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Professor Gill Valentine, Department of Geography, University of Sheffield, Winter Street, Sheffield S10 2TN, UK. Email: g.valentine@sheffield.ac.uk
and
Dr Joanna Sadgrove, Department of Geography, University of Sheffield, Winter Street, Sheffield S10 2TN, UK. Email: j.e.m.sadgrove@sheffield.ac.uk

Abstract

This paper draws on empirical research conducted as part of a European Research Council funded study to explore how individuals understand and live processes of social differentiation. Specifically, it draws on a case study life story narrative to examine how social identifications unfold across biographical time, examining the spatio-temporal complexity of experiences of differentiation, and the marginalization of self and/or others. In doing so, it contributes to the geographies of encounter literature by exploring the implications of insights from an individual's narrative of lived experiences of difference for group politics and the management of prejudical social relations.

Key words: social difference, encounter, life story, moral disposition, transversal politics

Lived difference: a narrative account of spatio-temporal processes of social differentiation

Reflections on geographies of encounter

We are witnessing unprecedented levels of mobility within and beyond the European Union and population change. In this context, Stuart Hall (1993) has argued that how we develop

the capacity to live with social difference is the key question of the 21st century. It is an issue that is particularly pertinent given rising levels of insecurity generated by post 9/11 terrorism and the current global financial crisis because in times of trouble attitudes towards minorities tend to harden. Given the implicit role of shared space in providing the opportunity for positive encounters between strangers, geography, urban studies and planning have paid increasing attention to this question, notwithstanding the longstanding interest of social psychologists in 'contact' theory (Allport 1954, Hewstone and Brown 1986) and sociologists and anthropologists in inter-group social relations. This is evident through recent writings about cosmopolitanism, hospitality and new urban citizenship (e.g. Amin 2002, Bell 2007, Binnie et al 2006, Laurier & Philo 2006a/b, Iveson 2006 and 2007, Wilson 2011).

Here, some authors have observed the potential for 'difference' to be dissolved through a process of mixing and hybridisation of culture as a result of everyday encounters and interactions in public spaces (such as in cafes, on buses, at community events and sports clubs) where there is an accommodation of otherness because the proximity of strangers necessitates a pragmatic engagement across categorical boundaries (Amin 2002, Laurier & Philo 2006, Noble 2009, Wise 2009, Wilson 2011). Drawing on examples from a range of studies of hospitality spaces Bell (2007: 19) argues that food and eating create a feeling of being involved with others, providing consumers with a license to talk to each other which can facilitate positive encounters such that commensality 'can …be about social *identification*, the sharing of not only food and drink but also world views and patterns of living'. Likewise, in a study of cafes Laurier & Philo (2006a, 2006b) argue that people have a different sense of social responsibility in a space like a coffee shop compared to the street. They employed a camcorder and participant observation to capture and study mundane interactions in these

public spaces, using microspatial analysis of gestures to explore how 'the work of conviviality is actually accomplished on a momentary, situated and improvised basis' (Laurier and Philo 2006a: 204). Their observational analysis recognizes the distinction between first time and regular encounters, as well as that between arranged and chance encounters. In doing so, they find what they describe as 'wonder' in these everyday events (Laurier & Philo 2006b: 355), like Thrift (2005), recognizing the potential for such routine friendliness to be leached out into wider world.

However, much of this writing about cosmopolitanism and encounter assumes - implicitly or explicitly - that contact with 'others' translates into respect for difference with the implication that mundane acts of low level sociality and banal everyday civilities have enduring effects (Valentine 2008). Indeed, much of this work is based on observational research of *fleeting* encounters in which, as Laurier and Philo (2006b) acknowledge about their own work, the identities of the participants and the meanings of such contact is read without recourse to how it was actually approached or experienced by the participants. For example, taking the bus as an everyday site of encounter Wilson (2011: 635) suggests that tolerance is essential in such spaces of intimacy and materiality where bodies are routinely pressed together.   Drawing on auto-ethnographic observation conducted over 100 hours of bus travel in Birmingham, UK, she claims through observation alone, that 'what happens on the bus *can* have meaningful effects' (Wilson 2011: 625).

In doing so, this work makes unacknowledged *temporal assumptions* - given the significance it attaches to the 'fleeting' - through its implicit reading of fluid moments of kindness, conviviality or tolerance in public space as present effects isolated from consideration of

their relationship to either the past or future. Fragmentary observation of such public encounters may capture how social differentiation is performed through particular interactions and how it can orientate the movements of passengers, consumers or passersby towards or away from each other or things to produce particular affective atmospheres in a given moment (see also Swanton 2010). However, these observational accounts cannot know how such momentary everyday negotiations and enactments are refracted through the personal histories of those observed – what people bring to encounters from their past which might prefigure the interactions observed; or their durability – whether the engagements recorded will be meaningful in terms of having lasting effects on the participants that may rematerialize in future encounters. Indeed, accounts which celebrate the meaningfulness of everyday encounters appear to presume that the subjects of such research observations are highly receptive and malleable: readily able to shed personal pasts, the collective histories and moral codes of the communities within which they are embedded, and the social relationships and anticipated commitments through which lives are entwined.

