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Title page

Title: Care and the Afterlives of Industrial Moralities in Postindustrial Northern England

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Care and the Afterlives of Industrial Moralities in Postindustrial Northern England

Abstract

Building on recent anthropological work on post-Fordist affect, this article explores comparatively the 'afterlives' of the social organisation of production. In particular, based on comparative ethnography of milling and mining on Northern England, it explores the very different forms of work organisation and their relationships with similarly contrasting moralities of care amongst and for older people.

Keywords: Ageing; morality; care; industry; British ethnography

Introduction

Britain's industrial revolution emerged with the power loom, and grew, fuelled by coal. As textile manufacture and coal mining intensified through the early nineteenth century, new population centres emerged and a new kind of labouring population, with a growing national (Gellner, 1964) and political (Thompson, 1968) consciousness, was forged. The site of greatest industrial concentration, the North of England came to be considered socio-geographically separate within the nation, both by its own inhabitants and by Southern English onlookers (Jewell, 1994). Investigating an internal-Orient (Said, 1978), novelists and journalists alike went "up North" to discover the nation's worrying fractures, and industry itself would add distinctive material referents to the divide. It was to a Northern mill town that Charles Dickens went to research his industrial novel *Hard Times* (1854); generations later, George Orwell's investigations into working class life would take him to the Northern coalfields, in *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937).

In the emergence of industry, and through reportage and national discourse since, the Northern working class has typically been treated in the singular. In structural terms - specifically those of another famed industrial-era onlooker, Karl Marx - this is quite apt. Yet, in different industries, the social organisation of production, amongst related secondary factors, consolidated distinctive local forms of culture, identity and moral personhood. The working classes of a textile district and a mining town, which we consider in this article, were both made by industrial capitalism, but they each measured moral selfhood and sociality in different ways. Elsewhere, Goodwin-Hawkins (2013) has described the 'textile individualism' of weaving and sewing workers, while Dawson (2002) elaborates on a coalfields culture of 'mining solidarism'; we outline each of these below. In this article, we bring these insights from our respective periods of long-term fieldwork in Northern England into comparative dialogue.

Of course, the industrial North is now *post*industrial, and has been so for some thirty years. Textiles are no longer produced, and coal no longer hewed. The reasons for industry's demise in its former heartland include blunt economics: an increasing mobility of capital, cheaper labour costs overseas and, latterly, change from Keynesian to neoliberal forms of state economic management. The coffin was surely nailed between the 1973 oil crisis and the bitter end of the Miners' Strike in 1985. The end of industry left a cortege of empty mills and closed mines, deteriorating townscapes, and blossoming unemployment. The majority of the former mill and mine workers who have weathered the challenges of postindustrial transition are now past retirement age. And, we argue, their industrial enculturations are both still evinced and are coming to matter in new ways.

Ageing brings uncertainties (Laslett, 1996); bodies wear and become less reliable, while ailment and accident lurk. That the physiological ageing process is always culturally mediated (Myerhoff, 1992) is an anthropological truism - in postindustrial Northern England, where older people carry the memories, both cognitive and somatic, of identities of localised industrial labour, it is a salient truism. In Britain, however, research on the connection between older age and particular localities has tended to focus on favoured places for retirement, such as the seaside (e.g. Blaikie, 2005). While 'ageing in place' has positive connotations in gerontology, this has emerged as more of a well-meaning buzzword than the ethnographic recognition that particular kinds of places exert influences on the people who live there, which in turn influences their experiences of ageing (see also Degnen, 2012).

Care – a peculiar amalgam of resource and relational practice (Buch 2015) is a particular pressure point in this respect. As older people navigate needs for care through experiences of, for example, chronic illness or cognitive decline, cultural conceptions of how care should be given, and by whom, come to the fore. In the latter half of this article, we illustrate the intimate entwinements of industrial cultures with moralities of care. The story of former Lyng Valley 'sewer' Gert Leach shows how the imperative for self-care within textile individualism has social consequences for those who become unable to maintain their autonomy. Contrastingly, the story of former Ashington miner Stan Cowton shows how the imperative for communal care within mining solidarism has very different consequences.

