration' (Scargill 1975:25–6).

or the TUC General Council was at best naïve. This was particularly the case where there was little support from trade union representatives in workplaces themselves. In the local government union NALGO, for example, local branches forced a special conference in opposition to the union leadership donating to the miners (Ironside and Seifert 2000:172–3).

TGWU officials contrasted hostility to the strike at Tilbury Power Station with how 'a militant and well organised Shop Stewards' Committee at West Thurrock Power Station, a few miles down the road, kept up solid support for the dispute all the way through' (TGWU 1985). This suggests a contrast to Jane Will's argument that decentralized and autonomous shop steward organisation encouraged narrow sectionalism (Wills 2001:465). Such sectionalism of course existed. Nevertheless, the ability to both construct workplace organisation and develop a broader class consciousness was more effective with the presence of politicised shop stewards' organisation (Cumbers, MacKinnon, and Shaw 2010:130). It is not at all clear that unions with power concentrated at the top were more likely to embrace broader causes. Even if they did, the risk was that the union leadership would make announcements of solidarity without the workplace-level organisation to ensure such declarations were meaningful.

**Conclusion**

Mitchell (2011) has argued that labour geographers need to be more realistic about the constraints on the ability of working-class people to shape the geography of capitalism. The limits of labour agency, however, should not be understood only with reference to outside structural constraints. While I have discussed the ideological positions taken by the Conservative government and often echoed in modified form by Labour and trade union leaders, this chapter has suggested how these limitations can still be explored in part 'from below'. The commitment of labour geography to challenging overly capital-centric accounts need not be abandoned in discussing the problems of working-class agency and labour solidarity. Rather than presenting either a caricatured radical or conservative working class, it is important to recognise greater complexity (McWilliam 2014). The reason some trade union members opposed the strike were varied and sometimes contradictory. Particular framings of the dispute—for example a narrow focus on jobs, or a broader political argument—could both encourage solidarity and militate against it. Alternative approaches to the strike may have succeeded in winning greater popular support. Nevertheless, there was no strategy that could have guaranteed absolute unity in the labour movement. A recognition of these antagonisms, I have argued, provides us with a stronger understanding

of solidarity in practice than overly normative accounts that emphasise the importance of universality (Scholz 2007; Wilde 2013).

The problems of solidarity had roots deeper than the tactics of the NUM. Both the longer term process of deindustrialisation and the more immediate problem of high unemployment had a significant impact on the level of support. In addition, however, I have emphasised and attempted to explain specific opposition to the strike and divisions within the support movement. The portrayal of the dispute as violent and antidemocratic, however contestable, convinced many and increased the difficulty of organising solidarity. In part, these characterisations of the strike and trade unions more broadly resonated with people due to significant disillusionment with the labour movement. Both the left and the right had developed significant critiques of trade unions, but the Thatcherite view had gained greater traction among the broader public. The scalar chasm between the leadership and members of some trade unions, especially where there was weak shop steward or other workplace organisation, meant that anti-democratic accusations carried some weight (Cumbers, MacKinnon, and Shaw 2010). The lack of support for the miners' strike from some trade union leaders was important. Yet just as significant a problem was the inability of even supportive trade union leaders to carry their membership with them.

Uneven economic geographies and patterns of trade union organisation helped shape reactions to the strike. For a number of labour geographers, such unevenness can be reflected in the privileging of place over class by trade unions and workers (Herod 2001; Hudson and Sadler 1986; Lier 2007; Tufts 2007). Place and class, however, were intimately connected. Certainly a defence of place was evident during the miners' strike, with the heavy emphasis on protecting mining communities. This drew in much support that may have otherwise been hostile to a strike simply over wages. At the same time, the attachment to particular mining communities, while essential for maintaining the strike, paralleled the uneven geographic development of the industry and the strength of local and regional identities within the NUM. This militated against a national response over threatened pit closures, concentrated in the 'peripheral' coalfields, which was reflected most starkly in the refusal of the majority of Nottinghamshire miners to strike (Howell 2012). While a majority of miners did support the strike, the relative lack of unity compared to the early 1970s had consequences for attempts to encourage solidarity in the labour movement. In a time of high unemployment, the miners' defence of jobs was undermined in part by the fear of other trade unionists for their own jobs, a problem that appeals to class solidarity were unable to overcome. However, despite, and perhaps because of, the limited support from groups such as steel workers that may have

been considered traditional allies, the miners developed seemingly more novel alliances. The next chapter explores the relationships of solidarity developed between the coalfields and feminist, LGBT, and black activists in London.

**Chapter 7**

**Generative solidarity and the refiguring of class: gender, race and sexuality in the miners' support movement**

**Introduction**

On 10 December 1984, Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners organised their single most successful event: a fundraiser attended by 1,400 people at the Electric Ballroom in Camden featuring Bronski Beat, which raised in the region of £5000. Two guests from Dulais in the South Wales coalfield addressed the audience, articulating themes that have been central to understanding the impact of the strike. Hefina Headon declared that 'the women of South Wales have been liberated. We had no idea of the power we had. That will not be suppressed. We will never go back to sitting at home again.' In a powerful exposition of the potentially mutual nature of solidarity, David Donovan promised the crowd: 'You have worn our badge, "Coal not Dole", and you know what harassment means, as we do. Now we will pin your badge on us, we will support you. It won't change overnight, but now 140,000 miners know that there are other causes and other problems. We know about blacks, and gays, and nuclear disarmament. And we will never be the same' (Presland 1984b). Donovan's speech in particular highlighted what Featherstone (2012:5, 19) has described as 'the generative, transformative character of solidarity', the way in which solidarity can construct relationships between 'diverse social groups' and create 'new ways of relating'.

This chapter explores the generation of diverse solidarities in interactions between London supporters and the coalfields during the strike. In the first section, I situate this history in the context of debates on intersectionality, difference and essentialism. I argue that through accounts of translocal solidarities we can understand intersectionality as a political practice that both expresses differences and articulates commonalities. Strong versions of anti-essentialism, I suggest, have the potential to be de-politicising. In contrast, the miners' support movement is useful in thinking about the need for both autonomous organising and the simultaneous construction of broad and powerful political coalitions. In the second section, I discuss relationships between women in the capital and mining areas, the impact the strike had on the gendered nature of the coalfields, and the role of feminist ideas and supporters. I then consider the place of race in the strike, the involvement of black activists both from London and the coalfields, and the centrality of discussions around state violence to these alliances. Finally, I focus on LGBT support, particularly from LGSM, and argue that this history can usefully contribute to debates around migration and class in the

geographies of sexuality. I do not treat gender, race, sexuality and class in isolation, but as far as possible highlight the overlapping and intersecting ways in which these categories were experienced and articulated through the solidarity movement. I emphasise a geographical approach to intersectionality, as a process that develops both in and between places. I argue centrally that the miners' support movement offers a compelling example of an intersectional politics in practice, one that contested the exclusions of the labour movement but also developed new alliances and effective solidarity.

**Intersectionality, difference and solidarity**

Intersectionality as a theory and political practice has deep roots. Its origins are most closely associated with black feminism and critical race theory in the USA, and it was first articulated explicitly by the legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (Carbado et al. 2013). Crenshaw argued against a tendency to treat race and gender as exclusive rather than mutually constitutive categories. Black women, she argued, were erased by a single-axis framework that predominated in antidiscrimination law, feminist theory and anti-racist politics (Crenshaw 1989, 1991). Rather than simply adding different forms of oppression together, intersectionality highlights how multiple factors intersect and shape each other. This insight has been taken up by researchers across a range of disciplines and theoretical perspectives, although it has remained strongly connected to feminism (McCall 2005; Yuval-Davis 2006).

The history of the miners' strike can contribute to a genealogy of intersectionality. Pragna Patel (2011), an activist in Southall Black Sisters, argued that their practice of building alliances, including during the miners' strike, constituted an intersectional politics even if it was not yet explicitly expressed as such. Such assertions can be controversial. Carbin and Edenheim have dismissed as 'un-Foucauldian' any attempt to suggest 'intersectional thinking' existed before the concept itself. They criticise claims for the intersectionality of socialist feminism in the 1970s as an attempt to exculpate this feminism from its 'compromising history' on race (Carbin and Edenheim 2013:237). Such a claim, however, reduces the influence of black activists themselves in developing such ideas through political practice. Acknowledging the power of Crenshaw's articulation of intersectionality should not mean ignoring how others contributed to the development of comparable ideas and practices.

Intersectional theorists tend to emphasise complexity and resist attempts to assert the primacy of any category, whether gender, race, class, sexuality or another. Gill Valentine

(2007:19) has highlighted how geographers can contribute 'an appreciation of the significance of space in these processes of subject formation'. Assessing geographies of gender and sexuality, Michael Brown has argued that there has been a particular emphasis on the role of place in bringing together different identities and subjectivities. He suggests, however, that there is a comparative lack of work on intersectionality across space (Brown 2012:542). The history of translocal solidarity during the miners' strike can contribute to addressing this absence. This chapter highlights how networks of support between the coalfields and the capital foregrounded intersectional experiences and politics. The relationships developed between London and the coalfields in particular disrupted the simplistic ways in which particular subjectivities and politics were mapped onto different regions of Britain.

Intersectionality challenges the perceived homogeneity of particular categories. In this sense, it can be understood as fundamentally anti-essentialist. For labour geographers, this means in particular that 'working class' cannot be understood independently from race and gender at least (McDowell, Anitha, and Pearson 2012). There is a sense here in which intersectionality is perceived as primarily a theory of difference (McDowell 2008b; Pratt and Hanson 1994). Differences between and within London and the coalfields are important to my account, and to how this history can influence the way we think about solidarity. As I discussed in Chapter 1, Raphael Samuel (1986a:x) denied that support for the miners could be conceptualised as solidarity because it was based on 'difference—the uniqueness of the pit villages in the landscape of contemporary life'. This is an understanding of solidarity that is far too restricted. The support, for example, of black Londoners for white miners, shows how important relationships of solidarity can be developed across differences.

These relationships of support constructed across space also allowed for the articulation of differences within particular places. By bringing miners to London, for example, LGSM asserted a distinctly working-class lesbian and gay identity and politics in spaces they felt were dominated by middle-class people (Bradley 1984). However, the translocal solidarity movement also encouraged the recognition of common experiences and identities that may otherwise have been hidden. Commonalities of class, for example, could be recognised between black Londoners and white miners. Seen through the prism of translocal solidarities, therefore, intersectionality can productively be understood as simultaneously a theory of differences and commonalities (Roberts and Jesudason 2013). The process of constructing these intersectional solidarities had an impact both within places and on relationships across space.

Solidarity cannot be an effective and transformative political relationship if it elides important differences. Geographers and others working on 'de-colonizing' solidarity have warned against attempts to collapse boundaries, especially where significant inequalities of power exist in these relationships (Land 2015; Mott 2016; Sundberg 2007). Nevertheless, an excessive emphasis on difference can be stultifying for political movements. Robyn Dowling (2009:838) points to the development of 'a new language of class' in human geography that focuses on 'complexity and multiplicity', intersectionality, and an explicit anti-essentialism. Linda McDowell, however, has questioned whether 'the theoretical and practical consequences of fragmentation, the emphasis on difference and diversity, a neglect of commonalities facing a new global proletariat, [is] making it more difficult to organise across space and scale, across differences of locality, gender and lived experience' (McDowell 2008b:505; see also Mitchell 2005:96).

Anti-essentialism and fluidity, as Valentine points out, can usefully provide space for agency in the construction of new relationships (Valentine 2007:14). Nevertheless, some versions of these theories can have an ambivalent relationship to politics. Kath Browne, for instance, has made a strong argument that geographers of sexuality have used the language of queer without sufficiently adopting their theory. Browne argues for 'queer as potential, fluid and defying categorisation', which 'can be used to question the tenets of "political action", "radical gay politics" itself and the essence of all we have known as "political" […A]nswers, definitions and boundaries are decidedly "unqueer"' (Browne 2006:890–891). LGSM would fit uneasily into such a conceptualisation of queer, because they did set boundaries and offer answers. However, such an approach may be necessary for effective political action.

The use of categories, for all the reductionism this involves, is useful for abstracting from experience and can be politically essential. The use of the term 'black' by some supporters of the miners and other activists in this period, for example, reflected a desire to develop political allegiances between people of African and Asian heritage, despite the obvious multiplicity of experiences contained in that category (Ramamurthy 2006; Waters 2016). Lynne Segal noted that seventies feminism was later 'severely chastised for its essentialism', yet 'the category "woman" was rarely seen as unitary, despite the oversimplifications that inevitably tend to accompany calls for collective action' (Segal 2013:158). Strong versions of anti-essentialism can inhibit the ability to organise collectively around specific forms of oppression. In this sense, political activism can necessitate 'strategic essentialism' (Spivak 1990; see also Knopp 2004:122).

The experience of the miners' strike solidarity movement can be understood as an attempt to negotiate these complexities. Women, black, and lesbian and gay activists campaigned autonomously around the dispute, rejecting claims that such activism was divisive for working-class politics. Nevertheless, they organised collectively around specific categories. Theorists that emphasise difference often highlight and even valorise the marginal (Knopp 2004; Pratt and Hanson 1994). This can mean an admirable focus on the oppressed in society, but, as Eagleton (1995) has argued, a 'cult of marginality' can also lead to a simplistic elevation of minorities above majorities. The creation of what Stuart Hall described as 'a new historical bloc of forces' was based on the recognition that democratic, politically transformative projects are necessarily majoritarian in some sense (Hall 1988:198). The diverse activists supporting the miners suggested that these networks of translocal solidarity had the potential to construct a movement that did not elide differences, but nevertheless moved beyond the fragments to a larger, and more powerful, collective (Rowbotham, Segal, and Wainwright 1980).

**Coalfield women, metropolitan women and feminism**

One of the best studied aspects of the 1984-5 miners' strike has been the involvement of women from the coalfields in local support campaigns, cohering to some extent in a national Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC) movement (for example Holden 2005; Seddon 1986; Spence and Stephenson 2009, 2013; Witham 1986). The more celebratory accounts have emphasised how this solidarity transgressed gender roles in mining communities, and had a significant long-term effect by reshaping relations within the coalfields (Stead 1987). Certainly it is necessary to complicate this picture, recognising at least that this was an uneven process. As I have discussed in Chapter 4, the significant antecedents in terms of women's activism within the coalfields also needs to be integrated into accounts of the strike. Moreover, gender relations were of course not uniform across the entire British coalfield.[1] Nevertheless, the sheer scale of the 1984-5 dispute drew large numbers of women into political activism for the first time, and even for those with previous political experience there was much that was new.

Some of the coalfield women involved explicitly recognised the limitations of class politics as it had been practised in Britain. A Barnsley women's group activist told a rally that 'we aren't in this country just separated as a class, we're separated as men and as women. We as

---

[1] Phillips (2012a:5), for example, has argued that the Communist tradition may have been important in the 'particularly progressive character of gender relations in Scotland's coalfields, leavened as it was, admittedly, by a measure of unreconstructed male chauvinism'.

women have not often been encouraged to be actively involved in trade unions […] It's always been an area that seemed to belong to men. We're seen to be the domesticated element of the family' (Gregory 1984). Gender roles within the coalfields were contested in particular by the activity women undertook during the strike, organising and speaking at meetings, picketing and so on. In so far as these changes were articulated explicitly in terms of gender, the influence of feminist activists may have played a role. The strike provided an opportunity for the meeting of women politically active in the coalfields and in London that was otherwise unlikely. In the feminist magazine *Spare Rib* one South London supporter asked 'what else would have brought together women from mining villages and London feminists, giving us access to each other's different ways of life?' (*Spare Rib* 1985b).

Personal accounts that emphasize the broadening horizons of coalfield women during the strike often do so in explicitly geographical terms: political awakening is reflected in perspectives expanding beyond the coalfields. Siân James, the wife of a South Wales miner, commented on fears that her neighbours would not welcome lesbian and gay support: 'But they're not like that at all. And it's really great and they've accepted that there is a life apart from the valley' (LGSM 1986). Similarly, a woman from Kent commented that before the strike, 'I wasn't aware of what was going on outside England. Now I'm aware of what's going on round the world as well' (Heathfield 1985d).[2] It was not only a perspective shift: many accounts emphasise the experience of leaving the coalfields to raise support for the strike (Salt and Layzell 1985:53–55). The strike enabled significant mobility and a sense of independence. A Kent activist talked about giving her first speech three weeks into the dispute: 'I was more frightened of getting on a train on my own than I was of actually speaking. Never been to London on my own [...] I don't think I'd been to Deal [a town in Kent] on my own on the bus even. It was that silly. And to go on the underground … I was going to die. This fear inside me. As soon as I'd overcome that once and I actually got to the meeting, to say what I felt was easy' (Heathfield 1985k). A Nottinghamshire woman described how 'women have been running round. Going to London. Going all over the place. It's really broadened their horizons' (Heathfield 1985h). As I suggested in Chapter 5, less frequently observed is that the strike also gave Londoners an opportunity to visit parts of Britain that they had never been to before.

Some visitors to London commented on the significantly different gender relationships they encountered. One Midlands woman explained how, like many others, she first visited

---

[2] This is one of a number of interviews conducted by Betty Heathfield. Some of the material was used for a book in 1985 (Salt and Layzell 1985). I largely refer to the interview transcripts at the Women's Library, however, as these are comparatively complete.

London during the strike and it opened her eyes. 'Up here we come straight out of the kitchen sink, looking after kids and what have you […] Down there it's just part of life that the women do this, that and that other. Up here, no it isn't. And some of the men don't like that all. The men resent us standing on our own two feet' (Heathfield 1985b). Of course the women they encountered in London—primarily political and trade union activists—were not necessarily representative of the city as a whole. Nevertheless, visiting London to raise funds for the strike exposed some women to different ways of life. Echoes of this can be found in the accounts of LGSM members, who pointed to the advantages for gay men of being in London (Flynn, Goldsmith, and Sutcliffe 1985:45). As I argue below, however, this did not lead to a straightforward embrace of the capital.

Differences between women in London and the coalfields could be perceived in class and ideological terms, in some instances creating tensions and uncertainties. One woman fundraising in the capital felt initially that Londoners were 'either posh, too above me or way out', and as a result she 'tried to talk posh' and not drop her aitches. These narratives tend to emphasise the overcoming of apparently surface differences: 'Honest they are normal people who just dress a different way from us. They've got hearts as good as gold' (Heathfield 1985i; Salt and Layzell 1985:53). Loretta Loach, a member of the editorial board of *Spare Rib*, believed that 'hesitation and lack of confidence characterized the early days of women's involvement in the strike and that was felt as much in relation to "educated" women in London as it was to men.' One woman Loach interviewed from South Yorkshire commented that on first visiting London she 'expected to be laughed at, the way I spoke, the way I am, but I made some friends and that gives you more guts to do what you're doing' (Loach 1985:176). These accounts suggest the successful negotiation of such perceived differences and the development of a translocal 'cross-class comradery' (Robinson 2007:165; see also Samuel 1986b:33).

The perception of feminism as middle class, however, meant that discussions around feminism were in part inflected with class concerns. Loach argued that the women's support movement in the coalfields was not feminist, reflecting the focus in 'tightly knit' mining communities on 'men and masculinity'. Nevertheless, she believed it had been a learning process that was 'mutually beneficial to working-class women and middle-class feminists' (Loach 1985:169). The question of how much women's support groups explicitly related to feminism was complex, with on occasion the label 'feminist' itself being resisted (Ali 1986; Loach 1985; Salt and Layzell 1985:78; Shaw 1993). Barnsley activist Lorraine Bowler, however, believed that the women's movement had been an important influence in spurring

the support groups. She explained that 'some of our women would see themselves as feminists, some wouldn't', but the 'organisation of women in the strike is clearly more explicitly feminist and far stronger than ever before' (Arkwright 1984).

A woman whose area had twinned with Camden during the strike expressed a more ambivalent attitude: 'We've become feminists in our own kind of way but we're not true feminists … I like my old man to still know he's boss. I've got mixed feelings because now I want to be equal to him, but I want him to still wear the trousers in the house' (Heathfield 1985i). It is necessary to be cautious of accounts that suggest it was always men enforcing gender boundaries and roles, as the reality was inevitably more complex (Ali 1986). The same woman felt that she 'could never be a true feminist. Honest. Although I think women should be equal. I'd never go down pits! I'm a coward!' (Heathfield 1985i). Just as with the mine itself, the picket line was often considered an exclusively male space. In some areas miners welcomed women on the picket line but in others it was resisted (Crane 1986; Loach 1984; Shaw 1993:13; *Spare Rib* 1985a). Sometimes coalfield women themselves however, even those involved in support groups, believed that picketing should be left to men (Headon and Thomas 1985).

The question of the family and heterosexual relationships seems to have been important here. It is notable, for instance, that LGSM avoided the explicit anti-family rhetoric prominent in the GLF in the early 1970s, frequently framing their solidarity in terms of supporting 'miners and their families' (Kelliher 2014:250–1). Another woman interviewed by Heathfield commented that

> We don't class ourselves as feminists. We've met a lot of feminists and we've been insulted by a lot of feminists. Not that they meant to insult us, but we still want to be married women […] We're married and we've got families, and this is what we wanted out of our lives. Obviously, the strike has taught us a lot, but I don't want to change things so my husband doesn't think of me as his wife. And my kids don't think of me as their mother. To me, my husband is my husband, and I love him (Heathfield 1985a:29).

Feminist understandings of the family were contentious in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Some black feminists had criticised white feminists for failing to recognise the different meaning attached to the family by black women, and this may have had some echo among working-class women (Rowbotham 1989:22; Thomlinson 2012).

The impact of the strike on marriages was mixed, some deteriorated while others felt their relationships were strengthened (Heathfield 1985d, 1985f; Strike 2009). Almost certainly for the majority this had more to do with the severe hardships of the strike rather than ideological transformations, yet the reaction—both positive and negative—of miners to women's active involvement in the strike clearly played a role. It may have been an infrequent occurrence, but on at least one occasion two miners' wives who met through the strike started a relationship (Lawrence 1993). The active involvement of women in the strike, however, was often perceived as a defence of their families. Writing about the 1972 dispute, Peter Heathfield claimed that Kent NUM alone had involved 'the womenfolk' in strike activities. He believed this was 'most essential if the family unit is to be preserved' (Heathfield 1979).

The idea that women in the coalfields felt insulted by visiting feminists, particularly around questions of the family, highlights the tension that could exist in these encounters. In the same interview as quoted from at length above, a woman described how 'we've had groups down here. Real staunch bloody feminists. And we've been singing in the backroom "A woman never knows what a good man she's got until she turns him down". They were horrified! "You mustn't sing that!" and we'd say "Well, you do what you want to do but we're on our own ground and we're singing these songs"' (Heathfield 1985a:29). These dynamics are important in thinking about how to construct productive solidarity relationships. Clare Land, as I discussed in Chapter 2, has suggested that white feminist supporters of indigenous struggles were most successful when they did not attempt to gender the issues. Instead, it was important that they gave support to, and recognised the oppression of both indigenous men and women (Land 2015:74). There is arguably a parallel here, where women in the coalfields did not always welcome feminist support that criticised the gender structures of their communities. In particular, there is a sense that it was inappropriate and patronising for guests from outside the area to assume they could tell other women how to behave. Nevertheless, a degree of friction may be inevitable in the development of such relationships. An approach to solidarity that is excessively deferential may mitigate these tensions and protect against elitism, but it nevertheless makes relationships of mutual learning less likely.

The notion that feminism became 'a mass force in the working class' through the women's support groups may therefore be an exaggeration, but that does not mean the interactions had no impact on either London or the coalfields (Hansen, Durham, and Bush 1985). Some, largely male commentators, believed that there was equally an awakening to working-class

politics for feminists (Ali 1984; O'Mahony 1985:8). Such commentary tended to ignore the significant involvement throughout the 1970s of feminists, especially socialist feminists, in campaigns around night cleaners, the Grunwick strike and other labour disputes (Rowbotham 2006; Stevenson 2016a). As discussed in Chapter 4, the Women's Liberation Movement had some involvement in supporting miners' strikes in the early 1970s. Indeed, for some radical or revolutionary feminists, the early dominance of socialists in the WLM resulted in an exaggerated emphasis on class (Rees 2010). Nevertheless, support for a strike in an almost entirely male industry may have seemed less likely than campaigns around disputes such as Grunwick. Some feminists felt 'unease' about the strike due to miners' sexism and because 'the supposed traditional solidarity of the miners, much romanticised by the Left, is based as much on a machismo male bonding of tough men doing a tough job as on a sense of class consciousness' (Stevi Jackson 1984). The framing of the strike in terms of a defence of community rather than simply jobs or wages, and the widespread and prominent involvement of coalfield women, undoubtedly played a role in encouraging feminist support (see for example Lewis 2011; Patel 2011).

At least some London women sought to interact with miners as well as coalfield women. Many undoubtedly supported the strike on its own terms, but some also saw solidarity relationships as an opportunity to challenge misogynistic views. Nina Gosling from Hackney joined a union delegation to a miners' demonstration in Mansfield. She described arguing with Northumberland miners as they were marching together that they should not be singing sexist songs if they wanted women trade unionists to support them, discussions that continued in the pub afterwards (Gosling 1984). The 'pockets of entrenched sexism' that existed among miners were of course being challenged by women within the coalfields as well (Douglas 1984a; see also Douglas 1984b). It may be tempting to crudely distinguish between feminists who saw men as potential allies and those that did not—and clearly this had some impact on forms of involvement with the strike—but the situation was arguably more dynamic. Debby Withall reported on a women's support conference in Manchester: 'for many feminists, the miners' strike has meant reassessing our attitudes to working with men, and has shown the real links between feminism and the struggles of working-class women. It has not been easy but women at the conference felt that the miners are beginning to listen to the people who have supported them. Many have challenged their own sexism and racism, and are prepared publicly to support the struggles of women, lesbians and gays, and black people' (*Spare Rib* 1985a:31).

