US

University of Sussex

Sussex Centre for Migration Research

Welcome to 'Monkey Island'

Identity, Community and Migration Histories in Three Norwich Estates

Sussex Migration Working Paper no. 38

Ben Rogaly and Becky Taylor

University of Sussex

July 2006

Abstract

In the recent history of the welfare state, particular areas have been identified in official documents as 'deprived' (Damer, 1989; Power, 1996; Social Exclusion Unit, 1998). In response to this, the present government has channelled resources through the New Deal for Communities to selected neighbourhoods, including the North Earlham, Larkman and Marlpit (NELM) estates in Norwich. In this paper we draw on an ongoing piece of research with estate residents to begin to explore questions regarding shifting social and spatial identity practices in the area.[1]

The New Deal for Communities has the idea of 'community' literally 'at the heart' of a 'long term commitment to deliver real change'. 'Community involvement and [community] ownership' are described as key characteristics.[2] Here we suggest that the very idea of 'community' is a construction that does not necessarily reflect how people think about their relations with others in the neighbourhood they live in. Among other things, even in estates regarded as 'white', migration histories matter. This represents the very beginning of our analysis of the interrelation between official descriptions of the area as deprived and residents' own social and spatial identity practices.

---

[1] For details of the project see http://www.sussex.ac.uk/migration/documents/dwc.pdf, accessed 5 April 2006.

[2] http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/page.asp?id=617&printer=1 accessed 14 March 2006.

Investigating the NELM Estates

Owing to increasingly apparent failures or limited successes of various welfare strategies, social policy theory since 1945 has become more and more preoccupied by the issue of implementation. In the UK in particular 'some passion' has gone into the 'top-down–bottom-up debate', typically linked to arguments about the respective roles of central and local government in the determination and implementation of policy (Hill, 1997). Area-based initiatives have a long history dating back to at least the 19th century. However, an important change occurred following the economic restructuring, privatization, and emphasis on individual responsibility that emerged from the late 1970s. This was manifest in a reengagement with ideas of 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor people and a move away from a universalist to a targeting strategy. New Labour has retained the emphasis on targets (Imrie and Raco, 2003). This change has created its own problems. Singling out particular neighbourhoods as 'problem areas' can itself perpetuate exclusion and distract attention from the causes of poverty (Morrison, 2003; Rogaly et al., 1999); the same can be equally true of targeting social or ethnic groups (Gotovos, 2003; Mosse, 1999).

While our research project aims to examine how policy constructs places, spaces and identity possibilities, we also seek to go further, to reveal how the agencies of estate residents and historical chance have played their part in the creation of the distinct characters of the estates. Individuals are not simply passive recipients of policy: as was said of the estate residents relocated during slum clearance and confirmed in many of our interviews, 'they have retained much of their former rejection of "authority" and an "independence" of thought and action' (Larkman Project Group, 1984).

Social identifications are made, contested and continuously reconstituted through categorization by others, through conscious, even instrumental, choice, and through unconscious group affiliations, including affective solidarities (Brah, 1996; Jenkins, 1996; Shotter, 1984). Identity practices refer to the actions, inactions, words and silences which either reflect the practical consciousness of taken-for-granted identifications, or which intentionally make use of identifications, for example to construct solidarities or assert group-belonging to achieve particular goals (Halfacre and Boyle, 1993, drawing on Giddens, 1986).

In our research we seek to problematize the idea of 'community', particularly as it is propagated in government social policy towards 'community organizations' and 'community cohesion' (McGhee, 2003). For some, community has become 'a governmentalized discourse' – a central means within 'third-way' politics of 'softening the move towards neo-capitalist restructuring' (Delanty, 2003: 87; Rose, 1999). While taking on board the possibility of such interpretations, we do not seek to argue that estate residents feel no sense of identification with others in their neighbourhood. It is also possible that the existence of an artificially constructed 'community' project can help to create a sense of community – as Castells has argued of urban social movements, 'regardless of the explicit achievement of the movement, its very existence produced meaning' (1997: 61).

