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The first thing to say is that, overall, 66% of the population of the town are listed as 'economically active' in Todmorden, and 33% 'economically inactive', which means that the state classes roughly a third of the town as not economically active. But there are problems with listing, for instance, 'looking after a home/family' as 'economically inactive', not only from a feminist perspective, but from a Marxist one, as it can, and I believe should, be argued that much of the 'economically inactive' category conceals the labour which reproduces the 66% of those who are 'economically active' every day. The figure given for those 'looking after a home/family' is 6%, which is course is completely erroneous if one takes into account the amount of those reproducing labour, feeding and cleaning for other workers, children, etc, who are also working themselves.[49]

This said, what is fairly clear here is that the wages being brought in from what flows of capital there are through this part of the Calder Valley is still relatively small, whatever objections I may raise over the way the data is presented, again, see my General Introduction here for an overview of this.

But this point maps on to working practices more generally, a point made by Pahl, for instance[50]: For many people in Todmorden, the state of work and non-work isn't necessarily divided neatly into periods of official employment and time claiming benefits. The most frequent discourses focussed on 'getting by' in ad hoc ways, whether in one of these more official categories – 'signing on' or employed. Pahl's analysis still holds I think, I have a litany of individual and household testimony to 'making ends meet', 'scratching by', 'getting on with it as best we can', 'doing whatever we need to do', etc.

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Insights such as these made by Pahl, which can be seen every day in Todmorden, coupled with ONS statistics which essentially reproduce nineteenth century divisions of labour, have partly forced the shape of this chapter, as I want to dialectically dissolve the fake, state barrier between official and unofficial economic activity. Again, I take much from Restivo's[51] argument that anarchism and social science can be fused to challenge domineering, 'archic' epistemologies such as these. But making this onslaught upon the binary nature of working and not-working, official and unofficial economies, the division of labour, technological and untechnological workers, global and local workers, and official and unofficial workers, also speaks to the dialectical method I want to re-inject into community research, and therefore sociology per se: These paradigms and people are all dialectically connected, they all contain each other as part of a wider assemblage.

I have already pointed out that unofficial economies are in some ways unrepresentative pictures of working practices in Todmorden. However, people practicing second economies weren't ever difficult to find either. For instance, I spoke to Peter, a man in his late 60s, who has now officially retired from factory work, but up until a few years ago earned what he called 'good money' on a 'pop round', essentially an unmarked van full of fizzy drinks and sweets, which he sold door-to-door.[52] He also had an informal trade in bicycles, but this was much less regular, and occasionally he would produce designer goods at very low prices, 'no questions asked'. When I spoke to him, he had some expensive walking gear, on sale for £5 an item, regardless of its form, walking trousers and jackets were all the same price. Peter sometimes referred to his round as 'hooky', which meant that it was un-taxed and occasionally turned up items of sketchy origin. It was interesting to me in light of the argument I have just made, that Peter ran his round when he was doing official work and when he was not. Sometimes he did both, and during some short

periods, he did neither.

So, for a little while we talked about Peter's working life, which mapped onto the experience of many other men of his age, my father included, in that he had worked in heavy industry in one way or another until the late 1980s, at which point he got by as best he could, and his wife's income as a schoolteacher covered a lot of the gaps, and in this he had 'been lucky'. In his case though, there was a less clear sense of class narrative and social capital, in that his wife's essentially middle class earnings were fusing with Peter's 'hooky' ones, they were congealing in a single household.

Suddenly, unprompted, Peter then told me about the people he called 'the scrotes', which is an abbreviation of 'scrotum'. With this unlovely term he designated those in and around Todmorden and Bacup he sold drinks and sweets to, people who were claiming Income Support or Incapacity Benefit. Peter often expressed disgust at their living conditions, and this tirade often then stalked away from Todmorden, to search for victims further afield:

> There's a hot dog stand at Accrington, and at bloody nine o'clock in the morning they're eating that rubbish, and I'm thinking "why are they not working!" And I'm bloody one of 'em! And there's me and trying to keep fit… and them buggers not doing any exercise…

In his last line, Peter was referring to a recent hip replacement. He felt resentful about the out-of-work, but guilty about not working himself, despite being beyond pensionable age. When I spoke to him, Peter often processed a kind of guilt about no longer being employed, through these observations of others not working, it was a regular theme which emerged when talking to him, but also many other working class people of all ages who I encountered in the town. People would then sketch cultural

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resentments about others in, over the top of their own practices, at the same time as there seemed to be little difference between them and the people they criticised, at least to an outsider's eye.

