Migration, place and class: youth in a rural area

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Abstract

The claims that locality, kinship, and social class are no longer the basis of ties that bind and of limited significance for identity in late modernity, remain seductive, despite their critics. Those who remain rooted are then presented as inhabitants of traditional backwaters, outside the mainstream of social change. This article presents young people's reasons for leaving or remaining in a rural area of Britain, the Scottish Borders. Young people's views about migration and attachment demonstrate a contradictory and more complex pattern than that of detached late-modern migrants and traditional backwater stay-at-homes. These stereotypes have some resonance in local culture, for example in disdain for rootless incomers lacking real sympathy with 'the community' and in the common accusation of the parochial narrow mindedness of locals who have never been elsewhere. However, such stereotypes emerge from complex social class antagonisms and cross-cutting ties to locality. Many young people's ties contradict the classifications these stereotypes imply. There are young out-migrants who are the children of 'rootless' in-migrants, but also, nevertheless, have lasting attachments to the locality of their childhood. Then there are young 'stayers' who are the children of 'born and bred' locals but yet feel serious disaffection from their locality. These 'attached migrants' and 'detached stayers' may not represent settled orientations to their locality of childhood, but they, nevertheless, contradict both certain local stereotypes and Baumanesque 'late modernist' sociological theorising.

Introduction

Some recent, evocative theoretical work suggests that it is not migration which is surprising in the late twentieth century but commitment to any particular locality (Bauman, 1992, 1996, 1998). 'The urge for mobility, built into the structure of contemporary life, prevents the arousal of strong affections for any of the places; places we occupy are no more than temporary stations' (1992: 695). Through his many writings, Bauman suggests that the postmodern cultural celebration of consumption, emphasising individualistic life-style choice and mobility, necessarily undermines attachment to locality. A number of commentators have similarly emphasised a sense of being disembedded from

place as a feature of the late twentieth century (Giddens, 1991, 1994; Beck, 1992). Bauman identifies a number of social divisions based on access to consumption and relationship to place. The mobile are divided between the privileged elite of globetrotting wanderers or 'tourists' who consume other places but have homes to go to and the underprivileged or displaced 'vagabonds' who have neither homes nor access to such consumption. The located are divided between those who can become tourists if they choose and those trapped in homes that are literal or metaphorical prisons. The trapped carry the stigma of exclusion from all but their belittled place, reacting by self deprecation or self-defensive, and sometimes ugly, tribalism.

In the 1980s, Bauman joined those speaking of a period 'after class', referring to a generation of young people 'squeezed finally out of the role of producers and goaded into a status determined by consumption alone' (1982: 179). Many theorists of late twentieth century post-industrial societies have continued to question the empirical significance of social class and to problematise the concept. Class divisions are no longer the bed rock of voting patterns or political action and it is no longer assumed that persistent class inequalities have theoretical primacy over other categories underpinned by systematic inequality such as gender, ethnicity, age, sexuality and able-bodiedness. At the same time there are many recent critics of the 'decline of class' thesis and attempts to move beyond critiques of class analysis (Beynon, 1999; Butler and Savage, 1995; Bradley, 1996; Crompton, 1993; Goldthorpe and Marshall, 1996; Scott, 1996; Skeggs, 1997). Beynon (1999) and others suggest that notions of consumption and classlessness were strategically combined in political rhetoric as part of what was in fact a revitalising of class divisions of the Thatcher era. Empirical work continues to suggest that an orientation to life that assumes a right to choice remains class based, rooted in the more privileged experiences of middle-class lives (Walkerdine and Lucey, 1989). In her ethnography of working-class women from the North West of England, Beverley Skeggs reasserts the centrality of class to subjectivity 'even if we do not feel impeded by it or choose not to recognize it, or to avoid it through disidentifications and dissimulations' (1997: 7).

Studies of 'the countryside' are currently juggling reassessments of locality, social class and identity. Migration is a centuries old and visible part of the 'community' experience and family histories of rural areas. But in the late twentieth century, youth out-migration is typically masked by counter-urban in-migration. 'Incomers' often outnumber born and bred 'locals' (Jedrej and Nuttall, 1996; Lumb, 1982; Stephenson, 1984). Contemporary counter-urban migration is one of a set of transformations levelling urban/rural differences (Urry, 1995a). Shifts in international divisions of labour have resulted in the relocation of industry from cities to rural areas. The pervasive reach of modern transport, communication systems and state interventions ameliorate the disadvantages of rural areas in terms of access to resources. In the 1970s, sociologists documented middle-class migration to rural areas in search of a particular pastoral version of their imagined traditional countryside. In the

1990s, John Urry has documented the complex shifting class divisions within rural areas and the deeply contested visions of the countryside among diverse social groups (Urry, 1995a, 1995b; Rojek and Urry, 1997). In a recent study of rural Scotland it has been argued that it is the 'inescapable experience of the asymmetries of social class' (Jedrej and Nuttall, 1996: 20) that underpins the metaphorical usage of the terms 'local' and 'incomer' in rural areas.

