

**‘Community means the World to me’: an ethnographic  
study of a public house and bowling club**

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**Abstract: ‘Community means the World to me’: an ethnographic study of a public house and bowling club.**

This thesis is an ethnographic study of two local institutions within the community of Fallin which explores how twenty-four men understand, maintain and reproduce community and belonging. Throughout, the thesis suggests that the past acts as a stable reference point for the men to deal with social change. The Bowling Club and the Pub are suggested as being sanctuaries for this type of collective remembering to take place as they still reflect a mode of life associated with the past. It is argued that imagined histories were recollected, recreated and maintained through the power of storytelling and sharing experiences to the younger generations or outsiders (Blenkinsopp, 2012; Homans, 1974). This thesis suggests that perceived threats from outsiders only serve to further galvanise the central values of their community (Cohen, 1985; Homans, 1974).

Chapter Two provides a review of the literature and theoretical concepts which sets out the academic foundations of this thesis. The work of Bourdieu shapes the theoretical, methodological and reflexive nature of this project. Chapter Three introduces the ethnographic method which gives this study an in-depth account of the narratives and identities of the men in this project. Chapter Four outlines the reflexive nature of the author’s relationship with the community, the Bowling Club and The Goth and how this affects the interpretations presented in this thesis. Chapter Five provides the reader with descriptive and demographic data of the community of Fallin and the research sites. Chapters Six and Seven analyse the data and directly answer the research question through interpreting interview data and using field notes. Concluding in Chapter Eight, this thesis suggests that the version of community that the men helped to reproduce and maintain is strongly associated with a historical working-class mode of life. This thesis suggests that these local institutions reproduce historical notions of community and belonging through outside forces and incomers challenging this traditional mode of life. Of particular interest is how the younger men in the study often adopt this shared *habitus* and learn how to be a man through regular interactions in The Goth and the Bowling Club.

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## Chapter One

### **Introduction: 'Community means the world to me': an ethnographic study of a public house and bowling club**

It is important to firstly define how the term 'community' will be used throughout this thesis. Community has many different meanings and it is worth noting that community can be understood as a value (Frazer, 1999: 76). This opens up community as an entity which can bring together a number of elements like solidarity, trust, commitment and belonging (Smith, 2001). This synthesis allows, as Cohen (1982) suggests, for communities to be approached as 'communities of meaning'. They act as the most powerful vehicle for reproducing individual belonging to a wider collective. The definition of community which this thesis shall adopt reflects the idea that community can be imagined, used and performed by members:

'People construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity' (Cohen, 1985: 118).

Thus, community is best understood through individual's perceptions, attitudes and crucially how the past shapes as a 'repository of meaning'. The former mining village of Fallin is a community which is still heavily identifiable with the industry that sparked its inception and development in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (MacWhirter, 2004; Mair, 2010). This thesis seeks to understand how this community is remembered, performed and reproduced through the collective memories of twenty-four men. This study centred on two local institutions and the men who frequent them, due to the symbolic and historical importance of each to the development of the wider community of Fallin (Mair, 2010; Kerr, 1991). This should not be read as an omission of women from the history, present or future of the village. Rather, I

wanted to present the reader with an in-depth account of how community and belonging are understood in two local institutions which were closely associated with men and the development of the community's *habitus*. It will be argued that the ties with the past can be found in the symbolism, narratives and behaviour of men who frequent the local institutions of the local Bowling Club (Polmaise Bowling Club) and The Fallin Public House (The Goth). Both of these local sites have been in existence for over 100 years and their inception coincided with the birth of the local collieries in the community of Fallin.<sup>1</sup> The crest of the Bowling Club is of a Colliery Tower and The Goth was formed and maintained by the community of miners (Mair, 2010). On the site where Polmaise No.3 and 4 collieries once stood, there lies a plaque in commemoration to the men who lost their lives and livelihoods within the community of Fallin. It simply states 'Their Light Shall Never Go Dim'.

This study focuses on this commemorative sentiment and seeks to shed further light on the continuing attachment and adherence to a symbolic community that has long since physically disappeared. Memories, nostalgia and collective remembering play a large part in the narratives of the men in this study and are crucial emblems in how their lived realities are performed in both the private and public spheres of the Bowling Club and The Goth (Blenkinsop, 2012; Cohen, 1985). Their stories form the crux of this project and offer insights into the contemporary community of Fallin. Cohen (1985: 15) suggests that:

Community is that entity to which one belongs, greater than kinship but more immediately than the abstraction we call 'society'. It is the arena in which people acquire their most fundamental and most substantial experience of social life outside the confines of the home. (Cohen, 1985: 15)

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<sup>1</sup> The Bowling Club was founded in 1911 and The Goth in 1910.