There was a sense of resentment in Peter that, although he had kept himself physically fit throughout his life – he had been a keen cyclist and marathon runner – he was still experiencing problems in old age. Again, these resentments were sometimes aimed at 'the scrotes', or 'the slobs', another term of distinction he used. There was a link between the white, male, embodied working practices of industrial life in all of this, and the idea of keeping yourself fit and getting on with work, a practice which has been subsequently undermined on any post-industrial landscape. Peter, and many other men of that generation, were clearly attempting to control their own bodies through exercise, in a highly Spartan way, to control the one aspect of their lives they 'owned' in the chaotic landscape of post-industrial capital.

But Peter never seemed to arrive at this conclusion, he always remained in a relatively small circuit of explanation, a 'them and me' mentality. But when this rigid set of demarcations Peter puts in place are logically addressed, they collapse. Because far from being simplistically disgusted by 'the scrotes', Peter seemed fascinated by them. In fact, at one point I felt like giving him my notebook, as his descriptions were becoming sociological. Yet there was a detached mix of horror and fascination in his voice when he described them – and I'm not trying to claim that this is always absent from a sociologist's mind because 'they're sociologists' – but Peter seemed split between some sort of misguided jealousy, because these 'others' have experienced long stretches of time without having to go to work, and his perception of them as 'scroungers and spongers.' There was a contradiction here, as he was selling cheap food and other items to 'the scrotes' while accusing them of indolence.

One could describe this as 'hypocritical', but I don't think that simple hypocrisy ever fully accounts for the multiple functions

of social practices or language. What was being experienced in these moments were the cultural ramifications of post-industrialism, the way the superstructure – culture – calibrates itself to deal with the base, or rather the discontinuous nature of the base, sometimes in a good order, but in this case, not so good. But we shouldn't place arbitrary borderlines between base and superstructure either, for they are meshed together.[53] Todmorden is a border town, and that border is geographical, it is the line where Yorkshire and Lancashire meets, although culturally, this line is often treated as the place where those counties *refuse* to meet. This seems to map, metaphorically on to the points I am making here through my ethnography: subjective and ideological lines were constantly being blurred by people such as Peter. Ultimately, he was refusing to let his identity merge with these 'others', and yet the landscape on which he moved meant crossing the border between himself and 'them', the other, all the time. Put simply, Peter had to place himself closer to 'the scrotes' through necessity, at the same time as he distanced himself from them. His attempt to draw distinction inevitably threw up contradictions on such a small-scale symbolic landscape. Again, there was a dialectic in play here, in which Peter and 'the scrotes' contained each other at the same time as they were bracketed apart. 'Dialectical' is perhaps too soft a term in light of the almost vampiric nature of some of Peter's interactions with the inhabitants of Todmorden and Bacup council estates, but nonetheless, this encounter spoke to my dialectical theme of deracinated localism. This point applies to most of the people and community groups I subsequently engaged with, Incredible Edible Todmorden, the Asian community, and the local neo-Nazi, what they all shared was this attempt to other and bracket themselves apart on a small-scale geography.

To take this idea further, but also to return it to the theme of this chapter, a similar dialectic is put in motion by interrogating the line between official and unofficial economies, as well as local

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and global flows, traces of material, objects, capital, and symbolic culture in the landscape. The slightly sweaty, disturbing quality of living inside these experiences – of trying to remain binary when those binaries don't hold – could nearly always be detected when speaking to the people accounting for them. It was perhaps what Althusser called 'interpellation', the point at which encounters with otherness uncannily reveal the constructed nature of subjectivity.[54]