The routine marketing of idealised rural images and the soap opera portrayals of the dangers and excitements of rural versus city life are inevitably part of the background to young people's self-reflexive consideration of relationship to place, along with the visibility of local patterns of migration and of the restricted range of local employment. In the 1950s, the anthropologist James Littlejohn was documenting the stereotyping of farm communities as 'out of it' in term of all that was progressive and beneficially modern. Although negative stereotypes do not dominate popular images of rurality, many studies of rural areas since have noted that for a proportion of young people staying locally is devalued by the sense that to 'get on', with its implications of the middle-class good life, you had to get out (Hannan, 1970; Dench, 1985; Furlong and Cooney, 1990; Jones, 1992; Macdonald, 1988; MacLeod, 1996; Stephenson, 1984). In a study of young people who grew up in a rural area of Scotland, Gill Jones and I have found this belief that 'to get on you get out' persists and that some young people who stay feel trapped and imprisoned. In a summary article, Gill Jones (1999) has argued that the socio-spatial identities of young people 'provide some empirical evidence for metaphors of postmodernist discourse' (1999: 18) including Bauman's 'tourist' and the 'vagabond'. By implication the disaffected stayer is, like the vagabond, disenfranchised from consuming places and imprisoned by lack of choice. In this article, using the same data, I look more explicitly at the issues of social class as a means of critically re-evaluating theoretical approaches which assume dominance of consumer orientations and lack of binding social ties in attachment to place.

The sample

The data are in-depth interviews with 45 young people, 19 young men and 26 young women, brought up in a rural area of Britain, known as 'the Borders', a local authority area of Scotland, formerly Borders Region, now the Scottish Borders. This is an agricultural area, bounded to the south by the Scottish-English border and to the north by the industrialised lowlands which stretch westwards from Edinburgh. While this area has its own distinct history and characteristics, it is typical of rural areas in both its loss of its 'own' young people in their teens and early twenties and the masking of this loss by in-migration across age groups (Champian, 1897; Coleman and Salt, 1992; Fielding, 1985; Lumb, 1982; McCleery, 1991). The purpose of the study was to explore the processes by which some young people leave and others stay

Table 1 'Stayers' and 'Migrants' By Parents' Origins and Class Background

	Parental origins unknown	Parents both 'locals'		One 'local' parent		No 'local' parent	
	Working Class	Middle Class	Working Class	Middle Class	Working Class	Middle Class	Working Class
'stayer'	Patricia	**Andrew** Ewan Nicky	Caroline Karen Lorna Kate Paula Tracy	**David** Francine **Moira** **Roseanne**	**Brenda** Graham Iona Jackie Jean	Ian	Gordon John Richard
'migrant'		**Carol** **Helen** **Laura**		**Cathy** Mary Shona **Teresa**	**Keith** **Linda** **Malcolm** Morag Sean	Alison **Calum** **Christopher** Jill **Peter** **Stephen** **Stewart** **Tim**	Alasdair Hugh

Father's occupational classification is unknown for Roseanne and Richard, hence their location between columns in the table. Middle-class parents had professional, managerial or, in the case of Andrew, Cathy, Helen, Laura and Alison, 'intermediate' occupations. The following 'cross-class' respondents were classified as middle-class: Carol, Shona (fa. middle, mo working), Alison (fa. Intermediate, mo. working) and the following as working-class: Hugh, Jackie, Karen, Kate (fa. working, mo. Intermediate), Jean (fa. Working, mo. middle).

Names shown in bold are 'high attainers', gaining 6 or more O grade equivalents in the top three bands at age 16.

through the accounts of young people themselves. There were no direct questions about identification with, or attitudes to, social class but attachment to the locality, sense of community, attitude to migration and to incomers were all explicit topics which often elicited references to class divisions. The data imperfectly approximate to a small random sample of young people in their early twenties who were all in their fourth year of secondary school (the final compulsory year of schooling for most Scottish pupils) in Borders region of Scotland in 1988.[1] Each has been given a pseudonym and individuals are referred to by name in the remainder of the paper. Real place names are used except when this would compromise anonymity; hence, typically only the larger Borders towns are named.