It is necessary to complicate the geographical imagination implicit in some accounts of relationships between metropolitan and coalfield women. 'Educated women' and feminists existed outside of London as well (Loach 1985:176).[3] One of the individual feminists closest to WAPC, for example, was its treasurer Jean McCrindle, then a tutor at the Northern College in Barnsley (Rowbotham and McCrindle 1986). The Greenham Common campaigners, whose links with coalfield women during the strike I discuss below, originated in South Wales. At the same time, London women active supporting the strike were neither necessarily self-identified feminists nor external to the labour movement. Among printworkers for instance, London SOGAT 82 had a specific women's branch that was active fundraising and visiting coalfield areas (SOGAT 82 London Women's Branch 1984). There is little in their minute books from the period that suggests an explicit engagement with feminism. This was perhaps reflected in a report from the 1985 TUC Women's conference by SOGAT 82 delegate Lin Tsiricos: 'I searched hard for the feminist fanatics, and examined the agenda carefully for resolutions calling for the abolition of men – but to no avail. There wasn't even one hiss of derision when a man rose to speak!' She wanted to reassure fellow members that the Women's TUC was not, as she had previously believed, 'a crank's convention' (*SOGAT Women* 1985:3).

This is not to counterpose feminist and trade union activists, when there was of course an overlap between the two. One essay on feminist involvement in the British trade union movement published by *Feminist Review* in 1984 attempted to outline the complexities of the relationship. Elliot argued that autonomous women's organization within trade unions was weak except in education courses. Women-only courses brought together feminist trade unionists and those who would 'bristle at the label "feminist"' (Elliott 1984:68). There were commonalities but also real tensions. 'Some women may get upset by what they see as "men-hating"' (Elliott 1984:68–69). Support from London women for the strike undoubtedly reflected this complex mix. The solidarity movement for the miners was, however, capable of bringing together women involved in a range of trade union, feminist and other campaigns.

A concerted effort was made to relate WAPC to a number of women's struggles in London and elsewhere. A group from Nottinghamshire, for instance, visited Northern Ireland on International Women's Day to express support for women in Armagh jail (*Here We Go* 1985).[4] Meetings in London drew together women striking against pay cuts at Barking

---

[3] On the WLM outside of London, see for example Browne (2014) and Lockyer (2013).

[4] Armagh was the only women's jail in Northern Ireland and held a number of republican prisoners. The increased use of strip searches in the early 1980s led to protests and a solidarity campaign (Loughran 1986).

Hospital, WAPC and Greenham Common activists (Field 1984; Heathfield 1985l). In this way, the translocal solidarity networks attempted to create 'counter-topographies of resistance' (Brown and Yaffe 2014:44; see also Katz 2001). Miners' support groups with different emphases, for example black or lesbian and gay support groups, constructed overlapping but distinct oppositional topographies. Activists involved with Greenham, both those at the site itself and supporters elsewhere, perhaps had the greatest impact in making an alliance with WAPC. This arguably reflected shared opposition to the nuclear industry (Norden 1985). Reciprocal visits between the Greenham Camp and the coalfields, and the support from Greenham women in London and elsewhere, feature frequently in accounts of the time (Heathfield 1985g; Headon and Thomas 1985; Humber 1985; Neath and District Miners' Support Group 1984a; Shaw 1993). The deep impression made by Greenham on WAPC can perhaps be seen in the adoption of protest camps by women in the campaigns against pit closures in the early 1990s (Douglass 2010:279).

The Greenham camp was one prominent example of a women-only political space. There were places in London that feminist supporters took women from South Wales to raise support other than workplaces that, they believed, 'men couldn't or wouldn't go: refuges, single parents' groups, one o'clock clubs, schools, community, youth and health centres'. A member of this South London support group commented that 'I felt so excited sitting in a community centre listening to South London women enthusiastically discussing day to day life through the strike with women from pit villages' (*Spare Rib* 1985b). In other cases, fundraising events in London organised by feminists, often with guests from the coalfields, were explicitly organised in 'women only' spaces including the Waltham Forest and King's Cross women's centres (*City Limits* 1985b; LAPC and LGSM 1985; *Time Out* 1984a, 1984c; Waltham Forest Miners Support Group 1984). Accounts of the strike can emphasise how coalfield women transgressed gendered boundaries by joining picket lines for instance, or simply by their public involvement in the strike. These connections with Greenham and London feminist supporters, however, highlight that there were distinctly gendered spaces in which coalfield women could appeal for solidarity that were unavailable to miners.

The translocal solidarity relationships developed between coalfield and metropolitan women are an important part of the story of the strike. The extent to which we can claim these relationships as transformative however, and more broadly how we assess the long term impact of the dispute on gender relations in the coalfields, is not straightforward. As a model for women's involvement in the labour movement, the miners' strike was both inspiring and somewhat problematic. Women's prominence ultimately derived from their relationship to

men at work; it was the miners' wives that were highlighted rather than the women working in the canteens or the offices for the NCB.[5] The emphasis on women in their familial roles perhaps accounts for the fact that those involved in WAPC are often portrayed as housewives, when many were also in waged employment and some were already trade unionists themselves (Davies 2010:67).

The women whose accounts we have access to are largely the minority who actively campaigned during that year. Even within this group, there was a diversity of attitudes. One Kent woman described how 'a lot of women just want to get back to reality. Get back to a normal family life. Spending time with the kids, which through the strike you haven't had a lot of time for. But there's an awful lot of women who used to say they'd be glad when it was all over just to get back to normality, being a proper housewife again, sort of thing! But it will never be like that for me now. It's really changed me' (Heathfield 1985d). Certainly, studies that have emphasised continuity or a reversion to established gender roles within coalfield communities have served as a necessary corrective to overly simplistic and romanticised views (Shaw 1993). A parallel can be seen in accounts of Appalachian coal miners' strikes in the 1970s, where the wives of coal miners also played prominent roles but were pressured by husbands and the union back towards established gender roles afterwards (Fisher 1993:323). Although, as the quote above suggests, it was not always a case of only men re-enforcing gender norms.

It is worth considering the role defeat played in shutting down those openings that had emerged. The fact that WAPC was refused associate membership of the NUM after the strike suggests there was a relatively shallow change of attitudes within the union. The move was, however, supported by Scargill, Heathfield and McGahey, but their position in relation to the right of the union was weakened by the failure of the strike (Rowbotham and McCrindle 1986:122). The decline of the industry and mining communities in the aftermath of defeat meant that reciprocal support was less likely (Robinson 2007:179). This tempers notions that the transformations engendered by the solidarity movement can be straightforwardly salvaged from the strike's defeat. Thörn has argued, in the context of the anti-apartheid movement, for the need to consider the impact of political movements beyond their immediate goal. The anti-apartheid movement, he argues, 'created networks of solidarity, as well as political action forms that made – and still makes – an impact on the political cultures of countries all over the world' (Thörn 2009:421; see also Featherstone 2012:33). Such an

---

[5] For a debate on similar experiences in the US context, see Roediger (1994:127–180).

understanding is important to arguments I make here, yet the success of the immediate goal and the broader effects are not always so easily disentangled.

Nevertheless, it is important not to ignore the genuine processes of change that took place, even if this was among a relatively small group of women (Spence and Stephenson 2007). Individual stories such as Siân James's are important to recount. A South Wales miners' wife particularly active in forming alliances with Londoners, James continued joining picket lines at Wapping, undertook higher education, became a director of Welsh Women's Aid and then a Labour MP (James et al. 2014; Kellaway 2014). Discussing WAPC, Featherstone has argued that the 'formation of solidarities in and between places can re-shape power relations within places' (Featherstone 2012:31). The experience of the strike and the diverse solidarities forged across localities were crucial for some individuals in becoming and remaining political activists. At a collective level, a number of women's organisations in the coalfields disappeared, some more rapidly than others (Shaw 1993). WAPC did continue to be active however, playing a prominent role in the campaign against pit closures in the early 1990s (Beckwith 1996). In addition, they provided practical support to a number of struggles outside of the coal industry, including long industrial disputes at Hillingdon hospital in the 1980s and on the Liverpool docks in the 1990s (Sweeney 2014). The experiences of 1984-5 therefore left a significant legacy of women's solidarity activism both within and beyond the coalfields (Guest 2016:49–83).

**Black solidarity, black miners and state violence**

One potential problem for organizing feminist support during the strike was the fragmentation of the Women's Liberation Movement, which had not held a national conference since the fractious 1978 gathering (Rees 2010). Critique of the WLM was particularly prominent in the mid-1980s from black women who were increasingly organising autonomous groups such as Southall Black Sisters (SBS), founded in 1979 (Amos and Parmar 1984; Gupta 2003; Southall Black Sisters 1990; Thomlinson 2012). SBS worked in alliance with other black London organisations to provide support for the largely white miners during the 1984-5 strike. A 'black delegation' of Londoners to the Kent coalfields was organised in June 1984 by a number of groups including SBS, Camden Black Workers Group, Southall Miners Support Group, Black Women for Wages for Housework, and the

Hackney Asian Collective.[6] This provided the impetus for sustained involvement in the strike under the name Black Delegation to the Mining Communities (BDMC).[7]

Discussions of race and solidarity have been prominent in geography and other disciplines, particularly around debates on decolonising solidarity (Land 2015; Mott 2016; Sundberg 2007). These contributions have covered important ground in thinking through the possibility of solidarity especially between white and indigenous peoples in the Americas and Australia, and how to negotiate relationships which 'are fraught with power asymmetries' (Sundberg 2007:114). One answer offered is that solidarity activists should defer to those they are supporting (Brown and Yaffe 2014:41). There is a risk, however, of portraying solidarity across racialized differences as something that white people do, removing the agency of black people to construct solidarity relationships and develop more reciprocal connections. It is a sense, more broadly, that those offering solidarity tend to be in a privileged position. This can of course be true, but it is important to reject the idea that people subject to oppression are unable to develop relationships of solidarity (Featherstone 2012:5). The activism of black Londoners and others described in this chapter should be seen as undermining such assumptions.

Pragna Patel, a prominent figure in SBS who was involved in the visit of black Londoners to Kent, explained how they took coachloads of people and Indian food: 'often the mining communities had never met or talked to Indian people or Asian people. And so there were a real camaraderie.' Although they were not 'necessarily all progressive on race issues […] they were exposed to seeing black women on picket lines and at the mining communities at the coalface, you know, supporting them' (Patel 2011). The central involvement of Asian organisations from Southall and elsewhere highlights connections to the Asian Youth Movements (Ramamurthy 2013). Some of the individuals involved, for example Suresh Grover, had been active in the AYMs. The influence was reflected more broadly in the use of 'black' as an inclusive and political identity, and the attention paid to class and the question of racism within class politics (Ramamurthy 2013:3). This was evident in recent reflections on the miners' strike by Pragna Patel. She argued that in supporting the miners' strike they situated themselves 'as part of a wider labour movement'; it was from within that

---

[6] Other groups involved, or who had individual members involved, included the Asian Socialist Collective, Brixton Defence Campaign, London Campaign Against the Police Bill, Brixton Black Women Group, Black Liberation Front, Black People Forum, Black Trade Union Solidarity Movement, Workers Against Racism, National Union of Domestic Employees (Trinidad), Harlesden Asian Women Refuge, Reinstate Sri Asokamola Campaign, Southall Black Women Centre, Troops Out Movement, Southall Monitoring Group, I.T.H.U.S.E., Chinese Information and Advice Centre (BDMC 1984a, 1984b).

[7] I have stuck to this name for consistency although variations are used in different sources, perhaps reflecting a relatively ad-hoc organisation.

they could critique how the labour movement had 'often failed black workers' (Patel 2011). This reflected broader moves towards black self-organisation within the trade unions and the Labour Party (Anand 1984; Virdee and Grint 1994; Wongsam 1984). A Black Sections group from Westminster North Labour Party was among supporters who travelled to Stoke-on-Trent to offer solidarity to miners in the area (*The Voice* 1984a).

SBS also emphasised the importance of supporting women organising in the coalfields (Patel 2011). Such alliances could be articulated in terms that were simultaneously conscious of race, gender and class. Patel was clear that the development of such relationships constituted an intersectional political practice, and the miners' strike shows how translocal solidarities were important in this process. Another group that organised collections for the miners was the Black Trade Unionists Solidarity Movement. One of their members discussed the visit of miners' wives from Doncaster: 'we've got the same problems, white working-class women and black working-class women and we've got to find some common bond where we can come together. And I mean if it's going to be the miners' strike then at least that's one positive thing that's come out of it […] I mean it's very very slim and shakey at the moment but at least there's something there' (Anthony 1985). Forms of intersectionality therefore help us understand some of the relationships developed. Affinities of class and gender could help forge connections across racialized differences.

In an article in *Race Today*, London-based Trinidadian activist and writer John La Rose argued that 'no single battle of the working class and people in Britain has aroused so much passion and attracted so much solidarity from black workers and unemployeds [sic] as the one-year old Miners' Strike. What has struck us and won our admiration has been the courage, determination and heroism of the miners and their families, especially the women in their organisations' (La Rose 1985). The inspiration of coalfield women was clearly crucial in mobilising black support as it was for a number of other supporters. La Rose suggests that another reason for black support for the miners' strike, however, was the 'determination and heroism' of the struggle (La Rose 1985). The question of political power was important. Raphael Samuel argued that support for the miners, better characterised as charity than solidarity, 'was predicated on the miners' weakness rather than their strength' (Samuel 1986a:x). In contrast, according to one interview, it was the militancy of the miners that was important: 'they do not withdraw from the fight nor do they make concessions. I think that is a strong point where the miners come more closely to black people's struggle than any other union' (*Miners' Strike Songs* 1984). Support for the strike, and the attempt by diverse activists to influence the labour movement, in part reflected a belief in the

organised working class as a transformative agent. LGSM asked: 'if the miners are defeated in this strike what chance have we got?' (LGSM 1985b).

This helps explain the broader mobilising power of the miners' strike, an example of how particular struggles can resonate among wider political networks (Anderson 2015). Ralph Miliband expressed this in the most explicit terms. He argued that 'the "primacy" of organised labour in struggle arises from the fact that no other group, movement or force in capitalist society is remotely capable of mounting as effective and formidable a challenge to the existing structures of power and privilege as it is in the power of organized labour to mount […] And if, as one is constantly told is the case, the organized working class will refuse to do the job, then the job will not be done; and capitalism will continue, generation after generation' (Miliband 1985:10; for a similar argument see Rutherford 2010:774). The growth of more complex alliances in the 1980s in part reflected a questioning of this logic. Nevertheless, even the 'revisionists' that Miliband attacked were concerned with the same question of agency. Moving 'beyond the fragments' (Rowbotham, Segal, and Wainwright 1980) or constructing 'a new historical bloc of forces' (Hall 1988:198) was a question in large part of developing effective political power. Black solidarity during the miners' strike can be understood as part of this project.

It is necessary to be cautious about strictly contrasting a multi-racial metropolis with homogeneous white coalfields. Undoubtedly coal miners were largely white, and as Patel suggested the strike encouraged personal interactions with black people that was new for some people. One miners' wife commented that before the strike, 'I didn't like coloureds. It's really hard to get to know a coloured bloke round here' (Heathfield 1985e). There were, however, certainly some black miners, although precise numbers are difficult to know.[8] Black London-based feminist Gail Lewis recalled connections she developed with Asian women organising in Yorkshire through WAPC during the strike. This contrasted with the few contacts with white feminists she had outside of London (Lewis 2011).[9] Black miners came to London seeking support at a number of black and anti-racist events, most notably the Notting Hill Carnival where they worked with BDMC to reportedly raise £2,500 (Carter

---

[8] Figures of around 3,000 seemed to be circulating at the time, although only Ron Ramdin, who wrote that he was given the number by a black NUM official during the 1972 miners' strike, provides any source (BDMC 1984a; *Caribbean Times* 1984; Ramdin 1987:474; Roelofs and Canning 1985:6; Vassell 1984). Gary Morris believed that there must have been at least 1000 based on the stories he was told by black miners and because of their strong presence in some black institutions in mining areas (Morris 1986:41).

[9] Lewis also believed that BDMC visited Kent partly because there were more black miners there but this is contradicted by Patel's account. The proximity, also mentioned by Lewis, seems a more likely explanation. She may have been mixing this up with later visits to Nottinghamshire, where there do seem to have been a greater number of black miners.

1986:11; *Searchlight* 1985; Vassell 1984). The miners had two stalls, space on the African Liberation group's stall, and a float (Scola 1984).

Simon Berlin (1984) from Lambeth NALGO described spending

> some hours with a group of Staffordshire miners collecting for the hardship fund at the Notting Hill Carnival, they had never been to London before, and they said they would remember the day for the rest of their lives – because it was the spirit of unity and harmony on that day that was the urban expression of the life they knew in their own villages, and the miners were a natural and feted component at the carnival, because the miners' strike and the carnival expressed the same aspirations, a Britain that we all want but which is being denied us by Thatcher and her associates.

Black miners from Nottinghamshire visited workplaces in Brent through links established at the carnival, a black miner from South Staffordshire told a Haringey meeting 'about his experiences of arrest for "besetting" (looking at!) a neighbouring working miner', and two black miners from Derbyshire raised funds in Southall and Brent (Rouffiniac 1985:28; *Searchlight* 1985:16; van Gelderen 1984). The *Caribbean Times* (1984) and BDMC (1984a) noted that connections between black miners and black organisations had been rare; the links made at Carnival were seen as significant in this context. In some instances, at Carnival and as noted by Gail Lewis for example, what took place was therefore the establishment of networks of black solidarity between London and the coalfields.

Some translocal connections were also made through the support campaign with groups and individuals who were not miners. BDMC visited Nottinghamshire and campaigned jointly with black activists from outside the coal industry. Together they visited Gedling Colliery, where there was a strong black presence, in an apparently unsuccessful attempt to convince non-strikers to join the dispute (Morris 1986; *The Voice* 1984b). The relatively high concentration of black miners in the Midlands meant that, unsurprisingly, there were some that did not support the strike, almost certainly often for the same reasons as white miners in the area. Nevertheless, Gary Morris's interviews with black miners pointed towards some specific issues (Morris 1986). One was the sense that, in an area or pit that was largely not on strike, black people who took a minority position would stand out and be particularly exposed to retribution. This sense of vulnerability may have been present even where strikers were the majority. Fitzalbert Taylor, a black miner who did not strike in 1984-5 but picketed in 1972, described the earlier dispute: 'They said, "Come on Big Albert, we want you at the

front!" I thought when the police see me, a big black man, they will beat me at the front. But I am more sensible than that […] So I went to the back. It was a case of surviving because you don't get the same privileges as them. The police drank their soup with the white strikers. I thought this strike is not for us black men. After the 1972 strike, I said I was not going on no picket line again' (*The Voice* 2016). The picket line, then, could be understood as a white space.

Black workers also explained to Morris that they were given the worst jobs in the pits, and white people dominated the NUM even where there were substantial numbers of black miners (Morris 1986). This was reflected in the labour movement more widely, where despite a significantly higher union density among black and ethnic minority workers, representation among officials was very weak (Virdee and Grint 1994). Loyalty to the NUM may have therefore seemed less compelling for some black miners. According to Morris, some 'took the view that this was "not my country and I didn't come to Britain to fight battles for the white man"' (Morris 1986:44). One striking black miner was told at a meeting of black individuals and groups in Nottinghamshire that the dispute was a distraction for the black community (Morris 1986:46). Such views had parallels, although in a significantly different context, among lesbian and gay people who questioned support for the miners. One letter to *Capital Gay* during the strike argued 'that the mining communities under threat encapsulate all the sexist, patriarchal and anti-gay views which threaten us as lesbians and gay men', and suggested that supporting the strike reflected 'a guilt-ridden internalisation of the repressive view that lesbian and gay rights are a side-issue, subservient to the class struggle' (Weeks and Davies 1984).

Supporters of the miners, however, believed that a significant process of change was taking place through the strike. One factor frequently evoked to explain this was the experience of policing. Badges handed out at Notting Hill Carnival read 'Black People Support the Miners' and 'Oppose Police Violence'.[10] The question of state violence towards black people and the miners was often presented as a crucial unifying factor. Speaking to the Elvington Miners Wives Support Committee in Kent, Pragna Patel reportedly said that she hoped 'there would now be a more concrete unity between the Black and mining communities, based on their shared experiences of policing methods' (Bishop 1984). Reflecting some years later, Patel again emphasised the importance of the militarised and politicised 'police assault' faced by

---

[10] An image of the badge is in the TUC Library Collections, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'NUM' folder.

miners that 'was similar to what black people had faced […] in Brixton, in Southall, […] and Northern Ireland for example' (Patel 2011).

Similar arguments were made by John La Rose, who spoke at a solidarity meeting for the miners at Hackney representing the Alliance of Black Parents Movement, the Black Youth Movement and the Race Today Collective, and donated money to the miners' appeal on behalf of the New Beacon Bookshop in Finsbury Park (Hackney Miners Support Committee 1985a, 1985b; La Rose 1984). La Rose explained that during the strike 'the mineworkers learned what the black population have had to learn during 30 years of hard experience with the police and the courts. Some miners even said: We did not believe what you were saying about the police before but now we understand. We are facing the same thing now' (La Rose 1985). Accounts from miners and their families themselves, at least those active in the strike, frequently attest to this shift in consciousness (for example Farrar n.d.; LGSM 1986; South Yorkshire WAPC 1985; Ware 1985).

It was not entirely true that miners had never faced state violence before. While the 1970s strikes may have been looked upon nostalgically in 1984-5, earlier accounts do not suggest policing by consent. Arthur Scargill described police at a picket in 1972: 'I was black and blue. They were punching with their heels into the crowd, they were hitting with elbows' (Scargill 1975:15). South Wales NUM Area executive member Dai Davies made the point explicitly in 1984: 'it's not completely new for us. In 1910 in Tonypandy they brought troops and police into the valley. In 1921 South Wales was the huge producer of coal. The Yorkshire lads now are the big producers. That's why a lot of the police violence is concentrated there' (Coultas 1984). Nevertheless, the intensity of state oppression was clearly experienced as new by many miners, and while the historical memory of the police and troops in the valleys was important, the direct experience of police occupying mining communities had a deep impact (Green 1990).

What was crucial in forging new connections was the combination of personal experience of state violence, the perception of media misrepresentation, and the personal contact with black activists through solidarity networks (Farrar n.d.:51). Durham miner Norman Strike noted in his diary while raising support in London that 'one thing I noticed today was the tremendous [support] we get from the black community. I know what Brixton and Toxteth are really about now, having been at "The Battle of Orgreave", and am a proud card carrying member of the "Enemy Within"' (Strike 2009:133). This sense of becoming a 'minority group' and 'outcasts of the state', and the new understanding that it brought, was a powerful one (Kincaid 1984:13; see also Ware 1985). Siân James described discovering that mining

communities 'were next in line after lesbians and gays, black men, black women […] It's a horrifying position to be in. You cannot sympathise with an oppressed group until you've actually been a member of one' (LGSM 1986).

This sense of an alliance constructed under the specific circumstances of the miners' strike is encapsulated in Stuart Hall's understanding of articulation. It is a form of 'connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time. You have to ask, under what circumstances can a connection be forged or made?' (Hall and Grossberg 1996:141). This theory rejects automatic, pre-given connections and therefore allows a more dynamic and generative sense of alliance building. Yet Hall's exposition, influenced by Laclau, is highly abstracted and largely discursive. He argues that 'the theory of articulation asks how an ideology discovers its subject rather than how the subject thinks the necessary and inevitable thoughts which belong to it' (Hall and Grossberg 1996:142). Rather than an ideology discovering its subject, relationships of practical solidarity suggest more concrete ways in which alliances can be forged and commonalities articulated.

As Iveson has described in terms of the green ban movement in 1970s Sydney, such alliances were 'based not on some essential unity […] but on hard work' (Iveson 2014:1007). The possibility of solidarity as a transformative and generative relationship depends upon it being a political practice, not simply an expression of sympathy (Gould 2007:157). As I highlighted in Chapter 2, there has been extensive debate on whether shared experiences can form the basis for solidarity (hooks 1986; Shelby 2002). The intersectional critique that rejects common experience based on simplistic categories is important, nevertheless shared experiences articulated through translocal solidarity relationships can play an important role in forging alliances. A sense of shared experiences is neither entirely static nor endlessly malleable. The connections made by BDMC and others in terms of state oppression clearly resonated.

Groups like BDMC also made a direct connection between the policing of black communities in Britain and state violence in Northern Ireland, echoing again the connections made by AYM activists and others (Ramamurthy 2013:72–3). A delegation of Asian activists from Southall, Newham and Sheffield to Belfast in 1984 was organised by the Troops Out Movement (TOM).[11] The visitors from Southall commented on being shaken by the intensity of military surveillance and harassment, and by the extent of poverty: 'in

---

[11] Troops Out Movement, founded in London in 1973, campaigned for British troops to leave Northern Ireland and for Irish self-determination (Renwick 1999).

comparison, our own ghettoes back in England stand out in almost good light' (*Troops Out of Ireland* 1984a). The connections made between black and Irish activists over policing and anti-imperialism were reflected in the solidarity movement for the miners. A London meeting organised by BDMC had speakers from Kent NUM, WAPC, the Black Consciousness Movement, Azanian Trade Union Centre, Eelam Solidarity Committee, the PLO and Sinn Féin.[12]

TOM reflected on both the use of policing tactics developed in Northern Ireland on mining communities but also historical links between British miners and Ireland, including support from the Miners Federation of Great Britain during the 1913 Dublin lockout. They held meetings emphasising these connections in London and elsewhere, and took people from mining communities to visit Northern Ireland (Lovibon 1984; *Troops Out of Ireland* 1984b, 1984c). These visits again highlight the complex overlapping geographies evident during the strike: a campaign established in London taking miners from the British coalfields to visit Belfast. These meetings could be uncomfortable, especially as it was not unusual for miners to have family members serving in the British army in Northern Ireland. A Leicestershire miner taken to Belfast by TOM commented that it 'was awkward for me because my family was military – I'd got brothers in the army – but I thought I'd go over and see what it was all about' (Bell 2009:94). Others appeared less conflicted. A South Yorkshire miner explained that before they visited Belfast 'we were talking to a soldier whose dad is a miner […] I want to know what they do to turn someone like him into a killer – like the soldiers in landrovers [sic] and saracens we've seen today. I feel ashamed too. It's working class lads who are doing this. They're traitors to their class. His dad's an active picket in the strike, but the son's fighting his own kind' (Lovibon 1984:8).