We set out to explore both the external identity of the estates, and the shifting and multiple social identifications of estate residents over time. It is hoped that this will contribute to understandings of subjectivity and identification among 'poor white communities' in the UK as a whole. Identity practices operate simultaneously across different dimensions. We examine the interaction of ethnic identifications with identifications based on class, gender, generation and place. To the extent that identifications are performed, particular dimensions of identity are likely to be foregrounded by the same person in different times and places (Okamura, 1981; Rew and Campbell, 1999; Rogaly et al, 2004). Our understanding of identity practices is thus situational as well as relational. Of particular importance in this interdisciplinary research is analysis of how ideas of place change over time, and of the juxtaposition between the speeds of change in individual identifications and of change in surrounding institutions, buildings, policies and investments (Wolch and DeVerteuil, 2001).

We understand places as 'open, porous and the products of other places' (Massey, 1995: 59). Therefore we locate the estates in relation to their marginal geographical and social position within Norwich, which itself is

in the geographical, cultural and social centre of Norfolk, indicating that even the centre has its own margins. When the estates were first constructed they were on the geographical periphery of the city. This physical marginalization was reinforced by the fact that many ex-slum dwellers were rehoused there, resulting in social stigma (Larkman Project Group, 1984; Sibley, 1995). Since that time, the city has expanded beyond the estates, separating them from the surrounding countryside while tying them closer to the city, and meanwhile the University of East Anglia has been built on their doorstep.

At the same time, the social location of the NELM area has undergone profound changes. As well as containing people's homes and neighbourhoods, its council houses and estates are physical embodiments of the changing face of the welfare state – from council tenancy to the right to buy, to the recent increase in housing association properties (Forrest and Murie, 1991). People's identifications are profoundly tied to their relationship with their houses and the places where they are located (Bornat, 1989; Sixsmith, 1988). Residents' identifications are also meshed with lifecycle patterns. Generational shifts change the patterns of expectation, needs and experiences of individuals in their relationships with their homes and neighbourhood. They also increase diversity within and between households – 'time increases complexity, complexity in turn implies a multiplicity and a plurality of viewpoints' (Strathern, 1992: 21).

At the time of writing this paper we have conducted taped interviews with close on 60 individuals, most of them estate residents, and carried out ethnographic work, kept fieldnotes and collected data from national and local archives. This process of data collection is ongoing, and systematic analysis of interview transcripts has not yet begun, so this paper represents a pause, a time for reflection and a refinement of some of our research questions, rather than a presentation of research 'findings'. We have spoken to a diverse range of people, young and old, male and female, long-term residents, those who have only recently come to live on the estates and former residents, including some who have returned.

The grey literature we consulted about the estates and our interactions with the NELM New Deal for Communities Partnership had led us to believe that people's spatial and social identifications in the area had a degree of boundedness. Thus there would be 'Travellers', people with Irish heritage and people who had moved to the area from tied cottages in the countryside and from slum clearance in central Norwich. The three estates would relate to clearly understood places, and, because of a history of conflict between the estates, belonging to one of these places would define social relationships with people from each of the other two.

In practice, social and spatial identities are being revealed as even more dynamic and contingent than we had supposed. In what follows we draw on interview data to illustrate how different residents negotiated the insider–outsider divide, how situated identity practices led the boundaries of individual estates to shift, and how histories of movement of people, ideas and capital into and away from the estates have influenced identification and social change. The final section of the paper builds on these emerging insights by raising questions for our ongoing data collection and analysis, as well as for government regarding the centrality of 'community' in its strategies for long-term change in 'deprived' areas.

Belonging and Community

The NELM New Deal project has actively engaged a relatively small group of people, many with long histories in the area and extended family who are resident on one of the estates or nearby. This group of people, which includes board members and NELM staff, have given up their time to talk to us and have also given us contacts with other current and former residents. We have also sought to meet people through other means, for example through social clubs and churches and discussions with people known to us prior to the research, who either live on one of the estates or have been involved there through previous residence or work. Both of us have connections with the area, having lived, worked and/or studied nearby for several years. Being present on the estates over a period of several months, and following these and other routes, has enabled us to speak with recently arrived residents, people who once lived in the area, who left and then returned, as well as with former residents.