In the following discussion, young people are classified by their parents' occupations,[2] by whether or not their parents were 'local' or 'non-local' and by their own pattern of migration. Using the three class version of the recently devised socio-economic classification (Rose and O'Reilly, 1998, 1997), 17 young people were from middle-class backgrounds, 5 were from intermediate class backgrounds 21 were from working-class backgrounds, and in two cases there was insufficient information to make a classification. According to whether each parent was brought up in 'the Borders',[3] twelve young people had parents who were both brought up in the region, 18 had one 'local' and one 'non-local' parent, for 14 both parents were 'non local' and in one case this information could not be collected. Roughly half of our sample can be described as 'stayers' (8 men and 15 women) based in the Borders at the time of interview and half as 'migrants' (11 men and 11 women) who were based elsewhere.[4]

Qualifications, aspirations and migration

In the Borders, seeking a 'good job' usually means migration. Only children in solidly middle-class families typically take it for granted that they are destined for a 'good job' from a very early age. So middle-class children often take migration for granted. The advantages of leaving the area are an idea that working-class children who do well at school come to consider at a later stage. In table 1, more middle-class respondents are picked out in bold as those who were high attainers at school. It has been repeatedly argued and demonstrated that school attainment is not a simple reflection of ability (Bourdieu, 1973; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Burnhill *et al.*, 1988; Gray *et al.*, 1983; Furlong and Cartmel, 1997; Halsey, *et al.*, 1980). While schools can make a difference (MacPherson and Willms, 1987), the class-specific economic, social and cultural capitals afforded by different family backgrounds continue to weigh heavily. Differences exist across social classes in children's access to resources, experiences and social networks. Parents with different class-specific life experiences not only communicate different expectation and ambitions, but

also vary in their knowledge of educational and occupational opportunities and their ability to promote the relative merits of different options.

Attitudes to the locality and 'community' and to migration in itself are also an influencing factor in whether or not young people leave the area. In this small sample, there is a statistical association between young people's migration and both father's occupation and whether or not parents were born and brought up in the locality (see appendix). While class-specific privileges and family histories of ties to localities are no doubt folded into each other in the creation of particular predispositions and practices, the data (see appendix) suggest each of these factors exert a specific influence.

While middle-class privileges are associated with more possibilities of geographical mobility, table one shows that the sample includes a minority of middle-class families in which both parents are local. Children of middle-class local parents are less likely to migrate than children of middle-class non-local parents, the overwhelming majority of whom do leave. Some middle-class family histories may offer alternative means of gaining occupational advantage to migration for higher education and subsequent entry to a national or international labour market. For example, children of those families who run local businesses, or occupy information-gathering white-collar positions in local industry might become attuned to the possibility of a future in the same business as their parents and choose to be less oriented to university than other middle-class children. If parents encourage assumptions of staying local this may have effects on aspirations and scholastic achievement.

This is not to suggest that all middle-class parents who are locals consciously and automatically encourage their children to stay locally. This would contradict the emphasis on having choices and broad horizons which is a routine part of the middle-class repertoire. The sample includes a local middle-class farm family in which the parents explicitly discouraged their daughter from tailoring her future to staying locally and working on the farm. At age 16, Helen wanted to leave school, despite her excellent scholastic performance. Her parents insisted she stay-on and get a university or college education as they themselves had done.[5]

Doing very well at school can trigger an effortful reorientation of ambition in spite of class background or a family which has nurtured thinking in terms of a local future. One of our high-achieving respondents, Carol, illustrates the effort involved in migration from a family with no history of either higher education or migration.

> Because at sixteen you feel comfortable, well I felt comfortable at home with my family around me, and I thought it was a pretty place and all my friends were there, and I could see myself living there. But then as you get to maybe seventeen, eighteen, you think 'but there's no jobs and I don't want to end up in the textile mill or whatever. So then you think, 'no'.

So is that when you started to expect to leave?
Yeah. I don't think my mum or dad really wanted me to move away, because I was their little girl, and because I had been the first person to move out the family, I think they were a bit wary, but they knew that I wanted to go to college, and they wouldn't have stopped me.

As well as the discomfort of setting the precedent in the family for 'moving out', Carol had a local boyfriend whom she did not want to lose.

Well, I was going out with somebody at the time, and they lived in [*home village*], and I thought I wanted to be with him for ever, when I was seventeen. And I was worried about coming to Edinburgh in case I met somebody else, or whatever, I didn't want that at the time.

Had she not been a high achiever at school, its clear that migration would never have been on Carol's agenda.

Her experience is in contrast to migrants with middle-class non-local parents who created an expectation of migration. Peter is a good example:

So what age would you say you were when you first thought you would be leaving? Or did you always expect that you would leave? Could you put an age on it?
I think because my dad went to university I think it was always – and I was always quite good at school – I think there was always, I wanted to go to university. So you're not actually thinking of leaving Peebles for ever, but you're thinking I want to go to University and the next step is you leave home when you go to university, so I suppose it was quite early when I started thinking about going to university and stuff.

Table 1 suggests that overall levels of migration are lower among working-class young people than middle-class young people but a difference between those with local and non-local parents persists. The table contains a group of respondents from working-class backgrounds with local parents who are less likely to migrate than those with one or two non-local parents. Social class and parents' origins both modify the effect of school achievement on the tendency to migrate. Middle-class young people who were not high achievers had higher rates of migration than equivalently qualified working-class young people. Similarly, young people who were not high achievers and whose parents had not been born and brought up in the Borders had higher rates of migration than those with local parents.