The connections developed between the coalfields, anti-racist activists in London, and national liberation movements highlights how solidarity networks within Britain and transnationally could be constructed simultaneously. This can be seen for example in the account of Ken Evans, a Betteshanger miner who was resident in Brent for much of the strike. He travelled to America as a guest of the International Campaign Against Racism (INCAR) and spoke on university campuses, at the INCAR convention, and to Mexican farm workers and fruit pickers in California. He reported receiving 'deafening applause for the message of greeting I took from the London Miners Support Campaign and Brent Trades Council'. He felt this report would be of particular interest to Brent's 'black community'

---

[12] This list of organisations is from a leaflet advertising the meeting, on the back of which a letter held in LGSM's archive was written. The letter was suggesting LGSM make connections with Irish anti-imperialists in London (John C. 1984). The meeting is also discussed by Gilroy (1987:41, fn 7).

(Evans n.d.). International connections could be developed through more ad hoc encounters. Miners from Grimethorpe described attending a meeting of Brazilian trade unionists in London, and as a result being made lifelong members of the Central Única dos Trabalhadores trade union federation (Price and Whittaker 1986). The impetus for transport workers in Stockholm to start fundraising for the strike was apparently meeting Kent miners in a pub in London (Saunders 1989:81). Miners were not reliant on London to develop international connections. Nevertheless, such stories show in comparatively small scale ways how translocal networks within Britain could help produce transnational relationships.

At perhaps a more mundane level, it was Asian and black people's generosity towards miners' collections that seems to have made an impact and was repeatedly commented on (Clark 1984; Coventry Workshop n.d.; *New Statesman* 1984c; Seifert and Urwin 1987:55). One miners' wife explained that the 'support we've had from the coloured community has been fantastic. Brent. The lads said when they were standing at the factory gate, the coloured people were the first ones over putting the most in. […] it's forged a link that could never have got there any other way. It would never have happened just by talking' (Heathfield 1985c). An English miner described how 'the response we got from the inner city financially was absolutely incredible. I only went to London three times, collecting for 2-3 days at a time, in Hackney twice and Brixton once, mainly in the black areas, and I used to come back with £800-£900 each time. I also went round some of the sweat shops and there's a lot of the ethnic people there, they were quite willing because they knew the struggles we were going through, because they'd been going through it all their lives' (Farrar n.d.:51). Such concrete assistance highlights the limitations of counterposing local 'tangible solidarities' to 'abstract' solidarity across space (Harvey 1995:33).

While 'black' as an encompassing political term was used by groups like BDMC, it is worth reflecting on how the diverse ethnic geography of London shaped the relations established by mining communities. For example, the extensive support from Southall already discussed reflected the significant number of people of Asian origin in that part of west London. Activists from Dulais in South Wales spent a significant amount of time based on Green Lanes in Haringey, which has a significant Turkish population. As a result, one of the organisations they drew on for support was a Turkish community association (Rose 1984). Such communities again helped develop links that extended beyond national boundaries. In the summer of 1985, after the end of the strike, Turkish groups brought fifty Welsh children and four adults to London for a reception at Hackney Town Hall. The next day they travelled to France where they were hosted by Parisian Turks (Saunders 1989:251).

A mile or so north-east of Green Lanes is Broadwater Farm in Tottenham, an estate where approximately fifty per cent of residents at the time were black (Davis 1989). The Haringey Miners Support Group noted the particularly strong solidarity received from Tottenham's black population (Rouffiniac 1985:23). Blaenant miners apparently received 'tremendous support' collecting for the strike on the estate, and at least one person from Broadwater Farm visited Dulais during the dispute (Neath, Dulais and Swansea Valley Miners' Support Group 1985; *The Valleys' Star* 1986). Labour geographers have been keen to create accounts of working-class agency that are not restricted to trade unions (Herod 2010). The alliances constructed between inner city and coalfield working-class communities during the miners' strike show that even during an industrial dispute led by a trade union, forms of activism were not contained within such institutional boundaries.

In October 1985 there was a notorious 'riot' on the Broadwater Farm estate following the death of Cynthia Jarrett during a police raid of her house. The aftermath brought attention to the years of police harassment in the area, particularly of black youth (Davis 1989). In 1986, a delegation from the estate visited the Onllwyn miners' welfare in Dulais.[13] The local support group newsletter described how 'the Wales Congress in support of mining Communities and our local support group have welcomed a delegation from the estate as a gesture of solidarity' with 'the young black people who have suffered as badly at the hands of the police'. The article goes on to explain that what occurred in October 1985 was not a 'riot' but a 'conscious uprising against police harassment in Tottenham' (*The Valleys' Star* 1986). The relationship between Onllwyn and Broadwater Farm is a powerful example of the ongoing relationships of mutual support that were constructed during the miners' strike.

Solidarity, therefore, did not travel entirely in one direction (Brown and Yaffe 2014). The NUM was one of only a few unions to support the unsuccessful attempt to establish Black Sections within the Labour Party at the 1984 conference (Howe and Hassan 1984; *Spare Rib* 1985a).[14] At a more local level, Kent miners joined a commemorative march for the murdered anti-racist activist Blair Peach in Southall, where, as described above, connections had been made through BDMC (*London Labour Briefing* 1984a). Miners from Lea Hall in Staffordshire demonstrated against the deportation of Muhammed Idrish in Birmingham, and miners based in London reportedly gave support to an occupation of Camden town hall by homeless black families (*Searchlight* 1985). During a strike of largely Asian workers at

---

[13] The same welfare visited by Paul Robeson Junior and LGSM as described in earlier chapters.
[14] A motion to establish Black Sections formally within the Labour Party was defeated at the 1984 conference by 5,457,000 votes to 500,000 (*Tribune* 1984b:6).

Kewal Brothers, a garment factory in Birmingham, miners from Staffordshire and South Wales were a notable presence on the picket line (Morris 1984; Wilson 1984).

It is, as I argued in Chapter 4, necessary not to exaggerate the novelty of these relationships. Grunwick is a clear precursor for the Kewal Brothers support for example. However, understanding the longer gestation of such solidarities does not mean suggesting that there was nothing new in 1984-5. Often the direct experience of solidarity from black supporters during that year was seen as deeply meaningful for miners and their families. One miner talked about the generosity both of a poor black household when he went collecting door to door in London, and among people at Notting Hill Carnival: 'Every black person there virtually had a badge on "Black People Support the Miners". And that's a tremendous feeling to us to see that a group of people that have had so much suppression coming out and saying "aye, well, we'll support you"' (*Miners' Strike Songs* 1984; see also Price and Whittaker 1986). A miners' wife explained how 'I have begun to have more respect for coloured people. Especially blacks, because I was told the black people were putting more money in than anybody else. Obviously they understood the police side of it. The harassment. The total rejection from society. That's what we were getting just round here. It makes me sick to see what's happening in South Africa on televisions' (Heathfield 1985a). Such an articulation, suggesting that levels of respect were directly dependent on how much money was donated, is not unproblematic. It is such comparatively ambivalent statements, however, rather than the more polished pronouncements of longstanding political activists, that suggest a process of genuine change.

**'To be cockney and queer': solidarity and geographies of sexuality**

Dai Donovan was centrally involved in making connections between lesbian and gay activists in London and the mining community in Dulais. When LGSM visited South Wales, he explained that although they had already hosted lesbian and gay activists as members of Brent NALGO, 'it was different to have them come down under their own title' (Donovan 1986). Although a similar argument could be made about women and black supporters—the impact was greater from black support groups or explicitly feminist ones—the relative invisibility of sexuality meant it was even more important. It is nevertheless a useful reminder that lesbian and gay supporters were active through channels other than LGSM. Lesbian and gay activism had been building in the labour movement throughout the 1970s, with self-organised groups developed within trade unions and the Labour Party (Humphrey 2000; Purton 2006). Before the formation of LGSM, one such organisation, the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights, collected for the strike at the 1984 Pride

demonstration and invited a miner to speak at a rally afterwards. Mike Jackson, who would become secretary of LGSM, recalled that at this meeting there 'was standing room only. I remember we were all a bit staggered by how much this man had thought about things, identifying the two struggles. We didn't realize people did think about us that much' (Farnham 1989:212; see also Flynn, Goldsmith, and Sutcliffe 1985:40).

Issues around sexuality were also highlighted explicitly by relationships with feminist supporters, often in relation to the question of the family discussed above. One of the miners' wives already quoted, whose group twinned with supporters in Camden, commented that 'before the strike, if I'd have known I was going to talk to some lesbians, I'd have died. But they're only like us. They are normal people' (Heathfield 1985i). This reinforces the arguments made in Chapter 5 about the importance of personal relationships developed through twinning in challenging the assumptions of people both in the coalfields and in London. Similarly, the London magazine *City Limits* described a visit by LGSM to Dulais: 'Welcomed into the miners' homes for the weekend, whole families apparently started discussing gay rights and human sexuality over the tea-table' (*City Limits* 1984). This direct interaction was crucial in breaking down a mutual wariness (Kelliher 2014:245).

Women's sexuality was also raised by simplistic equations between political activism and lesbianism. This was clear, for instance, in representations of Greenham Common in the same period. Certainly, lesbianism was viewed positively at Greenham, and according to one account women had to 'come out' as heterosexual there (Roseneil 1996). Nevertheless, tabloid press coverage focused on and almost certainly exaggerated the predominance of lesbians in an attempt to demonise the protest (Cresswell 1994:48–9). As Cresswell (1994:35) argued, the women at Greenham 'transgressed the geographical boundaries that establish a dominant cultural and social order'. The women joining picket lines during the miners' strike could similarly be understood to be challenging gendered norms. According to one woman arrested picketing at Calverton in Nottinghamshire, the police said 'you don't treat these like women, you treat these like men. You kick 'em and you nick 'em' (Hogg 1986).

Ruth Percy has described picketing women in early twentieth century Chicago as stepping 'into a complex gendering of public space.' By challenging male strike-breakers and male police, 'they presented a more aggressive femininity' (Percy 2014:470). This could be expressed in terms of women's sexuality. Two Yorkshire women interviewed in *Spare Rib* described how the police called one, Bobby, 'a fucking lesbian on the picket line'. Bobby was initially worried that he believed it, but when they 'talked about it with these feminists

they said, "why be scared, there's nout to be ashamed of" and they put their point to us and it was logical' (Loach 1985:177). The transgression of gendered boundaries in terms of the picket line, the reaction of the police, and the solidarity relationships with feminists therefore combined to allow a re-thinking of assumptions around sexuality.

Again, the sense of lesbian and gay support as transformative and generative of new relationships can be seen both at a relatively high level and in more personal terms. Building on ongoing campaigning within the labour movement, the aftermath of the strike saw lesbian and gay rights motions passed by TUC and national Labour Party conferences for the first time. In both cases the NUM backed the motions, and the experience of the solidarity relationships developed during the strike was highlighted in supportive speeches. Proposing the Labour conference resolution, Sarah Roelofs explained: 'The miners' strike showed what we need in practice and a sister from a South Wales mining community said to us this week – "We are your friends now, and you are our friends and you have changed our world"' (Roelofs 1985; see also Kelliher 2014:256). People from South Wales and Yorkshire, independently of each other, joined the London Lesbian and Gay Pride demonstration in 1985 marching under the Blaenant and Hatfield Main NUM banners respectively (Douglass 2010:484–5, fn 105; Kelliher 2014).

Interviewed after the strike, Dai Donovan suggested that in terms of sexual politics 'they didn't have to win friends with me, I was quite open to that anyway' (Donovan 1986). Siân James, however, suggested such an attitude may have been unusual. She recalled that they 'knew gay people existed – my dad worked with a miner who was gay – but nobody openly talked about it; it was considered very personal. There was an uncertainty about how these people would be different and whether we would have to modify our behaviour' (Kellaway 2014). Individuals interviewed by LGSM suggested a shift in attitudes. One woman from the local support group in Dulais said that the visit of LGSM 'had been built up into such a big thing […] 'cause we didn't know what to expect'. After being pushed about what they expected, amidst mutual laughter, she said 'a bunch of weirdos'. On being asked what she thought of lesbians and gay men before the strike, another woman similarly commented that 'I don't like to say but it's had to take the strike for us to get more friendly' (LGSM 1986).

As well as developing relationships of solidarity with Dulais, LGSM created other networks of connections both within London and outside. Although there were significant arguments within the group around its 'whiteness and maleness', attempts were made to broaden the platforms of LGSM meetings (Browning et al. 1985:2; see also Kelliher 2014:247–8). Wilmette Brown, a black lesbian feminist who was involved with the King's Cross Women's

Centre and BDMC, was one of those invited by LGSM to speak (Bishop 1984; Mike Jackson 1984). An LGSM conference had speakers from Rhodesia Women's Action Group, the National Abortion Campaign, Reproductive Rights Campaign, the Terence Higgins Trust, Labour Lesbians Group, Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights, BDMC, Lesbians and Gays Against Imperialism, and others (LGSM 1985c). LGSM activists emphasised that they were attempting to bring 'socialism onto the agenda of sexual politics in the London lesbian and gay community [… and] sexual politics onto the agenda of trade union politics' (LGSM 1986). LGSM took part in general support activity within London, attending power station picket lines during a SERTUC day of action for example, and joined the Minerworkers' Defence Committee, bringing the politics of sexuality explicitly into the broader campaign (LGSM 1985f).

In addition, London LGSM inspired a number of groups across Britain and Ireland. Various sources noted lesbian and gay support groups in Huddersfield, Dublin, Swansea, Cork, Glasgow, Leicester, Southampton, Bournemouth, Brighton, Cardiff, Nottingham, Edinburgh/Lothian, York and Manchester (Canning 1984; Cant 1993; Jackson 1985; Labour Research Department 1985; MCTV 1 1985). LGSM developed a dense network of overlapping solidarities at various scales. Giving a sense of the connections constructed, at one of LGSM's weekly meetings they had guests from the South Wales coalfield, Manchester LGSM and the Dublin Lesbian and Gay Collective (LGSM 1985g). Contact was made further afield with international activists and interviews featured for example in *Radical America* in the USA and *Il Manifesto* in Italy (Flynn, Goldsmith, and Sutcliffe 1985; Goodsell 1985; Matheson n.d.). Their activity was generative of new connections among activists within London, between lesbian and gay activists and the coalfields, and perhaps as importantly between lesbian and gay activists campaigning on a labour dispute in England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland and to a lesser extent beyond.

The relationships developed were not without friction. Hostility towards lesbian and gay activists in London from miners was noted early in the dispute on a 'Democracy Day' march, protesting the imminent abolition of the GLC, when Kent miners harassed a group marching behind the London Lesbian and Gay Centre banner. Islington NALGO branch secretary, Dave Burn, protested to Kent NUM President Malcolm Pitt that 'the behaviour of some of the Kent NUM members is contrary to the aims of the trade union movement and can only diminish support for the miners' struggle' (Burn 1984). Richard Coles wrote to *Socialist Worker* describing LGSM and Lesbians and Gays Against Abolition placards at the demonstration. 'A group from the NUM came up to have their picture taken with a "bunch

of woofters". Then a group from NALGO suggested, "Go home and stick your placards up your bum"' (Coles 1984). Evidently networked forms of solidarity can 'produce markedly exclusionary spaces of politics' (Featherstone 2005:260). This experience recalls the kind of hostility faced by GLF members when they joined labour movement demonstrations in the early 1970s, and some accounts of reactions to Gay Left at Grunwick (Robinson 2007; Vittorini, Field, and Methol 1986). Coles' account suggests that hostility came not just from NUM members but also from NALGO, which was arguably one of the most progressive unions on lesbian and gay rights (Humphrey 2000). Being aware of homophobia in the coalfields, therefore, should not lead us to think that miners were unique in this respect within the labour movement.

Hatfield NUM's Dave Douglass was perhaps more forthcoming about what a significant shift it was to support lesbian and gay rights in his pit community than those interviewed in Dulais by LGSM. Links were made between a local support group in his area and a London anarchist lesbian and gay organisation called Wolverine (Douglass 2010:50). Douglass believed that before the strike

> the very notion of homosexuality in the pit community would have produced revulsion. Any poor unfortunate miner discovered to be "queer" would be badly treated, often beaten and driven from his work, and the community at large. This strike, and the brave solidarity of the gay and lesbian community, particularly those from London, in making a stand with us, despite some of us, in the teeth of hostility, opened some eyes and many more hearts. To be a southerner was a hurdle enough, to be cockney and queer was quite some barrier to see over (Douglass 2010:484–5 fn 105).

A discussion and vote about taking the Hatfield Main banner to the Pride march was held at a mass branch meeting. This 'would have been quite impossible before the start of the strike, so too the acceptance that some men, aye, even coal miners, could be gay and not really very much queer at all. One lad in particular, an activist from Goldthorpe Colliery, had fought for and won that right, and in so doing the respect of every Doncaster picket' (Douglass 2010:484–5 fn 105). The gay miner certainly conflicted with understandings of homosexuality as a southern phenomenon. Another gay miner, from Thorpe Willoughby in Yorkshire, made contact with LGSM during the strike and visited London (LGSM 1984b, 1985d, 1985e). While in the city, Lance Broadhead was interviewed by *Capital Gay*. He explained how his parents knew he was gay but did not want the neighbours to find out, and described his isolation. 'His father was uneasy about his son's gayness but Lance says: "He

changed his attitude to gays and lesbians when he realised the support gays and lesbians have given the miners'" (*Capital Gay* 1985a).

There was likely relatively little romanticizing of the coalfields among London's LGBT population. LGSM 'recognised that homophobia, sexism and racism existed within the mining communities as they do throughout society' (Browning et al. 1985:1). Yet the solidarity of LGSM challenged static and overly caricatured representations of mining areas. LGSM members highlighted the warm welcome they received from Dulais, undermining the idea that mining communities were irredeemably reactionary (LGSM 1986). They also argued that it was through personal interactions and practical solidarity that change could come about. Stephen Gee, a columnist for *Capital Gay*, grew up in a mining area in Derbyshire. He reported on Siân James' speech at the 1985 Pride march: 'She said she'd learned a lot from contact with lesbians and gays, that we can't do without the miners any more than they can do without us and if any child of hers says it's gay she will understand. However depressed you might be about the outcome of the strike hers is not the voice of defeat. People are still changing and able to see a better future' (Gee 1985a, 1985b). The solidarity of LGSM therefore had an impact in terms of gaining support for lesbian and gay rights among the NUM and the broader labour movement, and on a personal level in shaping attitudes towards sexuality within the coalfields, and opinions towards mining communities among the London lesbian and gay population.

In these overlapping and complementary concerns there was an attempt to embed lesbian and gay issues within working-class politics. This was far from accepted even among sections of the Labour left at the time. Left Labour councils in Liverpool and Sheffield were more likely to see the politics of gender, race and sexuality as diverging from class politics than London's GLC (Payling 2014).[15] There can be a tendency to echo some of the counterposing of class politics to gender and racial 'identity politics' in academic discussions of these issues, missing the complexity of what were often explicitly socialist feminist, anti-racist and LGBT liberation activists (Frost and North 2013:37; Rutherford 2010:771). This conflict could often be conceived of in terms of the different class nature of London and

---

[15] Similar voices could of course be found within London. Jerry White, a senior local authority employee in left-Labour councils in the 1980s, has argued that the GLC ignored 'the majority of Londoners in spending endless time and bottomless resources in pursuit of ideological purity on gender, sexuality and race' (White 2008:397). The London skilled working-class was apparently busy abandoning London and moving to the suburbs because they were confused by the radical left. He has little to say about the evident popularity of Livingstone's administration other than that 'Fares Fair, the travelcard and Ken Livingstone's charismatic leadership had made the Labour GLC both more recognizable and more popular, despite its risible extravagance of leftist gesture politics, than ever before in its brief history' (White 2008:399).

northern cities: the equation of both London and sexual politics with the middle class.[16] As Jane Wills (2008:28) has commented, 'geography is often used as a surrogate for the question of class'.

Terry Sanderson, a gay man who grew up in a small mining village in South Yorkshire in the 1950s and 60s, commented that 'men were men and women knew their places. Homosexuals were unheard of.' He recalled his local MP Peter Hardy saying that homosexuality 'has nothing to do with people around here—it all happens in London'. Sanderson noted that as far as Hardy 'was concerned, homosexuality did not exist north of Hampstead', a particularly affluent part of the capital (Cant and Hemmings 1988:85, 92). Following the 1987 Greenwich by-election, in which the left Labour candidate Deidre Wood lost to the Social Democratic Party, Patricia Hewitt blamed the 'gays and lesbians issue'. Kinnock's aides apparently called this the 'London effect' (Smith 1994:185; see also Tobin 1990).[17] Pratt and Hanson have highlighted how 'once rooted in space […] places play a role in hardening the boundaries between social groups' (Pratt and Hanson 1994:11). Certainly, geographical understandings of class and sexuality could play such a role, something that the translocal solidarities developed by LGSM sought to break down.

Such a characterisation was accepted to a certain extent by Ken Livingstone, who commented that the style of Liverpool *Militant* supporters 'wouldn't go down very well here, when you have a strong feminist movement and a whole range of community groups, middle-class issue groups and so on' (Ali and Livingstone 1984:108–9). The alliances of the miners' strike undermined the idea that the politics of gender, race and sexuality could not resonate among constituencies of the 'traditional, overwhelmingly white, manual working class' (Frost and North 2013:37). Livingstone also noted, however, that 'there are probably hundreds of gay refugees living in London away from the sexual intolerance in Liverpool' (Ali and Livingstone 1984:109). Whether his characterisation of Liverpool was correct or not, it chimed with arguments made by LGSM members about lesbians and gay men being exiled in London from working-class communities. The secretary of LGSM Mike Jackson, himself from Lancashire, claimed that 'an awful lot of people in our support group are actually from outside London […] certainly myself, and I suspect an awful lot of the others, the reason we ended up in London was because life was easier to be gay in London' (Flynn, Goldsmith, and Sutcliffe 1985:45). The solidarity of LGSM and other lesbians and gay men

---

[16] On male same-sex desire in working-class areas outside of London in the first half of the 20th century, see Smith (2015).

[17] During the 1983 Bermondsey by-election in which Peter Tatchell ran, Kinnock apparently commented: 'I'm not in favour of witchhunts but I do not mistake bloody witches for fairies' (Smith 1994:186).

living in London was therefore not exactly 'cockney and queer' as Dave Douglass suggested (Douglass 2010:484, fn 105).

Jackson worked for Gay Switchboard and on every shift received phone calls

> from a young person in Glasgow, Liverpool, Leeds, Belfast, you name it, in a working-class community, and basically, are they fucking isolated. Eventually, they'll probably end up just like we did, in London. I think that's really sad, that we have to come and live in this little ghetto. And if there's one thing I'd like to see this strike do, for example in Dulais, if nowhere else, is for young gay kids to be able to grow up there, and for their mothers and fathers to say, oh, alright, and for certain information to be around (Flynn, Goldsmith, and Sutcliffe 1985:45).

This echoes many stories of LGBT migration, accounts which often 'reveal gay and lesbian people's fraught relationships to the new places they encounter and create, and a nostalgia, at times, for the places left behind' (Knopp 2004:124). In the recent documentary on the miners' strike, *Still The Enemy Within*, LGSM's Mike Jackson discussed the welcome they received in Dulais, commenting that coming from a working-class background himself it felt like 'coming home […] It just felt like acceptance […] that's all I ever wanted' (Gower 2014). The relationship between migration and sexuality has received significant attention from geographers (Duyvendak and Verplanke 2013; Fortier 2001; Waitt and Gorman-Murray 2011). What is different in the history of LGSM, however, is an explicit attempt to politicise and transform the relationship between sexuality and migration through collective action and translocal solidarity.

LGSM was therefore not about middle-class Londoners patronising working-class northerners.[18] It was based on the belief that there had been 'increased opportunities and choices for gays', but that 'for most working class people taking advantage of them has meant losing contact with their class and community' (Roberts 1985). It was an attempt to change both the coalfields and London as well. While recognising the relative safety of London, they were also critical of what Jackson called 'this little ghetto' in the capital (Flynn, Goldsmith, and Sutcliffe 1985:45). In particular, they sought to challenge the middle-class domination of the London lesbian and gay scene: 'There's a problem in London, because life's a bit easier here. So people come here from all over the place and are cut off from their

---

[18] This is not to say that there were no middle-class members of LGSM. Rather, a number of leading members were working class, from outside of London, and established working-class politics as central to LGSM from the beginning.

roots. It can have a bad effect on working-class gay people. The places people go are predominantly middle class. It's only by meeting other working class gay people that I started to think "how dare these middle class people dominate my life-style"' (Bradley 1984:4).

By bringing the miners' strike into prominent lesbian and gay spaces, LGSM aimed to contest the way in which the lesbian and gay scene was classed (Kadi 1997; Taylor 2005). As I argued in Chapter 5, in doing this they challenged the frequent perception of LGBT spaces as gentrifying (Bell and Valentine 1995; Binnie and Valentine 1999; Brown 2014). At the same time, attending to the diversity of the spaces in which LGSM organised in the mid-1980s can contribute to work in the geographies of sexuality which has critiqued strong 'theories of homonormativity that present urban gay life in the Global North as being entirely saturated by the commodity and structurally shaped by neoliberalism, making both seem dominant, complete, and unassailable' (Brown 2009:1507; see also Andrucki and Elder 2007). This history is a powerful example of how translocal solidarity sought to reshape the intersectional geographies of class and sexuality (Binnie 2011; Brown 2012). Through engagement in the miners' strike, LGSM sought to connect their activism to a larger emancipatory project, based on the idea that working-class solidarity across differences of sexuality, race and gender could transform society profoundly. Reconstructing these diverse translocal solidarities during the 1984-5 miners' strike, as I have done in this thesis, can therefore make a contribution to understanding how to embed intersectional solidarities in the broad political project of the left.

**Conclusion**

Throughout this chapter, I have highlighted how forms of intersectional thinking can significantly contribute to understanding the solidarity networks developed during the 1984-5 strike, and in turn this activism can contribute to a genealogy of the theory. London supporters like LGSM, BDMC and Lambeth Women's Support Group were not prepared to subsume their efforts into an undifferentiated labour movement, and in organising in this way they brought to the fore questions that have often been ignored in trade union struggles. This was not, at least in most cases, an attack on class, but instead suggested that a 'mutual dependence and a new openness to influence' between new social movements and trade unions 'demonstrated a different direction for class politics' (Massey and Wainwright 1985:168). I have emphasised centrally that intersectionality should not be understood only as a theory of ever greater differentiation, but can help us understand how commonalties can be articulated across spatial, racial, sexual, gender and class boundaries. Emphasising the

role of translocal solidarity networks in this process highlights how relationships across space can contribute to the development of intersectional politics.