The encounters literature also implicitly makes *spatial assumptions*, namely that it is in public space where positive values (such as respect and tolerance) and attitudes towards others are shaped. While taken for granted normative codes of civility – what Buonfino and Mulgan (2009) refer to as the 'learned grammars of sociability' - in public space mean that people do commonly behave in courteous ways towards others, this is not the same as having respect for difference. There is often an awkward gap between some people's self-identified values of tolerance and compassion and their practices in public spaces, and vice-versa those who hold prejudiced views and values can nonetheless willingly exchange civilities in public space

with individuals who are members of groups for whom they have negative feelings, despite their privately held beliefs or attitudes (Valentine 2008, Valentine and Waite 2012).

As such, Amin (2002) has argued that co-presence in public spaces alone is not sufficient to reconcile ethnic and cultural difference, highlighting the limitations of spaces of transit and the barriers of neighbourhood territorialisation to producing meaningful engagement. Rather, he argues that spaces of encounter must be constituted in such a way as to produce moments of cultural destabilization that allow participants to break out of fixed relations and to develop new patterns of interaction and community cohesion. For Amin (2002) such intercultural understanding might be best achieved in what he terms 'micro-publics', spaces such as libraries, community centres and allotments, where participants can develop intercultural understanding through interaction and exchange around common interests (see also Fincher 2003, Fincher and Iveson 2008). Yet, in focusing attention on community spaces it is important not to overlook the ways that individuals' approach to encounters can also be developed, enacted and contested within 'private' spaces of the homes of family and friends and in institutional spaces (which share some characteristics of both 'public' and 'private' space) such as the school and workplace. In particular, these are spaces where the values and attitudes which help us to make sense of 'difference' and encounters are commonly shaped in our formative years.
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In the industrial era that was characterised by social hierarchies and tradition people were exposed to a relatively limited range of influences and their opportunities to encounter or express diverse/alternative values was constrained. As such, there was likely to have been relative consistency in the social values and attitudes that people encountered across a range

of sites (e.g. in the family home, school, places of worship/religious belief, community leisure spaces, the workplace). However, in the context of new modernity, processes of de-traditionalisation, globalization and accelerating social and geographical mobility, mean that individuals are now exposed to a much wider range of lifestyles, and competing values and attitudes (both positive and negative) and are freer from social constraints to develop more individualized ways of living and to define their own personal values (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). This means individuals are increasingly likely to encounter discontinuities and contradictions between the values and attitudes that are transmitted through different spaces and to need to resolve or reconcile such competing influences to define their own personal understanding of their place in the world and relationship to 'others'. Yet, research on geographies of encounter has paid relatively limited attention to understanding the values that constitute and are constituted by different spaces and the role these might play in the way people make sense of their encounters or engagements with difference.. By this we mean the moral dimension of our everyday lives in terms of our shared understandings of how we should live, who or what type of behaviours are good or bad, how should we treat others and be treated by them, what kinds of attitudes or behaviour towards others make people feel guilty and why? This despite the fact that in an increasingly differentiated world the moral judgments we make about others and the practices to which these judgments give rise are essential to understand and manage the antagonisms that are inherent in social relations (Smith 2000, Lee and Smith 2004). As such, we argue that social scientists need to pay more attention to both the potential *temporal* and *spatial* complexity of processes of social differentiation.

Thrift (2005) argues that morality - the judging of self and others – is not a solely cognitive process. Rather, he argues there are affective inputs too, a product of our complex personal histories that produce a sense of fairness or concern for others in some contexts and not others. In recognising both the cognitive and emotional dimensions of moral values we follow Sayer (2005) in understanding these to be ideals that can be intentionally adopted and are therefore capable of being articulated discursively; but also to be pre-reflexive, routine orientations to the world that are produced through embodied experiences of daily life. Here, Sayer draws on Bourdieu's (1990) concept of *habitus* - internalised dispositions that are the product of socialization - which Bourdieu himself primarily used to examine people's dispositions towards others in aesthetic and practical terms, to address ethical matters, observing that individuals also have instant moral responses (including emotions such as anger, bitterness, compassion etc.) towards others/situations prior to reflection. While the notion of dispositions necessarily acknowledges that early experiences are formative and that once acquired dispositions might orientate future actions (i.e. as normative standards) and have some inertia, this concept is not deterministic but rather recognizes that individuals can reflect on their own lives and chose to change or react to wider social relations/locations in new ways such that they produce and embody new dispositions. In this sense, Sayer (2005) argues that normative orientations are the product of practices as well as guides for actions.