Belonging to a community, and the collective remembering of those individuals who reproduce it in their daily lives, will be a central focus of this research project. Community, as a concept, will be introduced as a concept that is symbolically constructed through regular reproduction of everyday behaviours by individuals (Cohen, 1985: 11-12). Difference and conflict are important themes throughout much of this thesis, as they act as powerful vehicles for a community to preserve a past way of life that has been suggested as being redundant (Bauman, 2000; Sennett, 1998). Through documenting individuals' collective remembering, it is argued that the men present and maintain an ideal-typical presentation of a mode of life which has been reproduced over successive generations (Connerton, 1989: 1; Flint and Rowlands, 2003: 223). Such an approach to researching community moves beyond the cumbersome objective classification process that stifled communitarianism sociology (Frazer, 1999). It is suggested that each community is unique and one must focus on the individuals' collective identity that helps reinforce and reproduces it (Blokland, 2003). Histories, narratives and distinct discourses are reproduced to present halcyon accounts that lack 'historiographical rigour' (Cohen, 1985: 101; Pearson, 1983). As Connerton (1989: 3-4) suggests, social memory is guided by images and narratives of the past which are legitimised, sustained and conveyed by the present social order. The collective memories of the community, place and identities are robust and can be readily adopted by culturally empathetic younger men who help maintain them (Connerton, 1989). Storytelling is an important tool in reproducing and maintaining community and belonging (Smith, 2001: 1-3).

Prior to outlining the structure of this thesis, it is important to briefly describe the community that is the focus of this research. Fallin is a small village of around 3,000 inhabitants on the outskirts of the town of Stirling in Central Scotland which had a bustling mining industry until it was abandoned in 1987.<sup>2</sup> The tension between remembered history,

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<sup>2</sup> More extensive demographic and historical data will be presented later in the thesis (Chapter Five).



reality and expectations of community presented a paradox whereby narratives acted as a resource upon which to draw in order to make sense of the community that surrounds them today (Cohen, 1985: 99). It is these processes of belonging to a constructed version of community, or as Cohen (1985: 99) suggests the ‘selective constructions of the past’, that are the primary focus of this research as they can tell us a great deal about belonging to the men’s community.

For the twenty-four men researched in this thesis, the closure of the local collieries in 1987 represented a catalyst for the change in their community and how the communal relations prior to 1987 were the nostalgic reference point.<sup>3</sup> It is perhaps why the short descriptive accounts of Fallin by Kerr (1991) and McCormack (1989) focus on the mining industry and argue that the immediate downturn in community relations was because the industry left. Using these accounts and reflecting on the collective remembering of those individuals who maintain community in their daily lives will be a central focus of this thesis.

The chosen sites of research, The Goth and Polmaise Bowling Club, are almost, but not entirely, made up of men.<sup>4</sup> The public house has been a vital site for several researchers over the years. Armstrong’s (1997) ethnographic study on football hooligans used a pub as the site to observe behaviour, rituals and to speak with members of ‘the firm’. Hobbes’ (1988) study on East-End entrepreneurs and detectives required him to drink heavily to blend in with those he was observing and also Sulkunen *et al.* (1985) researched the construction of masculinities in an urban pub in Finland. Wight (1993) and Hey (1986) suggest that the pub is a social setting which rewards a version of masculinity that often subordinates women and other men who do not, or are unwilling to, subscribe to it. These central village institutions will act as the sites to base this partial ethnography and explore community, belonging and

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<sup>3</sup> These themes will be discussed extensively in the analysis chapters (Chapter Seven extensively).

<sup>4</sup> More discussion on the choice of men only participants will be discussed in the Methodology chapter (Chapter Four).

identity. It has led to this project seeking to address the following research question: in what ways do men understand, create and maintain community and belonging?

This question will be explored throughout each chapter. Chapter Two offers a review of the literature which encompasses a range of empirical community studies and theoretical work that has influenced the approach of this thesis. The concept of community is explored in more depth. Cohen's (1985: 118) symbolic approach of understanding and researching a community will be presented as a purposeful way of researching a community of men in that 'people construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity' (Cohen, 1985: 118).