Rutherford has argued that trade unions 'often struggled to accommodate' black, feminist, and LGBT liberation politics 'in the difficult circumstances of neo-liberal restructuring' (Rutherford 2010:771). The solidarities developed during the miners' strike suggest a more complex picture: where neoliberal attacks were resisted this created the opportunities to develop diverse alliances. Some of this space however, I have argued, was shut down by defeats for the labour movement and the left more broadly, with the miners' strike the most prominent British example. A detailed consideration of the support networks does not support romanticised assertions that exaggerate the processes of change, but it nevertheless highlights—as I have attempted to show—that solidarity is potentially a generative and transformative political relationship (Featherstone 2012). For those actively involved in the strike, the experiences of the year allowed them to 'think unthinkable things, to embrace impossible ideas, to overcome the most entrenched of stereotypical notions and cautions' (Douglass 2010:484). These personal changes and the impact on collective political organisation were mutually constitutive. The solidarities of the miners' strike should be understood as part of ongoing attempts to develop powerful and more equitable forms of politics on the left.

## Chapter 8

## Conclusion: Solidarity and the legacies of the 1980s

**Introduction**

This thesis contributes to an ongoing conversation between the traditions of labour history and labour geography (Featherstone and Griffin 2016). While I have focused on the miners' support movement in 1984-5, this research has highlighted the benefits of situating that moment in a longer trajectory. Through an in-depth archival reconstruction of support networks between London and the British coalfields in the 1970s and 1980s, I have explored the intersecting spatial and temporal dimensions of solidarity. I have argued that such an approach can provide important insights into the miners' strike itself, but also into broader theoretical questions around solidarity, class and labour agency. The first section of this concluding chapter outlines the primary contributions of the thesis. In the second section, I argue that the miners' strike and the politics of the 1980s are of continuing relevance to our current political situation. Recovering the diverse translocal solidarities that feature throughout this thesis, I suggest, can provide an alternative to dominant narratives of the period and provide inspiration for the contemporary left.

**The miners' strike and the metropolis: geographies and histories of class and solidarity**

Andrew Richards' work on British miners exemplifies an approach in which solidarity in the coalfields is rooted in common experiences: close knit communities, geographical isolation, strict gender roles, and a sense of a shared history. Above all, Richards argues, 'the working environment underground was the cornerstone of solidarity demonstrated so often above the ground' (Richards 1996:20). Such a view resonates with John Tomaney's recent defence of parochialism, which emphasises the tangible solidarities that can be developed within localities (Tomaney 2013; see also Harvey 1995:83–4). Such local solidarity was evident throughout the 1984-5 miners' strike in the coalfield women's support groups, the food parcels, soup kitchens and the many other ways that mining communities sustained themselves. However, much of this activity would have been impossible without the influx of food and money from supporters outside of the coalfields. The translocal support movement shows that practical solidarity does not have to be parochial. Moreover, rather than a solidarity based entirely on shared experiences and characteristics, I have emphasised the relationships constructed across differences of gender, race and sexuality.

This thesis has therefore used a focus on solidarity to make a significant challenge to how the geography of the 1984-85 miners' strike is understood. One key contribution has been to

challenge pervasive assumptions of the parochialism of coalfield communities. This apparent parochialism of the British coalfields has been reflected in analyses of the 1984-5 strike that suggest the NUM failed to seek popular support for their struggle, relying instead on the blunter instrument of mass pickets (Ackers 2014; Blomley 1994). I have shown in this thesis, however, that looking at the strike 'from below' can challenge this view. Significant numbers of people from the coalfields, miners and their families, were active throughout the strike in constructing alliances with supporters in London and elsewhere. They travelled all over Britain and further afield to make their case in defence of jobs and communities, and invited visitors to stay with them in the coalfields to gain first-hand experience of the situation. While in some cases of course they spoke to those who already backed the NUM, I have shown that miners and their supporters went to people's homes, workplaces, community centres, student unions, pubs and clubs in an attempt to broaden the popular support for the strike. Emphasising this grassroots translocal activism shows that accounts of the 1984-5 strike from below do not have to be geographically bounded.

By thinking about the miners' strike and the London left together, the thesis seeks to contribute to how we understand both the coalfields and the capital in the 1980s. I have argued that the miners' strike was central to the political activism of much of the London left, and therefore a history of the solidarity campaign challenges claims that activists in the capital had abandoned working-class concerns (White 2008). Despite the obvious differences between London and mining areas, significant long-term deindustrialisation and a rapid rise in unemployment in the capital in the first few years of Margaret Thatcher's government meant there was common ground. Strike supporters in Brent looked upon an 'industrial graveyard' in their borough, and the GLC leader Ken Livingstone noted redundancy notices from major London industrial employers read like a 'roll call of the dead' (Brent Miners Support Campaign 1984; Livingstone 1983:71). The SERTUC-NUM Support Committee (1984b) believed the strike was 'about ending the deindustrialisation of Britain', and this was a shared struggle in London and the coalfields.

However, deindustrialisation also played a role in shifting the basis for solidarity in comparison to earlier disputes. Certainly, workforces in traditional, well unionised industries still played an important role. As I have highlighted throughout the thesis, the Fleet Street print workers were among the most generous and committed of the miners' supporters in London. In other instances, however, it was not possible to appeal for solidarity in the same workplaces as before. Many of the power stations picketed by miners in 1972 and 1974, for example, had been closed in the intervening decade. Deindustrialisation had shifted the

composition of the trade union movement, giving an increasing presence to non-industrial unions like NUPE and NALGO. These unions often had a larger proportion of women in their membership, and the latter in particular was prominent in developing black and lesbian and gay self-organisation (Humphrey 2000; Virdee and Grint 1994). At the same time, a combination of deindustrialisation, unemployment, and the impact of the post-1968 liberation movements encouraged the British left to look beyond the workplace for political organising. These factors all contributed to developing the kind of diverse solidarities discussed throughout this work. By exploring these relationships, in Chapter 7 in particular, a central contribution of this thesis to the history of the 1970s and 1980s British left has been to argue that there has been an exaggerated counterposing of class politics with gender, race, and sexuality.

Through a study of relationships between London and the British coalfields, the thesis has sought to develop an understanding of how solidarity is constructed across geographical boundaries. Tactics such as twinning were crucial in enabling direct contact between distant places and the construction of networks of mutual solidarity from below. Flying pickets, tours of workplaces, and reciprocal visits between communities highlight the distinct forms of politicised mobility that were an important element of the strike and the support movement (Cresswell 2010). In Chapter 5, I showed how the production of relatively permanent physical spaces—including radical bookshops, women's centres, politicised lesbian and gay pubs and clubs, and miners' welfare halls—was crucial for developing translocal solidarity. Physical rootedness in particular localities and the development of networks between different places were mutually constitutive. In particular, these spaces were required for direct personal interactions between people from the coalfields and supporters in London, which helped solidify commitment to the solidarity movement and enabled processes of mutual learning.

The development of such spaces of solidarity was a contested process. I have built on Blomley's (1994) analysis to provide a broader picture of struggles over space between Thatcherism and alternative political projects in this period. The thesis has discussed, for example, the development of the symbolic space of the picket line as a deeply rooted historical process. While it was unevenly abided by, the fact that many trade unionists would not cross picket lines was a powerful resource for the labour movement. The Conservative Party, however, sought to restrict and reshape the picket line through legislation and policing, and by associating it rhetorically with violence and extremism. However, I have argued that the state played a contradictory role: while the government, police and courts

restricted space for the labour movement and the left, some socialists used local state resources to directly and indirectly support spaces for opposition to Thatcherism. The Conservative government's capping of council rates, and abolition of a number of local authorities, sought to undermine such attempts. Labour geographers should therefore recognise the heterogeneity of the state, different elements of which can pursue contradictory goals in relation to trade union struggles simultaneously (Cumbers 2015; Lier 2007; Martin and Pierce 2013).

There were, therefore, significant struggles between different sections of the state in relation to the miners' strike. However, conflict was also evident within the miners' support movement and among trade unionists more generally. While it can be methodologically difficult to study absences, I have nevertheless suggested ways of thinking about popular opposition or ambivalence towards the miners' strike. Some factors that weakened the solidarity movement were beyond the control of the NUM or the broader labour movement: deindustrialisation and mass unemployment, for example, were crucial in undermining trade union power. Nevertheless, elements of the Conservative government's representation of the strike resonated with some trade union members because it reflected a reality, albeit often in a distorted form. The accusation that the strike was anti-democratic because of the lack of a national ballot could make sense to people whose own trade unions were extremely hierarchical, with a leadership distant from the membership. What Cumbers et al. (2010:129) have described as the 'scalar chasm' between union leadership and members in the mega-unions resulting from mergers must therefore be addressed. As Carrie Mott (2016) has argued, understanding tensions among activists can help us develop more effective solidarity networks. By discussing the absence of solidarity, in particular among trade union members, I have argued that it is necessary to think more broadly about the challenges to solidarity.

Analysing such absences of solidarity can counteract what some see as a tendency towards romanticisation in labour geography (Mitchell 2011). This romanticisation, critics have argued, is evident in an overly optimistic view of working-class agency (Castree 2007; Das 2012; Peck 2013; Rogaly and Qureshi 2017). Popular hostility towards the strike, the tactics of the government and other elements of the state, and longer term socio-economic processes all significantly restrained the agency of miners and their supporters. Nevertheless, I have argued that a more sophisticated understanding of labour agency should not simply mean re-asserting constraints. Throughout the thesis there are examples of the resources built up over time by the labour movement and left that enabled the miners to stay out on strike for twelve months. Chapter 4 in particular showed how a culture of mutual solidarity was developed

through the 1970s that provided support for working-class resistance. Working-class agency is not fixed, but should be situated in specific historical and geographical contexts, and understood as an ongoing process of contestation between capital and labour (Cumbers, Helms, and Swanson 2010; Featherstone and Griffin 2016).

I have also emphasised that agency must include the ability of diverse actors to define the borders of class politics. A notable feature of the 1984-5 miners' strike was the support of feminist, LGBT and black activists for the predominately white, often socially conservative coalfield communities (Massey and Wainwright 1985:149). This resonates with recent research that has sought to understand the development of equitable political solidarity across social differences (Land 2015; Mott 2016; Sundberg 2007). These accounts often seek to mitigate the power imbalances that are prevalent in such relationships. Appeals to allow those experiencing oppression to take leadership of campaigns, and for individuals providing solidarity to defer to such leadership, is a way of counteracting the kind of impositions more associated with charity (Gould 2007). However, the idea of deference in solidarity can create a somewhat static picture of a privileged group of people supporting an oppressed group. Understanding that support can travel in multiple directions is important in recognising that people subject to various forms of oppression are themselves capable of offering solidarity (Brown and Yaffe 2014). Moreover, intersectional theories are useful in unpicking binaries of oppression and privilege to highlight the multiple and overlapping power relations at work in any given instance.

Intersectional analyses have tended towards an elaboration of difference (Brown 2012; Valentine 2007; Dowling 2009). I have shown, however, that intersectional solidarities across space during the miners' strike could simultaneously articulate commonalities and differences. Black working-class supporters of the predominantly white miners, for instance, were able to emphasise shared experience of class without ignoring the racism confronting black workers from the state, employers and within the labour movement. The politics of the autonomously organised feminist, lesbian and gay, and black activists described in Chapter 7 was heterogeneous. Nevertheless, an important point of convergence for many involved in the miners' support campaign was an attempt to re-shape the labour movement so that it was more representative of the working class as a whole. This is an approach that is influenced by, and extends, both intersectional theories and the history from below tradition of foregrounding the agency of diverse political activists in shaping conceptions of class and class politics (Thompson 1980a).

Rather than a deferential approach to solidarity, I have emphasised the possibility of solidarity being a mutual relationship. Brown and Yaffe (2014) have argued in the context of the 1980s anti-apartheid movement that it is necessary to pay greater attention to the simultaneous reciprocity of solidarity between places. I have provided further evidence of how this can work through the interactions that developed during the miners' strike. However, I have also argued that we can often understand the mutuality of solidarity better in an expanded timeframe. An important element of this process is the embedding of previous struggles and solidarities in cultures and traditions. The International Brigades in Spain, the 1926 General strike, the Pentonville Five, and the Grunwick dispute were stitched into banners, written into songs, and incanted in speeches, in an attempt to shape what it meant to be part of the labour movement and the left. Such memories and stories of solidarity could be evoked to encourage support in 1984-5. To be effective, however, there had to be an ongoing and more deeply rooted appreciation of these histories than could simply be produced in March 1984. There is a need, then, for accounts of how labour and other activists constructed and mobilised their own 'usable pasts' (Featherstone 2008; Griffin 2015). The importance of these solidarities in coalfield cultures suggests that relational constructions of place and a deeply rooted development of class in localities need not be contradictory (Featherstone 2005; Tomaney 2013).

Memory and tradition are important aspects of what I have described as the temporalities of solidarity. I have argued for a broader consideration of the relevance of time to understanding solidarity than has been evident in recent geographies of social movements and labour (Antentas 2015; Coe and Jordhus-Lier 2011). In his study of the civil war and reconstruction in the USA, David Roediger borrowed the concept of 'revolutionary time' from historians of the French revolution to explain periods when 'the pace of change and the possibility of freedom accelerated the very experience of time'. He argues for the need to see the self-emancipation of slaves 'as both deeply rooted and glorious in its sudden maturation' (Roediger 2014:9). The miners' strike is clearly of a different order to either the US civil war and emancipation, or revolutionary France. Nevertheless, as a period of significant upheaval it similarly reflects this duality. Processes of change could speed up, allowing people to 'overcome the most entrenched of stereotypical notions and cautions' (Douglass 2010:484). These changes depended on the extraordinary circumstances of the miners' strike. Yet, as I showed in Chapter 4, pre-existing networks, constructed during earlier struggles or during periods of comparative calm, were often crucial in providing the foundations on which the campaign in 1984-5 developed.

Through a study of the miners' strike, this thesis has therefore made a number of contributions to understanding the nature of solidarity. I have shown that direct, personal relationships of solidarity can be forged between distant places through distinct forms of politicised mobility. These relationships can be constructed across social as well as geographical boundaries, but an intersectional approach highlights how difference and commonalities can be articulated simultaneously. Such relationships can have a significantly transformative effect on those involved. Moreover, solidarity does not necessarily travel from the relatively privileged to the oppressed. Not only can people subject to oppression develop relationships of solidarity themselves, but support can also travel in multiple directions. Solidarity is potentially therefore a mutual relationship, and I have emphasised how this mutuality can develop over time. The construction of a culture of mutual solidarity can be a powerful resource, which, in the context of the labour movement, has a significant impact on working-class agency. Cultures of solidarity across space can be embedded in local traditions, contributing a distinct sense of the relational construction of place-based identities. I have therefore highlighted the value of a simultaneously historical and geographical approach to solidarity.

**Revisiting the 1980s**

This thesis, as I outlined in Chapter 3, was written with a political purpose in mind: it is intended to contribute to debates on how to develop effective and equitable relations of solidarity. This does not mean that it is a polemic or simply a celebration of the miners' support movement. Recognising and seeking to understand the limitations and weaknesses of the miners' strike and the solidarity campaign has been an important part of the work. Neither the successes nor the failures of the past can provide straightforward lessons for the present. Nevertheless, the understanding of solidarity developed in this thesis can help us in our thinking about issues of contemporary concern, as well as providing an impetus to political activism. Rather than leaving such intentions implicit, it is important to outline how the 1984-5 miners' strike, the support movement and the wider history of the left in the 1980s has been used in political debates, and the contribution this thesis can make.

The idea of usable pasts, and the impact of historical memory, have been persistent themes throughout this thesis. I have shown how they played a role in 1984-5, and in turn perceptions of that year continue to have an influence on politics today. While the final deep coal mine in Britain, Kellingley, closed in December 2015, the impact of the strike is still felt. The deindustrialisation of coalfield communities continues to have a significant impact economically, socially and politically (Bennett, Beynon, and Hudson 2000; Guerrera Films

2016). Certain issues from the dispute remain unresolved. The Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign, for instance, has fought to keep attention on one of the worst examples of police violence during the strike and its subsequent cover-up, which has gained renewed prominence in the light of the condemnation of South Yorkshire police over their role in the Hillsborough disaster (Conn 2016).

More widely, the strike has been deployed to represent a whole set of transformations: the decline of manufacturing, the weakening of trade unionism, the ascendancy of finance capital and neoliberalism. In a book released to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the strike, the journalists Beckett and Hencke claimed that Britain before and after the dispute 'are two fundamentally different places, and they have little in common' (Beckett and Hencke 2009:ix). The strike, according to the subtitle of one version of the book, announced 'the death of industrial Britain'. Five years later, thirty years on from the dispute, another anniversary prompted a whole new series of reflections. The thirty-year release rule for British government archives meant particularly enthusiastic rummaging for evidence. As Stoler (2009:26) has written, 'state secrets excite expectations'; the complete story of state involvement in the strike, if such a thing is possible, is unlikely to be given up so easily.[1] Perhaps the most novel and broadly popular portrayal of the dispute to appear in 2014, however, was the film *Pride* (Warchus 2014), a lightly fictionalised account of the London LGSM group that I have discussed throughout this thesis. The feature length documentary *Still The Enemy Within* (Gower 2014) was released around the same time, providing an account of the strike from the perspective of rank-and-file activists, with the solidarity campaign, including from trade unionists, LGSM, students and others, a central feature.[2]

While *Pride* in particular was to some extent a period piece, nevertheless both films were addressed to contemporary politics. One reviewer of *Pride* argued that the film was 'in essence […] a feelgood treatise on intersectionality, the utterly timely idea that systems of oppression and discrimination inevitably overlap and are most fruitfully considered and confronted in relation to each other' (Walters 2014). The exploration of gender and, somewhat obliquely, sexuality, through the miners' strike had already been touched upon in *Billy Elliot* (Daldry 2000) but *Pride* is very different. It is an activist history of collective struggle. LGSM reformed to use the platform provided by the film's release to highlight other campaigns and to promote the continuing importance of the kind of solidarity activism they developed. Other activists were inspired by LGSM and *Pride* into forming new

---

[1] The role of the secret service in the strike and its aftermath was investigated by Milne (2014).
[2] I have written about these films at greater length elsewhere (Kelliher 2015).

organisations. In Norway, a group called Lesbians and Gays Support the Dockers was set up to support ongoing struggles on the ports. In London, activists formed Lesbians and Gays Support the Migrants to provide solidarity with migrants in the UK.[3] The makers of *Still the Enemy Within* similarly toured their film, including in the coalfield communities, highlighting the importance of this history for understanding the financialisation of the economy and the 2008 crash, as well as the inspiration that the resistance of the miners and their supporters could still provide. Just as activists in 1984-5 used the long history of struggles and solidarity from the General Strike to Grunwick to inspire and catalyse a support movement, that history is now being constructed as a usable past for contemporary activists.

Rebecca Solnit (2016:xxiii–xxiv) has argued powerfully for the role of history in progressive politics: 'we have a seldom-told, seldom remembered history of victories and transformations that can give us confidence that, yes, we can change the world because we have many times before. You row forward looking back, and telling this history is part of helping people navigate toward the future. We need a litany, a rosary, a sutra, a mantra, a war chant of our victories'. The transformative experiences of the 1984-5 support movement are worth recalling on this basis. In particular, the history of solidarity during the miners' strike suggests alternative ways of organising that contrast powerfully with free market capitalism, and challenge historical teleologies that portray Thatcherism as an inevitable result of increasing individualism. The journalist Gary Younge (2009) observed that the strike was an edifying 'lesson in how socialism might work', both in terms of communal organising in the pit villages, and the challenging of racist and sexist attitudes.

Similarly, one woman involved in the strike argued that 'it's been marvellous living in a mining community where nobody has had anything at all. No new clothes, no luxury food. And we've been the happiest people going. Because we've had the best friends going. And we've been a community' (Heathfield 1985d). For many, of course, the experience of the strike was of immense hardship, not of commoning or nascent socialism. The strike was also defeated, so in this sense it fits uneasily into Solnit's litany of victories. In fact, barring the Pentonville Five, all the memorialised struggles listed earlier in this chapter were defeats for the left. Celebrating the 1984-5 miners' strike could therefore be seen as part of a somewhat perverse glorification of honourable failures. It is important to recognise, however, that solidarity can have a significant impact even in the midst of such a defeat (Featherstone 2012:33).

---

[3] Both have Facebook pages at the time of writing: https://www.facebook.com/lgsmigrants and https://www.facebook.com/LGSDpride.

In other unexpected ways, the period and the politics explored in this thesis have come into focus in contemporary debates. Veterans of the 1970s and 1980s London Labour left, which was central to the history told in this thesis, have gained an unlikely prominence with the election of Jeremy Corbyn as leader of the Labour party in 2015.[4] This has given debates about the 1980s an unusually powerfully resonance in contemporary political debate, and it is not only the left that has looked for inspiration. The Labour right in particular has sought its own usable past, revisiting how they successfully overcame the left of their party in that decade in what they consider a process of modernisation, beginning with Neil Kinnock's leadership and culminating in Tony Blair.[5] Opponents of Labour have also portrayed the shift in the party as in some sense a return to the 'the loony left' of the 1980s (Johnston 2016). At the same time, the Conservative governments since 2010 have attempted to repeat some of the tactics of Thatcherism, including public sector cuts, more restrictive laws on trade unions, and an extension of Right to Buy.

As the historian Raphael Samuel (1986a:xv) wrote in the immediate aftermath of the 1984-5 miners' strike, 'history always tells us as much or more about the present than it does about the past'. It is important to recognise how much has changed since the 1980s and be cautious about making easy comparisons. The context in which the somewhat revived Labour left is operating is significantly different, not least because trade union membership is only about half what it was at the start of the 1980s (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 2016). Nevertheless, there are important ideological struggles taking place over the meaning of the 1970s and 1980s, and it is important that those committed to a progressive response to our various economic and political crises are engaged in this debate. Recovering the history and geography of the miners' support movements can play a role in this project. The issues raised in this thesis, however, can make a broader contribution to thinking about the contemporary period.

In the midst of referenda on Scottish independence in 2014 and the United Kingdom's relationship to the European Union in 2016, certain geographical understandings of class and politics have been confidently asserted. The disillusionment of former coalfield communities has been contrasted with the wealth of cosmopolitan London (Harris 2016). There are of course good reasons for this. The result of deindustrialisation, the growth of the banking sector in and around the City of London, patterns of government investment and so

---

[4] On Jeremy Corbyn's leadership of Labour, see Seymour (2016). For examples of Corbyn's involvement in the support movement see *London Labour Briefing* (1984a:2), Mineworkers' Defence Committee (1984), *Morning Star* (1984e).

[5] http://www.history.ac.uk/events/browse/19442, accessed 8 July 2016.

on, have concentrated wealth in London and the South East. London is, as Doreen Massey (2007:8) argued, 'the heartland of that socio-political economic formation that goes by the name of neoliberalism'. Partly as a result, differences, such as in levels of migration and the resulting ethnic profile of various regions, have increased. To pick two examples that have featured in this thesis: Islington and Doncaster undeniably have significantly contrasting social structures that are reflected in different political cultures. Nevertheless, this thesis has shown the practical ways in which diverse groups of activists created important translocal solidarity networks between London and the UK's old industrial heartlands, which can provide an alternative way to think about the relationship between former mining areas and the metropolis.

The language of class is being revived in mainstream political discourse both on the left and to some extent the right. This is largely welcome, but as I argued in Chapter 3 it is necessary to be cautious about how class is employed. The alleged social conservatism of the working class is frequently counterposed to middle-class metropolitanism to support a flag and family style of labour politics (Geary and Pabst 2015; Hunt 2016). Such an approach can lead to regressive positions on race, gender and sexuality. Recounting the diverse solidarities of the 1970s and 1980s is not to construct an equally mythical socially progressive working class. It is nevertheless to insist that histories of mutual support across social differences within the labour movement suggest possibilities for a class politics that is attentive to other axes of oppression, and their interrelation. I have argued that theories of intersectionality can be usefully applied to the kind of networks built in the mid-1980s through the miners' strike, even though they pre-date the terminology (Crenshaw 1989). Thinking about intersectionality in the context of a solidarity campaign highlights that it can be a theory and an approach that encourages the forging of new commonalities across previously intractable divisions.

This is not an argument to ignore differences, or to suggest that there is some possible situation in which people on the left can overcome all their disagreements. Indeed, the alliances forged during the 1984-5 miners' strike firmly highlight the importance of autonomous organisation. Nevertheless, in attempting to contest neoliberal capitalism and create a more egalitarian and democratic society, a sense of common purpose on the left is necessary. Reflecting on *Beyond the Fragments* recently, Sheila Rowbotham recalled that 'at that time, we had a credible word for what we wanted: "socialism" […] I still identify with the word "socialism", but I realise that many others on the left no longer do so […] I will say, then, that a vital component in "how" is imaging and articulating what else might

be possible – what is beyond the beyond?' (Rowbotham et al. 2014:145). The binding force of socialism, despite or because of the fact that it meant a variety of things to different people, was important in creating the alliances of the miners' strike. Another part of the how, though, is agency: developing connections between the labour movement and the politics of anti-racism, feminism and sexual liberation suggested a powerful transformative force. If power is not necessarily where it was in the 1980s, the question of agency is still vital for constructing an intersectional politics that has liberatory potential.