I became very interested in the use of the phrase 'on and off', which arose again and again during fieldwork, it alerted me to the precariousness of everyday life. 'How is work?' 'On and off' [Nicola]. Or, 'I live with me girlfriend, she's scouse, we've been at it eleven years, on and off' [Tony].[55] Linguistically, the permanent was often couched in the temporary, and vice versa. This again highlights the dialectical nature of contemporary community. This way of speaking seemed to have simultaneously replaced and subsumed older statements, such as 'up and down'. 'Up and down' designates a continuum, a rollercoaster-like one, perhaps, but 'on and off', a phrase which also maps good and bad, also assumes a fundamentally dis-continuous set of experiences. There was a generational aspect to this, terms such as 'donkey's years', designating 'a long time', via the image of a work animal – which my father still uses in everyday speech – seemed to have been replaced by phrases which signify discontinuity.

I wanted to speak to Peter further, but that was the last I saw of him. I suspect that he realised he had given me enough risky material to take back to what he described as 'them clever bastards' in universities. His disappearance wasn't too much of a problem, as I encountered the same mix of resentment and resistance repeatedly in Todmorden. These resentments and resistances, work and the state of not-working, have to be viewed as much more entangled, dialectical paradigms. As we can see through the example of Peter, cultural class and social capital in

the sociology of work must be considered in a similar dialectical manner. This idea shoots through much of the sociology of work, but I want to explicitly re-inject those accounts with the sense of a fully dialectical landscape, on which all of these supposedly binary paradigms contain each other.

Practically, this 'tangling' occurs when what used to be the 'traditional' white working classes try to root themselves in a landscape of labour which is fundamentally rootless. Again, this is not new. They have been trying to do this for several decades now. Their attempts to sink this taproot into permanent nourishment – security – will very often lead to an uprooting, and when it does, this process produces resentment. But those resentments cannot be neatly separated out from the resistance, and often neither can attempts to create security be neatly separated out from the chaotic lives lived in post-industrial landscapes. I also want to argue here that this phenomenon is what collapses the binary between people working in official and unofficial economies. Ethically, as sociologists, we need to re-focus our attention on to the practices of 'getting by' and away from criminology and the default epistemologies of 'justice'.

Time and time again, the narrative of a life lived in precarious and insecure circumstances surfaced when I spoke to the 'regular' workers who were supposed to be immune from the causes of those narratives: I talked to a man who lived in Todmorden, but who worked freelance for a single institution, just outside Halifax. He had line managers, as in a 'traditional' job, but none of the stability or security a traditional job brings. He explained how he got all the down sides of working for a company, being dictated to, being treated 'like I'm their property' [Michael, 2011] but none of the benefits, no personnel department to deal with tax or National Insurance, no regular hours and zero job security. Often he turned up on the days he was supposed to work to find the people running the project were at another site, at which point he simply had to go home unpaid, having spent

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just under ten pounds in transport costs.

There is no longer a stable paradigm called 'regular hours'. The few times he mentioned the problems they were simply brushed off. He felt that he had little real recourse to complain, precisely because of his precarious employment status, and there was a scary, locked-in aspect to this. There was a kind of stifled fury under his comments, all the more shocking because of its stifling, and a kind of sick tautology in his fear of complaining, precisely because his links with his employer were so tenuous. This man, in his mid-40s, was working in an 'official' economy – it could in many ways be described as 'white collar' – but one which had cut him 'free' of its securities. Again this is a precarité argument, and Richard Sennett's[56] explorations of the new corporate work ethic is key to it, as Britain and America put in place horizontal, laissez-faire networks, which replace the old vertical hierarchies. Michael had experienced the old model, working at Mons Mill when it was producing for John Deere, and the new model, and he wanted to go back to the old way of working, in fact he seemed desperate for its impossible return.

I reached a point where 'criminal' practices, and examples such as this one, seemed to merge. We need to be very careful with comparisons such as this, but at the same time, as writers, we need to refuse to account for the practices of working lives within the neat, official, binary categories, laid down by, for instance, the Department for Work and Pensions, or HM Revenue and Customs. The lines created by the epistemologies of tax and dole are not 'norms', they are not natural, they are policed cultural barriers, but they often appear invisible, or 'naturalised'. As qualitative community researchers, we should hold to the experiences of those on the landscape we encounter, and in the case of Michael, and Jean, the example I am about to recount, their experiences are more similar than they are different.