In focusing on embodied experiences of daily life to examine processes of social differentiation, we argue that geographers need to pay more attention to the dynamic movement (literal and metaphorical) of individuals through space and time. This is often lost when a given social identity (e.g. class, race, gender) is theorised through a set of static signifiers (e.g. occupation, housing). Rather, we need to focus on 'social mobility' in its

widest sense – not just in terms of class position – recognising that any kind of movement (social, geographical even virtual) represents a reaching out to the world which necessarily opens us up to the unknown (Frello 2008) and can generate instability and insecurity because it involves a change in usage of space and different experiences, performances and affordances (Bonss and Kesselring 2004). For example, as people move between physical spaces (migrate from one place to another) or when they move across social space (i.e. acquire an education, marry, develop a religious belief) they can encounter different normativities (unspoken rules/codes of behaviour) and can 'become someone else' as their sense of self in terms of their own moral evaluation and social/ethical practices and dispositions change. Ziegler and Schwanen (2011:763) define such acts of movement (literal and metaphorical) and engagement with difference as 'mobility of the self'.

Finally, most of the writing about geographies of encounter to-date has only considered relations between white majority and minority ethnic groups. In doing so, it has implicitly focused on, or presumed, static or fixed conceptualizations of identity because the limitations of most research grants mean it is often necessary to narrow the scope of empirical work to analyse the relationship between particular social categories rather than addressing the full implications of intersectionality (Valentine 2007). Yet, it is important to consider which particular identifications purposeful encounters with difference are approached through; how these encounters are systematically embedded within intersecting grids of power (i.e. individuals might be multiply and simultaneously positioned as both marginalised and privileged) and the differential capacity of particular voices to participate in social encounters.

This paper therefore attempts to address some of the limitations of existing work on geographies of encounter by drawing on empirical research conducted as part of a European Research Council funded study to explore how individuals understand and live processes of social differentiation. Specifically, the research is exploring individuals' lived time-space through their own narratives of their unfolding social identifications across biographical time and their spatio-temporal experiences of differentiation, and the marginalization of self and/or others. Here, we are interested in multiple forms of social differentiation (gender, age, race, class, sexual orientation, disability, religion and belief etc.) in contrast to the literature around prejudice/encounters which has tendency to primarily view these issues through the lens of race and racism.

In adopting this approach we understand narrative interviews to be a process of meaning making, a window on the dynamics of respondents' experiences and emotional lives, rather than a presumed reality (Bruner 1990). We recognize that the individual self is fragmented, not unitary or fixed, such that how the self is narrated may vary with time, with spatial context and according to the specific performative encounter between a given respondent and interviewer. In this way, a self that emerges from an interview is a product of the narration, not the source of it. We therefore follow Peacock and Holland (1993) in using the term life story to describe this research process because it does not imply that the narration is 'truth' or 'fact' but rather communicates the way that such interviews are precarious sense-making devices that can help to make experiences intelligible (Weick 1995).

The research upon which this paper is based involved 60 individual case studies (n=120 interviews) and associated pilot work. Here, each case comprises a time-line, a life story

interview, an audio-diary of everyday encounters, a semi-structured interview about attitudes towards difference, and an interview reflecting on the emerging findings. The informants were recruited from amongst respondents to a survey about prejudice (and the pilot study participants by snowballing through gate-keepers). They were sampled to include those from a range of social backgrounds (in terms of socio-economic status, occupation, gender, ethnicity, religious/belief, sexual orientation and (dis)ability); whose personal circumstances and lifestyle affords them a range of opportunities for/experiences of encountering 'difference'; and reflect the range of responses to the prejudice survey.

In order to explore the complexity of the socio-temporality of processes of social differentiation this paper focuses on the life story of one informant (cf. Valentine 2007). Potentially any one of the research participants could have been the focus of this paper as each provides a narrative account of lived experiences of social differentiation. Jennifer was chosen because her story is a good exemplary of the socio-temporal complexity evident in the dataset. Jennifer is a white British woman in her 30s who is married with children. Until recently she has been a full-time home-maker but is now studying part-time for a degree at her local university. All the quotations included in this paper from her life story interview are verbatim. Three ellipsis dots are used to indicate minor edits have been made to clarify the readability of quotations. The phrase [edit] is used to signify a significant section of text has been removed. All the names attributed to speakers are pseudonyms.

The paper provides an account of Jennifer's narrative of her lived experience of difference through three moments in time and unpacks the spatio-temporal complexity of the processes of social differentiation which are evident in her account. In doing so, it

contributes to the geographies of encounter literature by exploring the implications of insights from an individual's narrative of their lived experience of difference for group politics and the management of prejudical social relations, by drawing on the notion of transversal politics.

