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This volume brings together established and emerging writers concerned with men's global mobilities and their experiences of and within travel and tourism. Although there is existing work that has focused on gender and tourism, the emphasis on men, masculinities and tourism has been rather limited. While the implicit masculine position of the tourist gaze has been questioned, understandings of specific male tourists have often failed to engage with the gendered notions of independence, adventure, embodiment and risk that underpin much tourism experience and practice. The authors gathered here draw upon a pool of experience and research. In particular, the collection reflects the multiple ways that men 'do' masculinity as they travel and interact with other men or women. The volume offers insights into men's tourism from as far afield as Mexico, the US, China, Taiwan, western and eastern Europe, and more localized identities in the UK.

Thomas Thurnell-Read is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at Coventry University, UK. His work explores identity and, in particular, masculinity in relation to leisure and consumption practices. His research interests also include the sociological study of alcohol.

Mark Casey is Lecturer in Sociology at Newcastle University, UK. He has published on gay male travel in Australia and is currently undertaking research on the island of Mallorca and its British expatriate communities.
Working-class men's lives: Stigmatization of place in young people from the valleys: The you get a reputation it's when...
However, what happens when people leave a particular stigmatised place? Some studies have looked at how the identities and reputations of a particular place can accompany individuals when they relocate, or try to relocate, to a new destination (see Hayden, 2000; Galster, 2007; Keene and Padilla, 2010). But there has been very little work within tourism studies and on men and masculinities that has looked at how the reputations of a particular place or community accompany inhabitants when away from that geographical area. Studies have shown how particular characteristics of tourist destinations attract certain labels (Kneafsey, 2000; Andrews, 2005, 2006; Thornhill-Reed, 2011); how reputations about certain holiday resorts emerge (Malam, 2004; Mordue, 2005); and how the spatial order of tourist sites are negotiated (MacCannell, 1976; Edensor, 1998, 2001), but there is little research on how young men experience ‘tourist encounters’ (Crouch et al., 2001) when they temporarily leave a particular stigmatised place for a tourist destination. In this chapter, I argue that for a group of young working-class men from a community in the South Wales Valleys (UK), their tourist encounters are often tempered by the historic classed and gendered codes of the region (accent, perceived behaviours and external stereotypes) that accompany them when away from their community.

This chapter begins by extending Goffman’s arguments surrounding stigma, and I link this to young working-class men and social exclusion, before moving on to look at the socioeconomic context of the South Wales Valleys. Drawing on ethnographic material and in-depth interviews, in the next two sections, I closely examine these young men’s narratives, investigating what happens when young working-class men leave their community temporarily, and also talking with them about their fantasies of more greater mobility that allows these young men to explore ideas of escape from their mundane everyday lives and from where they live.

Stigma, social exclusion and young working-class masculinities

Stigma is one of the consequences that accompany being defined as different to social standards of normalcy. Goffman (1963) identified three separate types of stigma: abominations of the body such as physical deformities; blemishes of individual character such as mental illness; and the ‘tribal stigma’ of ‘race’, nation, religion, class and social milieu. Acting as spatial representations of structural inequalities, marginalised communities are examples that reinforce segregation through popular and political discourses, resulting in the pathologisation of those who reside there (see Campbell, 1993; McDowell, 2003; Wacquant, 2008; Jones, 2011; McDowell, 2012). Those who live in such ‘vilified’ places are therefore not only marred by the stigma of ‘race’ and class, but also through what Wacquant (2007: 67) terms the ‘blemish of place’ (see also Shields, 1991). Here stigmatising traits are attributed to those who inhabit a specific community, and a place comes to define a people (Hayden, 2000). Therefore as a result of such powerful representations, people become labelled when they come from a particular setting of origin (Curtis, 2004; Rhodes, 2012) and their stigmatisation belongs to specific representations of that place. One explanation for this discreditting of place and communities is said to result from the cultural dispositions of those who live there (Wacquant, 2008). It is also attributed to the multiple other stigmas associated with both people and the places they live in, such as poor living conditions, high levels of crime and unemployment, families who are dependent on state benefits and also industrial waste, technological stigma (e.g., nuclear power plants) and air pollution (Bush et al., 2001).