Class divisions, attachment and detachment

Young people's evaluations of the place where they grew up and their willingness to stay in or return to the Borders indicates a continuum of being

Table 2 Attachment or *Detachment* among 'Stayers' and 'Migrants' by Parents' Origins and Class Background

	Parental origins unknown	Parents both 'locals'		One 'local' parent		No 'local' parent	
	Working Class	Middle Class	Working Class	Middle Class	Working Class	Middle Class	Working Class
'stayer'	Patricia		*Caroline*		Brenda		
			Karen		Graham		
			Lorna	*David*	Iona		
	Andrew		Kate	Francine	Jackie		Gordon
	Ewan		*Paula*	Moira	*Jean*	Ian	John
	Nicky	.	Tracy	*Roseanne*			*Richard*
'migrant'		Carol		Cathy	Keith	Alison	
		Helen		Mary	Linda	Calum	*Alasdair*
		Laura		*Shona*	Malcolm	Christopher	Hugh
				Teresa	Morag	*Jill*	
					Sean	Peter	
						Stephen	
						Stewart	
						Tim	

Father's occupational classification is unknown for Roseanne and Richard, hence their location between columns in the table. Middle-class parents had professional, managerial or, in the case of Andrew, Cathy, Helen, Laura and Alison, 'intermediate' occupations. The following 'cross-class' respondents were classified as middle-class: Carol, Shona (fa. middle, mo working), Alison (fa. Intermediate, mo. working) and the following as working-class: Hugh, Jackie, Karen, Kate (fa. Working, mo. Intermediate), Jean (fa. Working, mo. middle).

Names shown in italics are those who expressed detachment from the locality of their school days

'attached' or 'detached' from their school-days' locality cross-cutting 'stayers' and 'migrants'. Some 'stayers', are more or less attached to their locality, more or less settled-in and happy to be there but some are not and dream of or actually envisage leaving. There are 'stayers' who are, nevertheless, clearly detached from their locality. And those who are already relocated elsewhere, the 'migrants', are also more or less attached or detached. Some are negative about the place where they once lived and emphatic that they will never return there or anywhere like it. Others remain advocates of their former home or the Borders more generally, perhaps still calling their previous home, 'home' and planning to return. Being attached or detached as a 'stayer' or 'migrant' are matters of degree and will change over time. Table 2 summarises the state of play at the time of the interview.

Both social class background and family history of migration or rootedness play into young people's sense of social divisions, 'community' and attachment to or detachment from the locality of their childhood. Coded reference to class divisions are often made in the way that places are talked about. For example, several respondents automatically ranks Peebles as 'nicer', with its implications of more middle-class, feminine and genteel, than Hawick and Galashiels, towns which are characterised as 'rough', suggesting more working-class and masculine. Another respondent disparagingly refers to Peebles as a middle-class commuter town that lacks 'real Borders people'. Such descriptions socially locate the speakers more than representing the realities of places. Many of our interviewees used the stereotype of the narrow horizons and parochialism of those who had never left the area, as an assertion of class superiority. When expressed by 'stayers', this dismissal of others typically coincided with attachment to a local 'community' of superior types like themselves. But for some 'stayers', accusations against others were an expression of a personal sense of marginality and being excluded. When expressed by 'migrants', disparaging comments about parochialism were sometimes part of complete detachment from the locality, a place with nothing to offer anybody with their finer qualities. Distancing mechanisms were also used in the way that 'incomers' were discussed as either those who inappropriately thought they were better than everybody else and wanted to 'run the place' or the crime-ridden outcasts of other regions.

Examples of attached 'stayers': John and Kate

John is a young man from a working-class family whose parents were incomers to the area from neighbouring regions before his birth and who had become 'locals' in his view. At the time of interview, John worked as a tyre fitter, praised the peace and quiet of his village, describe his home as 'where his heart is' and did not see himself as ever leaving the area. He still lived with his parents and had a fairly rich social life divided between his immediate family, including regular visits to his married sister and nephew, his girlfriend, a female

confidante, the rugby club and stockcar racing. However, at an earlier stage in his life, he had not assumed that his future would be in the Borders. Indeed, he talks of staying as an unintended consequence of not doing well at school, as if everybody's natural first choice, regardless of class background, would be to leave for higher education. In other words he presents staying as a failure to get out and on.

> *So when you were at school do you think you assumed that you would leave the area when you got older?*

> John: Yeah I think that's everybody's assumption. But then, getting back to when I was just leaving [school], I knew it was too late because I hadn't stuck in at school. The only way, really, I would have left would be to get better qualifications through school and go into further education, either into college or university. I would have to have left the area.