Some long-term resident interviewees talked of physical neighbourliness, for example exchange through shopping, or care of houses and pets when a householder was away. To emphasize this point, more than one person cited cases from media reports of other places where elderly people had died in their own homes and not been found for weeks, countering with a remark such as, 'at least round here someone would notice something was wrong'. It was physical support that caused one former resident, who had moved away but continued to work in the area, to seek to move back. As part of her work she had organized a meeting on one of the estates between a Norwich City Council housing officer and estate residents:

> the other workers in the council have absolutely no idea of the real intense feelings that, that people who can't get their repairs done, actually build up and I just collapsed in the middle of this meeting. The next thing I remember is being in the Norfolk and Norwich [hospital], but apparently it was the locals – the housing office couldn't cope at all – who called an ambulance. It was three members of [names a group of residents] that went up to the hospital, followed the ambulance, stayed with me until four o'clock in the morning ... finding out kind of like what was going to happen. Somebody else took my car keys out of my pocket and drove my car back to their house and parked it up on their garden so that it wouldn't be vandalized... They totally looked after me... I was very, very touched and all the while I was in the hospital people kept in touch, sent cards and... it's one of the reasons I ...moved back to the area.

> (interviewee 47, 9.01.06)

However, the importance of relations with others on the estate goes beyond neighbourliness to a less specific but nonetheless important feeling of 'belonging'. For many long-term residents the feeling of belonging is about 'knowing everyone', and being part of a web of family networks extending back three or more generations. This point was tellingly illustrated during the course of the fieldwork, when one of us came across two of our interviewees – one in their late 60s, the other in their 30s – in the local café, talking about a recent car accident in which three teenagers were seriously injured.

We had been unaware that these two individuals knew each other socially, and the younger woman was attempting to describe the victims of the crash, whose families had once lived on the estate, but no longer did so. In the course of the 10-minute conversation on the subject they talked about the teenagers in terms of their respective families, stretching back to three generations, discussed where they had lived on the estate, their neighbours, and their reputation. Although the older resident did not know the teenagers personally, by the end of the conversation she had located them in the web of relationships that existed across the estates and beyond.

One resident, born on one of the estates and long involved as a member of the NELM staff, vividly expressed his strong sense of belonging to the area as a youth. He described walking back into the estate as 'going into someone's house you, kind of go through the door and the doors shut, you felt secure all the way along the road, you knew all the neighbours, by "auntie" and "uncle" and, you knew, they were all looking out [for you]' (interviewee 15, 4.10.05).

Being known translates for some into a feeling of physical security. This allows other, older residents to feel comfortable walking up to the shops in the dark, as they rationalized that they had known the teenagers since they were babies, and had known their parents before them. In still other cases it engenders a sense of control, and the possibility of being able to confront some of the more threatening parts of life on the estates on equal terms:

> we did think about moving right away... but then because my old man's lived here all his life as well, you see and we sort of thought about it and, there's drugs everywhere and there's anti-social behaviour everywhere... at least if we stay here, chances are if someone was to sell my kids drugs chances are when I went and knocked on that door I was going to know that person who sold it to 'em... so I know what I'm up against and I know what sort of response I'm going to get and I know how I need to deal with it... If I move away I ain't got a clue and I could be going up against anyone couldn't I?
> (interviewee 27, 7.11.05)

Those who do not have a long history on the estates, either personally, or through their families, tended unsurprisingly to be much more ambivalent about ideas of 'community'. One woman, who may loosely be described as a middle-class incomer, initially made good links with her neighbours. However, she found herself ostracized when she was, falsely, accused by a neighbour of being a paedophile:

> that summer like the neighbour, our immediate neighbours, these are the next neighbours didn't speak to us. The other side that we'd looked after their dog every summer, you know for two weeks they wouldn't speak to us and it was just horrendous, like, people that had known us for yonks, you know, really sort of got into the malicious erm, and it was horrible and if [my child] went out in the back garden they'd be abusing him from two doors down and shouting things at him and we didn't have any money but I got my overdraft extended and I in the end got a fence put up, a big fence put up which I don't like and haven't liked it ever since. It feels a bit like the Berlin Wall... I've just wanted to move.