This chapter shall also explore studies on how masculinities are understood and performed (Hobbs, 2013). There will also be discussion of how storytelling acts as a crucial tool for community romance to be expressed (Jackson, 2002). Throughout the thesis, the literature presented in this chapter will be reflected upon and utilised to support my own research (Bourdieu, 1984; Bryman, 2004).<sup>5</sup> The literature review has been edited, amended and developed following analysis as the data required additional sources that reflected the importance of belonging to a community and how community is a relational concept (Becker, 1971; Blenkinsop, 2012; Cohen, 1985; Connerton, 1989; Dumont, 1980; Rogaly and Taylor, 2005). It is a positive facet of employing an approach to research that one can reflect upon what the data are saying and produce theory informed work as opposed to compositing data to fit into theoretically prescribed classifications (Emond, 2000).

Chapter Three outlines the methodological and ethical considerations of this thesis. The ethnographic method enables an intimate relationship to be developed between the researcher and the community. This thesis utilised sequential analysis as a means to understand, explore and develop embryonic themes which Becker (1971) said was 'the

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<sup>5</sup> As Dennis *et al* (1957) suggest, it is important to situate a community study in context with other similar studies. Each community study is culturally and historically specific, yet they argue that researchers should seek trends to validate research.

procedure which allows you to make use of what you learn one day in your data-gathering the next day'. This chapter presents a research timeline which outlines the longitudinal nature of this research project as well as documenting the benefits and challenges of researching 'friends' (Pahl, 2000). Within this chapter, the ethical dilemmas that were seen to be of central importance prior to commencement of fieldwork are discussed. This acts as a useful reflexive exercise which highlights how foreseen ethical concerns are often redundant upon entering the field and a whole host of other ethical dilemmas arise (Homan, 1991).

Chapter Four develops the methodological and ethical framework further. This reflexivity chapter offers the reader a means to understand my relationship to the men being studied. It is argued that the research process is not external to the researcher, who is understood as an active agent in the production of knowledge (Gouldner, 1971). Bourdieu is discussed in this chapter as he advocates the purposive nature of researching phenomena.<sup>6</sup> Reflexivity in the research process is, from a Bourdieusian perspective, an essential component of any research project that helps render the objective/subjective dualism redundant (Deer, 2008). There is a trend in some sociological research towards a more autobiographical research narrative which is found in much contemporary ethnography which has embraced the entwined relationship between the researcher and the purpose of their social enquiry (Lincoln & Denzin, 2000). Yet, this research favours the approach of Wacquant (2014: 4) where he states that researchers ought to embrace 'habitus-driven sociology':

It propels us [social scientists] to traverse the multiple layers that mesh into the fabric of the everyday lifeworld – the forte of phenomenology as instigated by Husserl and Meleau-Ponty – and to the carnality of action that ordinary social science...steadfastly erases from its accounts. (Wacquant, 2014: 4).

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<sup>6</sup> Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) was a French social philosopher and during his career studied a wide range of topics from education and art to politics, literature and philosophy. His sociology influence on this project shall be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

Chapter Five introduces the village of Fallin and provides socio-historical context to the history of Fallin and the local institutions of The Goth and Bowling Club (Kerr, 1991; Mair, 2010). This chapter introduces historical, documentary analysis to outline the socio-economic development of the community. Throughout, this chapter charts the social, cultural and economic development of The Bowling Club, pub and Fallin in order to contextualise the analysis chapters which reiterate the importance of belonging to a community that has strong ties to the past (Andersen, 1991; Cohen, 1985).

The remaining two analysis chapters, Chapters Six and Seven, form the core of the research project and address the central research question of understanding how the men understand, create and maintain notions of community and belonging. Chapter Six uses interview data that are supported by ethnographic notes to highlight the importance of storytelling as an important method of belonging and maintaining community. This chapter also argues that the men operate within a community of ‘complimentary opposition’ (Dumont, 1980). This means that the ‘True Believers’, or the men who most readily reflect the hegemonic traits of their community, require the ‘Sceptical Conformers’ or outsiders to solidify their communal identity.<sup>7</sup> The Chapter also reflects on social divisions such as gender, religious identity and class which are often said to be integral to the hegemonic masculinity of the community (Hobbs, 2013). Chapter Seven explores the research question directly and argues that the men present an ideal-typical version of the past which relies heavily on nostalgia (Andersen, 1991; Cohen, 1985; Dumont, 1980). Attempts are made to reject the perceived incompatibility of the concept of traditional understandings of community with advanced capitalist society that have been a focus of some academics (Bauman, 2000; Beck, 1992; Sennett, 1998). Reflecting on Durkheim’s (1964) argument, it is