A life story narrative of social differentiation

Time past: family values

Jennifer grew up in a traditional nuclear family. Her parents were (and still are) a married heterosexual couple and she was one of four children. Her father was a church minister and her mother did not work when the children were young. Jennifer's parents, although culturally and educationally middle class, both came from traditional working class backgrounds and had strong ethics about the importance of work, independence and self-reliance born out of their own social mobility. They were both supporters of a left leaning political party - the Labour Party.

> I grew up with my mum and dad married. I've got a sister and two brothers and I'm the second oldest and I guess you could say we were quite a close family growing up. Always ate meals together until we were in teenage years… We're, I guess, quite traditional. My dad's a minister in a Church, so we grew up in a nonconformist faith with church being probably the centre of our social activities…My mum stayed at home with us until my youngest brother was about probably nine and then she went back to teaching full-time. So I was looked after by my mum while I was growing up, so quite a traditional, family really [edit] I never felt I had that, but I must have had some framework sort of instilled in me because of the structure of church and faith and service. So my parents would never tell me off particularly unless I was directly rude to them, but I knew what they

expected of me and it wasn't an oppressive thing. It was a well that's the right thing to do and that's the right way to be. So I'm actually very glad for my parents bringing me up like that [edit] if dad had a day off and we had a day off together as a family, we'd go out and have a walk in the countryside and holidays were always taken in Britain.

Jennifer describes a familial closeness produced through shared activities including: family meals, weekend walks in the countryside, church based activities and family holidays. Her father and mother had an open and direct communication style (e.g. talking to the children about a house move) and adopted a non-authoritarian mode of parenting. She recalls that as a child she knew what was expected of her but, in contrast to her school friends, she did not have strong boundaries (e.g. her parents did not make her study or revise for exams) and she was not pushed to follow certain routes in making the transition from childhood to adulthood (e.g. to go to university) – something which she now regrets in terms of lost opportunities. As a teenager Jennifer went through a rebellious phase: smoking, dressing like a goth (a particular sub-cultural identity) and listening to music of which her parents disapproved. Yet, she had a strong cross-gender sense of identification with her father - attributing her frequent clashes with him (which perhaps suggests that there were more familial boundaries than she acknowledged in the interviews) during this period to similarities in their personalities.

I think on the important issues…it was just, you know, we had sort of a common mind. It sounds quite frightening actually that, but on small issues myself and my dad, we've got such similar personalities, it's crazy, and we used to get into such arguments. Like I would teenage screaming at him and he'd shout back and we'd just sort of knock along together like that

Jennifer describes herself as having been brought up to have a positive attitude towards minority ethnic groups and people with disabilities. In particular, her father's parish had a significant Afro-Caribbean congregation. She also has a strong childhood memory of her father with whom she strongly identifies, being touched by, and compassionate towards, a parishioner with Downs Syndrome.

> I had a good respect for lots of different adults in the church…There was one woman called Martha [she] was like my grandma in situ and she was Caribbean and so she helped me with that relationship that wasn't there cos my grandma was in Scotland. And other friends that I had, I played in a music group where there were a lot of West Indian people in that space as well [Edit] We had a [church] meeting at our house…There was one lady [with Downs Syndrome] who always used to choose [the song] 'if I was a butterfly thank you father for making me'. ..she always used to chose that and he [her father] was quite touched by that I think. And that probably had an affect on me as well, the idea that people who are different are still happy to be me…

In this sense, she eschews prejudice – in terms of racism and disablism - which is defined in classic psychological studies as negative attitudes towards groups and individuals based solely on group membership (Allport 1954). However, her parents, and implicitly the theological community she grew up in, adopted a conservative position on homosexuality; considering it to be morally wrong and against the teachings of the scripture.

> Because they're [parents] Baptists and come from quite conservative sort of teaching era…when I was growing up I thought homosexuality was wrong…And I've talked to my Mum about it recently and she's quite adamant about homosexuality being wrong.

Jennifer recognizes that there was an implicit transmission of values through her childhood family life in terms of how her parents related to each other and to other people: as habits of practice. She suggests that her early years were formative, identifying herself as having acquired values of compassion, individualism, non-conformity, and self-responsibility from her upbringing that have oriented her future actions. She narrates these dispositions as shaped through parental discourses, but also by affective inputs as a product of her everyday family life and encounters. In turn, these are values which she suggests that she would like to replicate in her own children. In this sense, she understands her present as imbued with her past.

The Time of your Life: school days

Jennifer was educated in a mainly white, mixed gender secondary school with a socio-economically diverse catchment area. Despite a superficial hegemonic identity as a girl from a white, middle class, traditional family, with core Christian values, Jennifer's narrative of her schooldays is one of marginalization and exclusion. She recalls being bullied because of her religious belief - her father was dubbed a 'bible basher' by her peers. She was teased by children from affluent backgrounds because she lived in their neighbourhood in a large house owned by the church, yet because her father was a minister on a modest income she had a free bus pass and her family could not afford foreign holidays. Yet, she was also teased by children – particularly girls - from low income backgrounds because she was regarded as 'posh' and had too much social and cultural capital to fit into their peer groups. In this sense, she describes a strong sense of dis-identification with other girls of her age (cf Valentine and Sporton 2009). Moreover, because of the values of independence, individuality and the

importance of direct and open communication - embodied through everyday family practices - had come to constitute Jennifer's ethical or moral disposition she frequently came into conflict with other children because she says she 'stood up' for what she believed.