In attending to the issue of care amongst older people we are, of course, adding to what has been described as a "veritable explosion" of anthropological work (Buch 2015: 279), an explosion no doubt motivated by a turn from concern with suffering towards, instead the social relations that sustain life, including by alleviating suffering (Robbin 2013). However,

following Appadurai's call for the anthropological study of care to develop a wider ethnographic corpus (1986) we do this in a way that addresses a key demographic gap in the anthropological literature on care – care for older people by older people. Above all, whilst, as one would expect of anthropologists, respectful appreciation of the contextual variability of 'care practices' has been duly paid (Mol et al. 2013), our attention to the intimate entwinements of industrial cultures with moralities of care is a unique and, we hope to demonstrate, important one. Methodologically, we rationalise our reliance of such individual, though certainly not untypical case studies on the psychoanalytic anthropology of Devereux (1978). He argues that generalising by averaging large numbers of individuals' traits, or seeking common denominators or representativeness, corrupts identity. Instead, he recommends that the anthropological endeavour should consist of appreciating how in the one human being is to be found humanity (Rapport, personal correspondence 2015). This approach has come to play an especially prominent role in the anthropological tradition of British ethnography (see, for example, Rapport, 1993) where our work is situated.

From industrial materiality to morality

Driven by developments in mechanised fibre spinning and textile weaving, the initial basis of industrialism was technological. Of course, changes in production were changes in work, too. Power looms replaced the artisanal work of handloom weaving within the household with new forms of labour in 'manufactories'. As production grew, so more resources, from coal to cotton, were required, and so more work was made for more labouring bodies. This meant more than the work itself: people became enmeshed in and subject to new political and economic relationships, as the Marxist historian E.P. Thompson (1968) has notably explored.

Indeed, the term ‘industrial revolution’ came to describe processes that were both material and social (Williams, 1983).

Significantly, the exigencies of industrial work percolated into many aspects of day-to-day life, such as through a shift from seasonal agricultural rhythms to careful time discipline (Thompson, 1967). As Antonio Gramsci (1997:302) was to characterise it, industrial production was more than the production of goods - it was “a specific mode of living and of thinking and feeling life”. Yet the industrial production of life was not a one-way process; lives were shaped *by* industry, but people also responded *to* industry. In New England milling, for example, Tamara Hareven (1993) has shown how workers actively navigated the industry by mobilising kinship ties. Such entwinements also suggest why the material conditions of industrial work have resurfaced culturally in unique ways, from ‘superstitions’ about pigs as a response to the dangers of coal-mining in Northern England (Dawson, 2000), to economic pacts with the devil amongst Bolivian tin miners (Taussig, 1980). In many cases, social shapings and cultural responses have lasted beyond industrial work itself, which scholars of ‘post-Fordist affect’ discern in the “afterlife” of lingering sensations, affects and ideas (Muehlebach & Shosan 2012:325; Berlant, 2007). Both industrial lives and afterlives are apparent in the two sites we focus upon here: the post-textile textile district of Lyng Valley, and the post-mining mining town of Ashington.

Milling and mining

A distance of 150 miles separates the West Yorkshire district of Lyng Valley (Goodwin-Hawkins, 2011-present) and the Northumberland conurbation of Ashington (Dawson, 1985-present), where we have respectively undertaken periods of immersive field research of up to

twelve months in length. Our respective research projects have drawn in large part upon the classic anthropological methods of participant-observation and informal interviewing. We have also each periodically revisited our respective fieldsites (Goodwin-Hawkins in 2015, and Dawson most recently in 2017), and maintain associations with news and residents in each area.

Lyng Valley, located within the South Pennine uplands, consists of several hilltop villages and vicinages clustering around a valley town, and has a total population of approximately 7,000. Ashington is more substantial in size, with the town plus surrounding villages adding to a population of some 22,000. Both grew into population centres during the industrial revolution, with Lyng Valley placed within the nexus of the developing textile industry, and Ashington proximate to coal. For almost two centuries, each place was dominated by its respective industry - but with notable differences. While Lyng Valley's mills were established by, and remained in, private ownership, the British coal industry was nationalised in 1946. Like coal-miners nationwide, those of Ashington were beneficiaries of nationalisation and of the collective bargaining power of the National Union of Mineworkers; they received the significant wage rises that led coal-miners to become commonly known as the 'wealthy working-class'. Miners' wages effectively led to the demise of economic pluriactivity in Ashington, as men moved into full-time mining out of additional employment; in Lyng Valley, however, a mix of textile work and agricultural labour on the district's upland farms remained the norm. A further significant difference concerns the gendered division of labour: while both men and women engaged in textile work, with 'outworking' (sewing from home) available to women with small children, mining was a masculine occupation and, with nationalisation, miners' wives increasingly moved out of the waged economy and into full-time domestic labour. (Interestingly, the promise of textile