This view contrasts with that of Kate, a working-class young woman with local parents.

> I never really thought about leaving when I wis at school. I just thought I'd always stay here. I don't know why, but I just always thought I'd stay here.

At the time of interview Kate was a full-time mother living with her 'built in babysitter' parents. She had an 'on-and-off' relationship with the child's father who was currently working in another part of the British Isles. Her social life was more constrained than John's but not a matter of any complaint. She had regular contact in or near her own village with a couple of close friends who were also mothers, and a routine of visits to female friends in a larger Borders town. She saw her future as a local one and planned to complete a course in care work and regain a job as a care assistant once her child was older. She explained that there was no reason to go anywhere else:

> Basically because I know everybody, really. I mean, I was brought up here. A' ma friends are round here. My family's here.

Both these young people have had set backs in their work histories since leaving school at 16 but both had some success at getting 'good enough' employment. Both expressed a sense of satisfaction with their personal ties and feel located in a supportive network of family and friends. Neither was preoccupied with local social divisions or complaints of any sort. Although John did talk about 'Englishmen' buying up local farms and trying to 'run the place' he concluded that incomers made no difference to him one way or another. Kate's major complaint was the episodic destructive violence and

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drunkenness among local young men, but this was related without any attempt to dissociate herself as a class apart.

Degrees of detachment among 'stayers'

The 'stayers' who are identified in the table as 'detached' typically combined having some very negative things to say about their home locality with some dreams or plans of leaving. However, within the group there is considerable variation. Paula, for example, is borderline between attached and detached. She was both very negative about Hawick and happy to be there with no plans to leave. She had converted her thwarted aspirations to hope for the next generation. At school she planned to be a trainee nurse and leave the area through the armed forces, a long established exit and means of gaining qualifications for working-class young people in the Borders. The plan ended when she became pregnant at age 16. At the time of interview she was living with a partner, described a supportive family life and planned to stay in the area. Nevertheless, she had not suppressed a sense of failed ambition. Unlike John, who was agnostic on whether subsequent generations of young people should stay or leave the area, she advised 'Leave Hawick. Because there is nothing here in Hawick for young people. To get on in life you'd have to leave Hawick'. While acknowledging that she was happy to be there, she reiterated that it had nothing and added it was 'just going down hill all the way'.

Most of those identified as detached had at least dreams of leaving; the common stated reason was limited employment options and feeling under-valued at work. This was true even for some young people who had successfully pursued a local career, like Karen, the daughter of local parents, (her father has a working-class trade and her mother is a clerical worker) who trained in nursing with the aim of staying locally. She had some negative things to say about her home town of Hawick and distanced herself from the annual festival, 'the common riding' which was attracting national publicity because of a challenge to its male-only character. At the time of interview, she knew that she was less well paid in the Borders than she would be doing the same job elsewhere. She was dreaming rather than planning her exit from her home locality:

> I've always said if I win the lottery I'm going to move. I wouldn't like to live here all ma life. [*Partner*]'s quite secure in his job and that's the only thing that he's trained to do, and it's quite well paid. Because I'm quite lucky, I've got ma certificate and that, so I could move. We were just back on Saturday from holiday because we were seeing [*partner*]'s brother up in [medium sized Scottish town] and we had the kids up there, looking through the town centre and there was a practice – I wonder how much they're paying? It was just quite nice. I quite like there.

Andrew's middle-class parents were also 'born and bred' locals. His father ran a small business and his mother was a clerical worker. Despite doing very well at school he had chosen at 16 to enter a skilled trade with a local business but he had become increasingly worried about his future and conscious of his market disadvantage in terms of peers who went to university. For Andrew the advantages of staying local were undermined by unease about his career and perceived downward mobility. He and his partner had seriously discussed emigration to Canada but, at the time of interview, these plans had been set aside while waiting to see whether the expansion of his workplace brought new opportunities.

Embitterment about entrapment and strong negative feelings for their locality were most forcefully expressed by, Jean, Roseanne and Richard, 'stayers' who crossed class boundaries or had ambiguous class positions and had negative experiences at work but who also lacked emotional and social support through a network of personal relationships. Jean's and Roseanne's work history had resulted in or enhanced a sense of isolation and 'being different' rather than integration into a social world. All experienced serious disruptions in their family during childhood due to premature death and/or alcoholism. Jean had a mixed class background and Roseanne and Richard share an ambiguous class background. Both their fathers were dead, neither of their mothers were employed at the time of interview. They had other family connections to both middle-class and working-class jobs.