(interviewee 43, 12.12.2005)

There are relatively few visible minorities living in the estates.[3] Three of our interviews with white longer-term residents revealed deep suspicion, and in two cases hostility, towards black people and towards Muslims. Categories such as 'black', Muslim and asylum-seeker were used by these interviewees interchangeably. Others we spoke with took a diametrically opposite position, including a young woman with a black boyfriend. One white woman and one of the few black long-term residents explained their revulsion at racist attacks by a small group of white teenagers first on a family of east Asian origin and then on a group of Fijian soldiers who had been renting a house on the Larkman estate.

A Filipino national told us that she was very happy to have moved to the estate as she now had a bigger house and was nearer to her workplace at the hospital than in her previous rented accommodation in the city. However, she and her colleague, another resident, did not feel any sense of 'community'. Indeed they told us they had not yet got to know anybody else living on the estate, except for another Filipina. Walking out to the bus stop to go to work and returning in the evening they had experienced taunts from white boys who regularly hung around in their street. To protect themselves from this on future journeys to and from work, they removed their coats to reveal their nurses' uniforms, which made them feel safe because they engendered value and respect. A resident of south Asian origin who had recently moved onto the estate spoke of his loneliness. Since moving to the estate over six months ago, no-one had invited him or his family into their house. When this happened for the first time just a week before we re-interviewed him in February, 'it was really good...[she is] the first one who takes this kind of initiative. It was fantastic...somebody calls you, like specially [that they are] the white people' (interviewee 29, 9.02.2006).

The Estates and Shifting Boundaries

For those who have a long link with the estates, the boundaries of their individual notions of what makes up 'their' estate are played out on a micro-scale. Far from being homogeneous, the three estates have distinct identities, which in part reflects their separate built histories – part of the North Earlham estate was built in 1927–8, before major slum clearance began in the city, and initially housed what might be seen as the 'respectable working class'. The second phase of building, in 1936–9 saw the completion of this estate and the construction of the Larkman estate, mainly to house people who had been moved out of the slum areas of central Norwich. Part of the Marlpit estate was constructed at this time, but the bulk of it was completed in the 1960s. Significantly, the busy Dereham Road runs through the area, dividing the Marlpit from the other two estates.

However, the estate boundaries are in no way clear-cut. Passengers returning from the city and getting down from a bus at the

---

[3] A recent report suggests that 1% of residents are 'non-white'. New Deal for Communities 2001–2005: An Interim Evaluation, 2005, London: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Neighbourhood Renewal Unit, November, p. 7.

Dereham Road/ Larkman Lane crossing may be heading for any of the three estates, including some relatively wealthy areas of owner-occupied housing which happen to fall within the administrative boundaries of the NDC area.[4] Yet other bus passengers, and the conductor, will name the stop as 'Larkman', which, as far as the rest of the city is concerned, carries a particular stigma and has a dangerous reputation. A community worker, now also a resident of the NELM area, said when she first started working in the area she was told by a colleague that 'at one point in its history about 60 percent of the crime in Norfolk could be traced back to the Larkman estate' (interviewee 47, 9.01.06). Sometimes people thought of as living in the Larkman (though in fact it applies to residents of any of the three estates) have been labelled 'monkeys' by other Norwich residents. For example, one of us travelling on a bus overheard a group of young people from City College talking of a fellow student and Larkman resident as being rather stupid: 'He's a monkey, monkey, monkey!' The term has been adopted by actual Larkman residents and incorporated as a motif within the mural of the local community centre – as 'Monkey Island'.

Within the three estates, however, residents create boundaries, both to do with physical space, such as the names of the particular roads included in the Larkman, say, as opposed to North Earlham, and to do with an imagined cultural world. For example, there is a tendency to shift the boundary between North Earlham and Larkman depending on whether an attempt is being made to portray the area as more respectable, in which case it is North Earlham, or less, when it becomes the Larkman. The Marlpit is commonly seen as 'posher' than the other estates – as one interviewee from the Larkman/North Earlham side of Dereham Road put it, 'they spell fuck with a capital F over there'.

> We [on the Marlpit] don't cause trouble. All we do is just stand, sometimes have a drink, just sometimes a little bit loud. On that side of the [Dereham] road, they just go around nicking, mugging old people.
>
> (interviewee 48, 12.1.2006)

[4] Such as the bottom of Hellesdon Road and parts of Gypsy Lane.