work attracted a number of young women from mining regions to Lyng Valley.) We are unable to fully address these gender differences within the space of this article, but return to them in our final reflections below.

Since nearly every working-age local resident in Lyng Valley and in Ashington either worked directly in textiles or mining or their auxiliary industries, or had family and friends who did, when Britain's industrial economy entered decline from the mid-1960s both places suffered. Lyng Valley's last textile mill closed in the 1980s, and Ashington's last mine in the 1990s. Post-mining, and lacking an obvious alternative source of major employment, Ashington has experienced sharp decline; it remains scarred by 'brownfield' (dis-used industrial sites), and has only proved attractive to working class in-migrants priced out of the housing market in the nearby city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Although similarly eviscerated by the end of the textile industry, Lyng Valley has fared somewhat better after cheap housing stock attracted the 'bohemians' who became a precursor to gentrifying middle class commuters (known locally as 'offcumdens') to the cites of Leeds and Manchester.

Despite industry's demise and the different experiences of postindustrial transition in each district, Lyng Valley and Ashington have each retained strong identities as single-industry towns. Ashington proudly announces itself as 'the biggest mining village in the World', with a local museum dedicated to mining heritage; heritage work in Lyng Valley has recently included a local campaign to save a (defunct) mill chimney, and local residents regularly describe the area as in "the cradle of the industrial revolution". Due to the sheer dominance of the textile and mining industries in the past, such enduring significance in the present is unsurprising. We would further suggest that postindustrial out-migration, as laid-off workers

have left to seek employment elsewhere, has in turn strengthened the place-based sense of identity amongst those who have stayed.

Textile individualism

"Sweatshops, that's what they were." Memories of hardship loom large for Lyng Valley's former textile workers. The 'weaving sheds', producing fabric, and 'sewing shops', producing ready-made garments, absorbed many and paid little. The equally low paid local retail and agricultural sectors were amongst the few alternatives. Yet, occupational hierarchies were carefully reckoned. Schooling streamed young people towards certain areas of the industry: those who did well were encouraged into engineering apprenticeships or to take typing certificates; low achievers were considered future weaving labour. With weavers at the bottom of the hierarchy, 'sewers' were the next step up, and were themselves graded between 'section workers', who specialised in sewing part of a garment, such as pockets or cuffs, and the more prestigious 'makers through', who sewed entire garments. Once within the industry, a worker might regularly change employer, but would rarely change work area - a weaver, for example, would not become a secretary. Thus, individuals' working lives were defined early, and were also hierarchically self-defining.

Regardless of skill or prestige, all direct textile workers were paid piece rates. Income thus depended upon output, and output upon an individual's ability to deploy the attributes of their working task: skill for the makers-through, speedy dexterity for the section workers. Piece rates further meant that, quite simply, to help another at work was to threaten one's own wages. Overall, the textile industry's working conditions - semi-meritocratic, hierarchical, and materially rewarding individual performance - encouraged an individualist ethos that

radiated beyond the workplace. Far from withering during the industry's demise, this textile individualism was emphasised anew. Unlike embattled mining communities (which we discuss below), textile workers did not engage in a comparative moment of collective struggle during de-industrialisation. When Lyng Valley's mills and sewing shops began to close, their workers either chose to leave the district, or clung on as individuals picking out varied livelihoods in a grey economy. For the latter, resilience and autonomy became especially self-definitive. Amongst Lyng Valley's former textile workers, care remains primarily for oneself.