> I didn't fit with the other children who would be in my sort of middle-class educationally and locationally because they didn't understand that actually we couldn't afford to go to America and things that…I guess I was quite mobile because of that I guess I didn't really quite fit. I never quite feel like I'm home anywhere…it's still sort of gone on in adult life. I'm still marginal.

Rather, Jennifer was drawn to a small group of Asian children in her school. She describes herself as being intrigued by their 'difference' – which narrates through a range of things including the hair oils they used, the language they spoke and the way she perceived them to take up and occupy space, self-segregating within the school. She also recalls being attracted by what she perceived as their shared moral disposition predicated on values of hard work and self-reliance, and as identifying with their shared positioning on the social margins at school as a product of both their faith and socio-economic status.   During a special activity week for children from low income backgrounds she developed a friendship with some Asian boys (Asian girls were not allowed to attend) predicated as she narrates on a unity in their shared marginalization, as well as her orientation to boys because of her gender dis-identification with other girls.

> I remember being intrigued by Asian people because of language, because the girls put oil in the hair, just interest I think…we had activities week where I was on the cheapest activity cos we didn't have any money and a lot of the Asian kids were as well…I really enjoyed that cos it meant I got to know them, and particularly because they were boys…a

lot of the Asian kids came from homes where their parents were very hard workers…they owned a business but weren't necessarily making much money

As Jennifer's narrative of her school days illustrates the sorting and judging of bodies goes on all the time. She recalls herself as charged as different by other children with whom she shared her gender, age, ethnicity, family form, and national identity primarily by a set of performative and aesthetic criteria including, embodied class dispositions - clothes, accent, manners – and her location in, and access to, space (type of home, neighbourhood, holiday destinations). At the same time, she narrates herself as having a connection with or receptivity to bodies that were categorically different from herself in terms of gender, and ethnicity through a mutual moral disposition (in terms of work ethic, self-reliance, faith etc.) and a shared socio-spatial location on the margins of the school.

Time present, is contained in time past?

Jennifer married at 18 after finishing her 'A' levels (final school exams). She followed the pathway of her parents from childhood to adulthood: marrying a youth worker who had been employed by her father and went onto train for the Ministry himself, for whom, like her mother, she became a full-time home-maker, as well as taking on unpaid responsibilities in relation to his theological college and later their parish.

With her marriage and subsequent motherhood and parish responsibilities, Jennifer in effect describes herself, as becoming someone else. This movement in both social and physical space was a process she found difficult. She became disassociated from her peers, most of who went onto university and describes herself as bitter towards her teachers who were

critical of her choice to side step higher education to become a minister's wife and who considered that her marriage would not last. Yet, she did not readily fit into her new life in a church environment where she was out of place as a young woman and a mother in a predominantly male, middle-aged theological community.

> I was navigating this new Mrs thing…It felt like I was playing house…We moved as a couple when my husband started to train to be a minister to [name removed] College which is quite liberal in comparison with the church background we'd been in….the biggest challenge for me was my age because the other married partners were people who were 20 years older than me. Sort of alongside my husband's peer group were mainly middle-aged men which was really weird…My peer group were all students, single, living in halls and it was another case of not quite fitting in.

Her childhood self-narrative of being positioned on the margins has persisted into her thirties. In particular, Jennifer believes that she experiences discrimination as a wife and mother who has chosen not to work in paid employment. She contrasts her own moral disposition – emphasizing the importance of being non-judgmental and treating people as individuals rather than members of a group – with the way that she perceives her own identity is read by women who work. In this sense, her narrative of dis-identification with contemporary hegemonic understandings of what it means to be a woman has continued from girlhood to motherhood, as has her sense of anger and insecurity about being morally judged and marginalized by her peers whom she perceives to dominate the spaces in which she lives and moves.

> I get cross…with the expectation of what a woman should do…because I haven't worked in a professional environment …I'm not stupid…just because I'm a woman who stayed

at home to bring her children up, I'm not stupid…It makes me angry…I find myself getting a bit bitter about it…The people that annoy me most who did it are women actually…because it felt like they were saying I'm better than you because I've got a job and I bring up my children.