# Appendix: Archives and research libraries consulted

| Archive | Main collections consulted | Reference abbreviation |
|---|---|---|
| Archive of the Irish in Britain, London Metropolitan University | Troops Out Movement (TOM) | AIB |
| Black Cultural Archives | Runnymede Collection, employment files | BCA |
| Brent Archives | Miners' strike support campaigns in Brent and Greater London (includes material from Brent Trades Council, Brent Miners Support Campaign, Greater London Association of Trades Councils, SERTUC); the Grunwick Strike (includes material from Brent Trades Council and the Grunwick Strike Committee) | BA |
| British Library | Newspaper and periodical collections; Sisterhood and After: The Women's Liberation Oral History Project interviews | BL |
| Doncaster Archives | Dave Douglass' papers; Cadeby Strike Support Group papers 1984-1988 | DA |
| Durham Records Office | Durham County Association of Trades Councils; Durham Miners and Mechanics | DRO |
| George Padmore Institute | Personal papers of John La Rose | GPI |
| Hackney Archives | Hackney Trades Council | HA |
| Hall-Carpenter Archives, LSE | LGSM ephemera | HCA |
| Kent History and Library Centre | Kent Area NUM | KHLC |
| Labour History Archive and Study Centre, People's History Museum, Manchester | CPGB; LGSM; Hilary Wainwright papers; Martin Walker papers | LHASC |
| London Metropolitan Archives | Eric and Jessica Huntley collection | LMA |
| Margaret Thatcher Foundation (Online archive), http://www.margaretthatcher.org | Digitised government archives and other material relating to Margaret Thatcher | MTF |
| Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick | NUS; TGWU; Trade unionism in British docks (Professor Lindop research material); Union of Communication Workers; Rodney Bickerstaffe papers | MRC |

| North East England Mining Archive and Research Centre, University of Sunderland | NUM Durham Area; Durham Colliery Mechanics Association | NEEMARC |
|---|---|---|
| Richard Burton Archives, University of Swansea | 1984-5 Miners' Strike and Colliery Workings Plans (includes material on the Ammanford Strike Committee, Dulais Valley Strike Committee, and Neath, Dulais and Swansea Valleys Support Group) | RBA |
| Sheffield Archives | Askern Women's Support Group; Mineworkers Strike (1984-1985): tape recordings (BBC Radio Sheffield); Miners' strike: Grimethorpe; South Yorkshire County Council | SA |
| South Wales Miners' Library | Oral history recordings; 1984-85 miners' strike leaflets and flyers | SWML |
| TUC Library Collections, London Metropolitan University | Trade union periodicals; Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings (including folders on support groups, WAPC, NUM, SERTUC) | TUCLC |
| University of Westminster Archives | Polytechnic of Central London Students' Union | UWA |
| Women's Library, LSE | Papers of Betty Heathfield; Papers of Amanda Sebestyen | WL |

# References

**Primary sources**

Absalom, Steve (1984), 'Xmas Show Spoilt by Half Moon's Collection for Miners', *The Stage and Television Today*, 13 December, p. 3.

ACT 2 NUS Members (1984), Letter to NUS, 16 November, MRC/MSS.175A/164.

Adams, Shelley (1984), Letter to Tony Chater, 30 November, BA/19885/SC/2.

Adams, Shelley, and Tom Durkin (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), 'Some Observations and Suggestions to Help Improve NUM Picketing Based on Our Local Experience', BA/19885/SC/4/2.

Ali, Tariq (1984), untitled article, *Time Out*, 9 August, p. 8.

Anand, Vidya (1984), 'Black Sections Here to Stay!', *Labour Briefing National Supplement*, May, p. 8.

Anon. (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), 'The Enemy Within: Who Are These McGibbbons, and Where Do They Come from? What Are Their Motives for Being in Kent? And Who Is Behind Them?', leaflet, BA/19885/PUB/3.

Anthony, Richard (director) (1985), *Here We Go*, documentary. Banner Film & TV (Production) for Channel 4.

Arkwright, Judith (1984), 'The Miners Wives - Then and Now', *Labour Briefing National Supplement*, July, p. 10.

Arnison, Jim (1984), 'Lancashire to Get Strike HQ', *Morning Star*, 10 May, p. 3.

Ashton, Mark (n.d. [c. 1985-6]), 'Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners! A Short History of Lesbian and Gay Involvement in the Miners Strike 1984-5', LHASC/LGSM/3/3.

Atkins, Suzanne, and Frances Heavey (1982), 'A chance to meet as women and trade unionists', *The Miner*, May, pp. 4–5.

Baker, Allan (1985), Letter to Pete Carter, 18 April, LHASC/CP/CENT/IND/07/02.

Barnsley Women Against Pit Closures (1984), *Women Against Pit Closures*. Barnsley: Barnsley Women Against Pit Closures.

Basnett, Dave (1985), 'Bumbling NCB to Blame', *GMB Journal*, April, pp. 1, 3.

Baxter, David (1984), 'Miners Welcome Brent Relief'. *Wembley Observer*, Special Christmas Edition, p. 5.

BDMC (1984a), 'Black Delegation: Support the Miners - Their Struggle Is Our Struggle', leaflet, BCA/RC/RF/10/06/A.
    (1984b), 'Support the Miners', leaflet, June, LMA/4463/b/17/01/005.

Berlin, Simon (1984), 'The Miners in 1984: Paths of Victory', in *Lambeth NALGO Annual Report*, pp. 22–23, RBA/SWCC/MND/25 Box 1.

Bishop, Marla (1984), 'Black Delegation to Kent Miners', *Spare Rib*, August, p. 11.

Bradley, Clive (1984), 'Out of the Ghetto', *Socialist Organiser*, 4 October, pp 4–5.

Brent Miners Support Campaign (1984), 'All behind the Miners' Fight for Jobs!', leaflet, BA/19885/BTC/2.

Brent Trades Council (1984), 'Solidarity with the Miners Now!', leaflet, BA/19885/BTC/1.

Brent Unemployed Workers Centre (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), 'Newsline Side with the Tories', HA/D/S/52/6/1/47.

Brown, John (1984), 'Union Solidarity Will Defeat Tory Attacks', *Right of Reply Special*, September, p. 8, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1'.

Browne, Ron (1984), 'The Miners Strike', *Race Today*, August, p. 18.

Browning, Steve, Colin Richardson, Nigel Young, and Stephanie Chambers (1985), 'Pits and Perverts: Lesbians and Gay Men Support the Miners 1984-1985', LHASC/LGSM/2/4.

Burn, Dave (1984), Letter to Malcolm Pitt, 28 June, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/85.

Butler, Roger (1984), Circular to West London AUEW Convenors and Branch Secretaries, Re: West London District Special Christmas Appeal, BA/19885/SC/2.
        (1985), Letter, *Right of Reply Special*, March, p. 34, LHASC/WAIN/1/10.

Camden NALGO Miners Support Group (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), Bulletin No. 3. TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'Support Groups' folder.

Campbell, Beatrix, and Val Charlton (1977), 'Grunwick Women: Why They Are Striking – and Why Their Sisters Are Supporting Them', *Spare Rib*, August, pp. 6–8, 46.

Campbell, Beatrix, and Tammy Hall (1985), 'Corridors of Power', *City Limits*, 22-28 February, p. 70.

Campbell, Duncan (1985a), 'Leon's "Whiteshirts" meet the Miners', *City Limits*, 25-31 January, pp. 8–9.
              (1985b), 'The Red Flag and the Thick Blue Line', *City Limits*, 1-7 March, p. 6.

Campbell, Duncan, and Beatrix Campbell (1985), 'The Pits, The Miners and the Media', *City Limits*, 15-21 February, pp. 8–9, 69.

Canning, Paul (1984), Letter to the Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights, 27 November, LHASC/LGSM/2/1.

Cant, Bob (1984), 'Not yet Ready?', *New Statesman*, 30 March, p. 12.
  (ed.) (1993), *Footsteps and Witnesses: Lesbian and Gay Lifestories from Scotland*. Edinburgh: Polygon.

Cant, Bob, and Susan Hemmings (eds) (1988), *Radical Records: Thirty Years of Lesbian and Gay History, 1957-1987*. London: Routledge.

*Capital Gay* (1985a), 'Lance Says Miners Are Being Starved Back', 25 January, p. 4.
  (1985b), 'Dulais Wears Our Badge on its Van', 5 April, p. 13.

Carpenter, Fred (1984), 'Ken Livingstone Interview', *London Labour Briefing*, GLC Elections Special Issue, September.

*Caribbean Times* (1984), 'Black Miners Seek Support', 24 August, p. 3.

Carter, Peter (1985a), 'Coal Pamphlet', second draft, LHASC/CP/CENT/IND/07/02.
  (1985b), Letter to District Secretaries, 6 February, LHASC/CP/CENT/IND/07/02.

Charman, Paul (1984a), 'Gay Grant', *Time Out*, 19-25 April, p. 7.
  (1984b), 'Miners and the Met', *Time Out*, 19-25 July, p. 7.

Christian, Louise (1984), 'Grasping the Nettle of Political Policing', *London Labour Briefing*, June, p. 11.

*City Limits* (1984), 'Out in the City', undated cutting, LHASC/LGSM/4/1.
  (1985a), 'Action', 4-10 January, p. 20.
  (1985b), 'Action', 25-31 January, pp. 18–19.

Clark, June (1984), 'The Diary of a Miner's Wife', *Right of Reply Special*, September, p 3, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1'.

Cohen, Barbara (1984), 'Notes of Meeting at New Scotland Yard', 5 September, BA/19885/SC/4/1.

Coles, Richard (1984), Letter to the Editor, *Socialist Worker*, 28 April, p. 7.

Collins, Jack (1984a), Letter to Bill Sirs, 24 March, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/87.
  (1984b), Letter to Henry Richardson, 24 March, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/87.
  (1984c), Letter to Bill Sirs, 15 May, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/85.
  (1984d), Letter to Dennis Skinner, 21 June, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/85.

Conn, David (2016), 'Orgreave Inquiry Calls Grow after Damning Hillsborough Verdict for Police', *Guardian,* 16 May, http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/may/16/orgreave-inquiry-calls-grow-after-damning-hillsborough-verdict-for-south-yorkshire-police, accessed 7 July 2016.

Connolly, Peter (1984), Letter to Dave Douglass, 12 April, DA, uncatalogued Dave Douglass papers.

Corbyn, Piers (1985a), 'Nuke Waste Crisis', *Labour Briefing National Supplement*, February, p. 4.
        (1985b), 'Defend the NUM Line on Uneconomic Pits', March, *Labour Briefing National Supplement*, p. 9.

Coultas, Valerie (1984), 'Neil - Never on the Picket Line - Says Dai Davies', *Labour Briefing National Supplement*, October, p. 3.
        (1985), 'Mineworkers Defence Conference: Building for Victory', *Black Dragon,* 4 January, p. 11.

Coventry Workshop (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), 'The Miners' Strike 1984. Keresley End – a View from the Village', a Coventry Workshop Fact-Sheet, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'Support Groups' folder.

CPSA (1984), 'Pit Strike Special: A Civil and Public Services Association Factsheet', TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'Trade Union Publications' folder.

Crail, Mark (1984), 'The Miners Need YOU', *Tribune*, 23 November, p. 1.

Crane, Jean (1986), Interview, 14 January, SA/SY689/V9/2.

Cunningham, John (1980), Letter to Editor, *Yorkshire Miner*, October, p. 2.

*Daily Mail* (1984), 'Red Ken Accused of Being "wet Nurse to Terror"', 5 December, p. 9.

Daldry, Stephen (director) (2000), *Billy Elliot*. Universal Pictures.

Dean, Graham (1984), Letter to Mrs. J. Crane, Secretary of Askern Women's Support Group, 9 November, SA/SY689/V8/5.

Department of Energy (1984), Letter to No. 10, MTF, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/133401, accessed 8 November 2016.

Department of Energy and Climate Change (2015), *Historical Coal Data: Coal Production, Availability and Consumption 1853 to 2014*, https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/historical-coal-data-coal-production-availability-and-consumption-1853-to-2011, accessed 15 March 2016.

DHSS Group SCPS (1985), 'Orgreave Comes to Whitehall', *Commentator*, March, p. 1.

Dibblin, Jane, and Mark Hollingsworth (1985), 'What? No Power Cuts?', *New Statesman*, 1 February, p. 14.

Dob, D (1984), Letter to the Editor, *Print*, NGA '82 journal, November, p. 5.

Donovan, David (1986), Interview by Hywel Francis, 10 March, SWML/AUD/547.

Douglas, Jim (1985), 'Sparks Add to Their History', *Right of Reply Special*, March, p. 6, LHASC/WAIN/1/10.

Douglas, Maureen (1984a), 'Mining for Change', *Spare Rib*, July, p. 11.

      (1984b), 'Miners' Sexism under Attack', *Spare Rib*, December, p. 11.

Douglass, David (1980), Letter to Editor, *Yorkshire Miner*, December, p. 2.

      (1986), 'The Doncaster Panel, 1969-84 (Interview by Guy Boanas)', in Raphael Samuel, Barbara Bloomfield, and Guy Boanas (eds), *The Enemy within: Pit Villages and the Miners' Strike of 1984-5*, pp. 51–54. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

      (2009), *The Wheel's Still in Spin: Stardust and Coaldust, a Coalminer's Mahabharata*. Hastings: Read 'n' Noir.

      (2010), *Ghost Dancers: The Miners' Last Generation*. Hastings: Read 'n' Noir.

Dunn, Jack (1978), Letter to Mr P Thompson, 17 March, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/39.

Durham Constituency Labour Party (1984), 'Miners' Families Support Group - Who We Are. What We Do', DRO/D/X 953/3/79.

*East Anglia Daily Times* (1984), 'IRA and PLO Pledge to Miners', 8 December, pp. 1–2.

Elliot, Dave (1984), 'The Future of Coal', *New Ground: Journal of Socialism and the Environment*, Autumn, pp. 11–14.

Elliot, Phil (1985), 'APEX Staff Double Money', *Right of Reply Special*, March, p. 30, LHASC/WAIN/1/10.

Etherington, William (1984), 'Report of the NUM Special Delegate Conference Held 10th August, 1984 at Sheffield University, Commencing 11.00 a.m.', NEEMARC/DCMA/1/1/7.

Evans, Ken (1984), Letter to the Editor, *Willesden and Brent Chronicle*, 6 April, p. 2.

      (n.d. [c. 1984]), Press Release, BA/19885/BTC/1.

Farnham, Margot (1989), 'Mark Ashton (19 May 1960 - 11 February 1987) - Five Friends Remember', in *Walking after Midnight: Gay Men's Life Stories*, pp. 205–223. London: Routledge.

Farrar, Max (n.d. [c. 1985-6]), 'From Orgreave to Broadwater Farm', *Emergency* 4: 50–53.

Field, Anne (1984), Letter to Hilary Wainwright, 29 May, BA/19885/SC/2.

*Finchley Times* (1972), 'The People Must Pay', 10 March, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/102186, accessed 11 December 2015.

      (1974), 'No Surrender', 1 February, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/102332, accessed 11 December 2015.

Fleming, M. (1984), Letter to the Editor, *Print*, NGA '82 Journal, June, p. 5.

Flynn, Brian, Larry Goldsmith, and Bob Sutcliffe (1985), 'We Danced in the Miners' Hall: An Interview with "Lesbians and Gay Men Support the Miners 1984-1985"', *Radical America* 19(2–3): 39–46.

Forey, Steve (1985), 'King's X On Right Lines', *Right of Reply Special*, March, p. 35, LHASC/WAIN/1/10.

Fountain, Nigel (1985), 'Notes and Quotes on a Week in 1985', *City Limits*, 15-21 March, p. 5.

Francis, Hywel (1985), 'Mining the Popular Front', *Marxism Today*, February, pp. 12–15.

French, Bill (1985), 'The Time to Fight Is Now', *Right of Reply Special*, March, p. 23, LHASC/WAIN/1/10.

Gee, Stephen (1985a), 'We Will Wear Your Badge', *Capital Gay*, 25 January, p. 14.
         (1985b), 'With Love - to One Who Wasn't There', *Capital Gay*, 12 July, p. 16.

GLATC (1985), 'Report from the South East Regional Council of the Trades Union Congress to the Association Meeting on 12th January 1985', BA/19885/GLTC/3.

GMB (2015), 'Trident Vote Promises Pie In The Sky Jobs', http://www.gmb.org.uk/newsroom/trident-vote, accessed 21 December 2015.

Goodman, Geoffrey (2006), 'Betty Heathfield', *Guardian*, 22 February, http://www.theguardian.com/news/2006/feb/22/guardianobituaries.politics, accessed 4 March 2015.

Goodsell, Martin (1985), 'A Report from the Lesbian & Gay Miners Support Group (London)', *Black Dragon*, 18 January, p. 12.

Goodspeed, Ray (2014), 'Pride - The True Story', http://leftunity.org/pride-the-true-story/, accessed 22 September 2015.

Gordon, Trevor (1984), Letter to the Editor, *Capital Gay*, 16 November, p. 2.

Gosling, Nina (1984), Letter to the Editor, *Socialist Worker*, 9 June, p. 7.

Gould, Tony (1985), Circular, 5 February, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'SERTUC' folder.
         (1984), Letter to Moss Evans, 5 July, MRC/MSS.126/TG/1395/5/1.

Greater London Council Police Committee (1984), 'Policing of the Miners' Strike: Implications for Londoners', 3 July, BA/19885/SC4/1.

Greenwich NALGO (1984), 'Meantime', newsletter of Greenwich NALGO no. 15, SWML, 1984-85 Miners' Strike Leaflets and flyers Dr Hywel Francis Box 1.

Gregory, Christine (1984), 'Miners' Wives Rally in Barnsley', BBC Radio Sheffield, 12 May, SA/ SY685/1.

Grunwick Strike Committee (1977a), Strike Bulletin No. 32, 21 March, BA/198722/GSC/2/1.
                    (1977b), Strike Bulletin No. 42, 25 June, BA/198722/GSC/2/1.

Guerin, Owen (1985), Letter to the Editor, *Public Service*, April, p. 13.

Guerrera Films (2016), *Why We Voted Leave: Voices from Northern England*, documentary, https://vimeo.com/172932182, accessed 19 July 2016.

Hackney Miners Support Committee (1985a), 'Solidarity with the Miners', leaflet, GPI/GB 2904 LRA/01/0563.
            (1985b), 'Hackney Pit Prop', LHASC/CP/LON/IND/ 2/16.

Hackney Trades Council (1974), 'Developing Links of Trade Union Solidarity and Personal Friendship', HA/D/S/52/6/15/5.

Hansard (1972), HC Deb Vol 831 cc33-169, 14 February.
      (1984a), HC Deb Vol 71 c191W, 17 January.
      (1984b), HC Deb Vol 59 cc709-16, 4 May.
      (1985), HC Deb Vol 72 cc605-6, 4 February.

Hansen, Frank, Graham Durham, and Graham Bush (1985), 'Time to Challenge Kinnock!', *London Labour Briefing*, February, pp. 1–2.

Harper, Keith, and Patrick Wintour (1985), 'The Pit Strike: The Bitter Battle That Ended an Era', *Guardian*, 5 March, pp. 15–18.

Harris, John (2016), '"If You"ve Got Money, You Vote in ... If You Haven't Got Money, You Vote Out"', *Guardian*, 24 June, http://www.theguardian.com/politics/ commentisfree/2016/jun/24/divided-britain-brexit-money-class-inequality-westminster, accessed 6 July 2016.

Harrison, T. (1977), Letter to the Editor, *The Miner*, November-December, p. 6.

Hastings, Stan (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), Letter to Moss Evans, MRC/MSS.126/TG/1395/5/1

Hatton, John, Alf Young, Mick Hamer, and Jonathan Winterton (1984), 'Alliance on the Line', *New Statesman*, 29 June, pp. 13–14.

Haylett, John (1984), 'Miners Tip Coal on Botha's Doorstep', *Morning Star*, 2 June, p. 1.

Headon, Hefina, and Ali Thomas (1985), Interview by Hywel Francis, 19 November, SWML/AUD/510.

Heathfield, Betty (1985a), 'Women of the Coalfields', book draft, WL/7BEH/1/2.
           (1985b), Interview Transcript 1, WL/7BEH/1/1/1.
           (1985c), Interview Transcript 2, WL/7BEH/1/1/2.
           (1985d), Interview Transcript 4, WL/7BEH/1/1/4.
           (1985e), Interview Transcript 9, WL/7BEH/1/1/9.
           (1985f), Interview Transcript 10, WL/7BEH/1/1/10.
           (1985g), Interview Transcript 12, WL/7BEH/1/1/12.
           (1985h), Interview Transcript 16, WL/7BEH/1/1/18.
           (1985i), Interview Transcript 18, WL/7BEH/1/1/18.
           (1985j), Interview Transcript 22, WL/7BEH/1/1/22.

(1985k), Interview Transcript 23, WL/7BEH/1/1/23.
(1985l), Interview Transcript 24, WL/7BEH/1/1/24.

Heathfield, Peter (1979), 'Review of Malcolm Pitt, *The World on Our Backs: The Kent Miners and the 1972 Miners' Strike*', *The Miner*, April-May, p. 3.
(1984), Letter to Tony Gould, 21 November, BA/19885/SC/2.

Henderson, George (1984), 'Opencast Coal - TGWU & Deep Mined Coal – NUM', Cyclo No. 841792, 5 December, MRC/MSS.126/TG/1395/5/2/1.

*Here We Go* (1984), 'Women for Mines Not Missiles', bulletin of the Nottinghamshire Women's Support Groups, August, LHASC/WAIN/13.
(1985), 'Stop Strip Searches', bulletin of the Nottinghamshire Women's Support Groups, February, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'Women Against Pit Closures and Women's Support Groups' folder.

Hodgson, Godfrey (1984), 'Excommunication and Heretics in the Valleys', *Financial Times*, 15 December, p. 19.

Hogg, Dianne (1986), Interview, 14 January, SA/SY689/V9/1.

Hoskyns, John (1980), Conference Speech (Note for Michael Alexander), 30 September, MTF, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/112635, accessed 11 December 2015.

Howe, Darcus, and Leila Hassan (1984), 'Defeat for Black Sections', *Race Today*, December, p. 8–11.

Howell, F.J. (1984), Letter to All Electricity Supply Industry mailing list, 1 October, BA/19885/SC/2.

Humber, Doreen (1985), 'Report on Greenham Common', *Here We Go*, bulletin of the Nottinghamshire Women's Support Groups, January, LHASC/MS84/MW/5/4.

Hunt, Tristram (2016), 'Labour Must Embrace Englishness – and Be Proud of It', *Guardian*, 5 February, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/feb/05/labour-embrace-englishness-proud-patriotism, accessed 20 July 2016.

I.P. (1984), Letter to George Henderson, 10 April, MRC/MSS.126/TG/1395/5/2/2.

Jackson, Mike (1984), Letter to Hefina Headon, 7 October, LHASC/LGSM/2/1.
(1985), Letter to Alan Dalton, 6 February, LHASC/LGSM/2/2.
(1991), 'Storing up Memories', *Rouge*, October-December, p. 23.
(N.d. [c. 1984-5]), 'Solidarity with the Miners – Labour Research Department Survey', London LGSM return, LHASC/LGSM/3/6.

Jackson, Stevi (1984), 'Women and the Strike', *Labour Briefing National Supplement*, May, p. 5.

Jagger, D. (1984), 'SOGAT Sponsors Miners' Football Presentation', *SOGAT Journal*, September, p. 8.

James, Selma (1972), 'The Miners' Strike and the Women's Liberation Movement', WL/7SEB/A/03.

James, Sian, Mike Jackson, Beverley Skeggs, and Diarmaid Kelliher (2014), 'Pits and Perverts Revisited: "Pride" the Movie, and Politics Now', presentations and roundtable discussion, 12 December, Birkbeck, University of London. http://backdoorbroadcasting.net/2014/12/pits-and-perverts-revisited-pride-the-movie-and-politics-now/, accessed 5 November 2015.

J.C. (n.d. [c. 1984]), Letter to Jim Slater, MRC/MSS.175A/164.

John C (1984), Letter to Mike Jackson, 3 December, LHASC/LGSM/2/1.

Johnston, Philip (2016), 'The Loony Left Is Back – but the Tories Would Be Crazy to Be Complacent' *The Telegraph*, 27 September, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/09/27/the-loony-left-is-back---but-the-tories-would-be-crazy-to-be-com/, accessed 10 March 2017.

Jones, Davy (1984), 'Miners Take on the Media', *Labour Briefing National Supplement*, July, p. 6.

K.A. (1984), Letter to NUS, 12 November, MRC/MSS.175A/164.

Kean, Hilda (1985), 'Opening up the Second Front - Strike Together on March 6th!', *London Labour Briefing*, March, p. 1.

Kellaway, Kate (2014), 'When Miners and Gay Activists United: The Real Story of the Film Pride', *Guardian*, 31 August, http://www.theguardian.com/film/2014/aug/31/pride-film-gay-activists-miners-strike-interview, accessed 22 February 2016.

Kellner, Peter (1985), 'What the Public Really Thinks about the Miners', *New Statesman*, 18 January, p. 7.

Kent Area NUM (1984), 'Picket Procedure', BA/19885/PUB/3.

Kent Communist Miners (1984), 'An Open Letter to Miners and Their Wives', March, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/87.

*Kilburn Times* (1984), 'No Mines – but Brent Backs the Strikers', 13 April, p. 5.

Kinahan, Jack (1984), NUS Internal Memo to Jim Slater, 14 November, MRC/MSS.175A/164.

Kincaid, Robert (1984), 'Collections and Connections: Getting Our Message Across', *Square Peg* 7: 12–13.

Kirsch, Brenda, and Christian Wolmar (1985), 'Miners Pickets - The Tally', *New Statesman*, 22 March, p. 6.

Knight, John (1984), 'Britain's Crisis of Law and Disorder - by the Attorney General', *Sunday Mirror*, 21 October, pp. 6–7.

Knowles, Michael (1974), Letter to NUM General Secretary, 13 February, HA/D/S/52/6/15/5.

La Rose, John (1984), Letter to the Miners Families Christmas Appeal, 5 December, LHASC/WAIN/1/2.
         (1985), 'The Miners' Experience of the Police, the Magistrates, the Judges and the Courts', *Race Today*, May/June, p. 6.

*Labour Briefing National Supplement* (1985), 'The Rocky Road from Wembley', February, pp. 12–13.
LAPC and LGSM (1985), 'Wimmin's Weekend', leaflet, 18-19 May, LHASC/LGSM/3/5.
Letter to Mr. C. Bennett (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), MRC/MSS.175A/166.

Levin, Bernard (1984), 'Beware of the Hydra That Threatens Liberty', *The Times*, 5 December, p. 12.

Lewis, Gail (2011), Interview by Rachel Cohen, 15 April, BL, Sisterhood and After: The Women's Liberation Oral History Project.

LGSM (1984a), Minutes, 14 October, LHASC/LGSM/1/1.
     (1984b), Minutes, 4 December, LHASC/LGSM/1/2.
     (1985a), 'LGSM presents The Drift', leaflet, HCA/EPHEMERA/684.
     (1985b), 'Which Side Are You On?', leaflet, LHASC/LGSM/3/1.
     (1985c), 'Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners Conference - The Way Forward', leaflet, LHASC/LGSM/5/2.
     (1985d), Minutes, 6 January, LHASC/LGSM/1/2.
     (1985e), Minutes, 20 January, LHASC/LGSM/1/2.
     (1985f), Minutes, 10 February, LHASC/LGSM/1/2.
     (1985g), Minutes, 31 March, LHASC/LGSM/1/2.
     (1986), *All Out! Dancing in Dulais*, documentary, produced by Jeff Cole, http://www.coolcave.co.uk/blog/video/all-out-dancing-in-dulais-1986.html, accessed 10 November 2016.