Jean's father was a worker in the mill and her mother had retired from a professional job. Her family life and her working life had been painful and difficult. She had felt forced out of her last job in a supermarket due to harassment at work which she did not speak out about for the fear of repercussions, sharing the same town as the perpetrator and wishing to avoid further gossip and trouble. Although defending as 'tradition' the male-only character of the Hawick annual festival, she drew on the stereotype of her home-town as 'rough' to deliver the following account of her sense of exclusion by other locals:

> You have to be Hawicky. You have to speak broad Hawick and enjoy going out and getting wrecked every weekend and going to certain pubs and that to fit in, in Hawick. And if you don't, if you don't wear what's fashionable and speak the way Hawick people speak and do the things, work in the mill, you don't seem to fit in.

Roseanne was a high achiever at school but at age 17 she exited to skilled manual work with a company offering free transport to the workplace, an hour's bus ride from her home. She explains her choice in terms of not being ready to leave her mother's home, which going to college would have involved, while being emphatically determined to avoid the most accessible employment in the local factory. She describes the factory in elliptical class terms as the sort of place that you get made to take a job if you are unemployed:

'Well, the factory is one those places that it's sort of like, you can get a job in there kind of thing. Which I didn't want to do. I didn't want to work in [home village] as well as live in [home village].'

At the time of interview, she was emphatically unhappy, feeling trapped in a demoralised work force and a financially insecure and penny pinching company. She felt socially isolated in her home village:

'I mean by the time I get home and everything I'm not really part of anybody's life ... the majority of folk – young people that go to the pub an' that, they'll be from the factory. Well, I mean, I'm not from there so I don't really eh, I don't join in with them or anything.'

It is not clear whether Roseanne is distancing herself from those who work in the factory or feeling left out by them. Class distancing strategies are certainly expressed in her various descriptions of incomers as people who try to take over and 'people who have been shifted from one place to another', particularly single parents from the larger mill towns and people from Newcastle whose acquaintances come up to commit burglaries.

Richard's bitterness partly stems from bad experiences at work. He had abandoned an apprenticeship that he experienced as an exploitative cover for 'slave labour' devoid of any training, although he is now apparently secure in a clerical job. His feelings of detachment include a sense of needing neither friends nor family and being better than the place (and its people) in which he is now a home owner. These views are connected in ways more complex than an interview could unravel with the vagaries of his fractured family background. He identifies with the father who was never from the Borders, who lived separately from Richard and his mother and whose death enhanced Richard's financial security in the place he disavows.

'I'm not from [home town] ... I'm from Edinburgh as far as I'm concerned. That's where I was born, that's where I lived for five years or so. I wouldn't want to be somebody from [home town] anyway. I'm proud of the fact that I wasn't born here'.

Degrees of detachment among migrants

The most thoroughly 'detached' of migrants had a very clear sense from a fairly early age that they wanted to leave and a conviction that they would never return. Such young people felt that their first departure for education or employment was the beginning of a permanent exit. This view was most typical of migrants from incomer families who had arrived part-way through their childhood, nursing memories of other people and places and feeling an 'incomer'. This was true for Alison, Jill and Tim. Stewart took longer to leave

the Borders than these determined migrants. He did not achieve university entrance qualifications at school but through subsequent further education. He expressed regret about his school days in terms of being sucked into the limited horizons of the people around him, people from whom he was now expressing distance.

> *Do you think Gala's a good place to bring up children?*
> I don't know. My mum and dad have asked this question as well and in a lot of ways it's not. It's limiting in a lot of ways. I don't know – it is limiting in a lot of – I don't know actually.

> *Limiting because of what?*
> Eh, I'm not sure. There isn't a huge amount to do and there's a certain way of thinking, there seems to be a certain mood, a certain psyche in Borders people from actually – well genuine Borders people – from moving out and doing something else. And I think you can get trapped into that general psyche, you know what I mean.

Degrees of attachment among 'migrants'

Migrants who are more appropriately described as 'attached' than 'detached' range from those with vague dreams of returning to somewhere like the place that they grew up to those with specific plans of return. Indeed it is arguably easier for migrants to romanticise their childhood home and to entertain vague notions of return than it is for 'stayers' to dream of leaving. For some 'migrants', the idea of return is in recognition of an identity with some aspect of the Borders, often a sense of life-long ties to family and friends but sometimes a more diffuse but class referential identification with community and place. Linda expresses explicit loyalty to her working-class roots, despite her entry into professional middle-class employment, when she talked of returning to the real Borders, not Peebles where she went to school. Her sense of herself as connected to the Borders involved active dissociation from the middle-class commuters of Peebles.

> I think because it's mainly a commuters' town. The majority of people I went to school with, their parents worked in Edinburgh. The town is developing into being a very middle class town. They're all very large houses and everyone commutes. I think Peebles just lost the feeling of it being a town.

For others, the desire to return was expressed in the idiom of life-style choice, which can be characterised as fitting Bauman's vision of the consuming 'tourist' or described more conventionally in terms of class privileges to make choices. Either way, what is being chosen in the imagination is a place that

offers clean air and safety in which children can play rather than the retention of living ties and identification with people. Carol, a graduate, had a life-style approach to returning, despite being the daughter of local, mixed-class parents. She was not yet settled in post-university employment at the time of interview. However, she assumed she and her husband would both have 'good jobs' and that she would take a break from work while bringing up children, perhaps back in the Borders while her husband commuted to work in Edinburgh.