As Goodwin-Hawkins (2013) has elaborated elsewhere, in Lyng Valley resilience and autonomy are brought into relief through repeated injunctions against "softness". Softness is seen to characterise the incapable, overindulged, foolish, and foreign. Like plants raised in a greenhouse, soft people are unable to weather adversity. In a place where hardship dominates much living memory, softness is a failure to fully belong. Yet, softness, if not quite contagious, somehow lurks, and guarding against it requires vigilance in oneself and scrutiny of others: "You've not gone soft, have you?" This adds a performative imperative to local individualist values. Indeed, continually convincing others of one's own resilience and autonomy is fundamental to social acceptance. As we show below, this is a potential point of both personal difficulty and changing social status in older age. The situation is very different in Ashington.

Mining Solidarism

We have already noted above that mining was largely a domain of male employment. Like textile workers, miners were paid at different rates according to specific occupation and

productivity. However, miners were organised into small teams, each representing the array of occupational skill-sets needed for coal extraction. Entry into a particular role was usually established at first entry to employment, and based on education, connections, and sometimes even inheritance. Occupational mobility was rare, with the exception of mine management. Thus, membership in a masculine work team was enduring and teams fostered loyalty and close social bonds. The ever-present risk of accident or death in the mine was an especially significant structural basis for solidarity, with the working group also seen as a constraint on the reckless and dangerous individual pursuit of productivity. Outside the mine, fear of losing a loved one created uniquely tight bonds between mining women (Dawson, 2000). The solidarity between men in a work team also carried over into relations between their wives, who socialised, laboured, and cared predominantly with each other.

In day-to-day practice, each work team was assigned to a different part of the mine. When work was scarce, teams competed for access to work in the ‘caval’ lottery. Together, team members and their families experienced both economic feast and famine. Times of plentiful work stimulated locally particular, often bacchanalian, forms of socialising. Times of scarcity stimulated a culture of mutual aid. Whilst a family’s economic conditions depended on male labour, women were expected to offer help to other families in times of need. This mining solidarism was crucial during the 1983-4 Miners’ Strike, when Ashington, amongst many other mining communities, was plunged into hardship, without access to work or wages for an entire year. The strike at once mobilised and cemented solidarism - it was mutual care that enabled the strikers to persist, and not car-boots full of cash from the former-Soviet Union, as some right wing media claimed. And, these values of solidarism have themselves persisted into Ashington’s postindustrial present.

During the strike, miners were widely stigmatised by politicians and in the media, drawing upon a well-established imagery of mine work as dirty work in a process of symbolic racialization (Metcalfe, 1990). Rather than contesting their stigmatisation, miners gave negative imagery positive attribution. In Ashington, the 'dirtying' substance of coal was symbolically transformed into something 'pure', even health-giving. In these parts, even where pneumoconiosis is rife, "All pitmen for heartburn suck coal", as they say. And, of course, coal is a cherished as a marker of identity. This echoes classic anthropological observations of how marginal peoples transform apparent weaknesses into bases for strength (e.g. Postal, 1978:129; Turner, 1969:109-110). Inversion of this kind is central to communal experience in Ashington. It also serves as a broader conceptual framework, including for the physiological processes of ageing. In what phenomenological scholars describe as 'bodily alienation' (Leder, 1990), illness and bodily decline are experienced as a parting of the self from the body: the body is not 'me', but 's/he' or 'it'. For older people in Ashington, as Dawson (2002) has previously illustrated, this marks personal distance from the pains and travails of bodily ill-health - weakness is again transformed into strength.

Although necessarily brief, our outlines of textile individualism and mining solidarism suggest quite different operative conceptualisations of care. We consider this in what follows.

Caring for others, caring for oneself

Expectations placed upon individuals in older age to care for oneself or others are mitigated by the key factor of welfarism. To explain, the generation of people about whom we are writing grew-up through the heyday of the British Welfare State. Thus, though lower rates of

take-up of certain forms of state provided care during deindustrialisation have been recorded for textile areas compared to areas dominated by other industries (Massey, 1995), amongst older people in both Lyng Valley and Ashington the state is perceived widely to hold ultimate responsibility for aged care.