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<sup>7</sup> Homans (1974) constructed a schema of group participation. It consisted of the True Believers who were committed to the cause and values of the community down to the escapees who were a part of the group but often were not committed and often undermined its value-system.

possible for traditional forms of community (mechanical solidarity) to operate alongside more interdependent individualism (organic solidarity) (Cohen, 1985). Bourdieu is used as the theoretical backdrop upon which to describe and analyse the men's narratives and interactions. The work of Homans (1974) is used in Chapter Seven to define the types of men that are within each local institution.

The thesis concludes in Chapter Eight, arguing that for the men in this study, community is based on a nostalgic remembering of the past. They negotiate the present based on their past set of dispositions which are strengthened by incomers (Dumont, 1980; Homans, 1974). Age is highlighted as an important variable, and to some extent, the younger men are not as committed to this symbolic construction of a community, yet still very much understand and react to the importance of it. Community is thus presented as a relational concept that is based on the collective memories of a community that members acknowledge and help reproduce. In an insightful epistemological position, Wight (1993) eloquently describes the motivations for his influential community study of an industrial lowland village in Scotland:

Concern with postmodernism amongst many sociologists illustrates how the theoretical interests that arise from the metropolitan professional subculture in which most social scientists live can prompt debates largely irrelevant to other sections of the population. According to Simmel's analysis of 'modernity', Cauldmoss is, in many respects, pre-modern (Wight, 1993:3).

Fallin, the community at the heart of this study, could readily replace 'Cauldmoss' in this description when Wight (1993) conducted his partial ethnography in 1984. In part, a key aim of this thesis is to discover whether much of Wight's (1993) findings still resonate in a 21<sup>st</sup>

Century working-class community. The community study tradition has a strong history in British Sociology when social scientists sought to understand the impact of urbanisation (Frankenburg, 1957; Young and Willmott, 1955), de-industrialisation (Roberts, 1993) and the effects of modernity on the working-class (Charlesworth, 2000; Savage, 2000). The work of Charlesworth (2000) incorporated his own socialisation as a member of the working-class community that he was researching in order to give a phenomenological account of being suffocated in a desolate environment that confined individuals to a life of enduring misery. Such bleak accounts of life were skilfully substantiated with the work of Bourdieu who advocated the importance of understanding the *habitus* or lived experiences of the members of the community. This project has been influenced by the theoretical and methodological approaches employed by Charlesworth (2000). His meticulously reflexive prose and phenomenological epistemology harboured a constant conflict between the working-class narratives he revealed and a middle-class discourse that often downplayed their plight and realities. Charlesworth's (2000) critical and reflexive approach to the research process has greatly influenced this project, and a chapter is dedicated to reflexivity as it ought to influence every stage of the research process.

The sociology of Bourdieu is utilised throughout all stages of the research process. Bourdieu (2001) dedicated much of his academic work towards challenging class differences. He often favoured the ethnographic method and using a variety of techniques to gather rich data (Back, 2005; Grenfell, 2005). Researcher reflexivity was viewed as paramount as it enhanced the validity of research through offering the reader an insight into the creation of knowledge (Bourdieu, 2001). Bourdieu's concepts, academic work and his approach to methodologically coherent research highlight the compatibility of using this methodology when researching a working-class community in Fallin.

This thesis explores the identities of twenty-four men and how they understand and belong to their version of the community of Fallin. The extended time in the field has provided a rich and detailed version of events which has also incorporated a change in my commitment and involvement in each field.<sup>8</sup> Theoretically, I found the works of Bourdieu (1978), Bauman (2000), Cohen (1985) and Homans (1974) resonated with the tales, actions and values of the men I interviewed, observed and with whom I drank. Previous empirical studies like Wight (1993), Charlesworth (2000) and Blenkinsop (2012) have lent weight to my findings in that they were identifiable in different types of community and in different stages of their historical development. Ethnography, and the community studies tradition, was deemed the most insightful methodology to gather data from the field. As I state in Chapter Three, the ethics involved in doing this strand of social research was always a central concern of mine. I have tried to present my findings in a manner which makes them accessible for the reader and have used photographs, field notes, extended field notes and imagery to bring the words to life (Blokland, 2005).