The migrant most emphatically committed to returning to a specific place was Helen. Her attachments to the Borders are clearly underpinned by class divisions. Her ties to the Borders are not rooted in an identity as a 'real Borders' person but based on love of the farm where she was brought up, ties to her family and a sense of permanent membership of an elite middle-class farming community. At the interview she says she thinks she will still be regarded as a local even if she has been away ten years. Her biography involves a painful falling out with, and dissociation from, school friends who were all leaving school at 16 and whom she now recognises as 'a different sort of class'. Her descriptions of the Borders used the distancing class codes of playing Hawick and Peebles off against each other and the view that those who have never left the Borders are narrow minded.

> I would never say I was from the Borders, because when you say the Borders people think of places like Galashiels and Hawick and I don't really like them. So I would say I was from Peebles ... .
>
> I just think it's very important to get away and sort of see the world a bit. Because all the people that I knew at school who stayed in Peebles, they're just so narrow-minded and they don't have any concept of what life's like outside Peebles.
>
> *A lot of young people leave places like Peebles though, and some of them don't come back. Do you think that matters?*
> I think there's not an awful lot in Peebles for young people really, and I can see why a lot of them don't come back, because I think, unless you feel a part of the community, then you probably wouldn't want to come back. It's more the farming community in the area that I would count myself part of rather than the Peebles community.

Discussion

The data support Skegg's observations concerning the continued centrality of social class to subjectivity and Jedrej's and Nuttall's concerning the way that 'incomer' and 'local' become metaphors for class divisions. The levelling of urban/rural difference has not wholly erased the denigration of rural places as traditional backwaters where nothing much happens. The suggestion that those with finer qualities normally get out leaving behind those stuck in their narrow

mind set was used, with class connotations, by both some migrants and some stayers. Sometimes, such derogatory views of rural others were deployed despite strong attachments to locals and rural places.

The young people who make up this sample exhibit a diverse range of types of attachment to people and place. At age twenty, half of the sample had left the area, but feelings of attachment to the town or village of their childhood were expressed by the majority of those who left and some migrants were more positive about their home town than some peers who stayed. For such a pattern to be consistent with a Baumanesque postmodern consumerist social world, the negativity of those who stayed should express embitterment at entrapped in a place without choice, while the positive feelings of those who have left should express consumer openness to the possibility of future re-consumption of a rural life-style. The fact that more middle-class young people (and rather more young men than young women) make up the 'attached migrants' and more working-class young people (and rather more young women than young men) make up the 'detached stayers' would not necessarily contradict this scenario. Rather some fit would be conceded between 'old' stratification around social class and gender and 'new' forms of stratification around consumption.

As Jones (1999) noted our data contain young people whose expressed sense of self echoes Bauman's account. However, the details of their situation and subjectivity also suggest the limits of postmodern metaphors such as the 'imprisoned' and the 'tourist'. While the accounts of young people like Richard, Roseanne and Jean do express bitterness at entrapment, the sources of their discontents are not obviously a postmodern feeling of being 'out of it' because of an inability to endlessly reconstruct the self through consumption. These young people were exceptionally marginal in ways that fed their discontent but it was a marginality that could be characterised in more conventional analysis of class position, family ties and social networks. Some middle-class migrants do see Borders' towns in terms of a possible future life-style choice; a romantic rural idyll that is not about the retention of living ties to specific people or places. Whether this should be interpreted as the dominance of post-modern consumer discourse or as a more conventional class privilege is not clear.

The typical discontent among those who stayed in the Borders involved a heightened awareness of the area as in economic decline offering no future relief from a disappointing work history that has failed to match ambitions or has created a sense of being unvalued. But some young people weathered setbacks in employment without loss of regard for either themselves or their locality to which they remained thoroughly attached. They were predisposed to accept lower aspirations concerning their work life because of the benefits of being surrounded by family and friends who have no plans to leave. The pleasures of their attachments to the people who inhabit their immediate personal world rendered their work situation 'good enough'. The 'stayers' who were actively considering strategies for exit had typically had partners who also

wanted to move on but the most disaffected, Richard, Roseanne and Jean, were relatively isolated, lacking personal support for leaving or compensation for staying.

A combination of class background and family history of rootedness or migration means that some young people were more socialised into migration and others more encouraged into staying locally, but 'attachment' to or 'detachment' from place cannot be simply read off from family background. The children of middle-class in-migrants were the most likely to migrate. Some openly looked down on the peers they left behind but those who did so were matched by migrants dreaming of or planning their return. While some middle-class migrants dream in abstract consumerist life-style terms, other young migrants from all class backgrounds retained a sense of ties to a particular class, family and place. For young people like Helen and Linda attachments to places and to people were not transient consumer choices. Linda's confident identification with working-class 'real people' and Helen's equally confident identification with the middle-class 'farming community' are better understood as subjectivities of class than consumption.