The kind of stifled fury and inward-facing resentment I

experienced in Michael could be found all over working class Todmorden, and often people seemed short of terms to express it. If there is something actually able to take root here fully, unfortunately it seems to be this. I heard similar stories, from barmaids in a local pub who turned up for shifts to be told to go back home again, having spent bus fare to get there. These girls were in their late teens and their expectations were being formed by this cultural mean, it was becoming 'natural'. A young man on the train station platform grumbled to anyone who would listen about how he didn't want to go to work, how he was on a lower rate for the first thirty hours each week, working conditions which, according to his testimony, sounded illegal. He seemed utterly disillusioned and was barely into his twenties. If we think about 'roots', which has a rather comforting nature connotation, it should also be in this sense. Some people are rooted early on in processes which only nourish them meanly, and there is a further, gendered dimension to this kind of labour, which continues. There is a dialectic of roots to be found here, which Amanda Ravetz[57] accounted for well – even though she did not use the term 'dialectics' – when she described working class Todmorden women and their description of the town as 'shit', not a place of quality, and yet at the same time 'home'. Nothing has arrived in the intervening years to substantially alter Ravetz's analysis.

So, to the 'emasculation' of previously patriarchal labour markets we must add the analysis provided by Mittin, who states that 'women's work is everywhere associated with part-time work, low pay and labour market segregation'. Hyman, Scholarios & Baldry hint at work pressure as a factor for both marital and relationship breakdown, or perhaps the reason for living singly in the first place.[58] This is how lives are lived under deracinated localism. The tendency to turn-inwards is strong, and therefore these stories risk remaining untold, becoming repressed, becoming, eventually, symptoms.

The 'hidden injuries of class' are becoming hard-wired into

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the landscape. I very rarely heard an economic analysis of this situation from the subjects of research, not that I expected one. I heard lots of stoical acceptance and antagonistic outbursts directed at the unemployed, much more than I heard their situation being blamed on the ethnic other, although I heard this too. I also spoke to men complaining that their girlfriends lived with their mothers, when they lived outside the familial unit, paying a price they couldn't really afford in order to do so. Many were bitter about the lack of access to their children. One was about to have a solicitor he could not really afford send a letter out [Gary, 2011], and I spoke to women who were entrenched in work and looking after their young, bearing the largest brunt of the costs, both economically and personally, convinced that the male species was fundamentally aberrant [Nicola, Jayne, Amber and Yvonne, 2011].

I also heard many ill-informed remarks about single parent mothers. Of all lone parents in Todmorden, the majority are female, 339 households out of 371, but 25% are in full-time employment and 28% in part-time. Single mothers account for 2.2 per cent of the population here, but 53% of them are working, which makes roughly just over one percent of the total population who are unemployed single mothers.[59] This, of course, did not stop the comments from coming, and the local neo-Nazi posted many comments on his blog about 'slut mums'. I had a conversation with someone who made the same argument, who, when I asked him what he thought the percentage of single parent unemployed women was here, he told me that he guessed 'seventy percent'. Many of the people proclaiming these assumptions shared key symptoms: mis-directed anger, followed by a retreat to a clearly troubled accep-tance, neither state being able to articulate what was happening to the whole psychic organism. They work, but their work often doesn't work in the way they think it should. There was something of Beckett in this. But once this work isn't working

properly, they very often don't interrogate 'the state of work', but instead deploy the same irrational arguments that we heard from Peter at the start of this section.

This literary reference may seem absurd – Samuel Beckett – but pathos, tragedy, and comedy were never far from the surface of my reading of the practices of a man who tried to straddle all the binaries put in place by the state, and therefore to disappear from their surveillance. Unfortunately, by attempting this, he eventually placed himself right at the centre of their attention.

My main substantive section here describes the practices of someone who was 'up and down', 'on and off' at all times, who tried to remain officially registered in work, while undertaking unofficial economic activities. In this, he became a kind of cipher for precarité, and for the state of life in post-industrial small towns, which I have tried to outline in my introductory sections here.