'List of London Miners Support Committees' (1984), 30 October, BA/19885/PUB/3.

Livingstone, Ken (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), 'The Cities' Case for Coal', *Jobs for a Change* 15: 3, LHASC/CP/CENT/IND/07/02.
         (1985), 'Editorial', *Black Dragon*, February, p. 5.

Lloyd, Cathie (1984) 'Problems with Police Harassment of Collections for the Miners', BA/19885/SC4/1.

Lloyd, John (1984), 'Why Scargill Relies on His Red Guards', *Financial Times*, 17 March, p. 19.

Loach, Loretta (1984), 'Who Holds the Baby?', *Spare Rib*, June, p. 10.

*London Labour Briefing* (1984a), 'London Supports the Miners', June, pp. 2–5.
         (1984b), 'Police Attack Street Collections', October, pp. 4–5.

London NUM Support Committee (1984), 'The September Share Out', *The London Miner* no. 4, 8 October, BA/19885/PUB/3.

Lovibon, Jon (1984), 'T.O.M.'s Delegation to Belfast', *Troops Out of Ireland*, October, pp. 6–9, AIB, Box: 'Troops Out Magazine (1978-88)'.

MacIntosh, Calum (1985), SERTUC/NUM circular, 27 February, BA/19885/SC/3/1-2.

Mason, Rowena, and Jessica Elgot (2016), 'Tom Watson to Meet Unions to Discuss Jeremy Corbyn Leadership Standoff', *Guardian*, 4 July, http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jul/04/jeremy-corbyn-issues-defiant-video-urging-labour-unity, accessed 8 July 2016.

Matheson, Andy (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), 'Il Manifesto' article translation, LHASC/LGSM/3/2.

Matthews, Bill (1985), 'Strike Lessons', *Rank and File Miner*, June, LHASC/WAIN/1/11.

McGhie, John (1984), 'Cop-in-Hand', *Time Out*, 27 September-3 October, p. 8.

McGibbon, Irene (1984), Letter to Moss Evans, 10 August, MRC/MSS.126/TG/1395/5/1.

MCTV 1 (1985), 'Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners at The Hacienda', documentary, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nW5rq6nAams, accessed 10 November 2016.

Meer, Rashid, and Bethan Webster (1985), Hackney Miners' Support Committee circular, HA/D/S/52/6/1/46.

Merrick, Tony (1980), Interview by Fred Lindop, MRC/MSS.371/QD7/Docks 1/31.

M.F. (1984), Letter to Jim Slater, 18 October, MRC/MSS.175A/164.

Miners' Campaign Tape Project (2009 [1984]), *The Miners' Campaign Tapes*, BFI DVD.

*Miners' Strike Songs* (1984), audio recording, SMWL/AUD/469.

Mineworkers' Defence Committee (1984), Solidarity conference statement, 2 December, BA/19885/PUB/3.

Ministerial Committee on Economic Strategy (1979), Minutes of the 13th Meeting, CAB 134/4335, 23 October, MTF, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/116497.

Mirror Group Graphics Chapel (1984), 'Mirror Group Graphics Chapel - We Pledge Our Support', *Right of Reply Special*, September, p. 4, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1'.

Monbiot, George (2008), 'Old King Coal is a Brave Old Soul, But He is Talking Utter Nonsense', *Guardian*, 12 August, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2008/aug/12/fossilfuels.nuclearpower, accessed 9 August 2016.

*Morning Star* (1984a), 'Most of Britain's Collieries Come to a Halt', 12 March, p. 1.
(1984b), 'Interference with Pickets Blamed for Pit Trouble', 15 March, p. 3.
(1984c), 'Meals for Strike Kids', 19 March, p. 3.
(1984d), 'Wales Community Support Grows', 3 May, p. 3.

(1984e), 'CND Peace Festival Takes Yorkshire Miners to Heart', 26 June, p. 3.

Morris, Gary (1984), 'The Strike at Kewal Brothers', *Race Today*, October, p. 4.
(1986), 'Black Miners and the Miners' Strike', *New Beacon Review*, November, pp. 40–47.

Mount, Ferdinand (1984), 'Will Arthur Scargill Smash the Miners?', *The Times*, 19 March, p. 12.

Murray, Lionel (1977), Grunwick Dispute Statement, 24 June, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/39.
(1984), 'Mining Dispute' circular to General Secretaries of all TUC affiliated unions, 14 May, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'TUC' folder.

Myers, Nell (1985), Letter to Pete Carter, 13 March, LHASC/CP/CENT/IND/07/02.

NALGO Miners Support Campaign (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), 'Why You Should Support the Miners', leaflet, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'Support Groups' folder.

Nationalised Industries Policy Group (1977), 'Final Report of the Nationalised Industries Policy Group', MTF, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/archive/displaydocument.asp?docid=110795, accessed 27 October 2015.

Neath and District Miners' Support Group (1984a), Minutes book, Report on Demonstration and Rally in Portsmouth, 27 June, RBA/SWCC/MND/25 Box 4.
(1984b), Minutes, 9 December, RBA/SWCC/MND/25 Box 4.

Neath, Dulais and Swansea Valley Miners' Support Group (1985), Visitors book, RBA/SWCC/MND/25 Box 4.

*New Statesman* (1984a), 'Where Is the Strike Going?', 25 May, p. 3.
(1984b), 'Miscellany', 6 July, p. 5.
(1984c), 'Miscellany', 10 August, p. 5.

New Zealand Star NUS Members (1984), Letter to Jim Slater, 31 October, MRC/MSS.175A/166.

Newsreel Collective (1977), *Stand Together*, documentary.

Norden, Barbara (1985), 'Many Visions - Many Hands', *Spare Rib*, September, pp. 6–8, 32–34.

NUM (1984), *Hands off the Pits - No Privatisation of Coal*, NUM Campaign for Coal Briefing Booklet No 2, MRC/MSS.126/TG/1395/5/4.
(n.d.-a [c. 1984]), 'Guide to Pickets', LHASC/MS84/MW/3/3.
(n.d.-b [c. 1984]), 'Fact Sheet, The Miners' Strike', TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'NUM' folder.

(n.d.-c [c. 1984-5]), 'A Call to Power Workers – Support British Miners on Strike for the Right to Work.', TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'NUM' folder.

NUM Durham Area (1984), Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, 14 March, NEEMARC/NUMDA/1/3/54.

NUS (1984), 'Support for the Mineworkers', press statement, 29 March, MRC/MSS.126/TG/1395/5/1.
(n.d. [c. 1984]), Template reply letter, MRC/MSS.175A/164.

O'Flynn, D (1984), Letter to Idwal Morgan, 18 April, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/35.

O'Mahony, John (1985), 'Twelve Months That Shook Britain: The Story of the Strike', *Socialist Organiser*, Special Issue, pp. 3–20.

Pascall, David (1984), 'The Coal Dispute - Public Opinion', minute to Turnbull, 14 June, MTF, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/133376, accessed 12 August 2016.

Patel, Pragna (2011), Interview by Rachel Cohen, 18 May, BL, Sisterhood and After: The Women's Liberation Oral History Project.

Paull, E. (1984), Letter to the Editor, *SOGAT Journal*, September, p. 10.

PCL Miners Support Group (1984), 'Motion for EUM', 22 November, UWA/PCL/2/11/3.

Presland, Eric (1984a), 'Cruising 167: The Fallen Angel', *Capital Gay*, 9 November, p. 17.
(1984b), 'Bronski Bash Nets £5,000 for Miners', *Capital Gay*, 14 December, p. 1.

Price, Brian, and Arthur Whittaker (1986), Interview, SA/SY731/V4/1.

'Prime Minister' (1984), No.10 note to Margaret Thatcher with 'Life in Britain' polling data attached, 29 August, MTF, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/133490, accessed 10 December 2015.

'Public Opinion Background Note 45' (1984), 4 July, MTF, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/137582, accessed 8 December 2016.

*Race Today* (1984), Letters, September-October, p. 2.
(1987), 'Grunwick Revisited', June-July, pp. 8–10.

Ramelson, Bert (1985), Letter to Pete Carter, 30 April, LHASC/CP/CENT/IND/07/02.

*Rank and File Miner* (1985), 'Barcelona Dockers', June, LHASC/WAIN/1/11.

Reid, Jimmy (1985), 'What Scargill Means', *New Society*, 17 January, pp. 91–93.

Renwick, Aly (1999), 'Something in the Air: The Rise of the Troops Out Movement', *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, 19 August, http://republican-news.org/archive/1999/August19/18troo.html, accessed 28 January 2016.

Ridley, Pete (1985), 'London, England', *SRAF Bulletin*, September, p. 7, LHASC/WAIN/ 1/5.

Roberts, Gethin (1985), 'Pits and Perverts', *Chartist*, February-April.

Roelofs, Sarah (1985), Speech to Labour Party Conference, *Labour Briefing National Supplement*, November, p. 10.

Roelofs, Sarah, and Paul Canning (1985), 'In Conversation with Tony Benn', *Lesbian and Gay Socialist*, Spring, pp. 5–17.

Rose, John (1984), 'Sister, Brother and Twin', *New Statesman*, 30 November, p. 12.

Rose Heyworth NUM (1984), Minutes, 10 March 1984, RBA/ SWCC/MND/25 Box 6.
Rouffiniac, Jess (ed.) (1985), *Haringey Supporting the Miners 1984-1985*. London: Haringey Trades Union Council Support Unit.

Salt, Chrys, and Jim Layzell (eds) (1985), *Here We Go! Women's Memories of the 1984/85 Miners Strike*. London: London Political Committee, Co-operative Retail Services Ltd.

Samuel, Raphael (1985a), 'Friends and Outsiders', *New Statesman*, 11 January, pp. 14–15.

Scargill, Arthur (1975), 'The New Unionism', *New Left Review* 1(92): 3–33.
            (1982), 'Why We're Backing the Health Service Workers', *The Miner*, June-July, p. 3.
            (1984a), Address to NUR National Conference, June, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/ F1987-13/NUM/85.
            (1984b), Letter to George Henderson, 5 December, MRC/MSS.126/TG/ 1395/5/2/1
            (2008), 'Coal Isn't the Climate Enemy, Mr Monbiot. It's the Solution', *Guardian*, 8 August, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2008/aug/08/ nuclearpower.fossilfuels, accessed 9 August 2016.

Scola, Julia (1984), 'Black People Support the Miners', *London Labour Briefing*, October, p. 3.

*Searchlight* (1985), 'Black People Support Striking Miners', April, pp. 16–17.

SERTUC (1984), 'Notes on August 11 Rally', BA/19885/SC/3/1-2.

SERTUC/GLC Miners Support Committee (1984), 'London Miners Gala's 5 Nights for the Miners', event programme, BA/19885/SC/3/3.

SERTUC-NUM Co-ordination Committee (1984), Minutes, 22 May, BA/19885/SC/1/1.

SERTUC-NUM Support Committee (1984a), 'Protect Your Rights', *SERTUC-NUM Broadsheet* no. 1, May, p. 2, BA/19885/SC/3/1-2.
                        (1984b), 'Step up support, as strike goes from strength to strength', *SERTUC-NUM Broadsheet* no. 3, p. 1, BA/19885/SC/3/1-2.
                        (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), 'Is This a Political strike? ...YES', leaflet, BA/19885/SC/1/1.

Shepard, John (1984), Letter to the Editor, *Socialist Worker*, 12 May, p. 7.

Sherman, Barrie (1984), 'Unions Disunited', *New Statesman*, 18 May, p. 20.

Sirs, Bill (1984a), Letter to Jack Collins, 11 May, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/85.
    (1984b), Letter to Jack Collins, 18 May, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/NUM/85.
    (1985), *Hard Labour*. London: Sidgwick & Jackson.

Slater, Jim (1984), Letter to Ms B., 13 November, MRC/MSS.175A/164.

Smith, Rob (1984), 'Anger at Council's Help for Miners', *South London Press*, 25
    September, p. 3.

Socialist Action (1985), *Railworkers and Miners: The Story of Coalville During the
    1984/85 Miners' Strike: United Against the Tories*. London: Socialist Action.

SOGAT 82 London Women's Branch (1984), Minutes of Branch Committee Meetings,
    TUCLC, uncatalogued papers.

*SOGAT Women* (1985), 'Women's TUC Gives Us Strength and Sisterhood', May, pp. 3–4.

South Yorkshire WAPC (1985), 'Education on Racism', *Women's Pit Prop* Issue 1, May-
    June, DA/DZMD/873/1/1.

Southwark Trades Council (1984), 'Southwark Support the Miners', leaflet, TUCLC, Box:
    'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'Support Groups' folder.

*Spare Rib* (1985a), 'What Did You Do in the Strike, Mum?', February, pp. 6–8, 30–31.
    (1985b), 'Striking New Connections', April, pp. 32–33.

Street, John (1984a), 'Diary', *Tribune*, 18 May, p. 4.
    (1984b), 'Diary', *Tribune*, 26 October, p. 4.

Strike, Norman (2009), *Strike by Name: One Man's Part in the 1984/5 Miners' Strike*.
    London: Bookmarks.

TGWU (1985), 'Miners' Dispute Report to the General Executive Council', September,
    MRC/MSS.126/TG/1395/5/2/2.

Thatcher, Margaret (1984a), BBC1 Panorama Interview Transcript, 9 April, MTF, http://
    www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105538, accessed 4 August 2016.
    (1984b), Speech to the Conservative Party Conference, 12 October,
    MTF, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/136240, accessed 7 December
    2015.
    (1984c), Speech Receiving Aims of Industry National Free Enterprise
    Award, 17 October, MTF, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/105766,
    accessed 8 August 2016.

The Economic League (1984), 'Ruthless, Cunning and Contemptuous: Political
    Manipulation of the Miners', July, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets
    and Cuttings Only 1', 'Miscellaneous Leaflets' folder.

*The Miner* (1970), 'Welsh miners demonstrate against the Springboks', January, p. 4.
        (1978), 'Ted's Message to the Racists', October-November, p. 1.
        (1979), 'Another Attack on Working Class Women', September-October, p. 2.
        (1980), 'Kent Miners Maintain Vietnam Links', September-October, p. 7.
        (1982a), Photo caption, July-August, p. 1.
        (1982b), 'Greenham Peace Women Have given World a Lead', December, p. 4.

*The Voice* (1984a), 'Labour Black Section Visits Miners', 18 August, p. 5.
        (1984b), 'Black People Support the Miners', 8 December, p. 3.
        (2016), 'The Untold Story of Britain's Black Miners',7 August, http://www.
voice-online.co.uk/article/untold-story-britains-black-miners, accessed 18 August
2016.

Thomas, David (1984), 'Union Resource Centres Threatened by the Cuts', *Tribune*, 16
March, p. 7.

Thornett, Alan (1985a), 'The Miners Arrive in Oxford', in Alan Thornett (ed.), *The
Miners' Strike in Oxford*, pp. 10–12. Oxford: Oxford and District Trades Council.
        (ed.) (1985b), *The Miners' Strike in Oxford*. Oxford: Oxford and District
Trades Council.

Thwaites, Roy (1984), Letter to Peter Heathfield, 11 July, SA/SYCC-CLLR/1/2/17.

*Time Out* (1984a), 'Agit Prop', 12-18 July, p. 42.
        (1984b), 'Agit Prop', 19-25 July, p. 24.
        (1984c), 'Agit Prop', 27 September-3 October, p. 37.

Tipple, Len (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), 'Support the Miners UNITY IS STRENGTH', *Signing on
Times* No. 6, Tower Hamlets Centre for the Unemployed, HA/D/S/52/6/1/39.

Trade Union Resource Centre Trust (n.d.), 'New Resources for the Trade Union
Movement Under Threat', HA/D/S/52/6/1/44.

*Tribune* (1984a), 'Councils Urged to Boycott Strike Breakers', 22 June, p. 12.
        (1984b), 'What was decided at Labour Party conference', 12 October, p. 6.

*Troops Out of Ireland* (1984a), 'Asian Delegation Visits Belfast', March, pp. 6–7, AIB,
Box: 'Troops Out Magazine (1978-88)'.
        (1984b), 'Miners and Ireland', June, p. 11, AIB, Box: 'Troops Out
Magazine (1978-88)'.
        (1984c), 'A State of Siege', July, p. 10, AIB, Box: 'Troops Out
Magazine (1978-88)'.

TUC (1982), *Report of the 114th Annual Trades Union Congress*. London: TUC.
    (1984a), *Report of the 116th Annual Trades Union Congress*. London: TUC.
    (1984b), 'Mining Dispute', Press Release, 13 November, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners'
Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'TUC' folder.
    (1985), *Report of the 117th Annual Trades Union Congress*. London: TUC.

*UCATT Viewpoint* (1984), 'Support for the Miners', July, p. 1.

(1985), 'Magnificent Base for West London Trade Unionists', January, p. 2.

Union of Communication Workers (1984), 'In Support of the Miners', documentary, MRC/MSS.148/UCW/5/13/D/1.

*The Valleys' Star* (1984), 'Do we need coal, when we've got oil, gas and nuclear power?', 5 June, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1', 'Support Groups' folder.
(1985a), 'London Commitment - Neasden Picket: Magic!', 27 February, SWML.
(1985b), 'Paul Robeson Junior at Onllwyn', 6 June, SWML.
(1986), 'From Soweto to Tottenham', March, SWML.

van Gelderen, Tessa (1984), 'Brent Miners' Support Group', *London Labour Briefing*, November, p. 5.

Vassell, Olive (1984), 'The Boys from the Black Stuff', *West Indian World*, 19 September: 6.

Vittorini, Polly, Nicola Field, and Caron Methol (1986), 'Lesbians Against Pit Closures', in Vicky Seddon (ed.), *The Cutting Edge: Women and the Pit Strike*, pp. 142–148. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Wagstaff, Mike (1984), 'The Battle of Wivenhoe', *New Statesman*, 11 May, p. 4.

Wainwright, Hilary (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), Interview with Eddie Corbett, handwritten notes, LHASC/WAIN/1/12.

Wakefield, Arthur (2002), *The Miners' Strike Day by Day: The Illustrated 1984-85 Diary of Yorkshire Miner Arthur Wakefield*, edited by Brian Elliot. Barnsley: Wharncliffe.

Wales Congress in Support of Mining Communities (n.d. [c. 1985]), 'Democracy, Thatcherism and the Miners' Strike', LHASC/CP/LON/IND/2/16.

Waltham Forest Miners Support Group (1984), 'Week of Action 15-22 December 1984', leaflet, TUCLC, Box: 'Miners' Dispute 1984/5 Leaflets and Cuttings Only 1'.

Warchus, Matthew (director) (2014), *Pride*. Pathé.

Ware, Julian (1985) (director), *Keresley: A Village and a Strike*, Central Television, http://player.bfi.org.uk/film/watch-keresley-a-village-and-a-strike-1985/, accessed 26 July 2016.

Webster, Frank (1974), Letter to "Brothers", with document from the London Student Organisation Miners' Support Group attached, KHLC/Uncat/ACC/F1987-13/22.

Weeks, Alex, and Paul Davies (1984), Letter to the Editor, *Capital Gay*, 7 December, p. 2.

White, Sarah (1984), Letter to NUM HQ, 22 May, GPI/NCM/1/3/3/3.

Whitelaw, William (1982) 'The Greater London Council (GLC) and the Metropolitan Councils', 3 October, MTF, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/140982, accessed 6 September 1984.

'Why "Black Dragon"?' (n.d. [c. 1984-5]), LHASC/WAIN/1/12.

Williams, S. (1985), 'Dragon on Picket Line!', *New Musical Express*, 23 February, p. 12.

Wilson, Amrit (1984), 'Mass Pickets for Asians on Strike', *New Statesman*, 13 July, p. 5.
   (1985), 'Staff Asked to Name Students on Anti-NF Picket', *New Statesman*, 18 May, p. 4.

Wongsam, M.A. (1984), Letter to the Editor, *Labour Briefing National Supplement*, 8 May, p. 8.

*Workers Unity* (1984), 'British Miners' Strike', Organ of the South African Congress of Trade Unions, no. 46/47, p. 6.

Wright, E (1984), Letter to Editor, *Print*, NGA '82 journal, October, p. 11.

*Yorkshire Miner* (1979a), 'The Nazi Terror That Stalks Britain's Streets', February, p. 12.
   (1979b), 'With women in mind', March, p. 6.
   (1979c), 'Apartheid official barred from pit', May, p. 4.
   (1982a), 'We'll support you ever more', July, p. 12.
   (1982b), 'Humanity's Real Pin-Up', August, p. 3.
   (1983), 'Miners' greetings to peace women', February, p. 5.

Young, Nigel (1977), 'Crossroads - Which Way Now?', *Gay Left* 5: 15–17.

Younge, Gary (2009), 'How the Miners' Strike Taught Me to Believe in Impossible Things', *Guardian*, 16 March, p. 29.

**Secondary sources**

Ackers, Peter (2014), 'Gramsci at the Miners' Strike: Remembering the 1984–1985 Eurocommunist Alternative Industrial Relations Strategy', *Labor History* 55(2): 151–172.

Adeney, Martin, and John Lloyd (1986), *The Miners' Strike, 1984-5: Loss without Limit*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Aguiar, Luis, and Shaun Ryan (2009), 'The Geographies of the Justice for Janitors', *Geoforum* 40(6): 949–958.

Ahmed, Sara (2015), *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Second edition. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Ali, Moiram (1986), 'The Coal War: Women's Struggle during the Miners' Strike', in Rosemary Ridd and Helen Callaway (eds), *Caught up in Conflict*, pp. 84–105. London: Macmillan Education UK.

Ali, Tariq, and Ken Livingstone (1984), *Who's Afraid of Margaret Thatcher? In Praise of Socialism*. London: Verso.

Amos, Valerie, and Pratibha Parmar (1984), 'Challenging Imperial Feminism', *Feminist Review* 17(1): 3–19.

Anderson, Jeremy (2015), 'Towards Resonant Places: Reflections on the Organizing Strategy of the International Transport Workers' Federation', *Space and Polity* 19(1): 47–61.

Andrucki, Max, and Glen Elder (2007), 'Locating the State in Queer Space: GLBT Non-Profit Organizations in Vermont, USA', *Social & Cultural Geography* 8(1): 89–104.

Anitha, Sundari, Ruth Pearson, and Linda McDowell (2012), 'Striking Lives: Multiple Narratives of South Asian Women's Employment, Identity and Protest in the UK', *Ethnicities* 12(6): 754–775.

Antentas, Josep Maria (2015), 'Sliding Scale of Spaces and Dilemmas of Internationalism', *Antipode* 47(5): 1101–1120.

Askins, Kye, and Kelvin Mason (2015), 'Us and Us: Agonism, Non-Violence and the Relational Spaces of Civic Activism', *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* 14(2): 422–430.

Baker, Alan (1997), '"The Dead Don't Answer Questionnaires": Researching and Writing Historical Geography', *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 21(2): 231–243.

Bayertz, Kurt, (1999), 'Four Use of "Solidarity"', in Kurt Bayertz (ed.), *Solidarity*, pp. 3–28. Dordrecht ; Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Beckett, Andy (2009),*When the Lights Went out: Britain in the Seventies*. London: Faber.
          (2016), *Promised You a Miracle: Why 1980-82 Made Modern Britain*. London: Penguin.

Beckett, Francis, and David Hencke (2009), *Marching to the Fault Line: The Miners' Strike and the Battle for Industrial Britain*. New edition. London: Constable.

Beckwith, Karen (1996), 'Lancashire Women against Pit Closures: Women's Standing in a Men's Movement', *Signs* 21(4): 1034–1068.

Beier, A. L, and Paul Ocobock (eds) (2008), *Cast out: Vagrancy and Homelessness in Global and Historical Perspective*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press.

Bell, David (2009), *The Dirty Thirty: Heroes of the Miners' Strike*. Nottingham: Five Leaves.

Bell, David, and Gill Valentine (1995), 'Introduction: Orientations', in David Bell and Gill Valentine (eds), *Mapping Desire: Geographies of Sexualities*, pp. 1–27. London: Routledge.

Bennett, Katy, Huw Beynon, and Raymond Hudson (2000), *Coalfields Regeneration: Dealing with the Consequences of Industrial Decline*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Berlin, Mike (2006), *Never on Our Knees: A History of the RMT, 1979-2006*. London: Pluto Press.

Beynon, Huw (1984), 'The Miners' Strike in Easington', *New Left Review* 1(148): 104–115.

          (1985a), 'Introduction', in Huw Beynon (ed.), *Digging Deeper: Issues in the Miners' Strike*, pp. 1–26. London: Verso.

          (ed.) (1985b), *Digging Deeper: Issues in the Miners' Strike*. London: Verso.

Beynon, Huw, and Terry Austrin (1994), *Masters and Servants: Class and Patronage in the Making of a Labour Organisation: The Durham Miners and the English Political Tradition*. London: Rivers Oram.

Beynon, Huw, and Peter McMylor (1985), 'Decisive Power: The New Tory State Against the Miners', in Huw Beynon (ed.), *Digging Deeper: Issues in the Miners' Strike*, pp. 29-45. London: Verso.

BFI (n.d.), 'Cinema Action', BFI Screenonline, http://www.screenonline.org.uk/people/id/529319/, accessed 21 March 2016.

Binnie, Jon (2011), 'Class, Sexuality and Space: A Comment', *Sexualities* 14(1): 21–26.

Binnie, Jon, and Gill Valentine (1999), 'Geographies of Sexuality - a Review of Progress', *Progress in Human Geography* 23(2): 175–187.

Black, Lawrence, and Hugh Pemberton (2013), 'Introduction. The Benighted Decade? Reassessing the 1970s', in Lawrence Black, Hugh Pemberton, and Pat Thane (eds), *Reassessing 1970s Britain*, pp. 1–24. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Blomley, Nicholas (1994), *Law, Space, and the Geographies of Power*. New York; London: Guilford.

Boddy, Martin, and Colin Fudge (1984), *Local Socialism? Labour Councils and New Left Alternatives*. London: Macmillan.

Bragg, Billy (2015), 'Jock Purdon, The Miners' Poet', BBC Radio 4, 2 March, http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/proginfo/2015/09/jock-purdon-the-miners-poet.