Within the Marlpit itself are further subdivisions, as the image of respectability tends to be associated with the area of older building, while the newer area, particularly the flats, is often linked with drug dealing. In January 2006 this part of the Marlpit estate was the subject of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order, limiting the size of gatherings on the street. One respondent, an activist who had worked in the area for many years in the 1980s and 1990s, referred to the fragmentation of estate identities:

> some people certainly on the, on the Larkman side of the Dereham Road would not see the Marlpit as being part of [the area], and the Marlpit vice versa would not see themselves as part of the Larkman... and the Larkman was divided into ... the Monkey Island end and, and there was around the sort of Clarkson Road, Motum Road side of Cadge Road and there was the other side of Cadge Road and they saw themselves differently so Beverly Road, Ranworth etc saw themselves differently... and I think that people didn't want to be particularly identified with Motum Road. They wanted to say, 'well, we're better'... It's interesting how again if you have a very, a community that is, is very erm, protective of itself perhaps but it doesn't have experience of the outside world, [it] becomes very inward looking and the more inward looking you become the more fragmented that community can become and it, it sort of asserts its identity in smaller and smaller areas.
>
> (interviewee 31, 21.11.2005)

In spite of the labels applied by (some) residents of each estate to those of the others, there is significant movement between them. For example, people commonly move between the Marlpit and the other estates, or vice versa, and have friends and family on either side of the Dereham Road. Yet, in many ways the road acts as a barrier, with people being unwilling, for example, to attend a community centre for events, as they perceive it as being outside 'their' area. Similarly, there is, what has been to us, a surprising lack of knowledge about the basic geography of estates other than an interviewee's own: in the course of a conversation, on several occasions, we have mentioned a street on the North Earlham estate, and found a life-long resident of the

Marlpit not to know where it is, even though it is only 10 minutes walk away. In one extreme case, a woman who lived at one end of Motum Road where her father, one sister, mother, brother and son also all lived, described how she had panic attacks when she went beyond a certain point further up the road. Her family, embodied in that particular section of the street, represented the boundaries of her particular 'community'.

Histories of Migration

It is important to emphasize that, alongside these very individual-based micro-constructions of what constitutes the local, residents, far from being isolated, conduct social relations enmeshed in networks that commonly encompass not simply national, but transnational, spaces. This can be seen through links both into and out of the area via the migration of individuals, ideas and capital. While Norwich, and in fact Norfolk, is typically seen as having been bypassed by post-1945 waves of immigration and settlement, in fact the estates have both contributed to, and experienced, various forms of migration.

Central to the experiences of interviewees growing up during and after the second world war was the presence of American soldiers in and around Norwich. Young women from the estates met them in the city, at the bases where dances were organized, or when they visited houses on the estates. Sisters of several interviewees, in what appear to be disproportionately large numbers, married GIs and moved to the United States. Similarly, interviews, backed up in part by council minutes, suggest that significant numbers from the estates took advantage of government-assisted migration schemes to Australia in particular, commonly referred to as 'the £10 ticket'.[5] Subsequent correspondence, often supplemented by visits, has created for the family members who remained resident on the estates not only international social contacts, but also a means of being able to directly compare their life experiences with people of a similar background who made different life choices. It has also created a cohort of people who

have become conversant with foreign cities, landscapes and the ins and outs of international travel.

Again, for older interviewees the armed forces, either serving in them or as a spouse, provided the means to travel the world, and to gain perspectives of life outside of 'the Larkman'. The frequency with which people from the estate lived abroad for temporary periods was vividly illustrated by one interviewee who described how, one day, she swam out to a rocky island in a bay in Cyprus. As she lay resting there she was recognized by a friend of her brother's, who lived three streets away. The result for some has been to create distance between themselves and other residents, often those of a younger generation, who are not seen as having the same breadth or depth of experiences.

> I went through the Suez Canal on a troop ship ... I sneaked up on deck didn't I, and I stood there oh, I suppose, half the night ... I found it absolutely fascinating and we were in one part of it and er, there was the old Bedouin, we were in with the sheep and they were running along the side on the sand banks - oh the smell huh! But, you know, how many people have seen that? I was absolutely fascinated and when I saw the film of Lawrence of Arabia... I thought, 'I've been there, done that'... I've had a hard life and an exciting life erm, but... when I used to come home on a visit I used to think 'oh god', you know what I mean, 'oh for Christ sake'.