Appendix

'Stayers' and 'Migrants' By Parents' Geographical Origins

	Locals	One Local	No Local
'stayer'	9	9	4
'migrant'	3	9	10
	N = 12	N = 18	N = 14

origins of one respondent's parents unknown
While Chi squared for the above table is not statistically significant, if respondents with one local parents are set aside to create a two by two table from the remaining 26 respondents then Chi Squared with Correction for Continuity is 3.86 which has a probability of less than 0.05

'Stayers' and 'Migrants' By Parents' Socio-Economic Class

	Working-class	Middle-class
'stayer'	14	7
'migrant'	7	15
	N = 21	N = 22

It was difficult to classify two respondents by social class
Chi Squared with Correction for Continuity is 3.9 which has a probability of less than 0.05

'Stayers' and 'Migrants' By Parents' Socio-Economic Class Controlling for Parents' Origins

	Locals		One Local		No Local	
	Working	Middle	Working	Middle	Working	Middle
'stayer'	6	3	5	3	2	1
'migrant'	0	3	5	4	2	8
	N = 6	N = 6	N = 10	N = 7	N = 4	N = 9

'Stayers' and 'Migrants' By Parents' Geographical Origins Controlling for Parents' Socio-Economic Class

	Working			Middle		
	Locals	One Local	No Local	Locals	One Local	No Local
'stayer'	6	5	2	3	3	1
'migrant'		5	2	3	4	8
	N = 6	N = 10	N = 4	N = 6	N = 7	N = 9

Acknowledgements

Notes

1 Respondents have two pseudonyms to protect particularly identifiable individuals and hence there is some variation in names used by Jones (1999). The sample is based on the third cohort in the Scottish Young People's Survey series (SYPS) conducted by the Centre for Educational Sociology, University of Edinburgh. This was a 10% sample of young people at secondary school in Scotland, sampled during their fourth year in 1988 and postally surveyed in 1989 at an average age of 16.75 and again in 1991 at an average age of 19.25 years. All young people in this SYPS

cohort who were at school in Borders Region and who answered one or both SYPS surveys formed the sampling frame for the current study. From a total of 128 young people, a random 50% of those who answered both previous questionnaires and all of those who only answered one were targeted for possible interview in the present study. Of the 84 young people with whom contact was sought, a third could not be traced. Interviewing stopped when a target sample size of 45 was reached.

2 In subsequent tables the intermediate group (two farmers; two small business proprietors and an intermediate technical worker) is merged with the middle-class group. In order to produce the tripartite division in the first instance, it was necessary to resolve 'mixed class' cases in which mother's and father's occupations fall into different categories. I have uneasily resorted to the convention of opting for the father's class. I fully accept that both mother's and father's occupation provide a fuller picture but showing both parents occupations over clutters the summary tables and makes analysis difficult. All merged and mixed class cases are identified at the foot of the summary tables so that the reader can see precisely what has been done.

3 The classification of parents as 'local' or 'non-local' is a crude starting point. It occasionally classes parents brought up in small towns and rural sites perhaps as little as twenty miles outside of the Borders region boundary as 'non-locals' of the same order as non-locals from the south of England. On the other hand, parents who migrated larger geographical distances within the Borders region remain 'locals'. Secondly, the perception of a 'local' is something that is negotiated between people living in the locality and the term is largely used as metaphor, not a measure of biographical reality. Hence, some parents who are classed as 'non locals' by this means may be generally regarded as 'locals' and vice versa. However, despite the need for this qualification, whether or not a person was born and brought up in the Borders is a measurable fact of some significance and a useful starting point.

4 Note that some of today's residents may be tomorrow's migrants. David, for example, is classified as a 'stayer' because of his residence and work in the area but he is waiting to transfer through his employment to another region. While it would have been possible to classify him as a migrant by his intentions and the circumstance of requesting a transfer, I was not sure whether the transfer would definitely happen. However, two Borders residents are classified by their intentions and work circumstances as migrants. Keith and Shona were living in their parents' house in the Borders, but as a clearly temporary arrangement after employment or education elsewhere, while seeking the next job elsewhere and with no intention or prospect of equivalent local work.

The table does not distinguish 'returners', those who have already left the area and returned (see Jones, 1999). Returning cannot be uniformly read as an intermediate case between migration and staying, as a form of half or failed migration, because some returners defined themselves as living away from home rather than as having left.

5 Daughters almost never inherit the family farm as the successor farmer and therefore their daughter's interest in the farm contradicted the gender order, just as leaving school at 16 contradicted class norms.

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