Brenner, Aaron (2010), 'Preface', in Aaron Brenner, Robert Brenner, and Calvin Winslow (eds), *Rebel Rank and File: Labor Militancy and Revolt from below in the Long 1970s*, pp. xi-xix. London: Verso.

Brenner, Aaron, Robert Brenner, and Calvin Winslow (eds) (2010), *Rebel Rank and File: Labor Militancy and Revolt from below in the Long 1970s*. London: Verso.

Bressey, Caroline (2014), 'Archival Interventions: Participatory Research and Public Historical Geographies', *Journal of Historical Geography* 46: 102–104.

Brittan, Samuel (2013), 'A Time for Confession', in Lawrence Black, Hugh Pemberton, and Pat Thane (eds), *Reassessing 1970s Britain*, pp. 61-68. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Britten, Hilary (1985), 'Looking Back – and Forward on the Miners' Strike', *Spare Rib*, April, pp. 9–10.

Brooke, Stephen (2014), 'Living in "New Times": Historicizing 1980s Britain', *History Compass* 12(1): 20–32.

Brotherstone, Terry, and Simon Pirani (2005), 'Were There Alternatives? Movements from Below in the Scottish Coalfield, the Communist Party, and Thatcherism, 1981–1985', *Critique* 33(1): 99–124.

Brown, Gavin (2009), 'Thinking beyond Homonormativity: Performative Explorations of Diverse Gay Economies', *Environment and Planning A* 41(6): 1496–1510.

Brown, Gavin, and Helen Yaffe (2014), 'Practices of Solidarity: Opposing Apartheid in the Centre of London', *Antipode* 46(1): 34–52.

Brown, Michael (2012), 'Gender and Sexuality I: Intersectional Anxieties', *Progress in Human Geography* 36(4): 541-550.
　　　　　(2014), 'Gender and Sexuality II: There Goes the Gayborhood?', *Progress in Human Geography* 38(3): 457–465.

Browne, Kath (2006), 'Challenging Queer Geographies', *Antipode* 38(5): 885–893.

Browne, Sarah (2014), *The Women's Liberation Movement in Scotland*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Bruley, Sue (2010), *The Women and Men of 1926: A Gender and Social History of the General Strike and Miners' Lockout in South Wales*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Bunce, Robin, and Paul Field (2014), *Darcus Howe: A Political Biography*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Burke, Peter (1981), 'People's History or Total History', in Raphael Samuel (ed.), *People's History and Socialist Theory*, pp. 4–9. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Callinicos, Alex, and Mike Simons (1985), *The Great Strike: The Miners' Strike of 1984-5 and Its Lessons*. London: Socialist Worker.

Carbado, Devon, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Vickie Mays, and Barbara Tomlinson (2013), 'Intersectionality', *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 10(2): 303–312.

Carbin, Maria, and Sara Edenheim (2013), 'The Intersectional Turn in Feminist Theory: A Dream of a Common Language?', *European Journal of Women's Studies* 20(3): 233–248.

Carter, Trevor (1986), *Shattering Illusions: West Indians in British Politics*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Castree, Noel (2000), 'Geographic Scale and Grass-Roots Internationalism: The Liverpool Dock Dispute, 1995-1998', *Economic Geography* 76(3): 272–292.

(2007), 'Labour Geography: A Work in Progress', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 31(4): 853–862.

Chaudhuri, Nupur, Sherry Katz, and Mary Perry (2010), 'Introduction', in Nupur Chaudhuri, Sherry Katz, and Mary Perry (eds), *Contesting Archives: Finding Women in the Sources*, pp. xiii–xxiv. Urbana, Ill: University of Illinois Press.

Cholmeley, Jane (2016), 'Silver Moon Women's Bookshop: A Feminist Business in a Capitalist World, Contradictions and Challenges', conference presentation, Radical Histories/Histories of Radicalism, Queen Mary, University of London, July 2016.

Church, Roy, Quentin Outram, and David Smith (1991), 'The "Isolated Mass" Revisited: Strikes in British Coal Mining', *The Sociological Review* 39(1): 55–87.

Clarke, Nick (2009), 'In What Sense "Spaces of Neoliberalism"? The New Localism, the New Politics of Scale, and Town Twinning', *Political Geography* 28(8): 496–507.
        (2011), 'Globalising Care? Town Twinning in Britain since 1945', *Geoforum* 42(1): 115–125.

Coe, Neil, and David Jordhus-Lier (2011), 'Constrained Agency? Re-Evaluating the Geographies of Labour', *Progress in Human Geography* 35(2): 211–233.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé (1989), 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics', *The University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989(1): 139–167.
        (1991), 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color', *Stanford Law Review* 43(6): 1241-1299.

Cresswell, Tim (1994), 'Putting Women in Their Place: The Carnival at Greenham Common', *Antipode* 26(1): 35–58.
        (2010), 'Towards a Politics of Mobility', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28(1): 17–31.
        (2015), *Place: An Introduction*. Second edition. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Cronin, James (1989), 'The "Rank and File" and the Social History of the Working Class', *International Review of Social History* 34(1): 78–88.

Crossan, J, D J Featherstone, F Hayes, H M Hughes, C Jamieson and R Leonard (2016), 'Trade Union Banners and the Construction of a Working-Class Presence: Notes from Two Labour Disputes in 1980s Glasgow and North Lanarkshire', *Area* 48(3): 357-364.

Cumbers, Andrew (2012), *Reclaiming Public Ownership: Making Space for Economic Democracy*. London: Zed Books.
        (2015), 'Constructing a Global Commons In, Against and Beyond the State', *Space and Polity* 19(1): 62–75.

Cumbers, Andrew, Danny MacKinnon, and Jon Shaw (2010), 'Labour, Organisational Rescaling and the Politics of Production: Union Renewal in the Privatised Rail Industry', *Work, Employment & Society* 24(1): 127–144.

Cumbers, Andrew, David Featherstone, Danny MacKinnon, Anthony Ince, and Kendra Strauss (2016), 'Intervening in Globalization: The Spatial Possibilities and Institutional Barriers to Labour's Collective Agency', *Journal of Economic Geography* 16(1): 93–108.

Cumbers, Andrew, Gesa Helms, and Kate Swanson (2010), 'Class, Agency and Resistance in the Old Industrial City', *Antipode* 42(1): 46–73.

Curtis, Ben (2011), 'A Tradition of Radicalism: The Politics of the South Wales Miners, 1964–1985', *Labour History Review* 76(1): 34–50.
       (2013), *The South Wales Miners 1964-1985*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Dar, Sarah (n.d.), 'Indian Workers Association', *Connecting Histories*, http://www.connectinghistories.org.uk/learning/campaigning-for-social-justice/20th-century-campaigns-for-social-justice/indian-workers-association/, accessed 29 July 2015.

Darlington, Ralph (2002), 'Shop Stewards' Leadership, Left-Wing Activism and Collective Workplace Union Organisation', *Capital & Class* 26(1): 95–126.
       (2005), 'There Is No Alternative: Exploring the Options in the 1984-5 Miners' Strike', *Capital & Class* 29(3): 71–95.

Darlington, Ralph, and John Dobson (2013), 'Objective but Not Detached: Partisanship in Industrial Relations Research', *Capital & Class* 37(2): 285–297.

Darlington, Ralph, and Dave Lyddon (2001), *Glorious Summer: Class Struggle in Britain, 1972*. London: Bookmarks.

Darlington, Ralph, and Martin Upchurch (2012), 'A Reappraisal of the Rank-and-File versus Bureaucracy Debate', *Capital & Class* 36(1): 77–95.

Das, Raju (2012), 'From Labor Geography to Class Geography: Reasserting the Marxist Theory of Class', *Human Geography* 5(1): 19–35.

Davies, Rebecca (2010), 'Not Just Supporting but Leading: The Involvement of the Women of the South Wales Coalfield in the 1984-85 Miners' Strike', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Glamorgan.

Davin, Anna (1981), 'Feminism and Labour History', in Raphael Samuel (ed.), *People's History and Socialist Theory*, pp. 176–181. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Davin, Anna, and Luke Parks (2012), 'An Introduction & Index to the Material', *History Workshop Online*, http://www.historyworkshop.org.uk/the-history-workshop-archives-an-introduction/, accessed 1 April 2014.

Davis, Jennifer (1989), 'From "rookeries" to "communities": Race, Poverty and Policing in London, 1850–1985', *History Workshop Journal* 27(1): 66–85.

Delap, Lucy (2016), 'Feminist Bookshops, Reading Cultures and the Women's Liberation Movement in Great Britain, c. 1974–2000', *History Workshop Journal* 81(1): 171–196.

Denman, James, and Paul McDonald (1996), 'Unemployment Statistics from 1881 to the Present Day', *Labour Market Trends* 104(1): 5–18.

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2016), *Trade Union Membership 2015: Statistical Bulletin*. London: BIS.

Dickinson, Margaret (ed.) (1999), *Rogue Reels: Oppositional Film in Britain, 1945-90*, London: British Film Institute.

Donnelly, Sue (2008), 'Coming Out in the Archives: The Hall-Carpenter Archives at the London School of Economics', *History Workshop Journal* 66(1): 180–184.

Douglass, David (1973), *Pit Talk in County Durham: A Glossary of Miners' Talk Together with Memories of Wardley Colliery, Pit Songs and Piliking*, History Workshop Pamphlets 10. Oxford: History Workshop, Ruskin College.

Dowling, Robyn (2009), 'Geographies of Identity: Landscapes of Class', *Progress in Human Geography* 33(6): 833–839.

Duyvendak, Jan Willem, and Loes Verplanke (2013), 'Struggling to Belong: Social Movements and the Fight to Feel at Home', in Walter Nicholls, Justin Beaumont, and Byron Miller (eds), *Spaces of Contention: Spatialities and Social Movements*, pp. 69–83. Farnham: Ashgate.

Eagleton, Terry (1995), 'Where Do Postmodernists Come From?', *Monthly Review* 47(3): 59–70.

Early, Steve (2010), 'The Enduring Legacy and Contemporary Relevance of Labor Insurgency in the 1970s' in Aaron Brenner, Robert Brenner, and Calvin Winslow (eds) (2010), *Rebel Rank and File: Labor Militancy and Revolt from below in the Long 1970s*, pp. 357-393. London: Verso.

Ebke, Almuth (2016), 'From "Bloody Brixton" to "Burning Britain": Placing the Riots of 1981 in British Post-Imperial History', in Knud Andresen and Bart van der Steen (eds), *A European Youth Revolt: European Perspectives on Youth Protest and Social Movements in the 1980s*, pp. 258–270. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Efstathiou, Christos (2014), 'E. P. Thompson's Concept of Class Formation and Its Political Implications: Echoes of Popular Front Radicalism in *The Making of the English Working Class*', *Contemporary British History* 48(4): 404-421.

Eley, Geoff (2002), *Forging Democracy: The History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Elliott, Ruth (1984), 'How Far Have We Come? Women's Organization in the Unions in the United Kingdom', *Feminist Review* 16: 64–73.

Emanuele, Vincent (2016), 'The Curse and Failure of Identity Politics', *Counterpunch*, http://www.counterpunch.org/2016/02/08/the-curse-and-failure-of-identity-politics/, accessed 20 July 2016.

Farge, Arlette (2013), *The Allure of the Archives*. Translated by Thomas Scott-Railton. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Featherstone, David (2005), 'Towards the Relational Construction of Militant Particularisms: Or Why the Geographies of Past Struggles Matter for Resistance to Neoliberal Globalisation', *Antipode* 37(2): 250–271.
    (2008), *Resistance, Space and Political Identities: The Making of Counter-Global Networks*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
    (2012), *Solidarity: Hidden Histories and Geographies of Internationalism*. London: Zed Books.

Featherstone, David, and Paul Griffin (2016), 'Spatial Relations, Histories from below and the Makings of Agency: Reflections on *The Making of the English Working Class* at 50', *Progress in Human Geography* 40(3): 375–393.

Ferrall, Charles, and Dougal McNeill (2015), *Writing the 1926 General Strike: Literature, Culture, Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fine, Ben (1984), 'The Future of British Coal: Old Ideas, Famous Economists', *Capital & Class* 8(2): 67–82.

Fine, Bob, and Robert Millar (eds) (1985), *Policing the Miners' Strike*. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Fisher, Stephen (1993), 'Conclusion: New Populist Theory and the Study of Dissent in Appalachia', in Stephen Fisher (ed.), *Fighting Back in Appalachia: Traditions of Resistance and Change*, pp. 317–336. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Fortier, Anne-Marie (2001), '"Coming Home" Queer Migrations and Multiple Evocations of Home', *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 4(4): 405–424.

Foster, John (2014), 'Eric Hobsbawm, Marxism and Social History', *Social History* 39(2): 160–171.

Francis, Hywel (1976), 'The Origins of the South Wales Miners' Library', *History Workshop Journal* 2(1): 183–205.
    (1984), *Miners against Fascism: Wales and the Spanish Civil War*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.
    (2015), *History on Our Side: Wales and the 1984-85 Miners' Strike*. Second edition. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Francis, Hywel, and Dai Smith (1998), *The Fed: A History of the South Wales Miners in the Twentieth Century*. New edition. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Franks, Benjamin (2005), 'British Anarchisms and the Miners' Strike', *Capital & Class* 29(3): 227–254.

Franquesa, Jaume (2011), '"We've Lost Our Bearings": Place, Tourism, and the Limits of the "Mobility Turn"', *Antipode* 43(4): 1012–1033.

Friedman, Marilyn (1989), 'Feminism and Modern Friendship: Dislocating the Community', *Ethics* 99(2): 275–290.

Frost, Diane, and Peter North (2013), *Militant Liverpool: A City on the Edge*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Gallas, Alexander (2016), *The Thatcherite Offensive: A Neo-Poulantzasian Analysis*. Leiden; Boston: Brill.

Geary, Ian, and Adrian Pabst (eds) (2015), *Blue Labour: Forging a New Politics*. London: I.B. Tauris.

Gennard, John (1990), *A History of the National Graphical Association*. London: Unwin Hyman.

Gentry, Kynan (2013), 'Ruskin, Radicalism and Raphael Samuel: Politics, Pedagogy and the Origins of the History Workshop', *History Workshop Journal* 76(1): 187–211.

Gilroy, Paul (1987), *"There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack": The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*. London: Hutchinson.

Ginzburg, Carlo (2012), *Threads and Traces: True, False, Fictive*. Berkeley, London: University of California Press.

Gordon, Paul (1985), '"If They Come in the Morning ..." The Police, the Miners and Black People'', in Bob Fine and Robert Millar (eds), *Policing the Miners' Strike*, pp. 161–176. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Gould, Carol (2007), 'Transnational Solidarities', *Journal of Social Philosophy* 38(1): 148–164.

Gower, Owen (director) (2014), *Still the Enemy Within*, documentary. Bad Bonobo.

Green, Penny (1990), *The Enemy Without: Policing and Class Consciousness in the Miners' Strike*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Gregory, Brad (1999), 'Is Small Beautiful? Microhistory and the History of Everyday Life', *History and Theory* 38(1): 100–110.

Greiner, Clemens, and Patrick Sakdapolrak (2013), 'Translocality: Concepts, Applications and Emerging Research Perspectives', *Geography Compass* 7(5): 373–384.

Griffin, Colin (2005), '"Notts. Have Some Very Peculiar History": Understanding the Reaction of the Nottinghamshire Miners to the 1984-85 Strike', *Historical Studies in Industrial Relations* 19: 63–99

Griffin, Paul (2015), 'Labour Struggles and the Formation of Demands: The Spatial Politics of Red Clydeside', *Geoforum* 62: 121–130.

Griffiths, M.J., and R.J. Johnston (1991), 'What's in a Place? An Approach to the Concept of Place, as Illustrated by the British National Union of Mineworkers' Strike, 1984–85', *Antipode* 23(2): 185–213.

Guest, Carly (2016), *Becoming Feminist*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gupta, Rahila (1990), 'Autonomy and Alliances', in *Against the Grain: A Celebration of Survival and Struggle*, pp. 55–61. Southall: Southall Black Sisters.

         (ed.) (2003), *From Homebreakers to Jailbreakers: Southall Black Sisters*. London: Zed.

Gyford, John (1985), *The Politics of Local Socialism*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Hall, Stuart (1985), 'Authoritarian Populism: A Reply to Jessop et al.', *New Left Review* 1(151): 115–24.

         (1988), *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left*. London: Verso.

Hall, Stuart, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke, and Brian Roberts (1978), *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*. London: Macmillan.

Hall, Stuart, and Lawrence Grossberg (1996), 'On Postmodernism and Articulation: An Interview with Stuart Hall', in David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen (eds), *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, pp. 131–150. London: Routledge.

Harcup, Tony (2011), 'Reporting the Voices of the Voiceless during the Miners' Strike: An Early Form of "Citizen Journalism"', *Journal of Media Practice* 12(1): 27–39.

Harvey, David (1995), 'Militant Particularism and Global Ambition: The Conceptual Politics of Place, Space, and Environment in the Work of Raymond Williams', *Social Text* 42: 69–98.

Hastings, Thomas (2016), 'Moral Matters: De-Romanticising Worker Agency and Charting Future Directions for Labour Geography', *Geography Compass* 10(7): 307–318.

Hayter, Dianne (2005), *Fightback! Labour's Traditional Right in the 1970s and 1980s*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Herod, Andrew (1997), 'From a Geography of Labor to a Labor Geography: Labor's Spatial Fix and the Geography of Capitalism', *Antipode* 29(1): 1–31.

         (2001), *Labor Geographies: Workers and Landscapes of Capitalism*. New York: Guilford Press.

         (2010), 'Labour and Geography: Where Have We Been? Where Should We Go?', in Ann Cecilie Bergene, Sylvi B Endresen, and Hege Merete Knutsen (eds), *Missing Links in Labour Geography*, pp. 15–28. Farnham: Ashgate.

Hobsbawm, Eric (1978), 'The Forward March of Labour Halted?', *Marxism Today*, September, pp. 279–286.

         (1996), 'Identity Politics and the Left', *New Left Review* 1(217): 38–47.

Holden, Triona (2005), *Queen Coal: Women of the Miners' Strike*. Stroud: Sutton.

hooks, bell (1986), 'Sisterhood: Political Solidarity between Women', *Feminist Review* 23: 125–138.

Howell, David (1985), '"Where's Ramsay MacKinnock?': Labour Leadership and the Miners', in Huw Beynon (ed.), *Digging Deeper: Issues in the Miners' Strike*, pp. 181-198. London: Verso.
　　　 (2012), 'Defiant Dominoes: Working Miners and the 1984-5 Strike', in Ben Jackson and Robert Saunders (eds), *Making Thatcher's Britain*, pp. 148–164. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Howells, Kim (1985), 'Stopping Out: The Birth of a New Kind of Politics', in Huw Beynon (ed.), *Digging Deeper: Issues in the Miners' Strike*, pp. 139-147. London: Verso.

Hudson, Ray, and David Sadler (1985), 'Coal and Dole: Employment Policies in the Coalfields', in Huw Beynon (ed.), *Digging Deeper: Issues in the Miners' Strike*, pp. 217-230. London: Verso.
　　　 (1986), 'Contesting Works Closures in Western Europe's Old Industrial Regions: Defending Place or Betraying Class?', in Allen Scott and Michael Storper (eds), *Production, Work, Territory: The Geographical Anatomy of Industrial Capitalism*, pp. 172–193. London: Allen and Unwin.

Hughes, Celia (2012), 'Young Socialist Men in 1960s Britain: Subjectivity and Sociability', *History Workshop Journal* 73(1): 170–192.
　　　 (2014), 'Narratives of Radical Lives: The Roots of 1960s Activism and the Making of the British Left', in Evan Smith and Matthew Worley (eds), *Against the Grain: The British Far Left from 1956*, pp. 62–79. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Humphrey, Jill (2000), 'Cracks in the Feminist Mirror? Research and Reflections on Lesbians and Gay Men Working Together', *Feminist Review* 66: 95–130.

Hyman, Richard (1986), 'Reflections on the Mining Strike', *Socialist Register* 22: 330–354.
　　　 (1989), 'The Sound of One Hand Clapping: A Comment on the "Rank and Filism" Debate', *International Review of Social History* 34(2): 309–326.

Hyslop, Jonathan (1999), 'The Imperial Working Class Makes Itself "White": White Labourism in Britain, Australia, and South Africa Before the First World War', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 12(4): 398–421.

Iles, Anthony, and Tom Roberts (2012), *All Knees and Elbows of Susceptibility and Refusal: Reading History From Below*. Glasgow: Transmission Gallery.

Ince, Anthony (2006), 'Orthodoxy, Territoriality and Exclusion on the Picket Line: A Student's Experience of the Recent AUT/NATFHE Strike', *Antipode* 38(4): 680–685.
　　　 (2012), 'In the Shell of the Old: Anarchist Geographies of Territorialisation', *Antipode* 44(5): 1645–1666.

Ince, Anthony, David Featherstone, Andrew Cumbers, Danny MacKinnon, and Kendra Strauss (2015), 'British Jobs for British Workers? Negotiating Work, Nation, and Globalisation through the Lindsey Oil Refinery Disputes', *Antipode* 47(1): 139–157.

Ironside, Mike, and Roger Seifert (2000), *Facing up to Thatcherism: The History of NALGO, 1979-1993*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Iveson, Kurt (2014), 'Building a City For "The People": The Politics of Alliance-Building in the Sydney Green Ban Movement', *Antipode* 46(4): 992–1013.

James, David (1996), 'For a Working-Class Television: The Miners' Campaign Tape Project', in David James and Rick Berg (eds), *The Hidden Foundation: Cinema and the Question of Class*, pp. 193–216. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

Johns, Rebecca (1998), 'Bridging the Gap between Class and Space: U.S. Worker Solidarity with Guatemala', *Economic Geography* 74(3): 252–271.

Jonas, Andrew (1996), 'Local Labour Control Regimes: Uneven Development and the Social Regulation of Production', *Regional Studies* 30(4): 323–338.
           (2006), 'Pro Scale: Further Reflections on the "Scale Debate" in Human Geography', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 31(3): 399–406.

Jones, David, David Petley, Mike Power, and Lesley Wood (1985), *Media Hits the Pits: The Media and the Coal Dispute*. London: Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom.

Jones, Nicholas, Pete Lazenby, and Granville Williams (2014), *Settling Scores: The Media, the Police and Miners' Strike*. London: Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom.

Kadi, Joanna (1997), 'Homophobic Workers or Elitist Queers?', in Susan Raffo (ed.), *Queerly Classed*, pp. 29–42. Boston, MA: South End Press.

Katz, Cindi (2001), 'On the Grounds of Globalization: A Topography for Feminist Political Engagement', *Signs* 26(4): 1213–1234.
           (2004), *Growing up Global: Economic Restructuring and Children's Everyday Lives*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.

Katz, Sherry (2010), 'Excavating Radical Women in Progressive-Era California', in Nupur Chaudhuri, Sherry J Katz, and Mary Elizabeth Perry (eds), *Contesting Archives: Finding Women in the Sources*, pp. 89–106. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press.

Kearns, Gerry (2007), 'Taking Theory for a Walk in Ireland', in Elizabeth Gagen, Hayden Lorimer, and Alex Vasudevan (eds), *Practising the Archive: Reflections on Method and Practice in Historical Geography*, pp. 9–22. London: Historical Geography Research Group, RGS-IBG.

Kelliher, Diarmaid (2014), 'Solidarity and Sexuality: Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners 1984–5', *History Workshop Journal* 77(1): 240–262.
           (2015), 'The 1984-5 Miners' Strike and the Spirit of Solidarity', *Soundings* 60: 118–129.
           (2017), 'Constructing a Culture of Solidarity: London and the British Coalfields in the Long 1970s', *Antipode* 49(1): 106–124.

Kerr, Clark, and Abraham Siegel (1954), 'The Interindustry Propensity to Strike: An International Comparison', in Arthur Kornhauser, Robert Dubin, and Arthur Ross (eds), *Industrial Conflict*, pp. 189–212. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Kidd, Colin (2016), 'Diary', *London Review of Books*, 18 February, pp. 38–39.

Kidner, Dan, and Petra Bauer (eds) (2013), *Working Together: Notes on British Film Collectives in the 1970s*. Essex: Focal Point Gallery.

Kiil, Maiken Bjerga, and Hege Merete Knutsen (2016), 'Agency by Exit: Swedish Nurses and the "Not below 24,000" Movement', *Geoforum* 70: 105–114.

Knopp, Larry (2004), 'Ontologies of Place, Placelessness, and Movement: Queer Quests for Identity and Their Impacts on Contemporary Geographic Thought', *Gender, Place & Culture* 11(1): 121–134.

Kushner, Tony (2006), 'Great Britons: Immigration, History and Memory', in Katherine Fischer Burrell and Panikos Panayi (eds), *Histories and Memories: Migrants and Their History in Britain,* pp. 18–34. London: I.B. Tauris.

Labour Research Department (1984), *The Miners' Case*. London: Labour Research Department.
⸻ (1985), *Solidarity with the Miners: Actions and Lessons from the Labour Research Department's Survey of over 300 Miners' Solidarity Groups*. London: Labour Research Department.

Land, Clare (2015), *Decolonizing Solidarity: Dilemmas and Directions for Supporters of Indigenous Struggles*. London: Zed Books.

Lawrence, Jacquie (director) (1993), *Out on Strike*. My Aunt Fanny Films.

Leeworthy, Daryl (2012), 'The Secret Life of Us: 1984, the Miners' Strike and the Place of Biography in Writing History "from Below"', *European Review of History: Revue Europeenne D'histoire* 19(5): 825–846.
⸻ (2016), 'For Our Common Cause: Sexuality and Left Politics in South Wales, 1967–1985', *Contemporary British History* 30(2): 260–280.

Leitner, Helga, Eric Sheppard, and Kristin Sziarto (2008), 'The Spatialities of Contentious Politics', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 33(2): 157–172.

Lier, David Christoffer (2007), 'Places of Work, Scales of Organising: A Review of Labour Geography', *Geography Compass* 1(4): 814–833.

Linebaugh, Peter (2014), *Stop, Thief! The Commons, Enclosures, And Resistance*. Oakland, California: PM Press.

Loach, Loretta (1985), 'We'll Be Right Here to the End ... And After: Women in the Miners' Strike', in Huw Beynon (ed.), *Digging Deeper: Issues in the Miners' Strike*, pp. 169-179. London: Verso.