(interviewee 11, 9.11.2005)

For younger generations, rather than travel abroad, the primary route for leaving the area has been through the medium of education, which, again, can lead to feelings of alienation from their place of origin, as well as the ability to reflect on the costs as well as the benefits of coming from a close-knit working-class estate:

> BR: And what would you say, you said the good thing about that, knowing where one belonged, what would you say was the bad thing about that?

> I1: Erm, was that it made, I think engendered a, for me certainly a sense of pointlessness in trying to do anything

---

[5] See A. James Hammerton and Alistair Thomson (2005) *'Ten Pound Poms': Australia's Invisible Migrants*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

different or... that I think we're very actively knocked down or told that we were getting too big for our boots or that we were trying to do things that we were being ridiculous if we tried to do something that didn't fit into what the family expected and I know for example when I went to university one of my aunts actually didn't speak to me for several years because who did I think I was you know and er, there, there, I think it really, it really is the crabs in a bucket thing like you don't need a lid they're just, I think that's quite depressing to live amongst that I think.

(interviewee 28, 14.11.2005)

For others, being good at school was something to be avoided, not so much because of the disparaging attitudes of teachers but more because of the disadvantages anticipated if credibility was lost with peers[6]:

> you didn't want to be a goody goody did yer, you know, that's the last thing you want teachers like you ... I did enjoy sciences, I didn't want anyone to know I actually enjoy that ... I can remember one year when I come top in science and they all start copping the piss and I said, 'that's alright I knew the answers', I said, 'I see the answer sheet'.

(interviewee 15, 4.10.2005)

This interviewee, and other men in their 60s and older, described the decision to join the military as the only socially acceptable way of gaining formal educational qualifications without losing face.

The temporary movement of estate residents out of the country to jobs abroad with the military led to encounters as migrants which not only left deep impressions of other people and places but which has in the process contributed to ideas about 'race' and national identity:

----

[6] See Paul Willis (1977) Why Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs. Farnborough: Saxon House.

You might imagine on a troop ship all those people, so I used to get up early in the morning for a shave while the water's about... I forget how many mile out [of Mumbai], 'Phew, what's that smell?'. Now all of a sudden I was talking to this here [sailor], and he say, 'you give it a half an hour you'll see what, I shan't tell you', he said, 'you'll see'. And you started to see the sea change colour, dirty old brown colour and the smell get stronger, cos you're not used to it. See once you've been there you don't notice it but er, when you get there and what they used to say...'jewel of the empire'! I'd never seen nothing like it in my life. First thing you see is the old bullocks walking about cos they, they let them walk about don't they, and these poor beggars with rickets walking about backwards like crabs, just ignoring 'em, never seen nothing like it.

(interviewee 8, 2.11.2005)

The NELM area, over its history, has not simply acted as a source of labour for export and armed forces recruits, it has also attracted and absorbed people and ideas from newcomers with varied class backgrounds. Some of these have brought in ideas and influenced social action on the estates. This is not to suggest that all social and voluntary action on the estates has received impetus from 'outsiders' – indeed, it has become very clear to us that over the decades there has been a considerable number of voluntary initiatives emerging purely from the grassroots actions of residents. These have included the building of a church, the construction of community centres, and the formation of a patrol to protect a local school from vandalism.

However, it is equally apparent that far from being cut off from external influences, social experiences and action on the estates have been influenced by 'outsiders'. For example, the University of East Anglia was built in the 1960s, close to the NELM area. While most residents do not see it as a place they can aspire to attend, not only did residents work on the construction of the campus in the 1960s, but women from the estates have formed a pool of labour from which cleaners and other ancillary staff are drawn. One former cleaner talked with much affection of 'her students':

Oh but they're lovely. That's funny when I was turning that drawer out I found a letter in there from one of my girls who come from Brazil. I mean they're all my girls and boys all of them.