Nonetheless, caring 'by' older people is still regarded as important in both contexts. To explain how so it is worth invoking Michael Herzfeld's classic work on selfhood and its social acknowledgement. Speaking of his Cretan mountain shepherd research subjects Herzfeld states famously, "there is less focus on 'being a good man' than on 'being *good* at being a man" (p. 17, 1985); furthermore, the quality of any given 'performance' of manhood is determined by the performer's ability to relate it to broader and valorised social phenomena. Likewise, in Lyng Valley and Ashington, whilst the expectation of being a good carer in the practical sense of effectively managing the material circumstances required for successful living, for example, is mitigated by welfarism, being *good* at being a carer matters. While in Lyng Valley premium is placed upon being *seen* to be able to care for one's own needs, in Ashington it is placed upon being *seen* to care for the needs of others. And, respectively, care performances are evaluated in terms of their resonances with broader narratives of, respectively, textile individualism and mining solidarism. However, these performances are impacted upon significantly by physiological decline, and in very different ways in each context, as we illustrate below through the stories of "Poor Gert" Leach, and Stan "the Man" Cowton.

"She can't stop alone in that house": Losing the capacity for self-care in Lyng Valley

Gert Leach was born and raised in Lyng Valley, spending much of her working life as a maker-through in the district's sewing shops. She had never married and, at eighty-three, lived alone in the terrace house inherited from her parents. She attended her local Methodist chapel, and enjoyed active sociality with the Women's Institute. Reporting good health, she merely needed the mobility aid of a folding walking stick (in jaunty floral pattern). Yet, in little more than a year her peers ceased seeing her as a resilient individual; she became "Poor Gert" - subject to care, and socially outcast.

It began with a holiday. Travelling to Wales for a long-awaited visit with an old friend, Gert slipped and fell on an escalator while changing trains mid-way. Despite bystanders at the station questioning her condition, she insisted on continuing her journey. In Wales, her friend convinced her to go to Accident & Emergency, where she was diagnosed with a broken collarbone. The break could not be plastered, and precluded Gert's return home until the following fortnight. Yet, even once she was home, other chapel-goers were surprised not to see her at the Sunday service. Their phone calls extracted Gert's insistence that she was cheerful and mending. It was not until her eventual reappearance some weeks later that Gert confessed: her injury had left her unable to raise her right arm, and therefore unable to brush her hair. Though physically able to leave the house, she refused to be seen looking dishevelled, and emerged only when she could present herself immaculately - and capably - once more.

Gert recovered. But within months a trip over an extension lead at home left her with a painful hip fracture. Regardless, she resiliently carried on with her regular activities, insisting to those who asked that she was just "a little wobbly". When she attended the annual Methodist Ladies' Fellowship dinner, radiant in red lipstick and a new outfit, she received the

approval of other attendees. “Doesn’t she look well?” they said, impressed by her recovery. Later they would look back, revising the dinner into Gert’s high tide.

A month after the dinner, Gert fell again. This was not an accident but a bodily failure: as Gert got out of bed, her legs refused the task of holding her upright. She collapsed on the floor and, unable to get up again, lay prone for five hours until a neighbour noticed her curtains were still drawn. Attending paramedics still struggled to convince Gert that she needed to go to hospital, as she repeatedly refused treatment and insisted that she could cope at home. Although intended to facilitate recovery, hospitals are often reckoned as places of contamination, mishap and death (Rapport, 2009). In Lyng Valley, levity is often used to downplay the seriousness of hospitalisation and reassert resilience. The remark of one older resident after a heart attack scare is characteristic: “Oh, it’s no matter. I felt better as soon as I got there.” But, Gert was hospitalised for several weeks, and her stay could not so easily be dismissed - it was now known that Gert *needed* care.

Eliza, a fellow chapel-goer, visited Gert at the regional hospital and brought back news. After one Sunday service, Eliza announced: “She’s still in. They’re doing tests and that, trying to find out what’s wrong with her. They don’t seem to be able to work out what it is, whether it’s one thing or another.” There were sympathetic noises, but it was another woman, Leah, who tapped into underlying feeling: “Mightn’t be owt wrong to find. Might be that she’s old and it’s time for them [doctors] to leave well enough alone.” This public reframing marked a shift in Gert’s social categorisation. With hospitalisation dragging on and three falls in a year, Gert was no longer seen as a victim of accidents but as in decline.