There is also continuity in Jennifer's narrative of class exclusion from childhood to adulthood. She currently lives in a white, middle class rural community, which she perceives as narrow-minded. While she describes herself as educationally and implicitly performatively middle class in terms of her embodied dispositions such as language, manners and so on, she argues that she is not aspirationally middle class in terms of her family's income and lifestyle. Rather, she continues to value her individuality and non-conformity in a community which her narrative suggests is constituted and regulated by a collective code of conduct or habits of practice with which she is not comfortable that is predicated on set of 'conservative' ethical dispositions and moral assessments about how people should live, who and what types of behaviour towards others are appropriate in the space. As such, she has had conflicts with her children's school and the boys brigade (a youth group) because of her non-conformity to gendered and class norms of dress (e.g. she was banned from helping out in the school because she wore jeans) and her willingness to challenge prejudices which she discursively links to the moral disposition of the place.

I hope you are not from [name of place removed] …it's pretty much stuck 30 years ago. And the most recent instance of discrimination, I can think of loads actually cos we've lived there for 2 years. I offered to help at school with the reading and the class teacher was happy for me to do that. So I went in. I got called into the deputy head's office and she gave me a booklet to read which was on staff policy. So I went in next week and she

called me into the office again and she said we can't let you help in school because you're wearing jeans. And me, sure of myself, said well I won't be changing my trousers so if you value parents helping you'll respect my wishes to come how I chose…they put pink certificates for girls and boy for boys [laughs]. It's that sort of school…the kids often say things like China man rather than Chinese person so my husband and I sit at home explaining to children why they don't laugh at people because their skin's a different colour…just language…I question them [school/ parents] I have the advantage I'm not from that community so I can say' oh is that a [name of place removed] phrase?'

On marriage Jennifer found herself living in a more theologically liberal community where she encountered openly lesbian and gay men for the first time – including having gay men as next door neighbours; her husband also holds a more liberal position on homosexuality within the Church than her father. Here, Jennifer describes a complex response to these encounters. On the one hand, she depicts a change in her attitude towards homosexuality and positive relationships with lesbians and gay men as a result of living in space constituted by different moral codes about sexuality from those she acquired in childhood, and which have brought her into conflict with her parents for whom homosexuality remains a sin. Indeed, she describes it as a 'sand in the shoe' issue with her parents causing niggling disagreements. Yet, on the other hand, she acknowledges a degree of ambivalence in her own position, observing that in terms of her religious belief she still thinks that homosexuality is 'difficult', notwithstanding her positive personal encounters with lesbians and gay men. In this sense, her personal conduct may have changed more than her ethical disposition (cf. Valentine and Waite 2012), reflecting that the past is often prolonged into the

present, even if we do not consciously recognize it. In other words, there is a temporalization as well as spatialisation to moral judgments and responses.

> And actually if I'm honest, to a certain extent now, I still don't know what I think….I've got friends who are homosexual, that's fine and I've been to civil ceremonies and that's fine but I guess because of what's been instilled in me from a child, not just from my parents but from a theology that's around you, it's a difficult subject. I've done a lot of thinking about it over the last few years. My husband's written stuff on it, on the issue of that in the church, and so we've thought about it quite a lot… There's a lot of theological discussion going on…about homosexuality and ways of being and, you know, respecting others and stuff like that…and I think just generally, because of the social environment we're in now, which is more accepting in some ways, well on the surface certainly more accepting…It's come up in personal relationships and personal sort of new understanding I guess and new expectations and whatever.

Jennifer's account of living in, and moving between, different physical and social spaces evidences the way that moral dispositions are constituted in and through particular spaces. As a consequence, mobility can expose this variability in shared norms and the social regulation of how we should live, behave and how we should evaluate and treat others in which diverse criteria are enrolled into processes of differentiation. While our individual moral dispositions are developed in spatially and temporally specific contexts we often unconsciously generalize these personal norms across the different time-spaces through which we live and move, finding it uncomfortable to operate with different ethical standards in different contexts. Such that, when our individual moral dispositions are out of alignment with the wider socio-spatial relations within which we are situated we experience a sense of

dissonance. As Jennifer's narrative demonstrates this can prompt reflection on our mode of relating to others, sometimes reifying our moral dispositions and at other times prompting a change (subtle or dramatic) in cognitive and emotional processes of social differentiation and/or everyday personal conduct.

Reflections on temporalisation and spatialisation in a narrative of social differentiation

In this paper we have focused on an individual's lived experience of difference, exploring the spatio-temporal complexity evident in this narrative of social differentiation. Here, instead of considering fleeting encounters with difference in public spaces (such as the street, bus, cafe) which have attracted much recent geographical attention, we have focused instead on Jennifer's narrative account of encounters in spaces ranging from the privacy of the familial home, to the institutional spaces of church, and school and the ill-defined space of 'community'; over not just momentary but also generational time (from the past of her childhood through to her future expectations of/for her children).