(interviewee 12, 10.11.2005)

Another interviewee, an Indian national and academic who moved to Norwich as part of a job relocation to the then relatively new university, worked hard as a teacher in a secondary school in the area to counter what she saw as disadvantages based around class:

I always thought ... that they needed an extra handle... I know partly because if you're black you need an extra handle and it's very like that. My sixth formers had to have something extra ... Because they were working class, they, they had, they came from so many disadvantages ... they had to have something extra so we had all sorts of things like we always arranged for English sixth-formers extra evenings when they would come for a play reading or listening to poetry or records or a talk.

(interviewee 35, 3.11.2005)

Another middle-class immigrant to Norfolk, a former journalist, this time from north London, found it important to engage politically and socially on the estates, bringing a political ideology of equality and justice developed through experience bringing up children in socially mixed areas of the capital. She started working with women on the estates to promote healthy eating

[My ideas] were a bit, yes they were foreign ... the classic example of that was when we did pasta sauce and pasta and ... this woman said 'I really liked that' erm, and I said 'Maybe you might like to try and make it at home during the week' and she said 'Huh no', she said 'if I made that he'd just throw it at me', and I said 'But if you really like it, you like it, make it for you'... Anyway the next week she came back and I said 'So did you get a chance to make it?' and she said 'Yep I did cos I really liked it' ... Not only did he throw it at [her] but the following morning she had his mother and I think her sister and maybe even

her mother, she had three of them on the doorstep saying 'Why are you giving him this ridiculous food? I mean this is horrible food, this is not food for a man' ... I was absolutely shocked. I was amazed and I realized how difficult, one of the main things which is how difficult change was.

(interviewee 31, 21.11.2006)

Other immigrants have brought capital to invest in businesses as well as ideas developed in the United States and India. Clergy in the Church of England, Methodist and Pentecostal churches in the area also carried ideas about social change, some of which were put into practice. One incumbent at a local church had instituted, prior to the Sunday morning service, a breakfast which was well attended by young people. Church buildings had been the subject both of vandalism and of community construction projects in the past.

Emerging Questions

The New Deal for Communities (NDC), a government policy to invest in 'community'-led partnerships in deprived neighbourhoods, makes the implicit assumption that community is a solid, bounded set of social relationships, located in one place. In this paper we have drawn on some of our research in progress with residents, staff and others involved in the Norwich NDC area to begin to illustrate the relationship between social identification and community in this particular place.

Feelings of belonging to a 'community' in the NDC area vary from being intense for some to being non-existent for others. Moreover, even for those who do feel they belong and are known in the area, identities have been constructed around (and in opposition to) micro-units of space inside the three estates. Belonging for some sits alongside exclusion of and even conflict with others. This complexity has been recognized in a major recent evaluation of NDCs nationwide. It suggests that 'community engagement' has been limited because 'residents can think

NDCs are cliquey, offering "lip service" to consultation'.[7]

In this research, we problematized the notion of community by deliberately seeking out newly arrived residents and people who had moved away, rather than focusing only on those whose connections to the estate stretch back more than a generation. This has inevitably led to an appreciation of the huge diversity of backgrounds of estate residents, in terms of class, ethnicity and nationality. The categories ('Travellers', Irish, former rural workers and ex-slum-dwellers) that we started out with have been shown to be inadequate. Feelings of belonging to the area and being connected to other residents are highly contingent and may be related more to length of residence, family history, skin colour, nationality and relations with neighbours than history of settlement. Most significantly, echoing Doreen Massey, identity, a sense of place and a sense of group belonging may be strongly related to an individual's own migration history and their interactions with 'outsiders' bringing their own histories to the estates.

In attempting to understand the interrelationship between individual identity practices and the discourses of the Welfare State, the next stage of our research, analysis of interview transcripts and further interviews and ethnographic work, needs to build in a systematic investigation of the flows of people and ideas into and out of the area. We also need to consider why some residents have never moved, even for a break on the Norfolk coast. It is by following these pathways that we will be able to assess the actual, perhaps unintended consequences of welfare policies, including area-based initiatives, in people's lives, alongside some of their unstated intentions.

Bibliography

Bornat, J. (1989) 'Oral History as a Social Movement: Reminiscence and Older People', *Oral History,* 17(2).

Brah, A (1996) *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities.* London: Routledge.