When Gert eventually returned home, gone was the floral walking stick, replaced now with two sturdy hospital-issued sticks. Her balance had visibly worsened, and she now walked falteringly. Her homecoming also proved brief. When she went for an outpatient check-up, doctors found an abscess near her collarbone, which required daily draining and meant she was hospitalised once more. Back at chapel weeks later, Gert showed the deep gash where the abscess had been lanced; witnessing this, other women sucked in their breath and turned away.

Not only had Gert's health become fragile, but her status had changed. Her peers no longer thought her resilient or autonomous, but as requiring care, and thus as not a peer at all. Out of her hearing, these others began calling her "Poor Gert". They did offer care, such as picking up her dropped walking sticks - yet in doing so they contrasted their own capability against Gert's increasing lack of it. When others talked about Gert (they now rarely talked with her), they recalled "all those falls", they described her own home as "too much for her", and increasingly advocated her going into aged care: "she can't stop alone in that house".

'Meadows', the council-run aged care complex, was on the outskirts of town, in a flood-prone area that had been a notorious slum during the industrial years. Built in the 1990s on half of a former mill site, the complex overlooked uncleared and weed-strewn demolition rubble. Meadows residents did not attend the chapels, craft circles, Women's Institute or coffee mornings that were the main social foci for older women in Lyng Valley. Likewise, the women who socialised in these spaces did not visit Meadows residents. Secluded in a dismal part of town, Meadows seemed to separate those who could no longer care for themselves from the sociality of their previously autonomous lives. Within the suggestion that Gert should go to Meadows was her complete social exclusion. Gert had suffered

accident, physiological decline and ill health; together with her recurrent hospitalisations, these events meant that she could no longer adequately demonstrate her resilience and autonomy, and that her peers no longer acknowledged her possession of these values. It was not that others did not care, but Gert became "Poor Gert" in her failure to keep caring for herself.

"It's us who do all the caring": Care giving in Ashington

82-year old widower and ex-miner Stan Cowton had been a fairly-unassuming presence at the Ellington Miners Welfare Derby and Joan Club. In general, men die younger than women, and especially so in in mining areas, where occupational diseases are commonplace. However, unlike some others Stan did not seem to revel in the attention and fussing that the sparse presence of men at the club often engendered amongst the women. He used to sit at the back of the hall, away from all the hubbub, chatting quietly and playing dominoes and bingo with Irene and Mary, neighbours and widows of Stan's 'marras' (workmates) from his last pit team at Ellington Colliery. He had been transferred there towards the end of his working life, after production cutbacks at Hirst Pit, another Ashington colliery.

The only times that Stan emerged from his usual anonymity was when he participated in a concert party run by Jean, Iris and Bess, widows of his marras from a team he had belonged to at Hirst. The concert parties reflect a long local tradition of creativity promoted by both the Methodist Chapel and, in the early twentieth-century a Modernist intellectual elite that saw, especially in miner's art and performance expressions of a near primitive communist selfhood (Fever 1988). Stan's specialism was singing the Marxist light opera of Brecht and Weill, especially, and comically, Surabaya Johnny, the histrionic story of a spurned woman.

Stan's participation was, however often under his own sufferance. He was concerned about the pressure it placed on his 'dickie ticker' (heart). Nevertheless, whilst over the years he withdrew from the concert party's visits to other Derby and Joan clubs, he always participated at his home club in Ellington. Jean, Iris and Bess insisted on it. He needed to "get out and about", away from the solitude of home.

Unfortunately, Stan suffered a serious heart attack. Though released to his home some weeks after the event, he needed to convalesce, and so took time out from the club. However, during his absence in person his presence in memory seemed to grow, and in ways that confounded his own typical modesty. People recollected that Stan had been no ordinary miner, but a 'stone-man'. Stone men are the men in mining teams who clear non-coal substances to enable coal hewers to do their job. Reflecting a symbolic distinction between coal, which is conceptualized as clean, and other polluting substances, the stone men are regarded by mining people to be of higher status than other miners, even though they were not paid at higher rates (Dawson 2000). Reports also emerged from those who visited Stan of his many exploits at home. He was still doing his own cooking, cleaning and gardening, including the heavy work required to prepare his leeks for that year's show. The cultivation of prize vegetables is a long tradition amongst mining men. Also, his illness and lucky survival of it had, so people said, given him an awareness of his body and how to manage it. "Don't worry about Stan", several such healthier people said, "he will outlive the rest of us …. he has learned how to." The weakness of physiological decline was transformed into a strength. And, over time Stan became a 'totem of good ageing', perceived by others to be soldiering on wisely through everyday life despite physical adversity (Dawson, 2002).