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<sup>8</sup> Discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The first section of this chapter looks at how communities are constructed and how important they are in helping us to understand social change (Bauman, 2003; Durkheim, 1964). This section then explores the importance of identity, belonging and the collective remembering of the past. It is argued that they are crucial for men to make sense of the social world they inhabit (Blenkinsop, 2012; Cohen, 1985). Throughout, the content directly engages with the research question about how the men in this study understand, create and maintain community and belonging. It is suggested that the power of storytelling plays a crucial role in the maintenance of this community and identity-making (Smith, 2001; Stanley, 2006). Throughout this chapter, empirical examples of research on communities are provided alongside theoretical offerings from Bauman (2000, 2003 and 2004), Bourdieu (1984 and 1991) and Cohen (1982 and 1985). It is argued that community is socially constructed by individuals who endlessly recreate and maintain it (Yerbury, 2012: 196).

### **2.2 Belonging, remembering and constructing community**

People manifestly believe in the notion of community, either as an ideal or reality, and sometimes as both simultaneously. (Hamilton, 1985: 8).

Attempts to define community are fraught with difficulty; for example Frazer (1999) charts at least 56 academic definitions of the term. Cohen (1982: 38) suggests when researching community academics ought to 'seek an understanding of it by trying to capture some sense of their experience and of the meanings they attach to community'. This reflects the definition of community outlined above as arguably the experience, constituency and history of one community cannot be transported neatly to the next locale (Blokland, 2003). This



project referred to and applied the concepts of solidarity put forward by Durkheim (1964), Cohen's (1985) work on symbolic construction of belonging and Bauman's (2000) and empirical studies on community (Blokland, 2005; Blenkinsop, 2012; Charlesworth, 2000; Cohen, 1982; Frankenberg, 1957 and 1969; Gluckman, 1963; Jones, 2011; Kapferer, 1998; Strathearn, 1982; Roberts, 2001; Wight, 1993; Yerbury, 2011). These studies provide a holistic account of being in a community.

Durkheim places significance on the cohesive nature of being a part of a community and suggests it is a moral force which could function in a manner best suited to deal with the problems of the modern age. Durkheim's (1964: 129) theory of solidarity is especially pertinent for understanding the communities of the Bowling Club and the Pub and the relationship of the individual to the wider community (Cohen, 1985: 24). He surmised that there are two forms of solidarity that bind individuals to one another and society. Mechanical solidarity can be understood as 'society acting and living within us' (Durkheim, 1964: 129) and organic solidarity which is built upon differences that develop among individuals. Yet these same differences form the basis for 'their integration and collaboration in a solidary whole' (Cohen, 1985: 24). Crucially, and this is often misinterpreted, Durkheim (1964) is not necessarily describing two distinct epochs, rather he suggests that it can be two aspects of society at any given time:

In the first, what we call society is a more or less organised totality of beliefs and sentiments common to all members of the group: this is the collective type. On the other hand, the society in which we are solidary in the second instance is a system of different, special functions which definite relations unite. These two societies really make up only one. They are two aspects of one and the same reality. (Durkheim, 1964: 129).

Community, in Durkheim's (1964) view, relies on mechanical solidarity which helps solidify the group's values and norms. Conceptualising a community in this manner suggests that conflict and negotiation is a key component of a functioning community (Cohen, 1985; Frankenberg, 1969; Gluckman, 1963). Arguably community interactions can be viewed as a dramaturgical project whereby individuals project a particular version of themselves based on their definition of a particular situation (Goffman, 1959). Such a performance is loaded with symbolism as it must be convincing enough for their peers to accept as a legitimate attempt to enhance solidarity between the players (Blenkinsop, 2012: 25). Similarly, Bourdieu (1996: 89) stresses that agents are not passive carriers of structures and instead they are active role-takers who negotiate their performances based on their back-stage strategies to manage expectations from the situation (Fowler, 2011).

In this project, the expediency and pragmatism of some men to appease the wider group was often coupled with the reward of continued partial membership to either field.<sup>9</sup> Reflecting upon Durkheim's (1964: 129) ideas on solidarity, the whole was held together through an intimate web of symbolism, difference and sameness that is a feature common in many societies (Cohen, 1985; Gluckman, 1963). This project sought to capture the diversity of the men's experiences of community by exploring how individuals themselves attach meaning to their community. Attention shall now turn to other academics who explore the symbolic power of belonging, remembering and maintaining community.