Despite theorizations of the multiplicity and intersectional nature of social identities - including Rose's (1993) argument about paradoxical space which recognizes that we can be simultaneously positioned at the centre and on the margins; inside and outside - there have been relatively few attempts by geographers to capture narratives of lived experiences of social differentiation. Much empirical research about social difference by geographers has been framed either through the fixed lens of particular excluded social groups (e.g. gender, race, sexual orientation, disability etc.) including specific intersections (e.g. gender and race), or that of specific privileged social categories (e.g. studies of whiteness). Much less empirical

attention has been paid to the active and complex daily production of social differentiation - although notably exceptions include work on practical orientalism which has explored how cultural/national identities are (re)negotiated through everyday banal bodily practices (Haldrup et al 2006), and research on prejudice which has examined the complex intersectionality of negative attitudes towards minority groups (Valentine 2010). Yet, Jennifer's narrative captures the dynamism of an individual's positioning and the constant processes of differentiation evident in socio-spatial relationships. As Smith (2000: 214) has argued 'if the human capacity of putting one's self in the place of others is to be an effective wellspring of morality, this requires understanding that place, as well as those others'. While Jennifer is privileged as a white, middle class, heterosexual, from a traditional nuclear family with core Christian beliefs, she also understands what it is to be marginalized in particular spaces and at certain moments when she has been charged as 'different' by others through particular performative, aesthetic and moral criteria.

Jennifer describes her own values in terms of individuality, compassion and a willingness to challenge others' attitudes. She narrates these as consistent over space and also over time (notwithstanding her description of 'becoming someone else' through marriage and a change in her attitude towards homosexuality). She describes them as rooted in her past – in her childhood family home and church, particularly explained through a narrative of 'closeness' to her family and especially her father. She also claims them as values that will continue to matter in the future because she wants to instill them in her own children. This is evident in her account of challenging her children's school's values, as well as her direct attempt to shape their way of seeing the world. Likewise, she describes a temporal and spatial consistency in her experiences of marginalization, as her account of being excluded by girls

at school because of her class (in terms of her father's occupation, housing, accent and so on) and her religious belief is echoed in her story of being dismissed or patronised by women in paid employment because of what she perceives as her lack of status in their eyes as a full-time home-maker. In this sense her account demonstrates a folding together of past, present and future.

The social psychology literature has explained such continuity in values across generations as a product of socialisation. This approach includes 'social reflection theory' in which children are understood to reflect the attitudes and values of their 'communities' which are presumed to be transmitted to them by their parents (e.g. seminal work of Bandura 1977) and 'systematic developmental theories' – a group of social learning theories about how values in relation to how we should treat other people are socially learned. Conformity is intrinsic to both these theoretical approaches which reason, for example, that children pick up through observation, accept, and reproduce negative ways of stereotyping or treating 'others'. In the context of geographical research on childhood and parenting (e.g. Holloway and Valentine 2000, Holt 2011), which has stressed the importance of children's own agency and the complexity of familial relationships, such understandings of how values are passed on appear simplistic given their implicit assumptions about children's passive absorbance of adult society's attitudes, and their failure to take into account the complexities and contested nature of intergenerational relations.

Rather, we have understood Jennifer's narrative by drawing on Bourdieu's (1990) concept of habitus. This denotes a set of dispositions related to particular practices which are not necessarily cognitive or instrumental and which may lead to regularities in patterns of

'common sense' behaviour across time or generations. Notably, following Sayer (2005) we recognise that habitus might include ethical dispositions that produce moral emotions which are embodied through everyday practices involving relations with others, so that individuals become habitually: honest, compassionate, and empathetic; or deceitful, uncaring and indifferent. These dispositions can be racist, sexist, or homophobic – involving the projection of bad or feared characteristics onto 'others' (resonating with Haldrup et al.'s 2006 notion of internal orientalism); or characteristics of tolerance, open-mindedness and acceptance – involving the valuing of difference. In this sense, individuals also acquire a sense of 'authenticity': we develop a belief about 'who we are', and we come to believe in the importance of 'being ourselves' which often includes drawing moral boundaries in which we claim virtues, such as being hard working for ourselves, and assign vices such as being judgemental to others (Sayer 2005). In Jennifer's case she has invested in, and identified with, her family's values like individuality, compassion and the independence to challenge others' attitudes, such that they have become habitual for her notwithstanding the ruptures of her physical and social mobility and her narrative of 'becoming someone else' when she left her childhood family home and school to marry.

Here, in understanding how Jennifer approaches encounters with difference we are influenced by Bergson's (1911) idea about the relationship of the past to the present. He emphasizes the continuity of time, mobilizing an analogy with a snowball to describe time in terms of duration, as rolling upon itself past into future like snow onto a snowball, to theorise temporality as simultaneous. In this way, we understand Jennifer's present to be imbued with her past through the habitual moral dispositions she developed in her formative years which provide a reference grid that help to make her present intelligible and which she

suggests will orientate her future actions and so be rematerialized into her future social relations. In this way, contrary to previous geographies of encounters which have implicitly stressed the malleability of selves and the dynamism of interactions, we acknowledge the potential durability of habitual everyday practices and ways of seeing the world and argue that geographers need to pay more attention to the temporalisation of process of differentiation and engagement.