As Shields (1991: 22) has argued, place can have multiple meanings: ‘the same place, at one and the same time, can be made to symbolise a whole variety of social statuses, personal conditions and social attitudes’. Shields suggests such place images can come to form a ‘place-myth’ (1991: 61). This then allows for a specific space, a geographic area, to become an imagined space, socially and culturally symbolised with specific activities and behaviours. But these place-myths emerge not only through symbolism but also social, economic and culture conditions. This place-myth can then accompany individuals who relocate to other areas via images produced through TV, print media, films and advertising. Myths held about a place can encourage certain behaviours and have an impact on tourist encounters (Crouch et al., 2001).

While negative attributes are assigned to those who may live in particular communities, as Wacquant (2008) has pointed out, this ‘Othering’ has multiple meanings within different contexts and with different individuals. McDowell (2007, 2012) has argued that young working-class men who live in stigmatised places are most often associated with fears of disorder, disrespect and delinquency. Their class backgrounds, their accents and their (often) aggressive performances of masculinity are seen as ‘redundant’ (McDowell, 2003) in a deindustrialised society (see Willis, 1977; Mac an Ghaill, 1994; Winlow, 2001; Nayak, 2006; Kenway et al., 2006). These more traditional performances of masculinity are particularly disadvantageous to working-class young men in
terms of educational success and access to higher education. They are also less likely to move into professional occupations or to find employment in lower paid service sector work because they lack the social and cultural attributes valued by employers in such fields. As Goffman (1963: 9) argues, this results in individuals being ‘disqualified from full social acceptance’. Current political and media discourses further support this representation: young working-class men are constructed as lazy, unwilling to work, ‘reckless’, violent and excessively heterosexual (McDowell, 2012; also see Andrews and Treadwell, this volume). As a result of these powerful representations, such men are deemed to demonstrate a moral, cultural, physical and social threat to an otherwise ‘respectable’ late modernity. A current example of this ‘moral panic’ (Cohen, 1972) is symbolised in the UK through the derogatory figure of the ‘chav’ (see Nayak, 2006, 2009; Jones, 2011 for a further discussion). This chapter examines the processes of spatial stigma young working-class men experience temporarily during tourist encounters. I now turn briefly to describe the deprived community and outline the methods used in this study.

Context and methods

In understanding the identities of these young men and why reputation is important, we must first examine the social context. Developing at the end of the nineteenth century to feed the growth in iron manufacturing, the South Wales Valleys were once a major contributor to the British coal industry (Williams, 1985) and one of the largest industrial centres in the country, employing up to a quarter of a million men (Grant, 1991; Rees and Stroud, 2004). A strong division of labour accompanied these communities, where distance from anything seen as ‘feminine’ was essential for a strong masculine identity, which would enable the communities to survive (Walkerdine, 2010). Men earned respect for working arduously and for ‘doing a hard job well and being known for it’ (Willis, 1977: 52). Kenway and Kraack (2004) suggest that these roles were often seen as heroic, with punishing physical labour involving different degrees of manual skill and bodily toughness, creating a tough, stoic masculinity. Male camaraderie, which was established through physicality and close working conditions underground, was also developed through jokes, storytelling, sexist language and banter at the work site. This was further supported through institutions such as miners’ institutes, chapels, pubs, working men’s clubs and sports. Rugby union (and to a lesser extent boxing and football) in particular still hold powerful positions in the culture of the locale: influencing those who play it, those who watch it, those who reject it and those who are deemed unfit for it (Holland and Scourfield, 1998; Howe, 2001; Harris, 2007).

After the Second World War, despite the nationalisation of the industry in 1947, coal mining in the region continued to weaken, and large numbers of collieries were closed. However, during the 1980s and onwards into the 1990s, due to economic restructuring policies of the Conservative government led by Margaret Thatcher, the region underwent rapid deindustrialisation (Williams, 1986; Smith, 1999; Day, 2002) and struggled to reinvent itself in the ‘new modernity’ (Beck, 1999). This acute collapse, coupled with the decline of the manufacturing industry, led to a drastic increase in economic inactivity (see Brewer, 1999; Frevé, 1999). The area is now characterised by what Adamson (2008: 21) terms a ‘triangle of poverty’ with low levels of educational attainment and high levels of unemployment, health inequalities and poor housing across the region (see also Winlow, 2001 and Nayak 2003, 2006, for research undertaken in other communities with similar post-industrial issues).