Belonging to a community is, as Bauman (2000: 4) suggests, the utopia that many of us yearn for which affords us security from the uncertainties that surround us. Such belonging, as Cohen (1982) argues, also implies an intimate relationship that is earned through working towards reproducing traditions and values. Blenkinsop (2012) and Cohen

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<sup>9</sup> See Chapter Seven. This shall be discussed in great depth through reflecting upon the work of Homans (1974) and the five typologies of participation within a group.

(1982), in their respective studies on rural communities in Northumberland and the Shetland Isles, argue that ‘belonging implies very much more than merely having been born in the place’ (Cohen, 1982: 21). This is important for this project as it suggests that there is more to a community than demographics. Community has to be earned, understood and reproduced in your identity. Linking back to the definition, community is socially constructed by those who seek to gain the most by its existence and is a repository of meaning for members (Cohen, 1985: 118).

At the time of Cohen’s (1982: 24) study on the Whalsay community, a remote island in the Shetland Isles, it was said to have less than one percent of its population coming from outside its locality. Belonging to a community like Whalsay suggests that Durkheim’s (1964) mechanical solidarity was especially pertinent as each member was ‘recognisable of the community as a whole and of its cultural panoply’ (Cohen, 1982: 21). Fallin, the community of this study, traditionally reflected such homogeneity of heritage and culture although the village was developed from incomers from Lanarkshire and the wider Stirling burgh (Mair, 2010). Yet, in the past thirty years Fallin, like so many other villages in Central Scotland, has encountered incomers moving into the locale.<sup>10</sup> What links Whalsay and Fallin, and indeed Cohen’s (1982) approach to belonging, is the underlying premise that in order to belong, one must be visible, active and affirm the local customs and cultures of local structures such as the Bowling Club or the Goth (Phillips, 2010). For the men in Fallin, this often involved being there in person to represent the Bowling Club or sit in your familiar seat and drink the same amount of your preferred drink. Of course, in the wider community of Fallin other individuals took part in different customs which maintained community and their affiliation to it. For example, the regular attendance at Church, keep-fit classes, bingo and the

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<sup>10</sup> See Chapter Four. Historical, demographic and contextual data about Fallin and the fields of research (Polmaise Bowling Club and Fallin Public House Society) will be discussed more fully.

metronomic school drop-off and pick-up routine provided platforms for community to be performed.

Wight's (1993) community study of what Bauman (2000) would describe as a 'real community' captured the subtle differentiation between acceptance and tolerance by the wider community. Wight (1993: 232) himself expressed that the social cohesion of the village ought to be understood in Durkheimian terms:

It was founded on the common past inherited by all those 'belonging' to Cauldmoss, and was reproduced through a common interpretation of the fundamental cognitive categories that made up their world. (Wight, 1993: 232).

Curiously, Wight (1993) adds a layer to Cohen's (1982) thesis on belonging believing that it was inherited by the next generation of inhabitants. The shared history of kin and kinship demarcated individuals, who shared many of the necessary dispositions, but came from a different village with its own set of local customs and traditions (Young and Willmott, 1957). In Fallin, this was exemplified around the issue of social housing and the policy of allowing individuals to choose preferences within a local authority area. Several men commented on how this structural force marked a shift in community relations and a wariness of incomers living in their midst. A common trend among the interviews was how their wives came to live in Fallin, often from other local villages, and could live in Fallin for thirty years or more but will never belong to the village. This was found to be the case in a community study conducted by Strathearn (1982: 89) where birth was the prime factor in belonging to a community. Her study in Elmdon captures the experience of belonging reflected by the men in this study when she writes that 'Being "real Elmdon" depends on birth status. In-coming

spouses can never be truly assimilated...the “real Elmdon” are those born to certain families’ (Strathearn, 1982: 89).