Castells, M. (1997) *The Information Age, Vol 2: The Power of Identity.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Damer, S. (1989) *From Moorepark to 'Wine Alley': The Rise and Fall of a Glasgow Housing Scheme.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Delanty, G. (2003). *Community.* London: Routledge.

Forrest, R. and Murie, A. (1991) *Selling the Welfare State.* London: Routledge,

Giddens, A. (1986) 'Action, Subjectivity and the Constitution of Meaning', *Social Research,* 53.

Gotovos, A. (2003) 'Minority discourse, social state and the imposition of identity: side effects of the ideology of multi-culturalism', in *Gypsy Identities in Europe: Policy and Research,* University of Ioannina, Greece.

Halfacre, K. H. and Boyle, P. J. (1993) 'The Challenge Facing Migration Research: The Case for a Biographical Approach', *Progress in Human Geography,* 17 (3).

Hill, M. (1997) *The Policy Process in the Modern State.* London: Prentice Hall.

Imrie, R. and Raco, M. (2003) 'Community and the Changing Nature of Urban Policy', in R. Imrie and M. Raco (eds), *Urban Renaissance: New Labour, Community and Urban Policy.* Bristol: The Policy Press.

Jenkins, R (1996) 'Categorization: Identity, Social Process and Epistemology', *Current Sociology,* 48 (3).

Larkman Project Group (1984) *The Larkman Project Group.* Norwich: University of East Anglia.

McGhee, D. (2003) 'Moving to "Our" Common Ground – a Critical Examination of Community Cohesion Discourse in Twenty-First Century Britain', *The Sociological Review,* 51(3).

Massey, D. (1995) 'The Conceptualization of Place', in D. Massey and P. Jess (eds), *Place in the World?* Oxford: OUP.

---

[7] New Deal for Communities 2001–2005: An Interim Evaluation (2005), November, p. 67. London: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.

Mosse, D. (1999) 'Responding to Subordination: Identity and Change among South Indian Untouchable Castes', in J. R. Campbell and A. Rew (eds), *Identity and Affect: Experience of Identity in a Globalizing World*. London: Pluto Press.

Morrison, Z. (2003) 'Cultural Justice and Addressing "Social Exclusion": A Case Study of a Single Regeneration Budget Project in Blackbird Leys, Oxford', in R. Imrie and M. Raco (eds), *Urban Renaissance? New Labour, Community and Urban Policy*. Bristol: The Policy Press.

Okamura, J. (1981) 'Situational Ethnicity', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 4(4).

Power, A. (1996) 'Area Based Poverty and Resident Empowerment', *Urban Studies*, 33(9).

Rew, A. and Campbell, J. R. (1999) 'The Political Economy of Identity and Affect', in J. R. Campbell and A. Rew (eds), *Identity and Affect: Experience of Identity in a Globalizing World*. London: Pluto Press.

Rogaly, B., Coppard, D., Rana, K., Rafique, A., Sengupta, A. and Biswas, J. (2004) 'Seasonal Migration, Employer–Worker Interactions, and Shifting Ethnic Identities in Contemporary West Bengal', in F. Osella and K. Gardner (eds), *Migration, Modernity and Social Transformation in South Asia*. New Delhi/ Thousand Oaks, CA/ London: Sage.

Rogaly, B., Fisher, T. and Mayo, E. (1999) *Poverty, Social Exclusion and Micro-Finance in Britain*. Oxford: Oxfam; London: New Economics Foundation.

Rose, N. (1999) *Powers of Freedom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shotter, J. (1984) *Social Accountability and Selfhood.* Oxford: Blackwell

Sibley, D. (1995) *Geographies of Exclusion: Society and Difference in the West.* London: Routledge.

Sixsmith, A. J. (1988) 'The Meaning and Experience of "Home" in Later Life', in R. Perks and A. Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader.*

Social Exclusion Unit (1998) *Bringing Britain Together: A National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal*. London: HMSO.

Strathern, M. (1992) *After Nature: English Kinship in the Late Twentieth Century.* Cambridge: CUP.

Wolch, J. and DeVerteuil, G. (2001) 'New Landscapes of Urban Poverty Management', in J. May and N. Thrift (eds), *Timespace: Geographies of Temporality.* London?New York: Routledge.