This chapter draws on findings from an Economic and Social Research Council-funded ethnographic study that was conducted over a two-and-a-half year period and looked at the diversity of a group of white, working-class young men within the former industrial town of Cwm Dyfryn situated in the South Wales Valleys. The overall aim was to investigate how masculinities were formed, articulated and negotiated by one school-year group at the end of their compulsory schooling, and then to subsequently follow them through their different post-16 educational pathways. This was conducted in the same school sixth form (ages 16–18) and within other educational institutions that some of the young men opted for after their General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSEs) qualifications. Nayak (2003: 148) has argued that ‘young people’s gender identities cannot be adequately comprehended within the microcosm of the school institution alone’. This research was therefore undertaken across multiple other arenas in order to gain what Geertz (1973: 6) called a rich, ‘thick description’ of their lives, which led to a more meaningful and intricate understanding of how they understood and represented their world.

I personally knew the research area, as I grew up there, so I was able to form close relationships with many of the participants in my study through a shared biographical history. At the time the research was conducted, I was also a Further Education lecturer, so I was familiar with the education system in the area. The head teacher of the high school
Repetition of place

Interventions are discussed in the following section.

Key and discussion in the following sections.

Interventions implemented are oriented to improve and exacerbate.

 contested... where... community... people... who... (e.g., school, city)

Endnotes

The interviews conducted were mainly qualitative on an informal basis with respondents from the community. The data collected were analyzed through thematic analysis, which involved coding and categorizing the responses to identify patterns and themes. The findings were then discussed in the context of the broader research objectives and implications for future research.
recognised through the accent that places Greg as being from a specific area, and he is guilty by association with it.

Cresco and Clive also discussed how the stigma of being from a deprived working-class community was transported with them in the following discussion about a foreign holiday. Here Cresco and Clive express anger at the way a father assumed they were troublemakers because of their accents and behaviour:

CRESKO: Well, I've been to Spain and um, we pulled [kissed] two girls there, and their father came out and went, 'Stop talking to them taffy boys.'
MW: Ah, right.
CRESKO: And I went to him 'Why'd you call us taffy boys?' 'Because you're from the Valleys. I know that because you've got an accent.' I was like, 'What!' 'And the way you act as well.'
MW: Really?
CRESKO: Yeah, I was like, 'The way I act? What do you mean by that?' He goes, 'Playing loud music, constantly drinking.' I'm like, 'Yeah, I'm on holidays.' [laughs]
MW: So you think it's a bad reputation then?
CRESKO: Do you reckon we have?
CLIVE: I think it depends on the person and who's judging you.
CRESKO: Yeah, but this was the girls' father.
CLIVE: Yeah I know, harsh though, wasn't it!

It is clear here that the father of the two girls that Cresco and Clive had kissed or 'pulled' was extremely wary of these young men. To him they symbolised not only a sexual threat, but a threat of contamination where their loud music and 'constant' alcohol consumption is positioned as representing the threatening nature of the South Wales Valleys. This was present in their South Wales accents, but also in the showy performance of their threatening masculinities that were deemed to be dangerous (Connell, 1995). Again, like the woman in Greg's experience above, the father already had preconceived ideas about where these young men were from and what they were like as a consequence of coming from a stigmatised locale (Shield, 1991; Campbell, 1993; Hayden, 2000; Keene and Padilla, 2010). Cresco and Clive's performance of a macho masculinity (Mac an Ghaill, 1994) displayed through drinking, playing loud music and pursuing heterosexual conquests, is a further problem for the father of the unnamed girls: in his eyes, this sort of behaviour is not fully acceptable (even on holiday!) and something he should protect his daughters from. Others also reflected on how through the media, the area they were from was associated with negative stereotypes that aided the creation of a discredited sell (Goffman, 1963):

TOMO: Yeah, you get a reputation if you're from the Valleys like... the TV and that always focuses on it... it's seen as bad, innit? [...] Seen as scrubbers and unemployed, dole bums, druggies and stuff.

For Tomo, these derogatory reputations of place are identified by the symbolic dangers of unemployment (as signified by dependence upon social welfare or the 'dole'), drugs and dirtiness. These unsavoury and unpleasant remarks are instilled through jokes, insults, disparaging comments and stories about the degeneracy and lack of respectability of the place he lives.

As the discussions above have shown, Cwm Dyffryn, and the South Wales Valleys more generally, are highly stigmatised places. The effects of this stigma have been shown to be felt both directly and indirectly. Through being subjected to name-calling, stereotypical opinions and negative reactions to their accents and performances of masculinity, the young men experienced a direct consequence of their 'spatial stigma' (Keene and Padilla, 2010). Much of this can be attributed to deindustrialisation since the early 1980s and the subsequent social and economic inequalities that have developed as a direct consequence of this process (Rees and Stroud, 2004; Adamson, 2008; Walker and Hole, 2010). Indirectly, these views and opinions of their community as stigmatised and something to be avoided also came through media and political representations of the area supported by wider representations of young working-class men. This meant that the young men felt they further suffered from a spoiled identity (Goffman, 1963). However, can the idea of travel and exotic holiday destinations also be an arena through which to challenge stigma and act out escape fantasies from this?