In time, amongst many people Stan was no longer Stan Cowton, but Stan "the man" Cowton. And, this new heroic status was read back into depictions of his pre-heart attack life in the club. Stan hadn't merely sung – he had "raised the rafters while popping them heart pills." Ironically, however, this very transformation of his status, that visitors to his home made him aware of, was one of the reasons why Stan was reluctant to return to the club. He feared succumbing to the pressure to sing, and the potentially mortal consequences that may have held for him. However, friends from the club visited repeatedly. In particular, Irene and Mary called in most days. They offered to tend to his leeks, something they knew he could only refuse. The presence of women in gardens is widely thought of as polluting and inhibiting of plant growth (Dawson, 2000). They also brought helpings of the kinds of foods, such as cakes and biscuits, or Lucazade (a glucose energy drink commonly prescribed to the infirm in post-WWII Britain), that would "be a treat" or "build-up his strength". They did this knowing that, in line with doctors' dietary advice and orders, these things would surely end up in the bin. Eventually, and especially through Irene's and Mary's arm-twisting, Stan succumbed and returned to the club.

On his return, Stan's appearance was shockingly diminished. He was pail, thin, weak and badly out of breath. Nonetheless, he was greeted as though a hero. And, after repeated initial refusals he gave in to pressure to sing. Now, with a sparrow-like voice, he faltered through Vera Lynn's wartime classic song of separation and the promise of reunion, either here on earth or in heaven. No matter that he could barely get through the first verse. The entire audience took over, while he listened on approvingly and movingly.

Both Stan and others cried. And, the social services organisers of the club agreed that this was, indeed, a very poignant occasion. They explained to Iris and Mary that Stan's choice of

song was his way of saying goodbye, and that that was appropriate. Derby and Joan clubs were, they also explained, for the ‘active elderly’, a criterion that Stan clearly could no longer meet. It was unsafe for Stan to continue attending, both for himself and others. His condition had brought on multiple secondary consequences. Some of these, such as incontinence, were hugely embarrassing. More importantly, each of them required care, something beyond the responsibilities of the organisers and the capabilities of the membership.

The arguments of the organisers, however, fell on deaf ears. Iris and Mary kept on encouraging Stan to attend. And they guilted his daughter-in-law into driving the few hundred metres back and forth between home and club that he could no longer manage on his own. By way of special bait, his old friends Jean, Iris and Bess visited the club again to perform an act that they had become (in)famous for elsewhere, and that Stan had heard about and had keenly anticipated seeing. They danced the can-can, with each kick revealing the incontinence pads they wore beneath their skirts. This was more than a mere act of ribald resistance to the organisers’ protests that they ought not to have to deal with people who could not control their bladders. Nor was it a mere making light of Stan’s condition. Capturing the constantly comedic timbre of club life, such scatology can be characterised as forms of ‘organic’ solidarity. They represent recognition of physiological ageing involving a breaking down of the body’s boundaries and, thus its un-containment (from which the word incontinence derives). In turn also, they represent no less than a celebration of physiological ageing entailing a de-centring of selfhood from the individual body, and its possession by and merging with other selves (Dawson, 2012). When people bigged-up Stan as “the man”, they were not simply glorifying an old friend, but assuming control of the construction of his selfhood. And, when they took over his singing, they were not simply helping Stan out. They

were *being* Stan for him. This type of practice is an extension of mining solidarism through physiological ageing, and into locally particular practices of care.