Lockyer, Bridget (2013), 'An Irregular Period? Participation in the Bradford Women's Liberation Movement', *Women's History Review* 22(4): 643–657.

López, Tara Martin (2014), *The Winter of Discontent: Myth, Memory, and History.* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Lorimer, Hayden (2003), 'Telling Small Stories: Spaces of Knowledge and the Practice of Geography', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 28(2): 197–217.
    (2010), 'Caught in the Nick of Time: Archives and Fieldwork', in Dydia DeLyser, Steve Herbert, Stuart Aitken, Mike Crang, and Linda McDowell (eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Geography*, pp. 248–272. London: SAGE.

Loughran, Christina (1986), 'Armagh and Feminist Strategy: Campaigns around Republican Women Prisoners in Armagh Jail', *Feminist Review* 23: 59–79.

Magnusson, Ola Anders, Hege Merete Knutsen, and Sylvi Endresen (2010), 'Between Coercion and Consent: Understanding Post-Apartheid Workplace Regimes', in Ann Cecilie Bergene, Sylvi Endresen, and Hege Merete Knutsen (eds), *Missing Links in Labour Geography*, pp. 169–184. Farnham: Ashgate.

Mann, Geoff (2007), *Our Daily Bread: Wages, Workers, and the Political Economy of the American West*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Martin, Deborah, and Joseph Pierce (2013), 'Reconceptualizing Resistance: Residuals of the State and Democratic Radical Pluralism', *Antipode* 45(1): 61–79.

Martin, Ron, Peter Sunley, and Jane Wills (1993), 'The Geography of Trade Union Decline: Spatial Dispersal or Regional Resilience?', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 18(1): 36–62.

Martin Walker Papers (n.d.), *Archives Hub*, http://archiveshub.ac.uk/data/gb394-ms84/mw, accessed 9 June 2016.

Marston, Sallie, John Paul Jones, and Keith Woodward (2005), 'Human Geography without Scale', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30(4): 416–432.

Massey, Doreen (1983), 'The Contours of Victory... Dimensions of Defeat', *Marxism Today*, July, pp. 16–19.
    (1995), 'Places and Their Pasts', *History Workshop Journal* 39(1): 182–192.
    (2007), *World City*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
    (2014), 'The Kilburn Manifesto: After Neoliberalism?', *Environment and Planning A* 46(9): 2034 – 2041.

Massey, Doreen, and Hilary Wainwright (1985), 'Beyond the Coalfields: The Work of the Miners' Support Groups', in Huw Beynon (ed.), *Digging Deeper: Issues in the Miners' Strike*, pp. 149-168. London: Verso.

Mates, Lewis (2006), 'Durham and South Wales Miners and the Spanish Civil War', *Twentieth Century British History* 17(3): 373–395.

Mbembe, Achille (2002), 'The Power of the Archive and Its Limits', in Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Michèle Pickover, Graeme Reid, Razia Saleh, and Jane Taylor (eds), *Refiguring the Archive,* pp. 19–26. Dordrecht; Boston: Springer.

McCall, Leslie (2005), 'The Complexity of Intersectionality', *Signs* 30(3): 1771–1800.

McDowell, Linda (2008a), 'Thinking through Class and Gender in the Context of Working Class Studies', *Antipode* 40(1): 20–24.
          (2008b), 'Thinking through Work: Complex Inequalities, Constructions of Difference and Trans-National Migrants', *Progress in Human Geography* 32(4): 491–507.

McDowell, Linda, Sundari Anitha, and Ruth Pearson (2012), 'Striking Similarities: Representing South Asian Women's Industrial Action in Britain', *Gender, Place & Culture* 19(2): 133–152.

McGowan, Jack (2008), '"Dispute", "Battle", "Siege", "Farce"? Grunwick 30 Years On', *Contemporary British History* 22(3): 383–406.

McWilliam, Rohan (2014), 'Back to the Future: E. P. Thompson, Eric Hobsbawm and the Remaking of Nineteenth-Century British History', *Social History* 39(2): 149–159.

Merck, Mandy, Hilary Wainwright, Nira Yuval-Davis, Deborah Grayson, and Jo Littler (2016), 'Feminism and "the S-Word"', *Soundings* 61: 95–112.

Miliband, Ralph (1985), 'The New Revisionism in Britain', *New Left Review* 1(150): 5–26.

Millar, Grace (2016), '"This Is Not Charity": The Masculine Work of Strike Relief', *History Workshop Journal*, first published online 6 August, DOI:10.1093/hwj/dbw028.

Milne, Seumas (2014), *The Enemy Within: The Secret War Against the Miners*. Updated edition. London: Verso Books.

Mitchell, Don (2005), 'Working-Class Geographies: Capital, Space and Place', in John Russo and Sherry Lee Linkon (eds), *New Working-Class Studies*, pp. 78–97. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
          (2011), 'Labor's Geography: Capital, Violence, Guest Workers and the Post-World War II Landscape', *Antipode* 43(2): 563–595.

Money, Duncan (2015) 'The World of European Labour on the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt, 1940–1945', *International Review of Social History* 60(2): 225–255.

Mott, Carrie (2016), 'The Activist Polis: Topologies of Conflict in Indigenous Solidarity Activism', *Antipode* 48(1): 193–211.

Mouffe, Chantal (2013), 'Space, Hegemony and Radical Critique', in David Featherstone and Joe Painter (eds), *Spatial Politics: Essays for Doreen Massey*, pp. 21–31. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons.

Munt, Sally (2008), *Queer Attachments: The Cultural Politics of Shame.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Navickas, Katrina (2016), *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place, 1789-1848*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Nyden, Paul (2010), 'Rank-and-File Movements in the United Mineworkers of America, Early 1960s-Early 1980s', in Aaron Brenner, Robert Brenner, and Calvin Winslow (eds), *Rebel Rank and File: Labor Militancy and Revolt from below in the Long 1970s*, pp. 173–197. London: Verso.

Ogborn, Miles (2003), 'Knowledge Is Power: Using Archival Research to Interpret State Formation', in Alison Blunt, Pyrs Gruffudd, Jon May, Miles Ogborn, and David Pinder (eds), *Cultural Geography in Practice*, pp. 9–20. London: Arnold.

Olson, Mancur (1965), *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Oswin, Natalie (2008), 'Critical Geographies and the Uses of Sexuality: Deconstructing Queer Space', *Progress in Human Geography* 32(1): 89–103.

Palmer, Bryan (1994), *Objections and Oppositions: The Histories and Politics of E.P. Thompson*. London: Verso.

Pandey, Gyanendra (2000), 'Voices from the Edge: The Struggle to Write Subaltern Histories', in Vinayak Chaturvedi (ed.), *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial*, pp. 281–299. London: Verso.

Panitch, Leo, and Colin Leys (2001), *The End of Parliamentary Socialism: From New Left to New Labour*. Second edition. London: Verso.

Parkin, Di (2007), *Sixty Years of Struggle: History of Betteshanger Colliery*. Deal: Betteshanger Social Welfare Scheme.

Parmar, Pratibha (1982), 'Gender, Race and Class: Asian Women in Resistance', in Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (ed.), *The Empire Strikes Back: Race and Racism in 70s Britain*, pp. 236–275. London: Hutchinson.

Payling, Daisy (2014), '"Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire": Grassroots Activism and Left-Wing Solidarity in 1980s Sheffield', *Twentieth Century British History* 25(4): 602–627.

Pearson, Ruth, Sundari Anitha, and Linda McDowell (2010), 'Striking Issues: From Labour Process to Industrial Dispute at Grunwick and Gate Gourmet', *Industrial Relations Journal* 41(5): 408–428.

Peck, Jamie (2013), 'Making Space for Labour', in David Featherstone and Joe Painter (eds), *Spatial Politics: Essays for Doreen Massey*, pp. 99–114. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons.

Percy, Ruth (2014), 'Picket Lines and Parades: Labour and Urban Space in Early Twentieth-Century London and Chicago', *Urban History* 41(3): 456–477.

Petley, Julian (2009), 'From Fertile Soil: Independent Filmmaking and the Miners' Campaign Tapes', in *The Miners' Campaign Tapes* DVD booklet, pp. 1–4. London: British Film Institute.

Phillips, Jim (2006), 'The 1972 Miners' Strike: Popular Agency and Industrial Politics in Britain', *Contemporary British History* 20(2): 187–207.

    (2012a), C*ollieries, Communities and the Miners' Strike in Scotland, 1984-85*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

    (2012b), 'Material and Moral Resources: The 1984–5 Miners' Strike in Scotland', *The Economic History Review* 65(1): 256–276.

Pitt, Malcolm (1979), *The World on Our Backs: The Kent Miners and the 1972 Miners' Strike*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Popple, Simon, and Ian W Macdonald (eds) (2012), *Digging the Seam: Popular Cultures of the 1984/5 Miners' Strike*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

Power, Lisa (1995), *No Bath but Plenty of Bubbles: An Oral History of the Gay Liberation Front, 1970-1973*. London: Cassell.

Pratt, Geraldine, and Susan Hanson (1994), 'Geography and the Construction of Difference', *Gender, Place & Culture* 1(1): 5–29.

Price, Richard (1989), '"What's in a Name?" Workplace History and "Rank and Filism"', *International Review of Social History* 34(1): 62–77.

Purton, Peter (2006), *Sodom, Gomorrah and the New Jerusalem: Labour and Lesbian and Gay Rights, from Edward Carpenter to Today*. London: Labour Campaign for Lesbian and Gay Rights.

Ramamurthy, Anandi (2006), 'The Politics of Britain's Asian Youth Movements', *Race & Class* 48(2): 38–60.

    (2013), *Black Star: Britain's Asian Youth Movements*. London: Pluto Press.

Ramdin, Ron (1987), *The Making of the Black Working Class in Britain*. Aldershot: Wildwood House.

Rees, Gareth (1985), 'Regional Restructuring, Class Change, and Political Action: Preliminary Comments on the 1984-1985 Miners' Strike in South Wales', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 3(4): 389–406.

    (1986), '"Coalfield Culture" and the 1984-1985 Miners' Strike: A Reply to Sunley', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 4(4): 469–476.

Rees, Jeska (2010), 'A Look Back at Anger: The Women's Liberation Movement in 1978', *Women's History Review* 19(3): 337–356.

Reeves, Chris (2009), 'Redressing the Balance: Making the Miners' Campaign Tapes', in *The Miners' Campaign Tapes* DVD booklet, pp. 5–11. London: British Film Institute.

Renouf, Jonathan (1989), 'A Striking Change: Political Transformation in the Murton Miners' and Mechanics' Branches of the National Union of Mineworkers, County Durham, 1978-1988', unpublished PhD thesis, Durham University.

Renton, Dave (2004), *Dissident Marxism: Past Voices for Present Times*. London: Zed Books.

Richards, Andrew John (1996), *Miners on Strike: Class Solidarity and Division in Britain*. Berg: Oxford.

Rippe, Klaus Peter (1998), 'Diminishing Solidarity', *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 1(3): 355–374.

Roberts, Dorothy, and Sujatha Jesudason (2013), 'Movement Intersectionality', *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race* 10(2): 313–328.

Robertson, Stephen (2005), 'What's Law Got to Do with It? Legal Records and Sexual Histories', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 14(1/2): 161–185.

Robinson, Lucy (2007), *Gay Men and the Left in Post-War Britain: How the Personal Got Political*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Roediger, David (2014), *Seizing Freedom: Slave Emancipation and Liberty for All*. London: Verso.
       (1994), *Towards the Abolition of Whiteness: Essays on Race, Politics, and Working Class History*. London: Verso.

Rogaly, Ben, and Kaveri Qureshi (2017), '"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: 189–198.

Rose, Gillian (1997), 'Situating Knowledges: Positionality, Reflexivities and Other Tactics', *Progress in Human Geography* 21(3): 305–320.

Rose, Jacqueline (2016), 'Who Do You Think You Are?', *London Review of Books* 38(9): 3–13.

Roseneil, Sasha (1996), 'Transgressions and Transformations: Experience, Consciousness and Identity at Greenham', in Nickie Charles and Felicia Hughes-Freeland (eds), *Practising Feminism: Identity, Difference, Power*, pp. 86–108. London: Routledge.

Routledge, Paul (2012), 'Sensuous Solidarities: Emotion, Politics and Performance in the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army', *Antipode* 44(2): 428–452.

Routledge, Paul, and Andrew Cumbers (2009), *Global Justice Networks: Geographies of Transnational Solidarity*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Rowbotham, Sheila (1989), *The Past Is before Us: Feminism in Action since the 1960s*. London: Pandora.
       (2006), 'Cleaners' Organizing in Britain from the 1970s: A Personal Account', *Antipode* 38(3): 608–625.

Rowbotham, Sheila, and Jean McCrindle (1986), 'More Than Just a Memory: Some Political Implications of Women's Involvement in the Miners' Strike, 1984-85', *Feminist Review* 23: 109–124.

Rowbotham, Sheila, Lynne Segal, and Hilary Wainwright (1980), *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*. London: Merlin.

Rowbotham, Sheila, Lynne Segal, Hilary Wainwright, and Pragna Patel (2014), 'After Thatcher: Still Trying to Piece It All Together', *Soundings* 56: 137–153.

Russo, John, and Sherry Lee Linkon (eds) (2005), *New Working-Class Studies*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Rutherford, Tod (2010), 'De/Re-Centring Work and Class? A Review and Critique of Labour Geography', *Geography Compass* 4(7): 768–777.

Samuel, Raphael (1980), 'On the Methods of the History Workshop: A Reply', *History Workshop Journal* 9(1): 162–176.
          (1985b), 'The Lost World of British Communism', *New Left Review* 1(154): 3–53.
          (1986a) 'Preface', in Raphael Samuel, Barbara Bloomfield, and Guy Boanas, (eds), *The Enemy Within: Pit Villages and the Miners' Strike of 1984-5*, pp. ix–xviii. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
          (1986b), 'Introduction', in Raphael Samuel, Barbara Bloomfield, and Guy Boanas (eds), *The Enemy Within: Pit Villages and the Miners' Strike of 1984-5*, pp. 1–39. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
          (1987), 'Class Politics: The Lost World of British Communism, Part Three', *New Left Review* 1(165): 52–91.
          (2012), *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*, revised edition. London: Verso.

Samuel, Raphael, Barbara Bloomfield, and Guy Boanas (eds) (1986), *The Enemy Within: Pit Villages and the Miners' Strike of 1984-5*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Saunders, Jack (2015), 'The Untraditional Worker: Class Re-Formation in Britain 1945–65', *Twentieth Century British History* 26(2): 225–248.

Saunders, Jonathan (1989), *Across Frontiers: International Support for the Miners' Strike*. London: Canary.

Scholz, Sally (2007), 'Political Solidarity and Violent Resistance', *Journal of Social Philosophy* 38(1): 38–52.
          (2008), *Political Solidarity*. University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Schwarz, Bill (1993), 'History on the Move: Reflections on History Workshop', *Radical History Review* 57: 203–220.

Seddon, Vicky (ed.) (1986), *The Cutting Edge: Women and the Pit Strike*. London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Segal, Lynne (2013), 'Jam Today: Feminist Impacts and Transformations in the 1970s', in Lawrence Black, Hugh Pemberton, and Pat Thane (eds), *Reassessing 1970s Britain*, pp. 149–166. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Seifert, Roger, and John Urwin (1987), *Struggle without End: The 1984-85 Miners' Strike in North Staffordshire*. Newcastle, Staffs: Penrhos.

Sewell, William H, Jnr. (1990), 'How Classes Are Made: Critical Reflections on E.P. Thompson's Theory of Working-Class Formation', in Harvey J Kaye and Keith McClelland (eds), *E. P. Thompson: Critical Perspectives*, pp. 50–77. Oxford: Polity.

Seymour, Richard (2016), *Corbyn: The Strange Rebirth of Radical Politics*. London: Verso.

Shave, Samantha (2013), 'History for below', in Mark Hailwood and Brodie Waddell (eds), *The Future of History From Below: An Online Symposium*, http://manyheadedmonster.wordpress.com/history-from-below/.

Shaw, Katy (2012), *Mining the Meaning: Cultural Representations of the 1984-5 UK Miners' Strike*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars.

Shaw, Monica Patricia (1993), 'Women in Protest and beyond: Greenham Common and Mining Support Groups', unpublished PhD thesis, Durham University.

Shelby, Tommie (2002), 'Foundations of Black Solidarity: Collective Identity or Common Oppression?', *Ethics* 112(2): 231–266.

Sivanandan, Ambalavaner (1982), *A Different Hunger: Writings on Black Resistance.* London: Pluto.
            (1990), *Communities of Resistance: Writings on Black Struggles for Socialism*. London: Verso.

Smith, Adrian (2015), 'The State, Institutional Frameworks and the Dynamics of Capital in Global Production Networks', *Progress in Human Geography* 39(3): 290–315.

Smith, Anna Marie (1994), *New Right Discourse on Race and Sexuality: Britain, 1968-1990*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, Helen (2015), *Masculinity, Class and Same-Sex Desire in Industrial England, 1895-1957*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Solnit, Rebecca (2009), *A Paradise Built in Hell: The Extraordinary Communities That Arise in Disasters*. London: Viking.
            (2016), *Hope In The Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities*. Canons Edition. Edinburgh: Canongate Books.

Southall Black Sisters (ed.) (1990), *Against the Grain: A Celebration of Survival and Struggle*. London: Southall Black Sisters.

Spence, Jean, and Carol Stephenson (2007), 'Female Involvement in the Miners' Strike 1984-1985: Trajectories of Activism', *Sociological Research Online* 12(1), DOI: 10.5153/sro.1461.
            (2009), '"Side by Side With Our Men?" Women's Activism, Community, and Gender in the 1984–1985 British Miners' Strike', *International Labor and Working-Class History* 75(1): 68–84.

Spivak, Gayatri (1990), *The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues*. New York: Routledge.

Stead, Jean (1987), *Never the Same Again: Women and the Miner's Strike 1984-85*. London: Women's Press.

Steedman, Carolyn (1998), 'The Space of Memory in an Archive', *History of the Human Sciences* 11(4): 65–83.

Stephenson, Carol, and Jean Spence (2013), 'Pies and Essays: Women Writing through the British 1984–1985 Coal Miners' Strike', *Gender, Place & Culture* 20(2): 218–235.

Stevenson, George (2016a), 'The Women's Movement and "Class Struggle": Gender, Class Formation and Political Identity in Women's Strikes, 1968–78', *Women's History Review* 25(5): 741–755.
         (2016b), 'The Forgotten Strike: Equality, Gender, and Class in the Trico Equal Pay Strike', *Labour History Review*, 81(2): 141–168.

Stoler, Ann Laura (2009), *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Stradling, Robert (2004), *Wales and the Spanish Civil War: The Dragon's Dearest Cause?* Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Sundberg, Juanita (2007), 'Reconfiguring North–South Solidarity: Critical Reflections on Experiences of Transnational Resistance', *Antipode* 39(1): 144–166.

Sunley, Peter (1986), 'Regional Restructuring, Class Change, and Political Action: A Comment', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 4(4): 465–468.
         (1990), 'Striking Parallels: A Comparison of the Geographies of the 1926 and 1984–85 Coalmining Disputes', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 8(1): 35–52.

Sweeney, Anne-Marie (director) (2014), *Going through the Change*, documentary.

Sweet, Colin (1985), 'Why Coal Is Under Attack: Nuclear Powers in the Energy Establishment', in Huw Beynon (ed.), *Digging Deeper: Issues in the Miners' Strike*, pp. 201–216. London: Verso.

Taylor, Becky (2014), *Another Darkness, Another Dawn: A History of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers*. London: Reaktion Books.

Taylor, Yvette (2005), 'Real Politik or Real Politics? Working-Class Lesbians' Political "Awareness" and Activism', *Women's Studies International Forum* 28(6): 484–494.

Therborn, Göran (2010), *From Marxism to Post-Marxism*. Paperback edition. London: Verso.

Thomas, Chris (director) (2007), *The Great Grunwick Strike 1976-1978: A History*, documentary, Brent Trades Council, BA/198722/BTC/2/2.

Thomlinson, Natalie (2012), 'The Colour of Feminism: White Feminists and Race in the Women's Liberation Movement', *History* 97(327): 453–475.

Thompson, E.P. (1960), 'Revolution Again!', *New Left Review* 1(6): 18–31.
    (1971), 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', *Past & Present* 50: 76–136.
    (1980a), *The Making of the English Working Class*. 1980 edition. London: Gollancz.
    (1980b), *Writing by Candlelight*. London: Merlin.
    (1992), 'Rough Music Reconsidered', *Folklore* 103(1): 3–26.

Thompson, Paul and Mike Allen (1986), 'Labour and the Local State in Liverpool', *Capital & Class* 10(2): 7–11.

Thörn, Håkan (2009), 'The Meaning(s) of Solidarity: Narratives of Anti-Apartheid Activism', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35(2): 417–436.

Thorpe, Keir (2001), 'The "Juggernaut Method": The 1966 State of Emergency and the Wilson Government's Response to the Seamen's Strike', *Twentieth Century British History* 12(4): 461–485.

Tobin, Ann (1990), 'Lesbianism and the Labour Party: The GLC Experience', *Feminist Review* 34: 56–66.

Todd, Selina (2013), 'History from below: modern British scholarship', in Mark Hailwood and Brodie Waddell (eds), *The Future of History From Below: An Online Symposium*, http://manyheadedmonster.wordpress.com/history-from-below/.
    (2014), *The People: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class, 1910-2010*. London: John Murray.

Tomaney, John (2013), 'Parochialism – a Defence', *Progress in Human Geography* 37(5): 658–672.
    (2015a), 'Region and Place II Belonging', *Progress in Human Geography* 39(4): 507–516.
    (2015b), 'Understanding Parochialism A Response to Patrick Devine-Wright', *Progress in Human Geography* 39(4): 531–532.

Tufts, Steven (2007), 'World Cities and Union Renewal', *Geography Compass* 1(3): 673–694.

Tyner, James, and Joshua Inwood (2014), 'Violence as Fetish Geography, Marxism, and Dialectics', *Progress in Human Geography* 38(6): 771–784.

Uitermark, Justus, and Walter Nicholls (2014), 'From Politicization to Policing: The Rise and Decline of New Social Movements in Amsterdam and Paris', *Antipode* 46(4): 970–991.

Valentine, Gill (2007), 'Theorizing and Researching Intersectionality: A Challenge for Feminist Geography', *The Professional Geographer* 59(1): 10–21.

Virdee, Satnam (2014), *Racism, Class and the Racialized Outsider*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Virdee, Satnam, and Keith Grint (1994), 'Black Self-Organization in Trade Unions', *Sociological Review* 42(2): 202–226.

Waddington, David P., Maggie Wykes, and Chas Critcher (1990), *Split at the Seams? Community, Continuity and Change after the 1984-5 Coal Dispute*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Wainwright, Hilary (2013), 'Place Beyond Place and the Politics of "Empowerment"', in David Featherstone and Joe Painter (eds), *Spatial Politics: Essays for Doreen Massey*, pp. 235–252. Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons.

Wainwright, Hilary, and David Elliott (1982), *The Lucas Plan: A New Trade Unionism in the Making?* London: Allison & Busby.

Waitt, Gordon, and Andrew Gorman-Murray (2011), '"It's About Time You Came Out": Sexualities, Mobility and Home', *Antipode* 43(4): 1380–1403.

Walters, Ben (2014), 'Pride', *Sight and Sound*, October, http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/reviews-recommendations/film-week-pride, accessed 22 September 2016.

Waters, Rob (2016), 'Thinking Black: Peter Fryer's Staying Power and the Politics of Writing Black British History in the 1980s', *History Workshop Journal* 82(1): 104–120.

Weeks, Jeffrey (1990), *Coming out: Homosexual Politics in Britain from the Nineteenth Century to the Present*, revised edition. London: Quartet Books.

Wetherell, Sam (2016), 'Freedom Planned: Enterprise Zones and Urban Non-Planning in Post-War Britain', *Twentieth Century British History* 27(2): 266–289.

White, Jerry (1981), 'Beyond Autobiography', in Raphael Samuel (ed.), *People's History and Socialist Theory*, pp. 33–42. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
　　　　(2008), *London in the Twentieth Century: A City and Its People*. London: Vintage.

Wickham-Jones, Mark (2013), 'The Challenges of Stuart Holland: The Labour Party's Economic Strategy during the 1970s', in Lawrence Black, Hugh Pemberton, and Pat Thane (eds), *Reassessing 1970s Britain*, 123–148. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Wilde, Lawrence (2013), *Global Solidarity*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Williams, Granville (ed.) (2009), *Shafted: The Media, the Miners' Strike & the Aftermath*. London: Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom.

Williams, Gwyn (1985), *When Was Wales? A History of the Welsh*. London: Black Raven.

Williams, Raymond (1989), *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, Socialism*. London: Verso.

Wills, Jane (2001), 'Community Unionism and Trade Union Renewal in the UK: Moving Beyond the Fragments at Last?', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 26(4): 465–483.

    (2008), 'Mapping Class and Its Political Possibilities', *Antipode* 40(1): 25–30.

Witham, Joan (1986), *Hearts and Minds: The Story of the Women of Nottinghamshire in the Miners' Strike, 1984-1985*. London: Canary.

Withers, Charles (2002), 'Constructing "the Geographical Archive"', *Area* 34(3): 303–311.

Wood, Andy (2013), 'History From Below and Early Modern Social History', in Mark Hailwood and Brodie Waddell (eds), *The Future of History From Below: An Online Symposium*, http://manyheadedmonster.wordpress.com/history-from-below/.

Wood, Ellen Meiksins (1995), 'A Chronology of the New Left and Its Successors, Or: Who's Old-Fashioned Now?', *Socialist Register* 31: 22–49.

Wright, Erik Olin (2015), *Understanding Class*. London: Verso.

Wright, Melissa W. (2010), 'Geography and Gender: Feminism and a Feeling of Justice', *Progress in Human Geography* 34(6): 818–827.

Yuval-Davis, Nira (2006), 'Intersectionality and Feminist Politics', *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13(3): 193–209.

Zeitlin, Jonathan (1989a), '"Rank and Filism" in British Labour History: A Critique', *International Review of Social History* 34(1): 42–61.

    (1989b), '"Rank and Filism" and Labour History: A Rejoinder to Price and Cronin', *International Review of Social History* 34(1): 89–102.

Zinn, Howard (1970), *The Politics of History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1970.