Challenging stigma – temporary and permanent mobilities

The concept of travel and holidays as an opportunity to escape from mundane everyday life has been well-documented within tourism studies (MacCannell, 1976; Malam, 2004; Andrews, 2006; Thurnell-Reed, 2011). However, there has been little attention paid to young working-class men's perceptions of holiday destinations, adventures and the fantasy of travel as a means to escape a deprived, stigmatised locale. In this final section of
Conclusion

A number of authors have explored how the study of identity, identity boundaries and how experiences are formed in terms of mobility and distance from their community. They have also been involved in the research conducted by one of the community's largest schools. The school's identity is formed in the context of the community. This identity is a product of the school's environment and how it has been shaped by the community. The school's identity is also shaped by the community's history and how it has been influenced by the community.

Therefore, it is evident that the school's identity is formed in the context of the community. The school's identity is also shaped by the community's history and how it has been influenced by the community. The school's identity is also shaped by the community's history and how it has been influenced by the community. The school's identity is also shaped by the community's history and how it has been influenced by the community. The school's identity is also shaped by the community's history and how it has been influenced by the community. The school's identity is also shaped by the community's history and how it has been influenced by the community. The school's identity is also shaped by the community's history and how it has been influenced by the community. The school's identity is also shaped by the community's history and how it has been influenced by the community. The school's identity is also shaped by the community's history and how it has been influenced by the community.
certain deprived communities and the people who live in them are increasingly likely to become stigmatised by both political and media discourses (Waquant, 2007; Keene and Padilla, 2010; Jones, 2011; Rhodes, 2012). This chapter expands this work by showing that for a group of working-class young men, the deindustrialised place they inhabit and the stigma that is associated with it is transported with them to different places when they leave it on holiday. The young men in this study describe how they feel they have a reputation because they are from a deprived community and are associated with negative stereotypes. The stigmatisation seems to have an impact on how they experience being away from their community and how they refer to it. I argue, then, that these young men suffer from a spoiled, discredited identity (Goffman, 1963) due to their working-class accents and traditional performances of masculinity, which are viewed by others as threatening.

The place they come from is spoiled, but so, too, individuals who are known to be from this place become spoiled by association. As they travel, other tourists see them as a threat of contamination, almost as if these young men can pass on the undesirable qualities of the South Wales Valleys to them. What is also apparent is that even though these young men feel stigmatised when they leave the locale temporarily on holiday, the idea of travel to exotic holiday destinations also brings with it fantasies of escape from the discredited position they find themselves in. The longing these young men express for fleeing to destinations such as Barbados and Ibiza are not only physically a long way from their homes, but also areas to experience different leisure pleasures and places to act out sexual fantasies. Tellingly, the aspirations to travel are characterised by a desire for the space to enable an enactment of an unproblematic masculinity, whereas the actual experiences reported by the young men show just how readily their ‘home’ identity might disrupt their pursuits of a ‘new self’ through the mobility of tourism. The experiences of the young men as tourists suggest a need to consider how the different processes that contribute to the construction of spatial stigma and masculine identities occur. The multiple disadvantages these young men (and others like them) experience by coming from deprived communities did not arise organically. They are the result of historic social and political practices that continue to create exclusion and difference. However, while travel would seem to have the power to reconfigure class and gender identities, access to these opportunities for those most likely to benefit from it are restricted.

Notes

1. See, for example, recent media representations of communities and their inhabitants such as the ITV programme Benidorm and the MTV reality television show Geordie Shore and The Valleys.

2. The name has been changed to maintain the anonymity of participants, but chosen to reflect its history and geography.

3. All names of participants have been changed.

4. Penrhys is a county on the coast of West Wales, around a hundred miles away from Cwm Dyffryn.

5. Taffy (or Taff), is a colloquial name for people (mainly men) from South Wales that is taken from the river Taff which runs through the area. The term is also used pejoratively and deemed gant-Welsh.

6. Cwm Dyffryn High School, despite being situated in a highly deprived community, ran an extensive programme of subsidized school trips every year with skiing and foreign language holidays to Europe.

References