Of course, the poor put-upon organisers of the Ellington Derby and Joan club were forced by insurmountable pressure to become carers for Stan (and others), sometimes even having to clean him up. They received no compensation. When they complained, the response was startling. Accompanied by a look of surprise and incredulity, Irene replied with a statement that could be interpreted as either honest or disingenuous – "What are you talking about? It's us who do all the caring." Looking offended, Mary and a few other club members nodded in agreement.

Discussion and conclusion

'Poor Gert' and 'Stan the man' both experienced a decline into illness and frailty in older age. In common with experiences of older age more broadly, they inhabited bodies that were no longer obedient. Living with and through their loss of capability, both tried – where they could – to keep on living independently. But it is in their treatment within their respective peer and community groups that the differences emerge. Former sewer Gert was soon deemed incapable of caring for herself, and her peers in large part kept their distance, and indeed advocated for her placement in an aged care home where she would be excluded from their sociality. She was *poor* Gert, to be recalled in sympathy, but not actively given care. By contrast, former miner Stan was *the man*, lauded for continuing in his own home, his pre-illness achievements inflated in memory. His incapacity deemed him worthy of care by his peers, who went out of their way to incorporate him into communal sociality.

With decades now past after de-industrialisation in Lyng Valley and Ashington, it is older people, like Gert, Stan and their peers, who carry the memories and subjectivities of industrial work. Through the two cases presented above, we have argued that industry lives on not only in moralities of care, but in localised forms related to particular industrial antecedents: the individualism of textiles, and the solidarism of mining.

Having emphasised the differences *between* Lyng Valley and Ashington, let us briefly acknowledge that there are, of course, internal differences and discordances. In Lyng Valley, Eliza, for example, cared for Gert by regularly visiting her in hospital. In Ashington, Stan's daughter-in-law needed to be 'guilted' before she would give care by driving him to the club. And, notably, neither Gert nor Stan acquiesced without resistance. Gert sought her peers' sociality, even as they distanced themselves; Stan was reluctant to be re-incorporated into club life. Local moralities of care are not wholly hegemonic.

Nevertheless, other cases from our respective fieldwork do show the saturation of the localised moralities we have argued for, in relation to other facets of existence, such as death and dying (Dawson & Goodwin-Hawkins 2018) and in relation to care. The case of James and Miriam – a couple who retired to Lyng Valley from elsewhere in England – again illustrates individual values of self-care. Settling into their new home in one of the hill-top villages, James and Miriam comported themselves as they expected 'good' community members should: by neighbouring, caring, and offering to help others. But while these helping behaviours would likely have fit well in Ashington, in Lyng Valley they clearly marked James and Miriam out as *not* belonging. Indeed, their efforts to care were at best considered odd, and at worst resented. Likewise, in Ashington Darby and Joan club members

who, echoing an ethos of the individual responsibilization for care articulated increasingly by health professionals and others, protested the need for excluding participants who could no longer care for themselves, were very swiftly rebuked and sometimes became the subjects of exclusion themselves.

Despite these supporting cases, could other factors explain the differences in care? Gender in particular lurks here, with common cultural associations between women and care-*giving* in turn positioning men as care-*receiving*. This is certainly seen in Stan's case where, as a rare male of his age group, he was especially fussed over by female peers. Nonetheless, and as we have demonstrated ethnographically elsewhere (Dawson 2010), while the commonality of their presence may mean that they are not fussed over quite as much, women who require care receive it or, at least, receive performances of it from their peers. While untangling the full implications of gendered care here is a task beyond this article, we do surmise that, again, industrial differences play a strong role. As we explained in introducing Lyng Valley and Ashington, textiles employed both genders, while mining work was undertaken by men. Lyng Valley women, then, had experience of working self-reliance, very often in the weaving and sewing roles that paid individualising piece rates. Ashington women, however, were reliant on the work of their men, and experienced their own community as a mirror of how men worked together below ground. Gert and Stan, then, are not different only because they are a woman and a man, but are specifically different because they are a former textile working woman, and a former mining man. Their working identities and their genders entwine.

Clearly, the lived experiences of industrial work have fashioned moral subjects. Industrial materiality made a moral order sensible and knowable: the good miner was known by his work, but also by his camaraderie; the good textile worker showed stoicism and knew

salvation. These certainties were rooted in labouring experience. They persist, now that the mills and mines have closed, in local moralities of care.

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