Yet, this is not to suggest that moral values are fixed or trans-situtional. Rather, Jennifer's narrative of her lived experiences of difference in particular physical and social locations evidences the way that moral 'norms' are constituted in and through space, comprising regimes of judgment. For example, particular spaces – in this example the family home, the school, or a community space like a parish church -- are produced and stabilised through the repetition of the particular moral codes of the dominant groups that occupy them (e.g. about how to live, what kinds of behaviour are perceived as good or acceptable, how we should treat other people etc.). When individual identities are "done" differently in particular temporal moments they rub up against, and so expose these dominant spatial orderings - the 'right ways of being and doing' - that define who is in place, who is out of place; who belongs and who does not (cf Cresswell 1996). As Jennifer found in her village, the expectation or pressure to fit in – to be some one else - creates a sense of discomfort that comes from operating in a space with which our personal moral disposition is not compatible. Such experiences can challenge or provoke reflection on our mode of relating to others, sometimes acting as a catalyst for change. In such ways, space can be productive, not just reflective of, sameness or difference. In Jennifer's case she recognizes that some of her attitudes, most notably towards homosexuality, have been questioned as she has moved away

from her childhood home into new environments constituted through different moral values. As such, she has been prompted to adopt a positive attitude towards lesbians and gay people which is usually embodied in her everyday practices, despite her troubling sense that she may still also ascribe to the conservative Christian values predicated on the unambiguous witness of the scripture against same-sex relations that dominated her childhood family home.

Finally, as we outlined in the introduction to this paper encounters or contact in shared space have been at the heart of attempts to address the question of how we might develop the capacity to live with difference. Jennifer's contact stories, for example, meeting a person with Downs syndrome and members of minority ethnic groups at church, befriending Asian boys at school, or having gay neighbours – are not just about proximity producing a tolerance or understanding of 'difference'. Rather, they are accounts of 'closeness' or intimacy by which we mean relations that make something or someone known. Recalling her contact with a member of the congregation with Downs syndrome Jennifer implicitly describes the capacity of this encounter to have an affect as mediated through her closeness to her father ('he was quite touched by that I think and that probably had an affect on me'); the same capacity to receive affect is evident in her description of contact with lesbians and gay men which is mediated through her closeness to her husband. Her relation with him makes homosexuality known to her. Then, in her account of her school life she has positive encounters with a group of Asian boys because she perceives their shared knowledge of exclusion (on the grounds of faith and socio-economic status) creates a relationship between herself and them, brings them close, despite their obvious gender, religious, ethnic, and cultural differences. In other words, Jennifer's narrative of lived experience of difference

demonstrates that it is not spatial proximity alone that overcomes social difference but rather closeness – it is the act of knowing – or the production of intimacy which aligns different bodies in time and space.

The evidence of this paper is that Jennifer does not see herself as a representative of a particular community/constituency; she hints at a reflexive awareness of the multiplexity of her specific positioning in relation to other members of constituencies/groups to which she might be presumed to belong (e.g. women, mother, middle class, Christian) and in relation to specific encounters. But she is also able to 'shift' outwards because her moral disposition enables her to be receptive to, and put herself in the situation of those, positioned in different social categories from herself (e.g. her Asian schoolboy friends or gay neighbours). Her reflections on her connection with Asian boys from low income households at school and the marginalization they experience shows, for example, how compatible values can cut across differences in positioning and identities – suggesting that in terms of group politics, struggles against prejudice and discrimination can have a specific categorical focus without ever just being confined to that category. As such, while this paper has focused on an individual's narrative of her lived experience of difference it nonetheless has implications for our understanding of group politics.

Notably, Jennifer's account resonates with the notion of transversal politics, a term which originates from a tradition of autonomous left politics in Bologna. This has been mobilized by Yuval-Davis (1999: 94-95) as a standpoint epistemology which '…recognizes that from each positioning the world is seen differently and that any knowledge based on just one positioning is unfinished'. From this perspective notions of difference are not hierarchical.

They assume *a priori* respect for others' positioning – which includes acknowledgement of differential social, economic and political power. Moreover, transversal politics is based on a conceptual - and political – differentiation between positioning, identity and values. People who identify themselves as belonging to the same collectivity or category can be positioned very differently in relation to a range of other social divisions (e.g. class, gender, ability, sexuality, stage in the life cycle etc.). At the same time, people with similar positionings and/or identities can have very different social and political values. As such, transversal politics aims to avoid over-universalism and over-relativism. In this way, it offers the possibility of a political approach to how we might develop the capacity to live with difference and manage the antagonisms inherent in such social relations which is largely missing from the geographies of encounter literature.

Acknowledgements

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