The choice of phrase is revealing as it implies that the in-coming individuals ought to have their identity subsumed by the collective. Symbolically, it leaves such individuals on the edge of the community peering in towards the group despite often sharing the necessary set of dispositions needed for full participation. Keeping incomers on the periphery is also a symbolic act reflecting some men’s desire to keep structural forces away from fully dismantling the remembered community they fought hard to protect (Charlesworth, 2000). Cohen (1982: 7) offers a cogent explanation for such cultural defensiveness by suggesting that when a group or community comes under threat from outside structural forces the automatic response is to become more tightly knit and local. It would be problematic to dismiss such views as parochial triviality as it is possible to suggest that understanding the messy intimacy of real communities offer far greater insights than one would find if we explore national or religious identity for example (Bauman, 2000; Cohen, 1982: 9-10). This is why Cohen (1985) rightly suggests each community ought to be studied and understood from its core looking out in order to gain the specificities of their community. Being born into and thus embodying the *habitus* are crucial in whether you are tolerated or as Cohen (1982: 21) puts it, the individual is part of the ‘cultural panoply’.

Alongside belonging to a community, Cohen (1985) and Wight (1993) both identify the central importance of remembering community through nostalgia, symbols and myth. Collective public performances, like carnivals, Highland Games or the celebration of the Glorious Twelfth Orange march, galvanise certain groups within the community to pay tribute to customs (Blenkinsop, 2012). As Kapferer (1998: 150) suggests, public ceremonies gain new significance throughout time as the process of remembering history takes on new life in light of structural forces surrounding them.

Kerr (1991) in his chronological account of Fallin spoke of the ‘lost community’ following the abandonment of the local colliery in 1987. Jones (2011) also reflected this sentiment in other former-mining communities in the North of England following the de-industrialisation of their towns and villages. The past offers a tantalising glimpse of what they could still have were it not for structural forces dictating otherwise (Charlesworth, 2000). The perceived freedom from the pit came with a human cost with many losing the ‘dignity, self-respect, honour and human sociality’ that were afforded them during their industrial past (Charlesworth, 2000: 49). Yet, there are cautionary tales against dreaming of the paradise lost (Bauman, 2000; Pearson, 1983). Roberts (2001: 88) captures such a paradox between myth and reality for many individuals dealing with the loss of real communities:

It was never really like that...the close-knit working-class communities could be claustrophobic; there was no privacy; it was difficult to prevent everyone knowing one’s most intimate business. There were neighbourhood feuds; children (and sometimes adults) fought in the streets. These were risky places. (Roberts, 2001: 88).

Roberts (2001) questions the merits in remembering a past so fondly that was often interspersed with social problems and obtrusiveness in its social relations. The realities of these communities are often glossed over in nostalgic remembering when they are viewed as the ideal-typical version of how a community ought to be formed. The stifling nature of living, working and socialising with a close-knit group of people is often why many individuals seek to move into gated communities that allow greater freedom and privacy (Bauman, 2000). Crucially, it was exactly these traits that some men in Fallin missed. Tales of leaving children with neighbours who had the collective responsibility to keep them in check, knowing the local gossip and stories of poaching were recited with fondness.

Charlesworth (2000) largely neglected the humour, fun and fondness in his study of the working class in Rotherham which this thesis seeks to address in Chapter Six in reference to the community of Fallin. Kerr (1991), Mair (2010) and Phillips (2010) all speak of the community of Fallin's familiarity and happiness with their past way of life. Charlesworth (2000) captures this process of remembering eloquently in the following quotation:

The industrial past is still living in the dispositions of the old, who still speak to each other in public space and who embody a certain form of concern about matters of human consequence. (Charlesworth, 2000: 49).

### **2.3 The importance of storytelling**

Stories belong to the relationship at hand, and therefore vary from one relationship to another; a television interviewer gets a different story of a lost football game from the one players tell each other. (Tilly, 2006: 16-17).

Stories are a version of events which can rework, simplify and present events depending on how the narrator wants to present to a particular audience. By this understanding, stories have to be understood with a great deal of cultural awareness if one is to use them as a means of understanding a version of community and belonging. Yet, stories and conversations allow communities to save face as the very process of remembering a past community is in fact a social construction where 'history after a fact' can lead to a specific version of the past being remembered (Stanley, 2006: 37). A manufactured representation of the past can be developed which also can lead to the forgetting of events that bring into question their paradise lost (Bauman, 2000; Blenkinsop, 2012; Stanley, 2006: 4). Framing memory in this manner can witness the development of community through generations which incorporates social

change. Drawing back to the definition of community outlined earlier, storytelling is a key tool for community to be symbolically constructed in order to frame present-day realities (Cohen, 1985: 118).

Stanley (2006: 21) suggests that viewing this process of memory-making in such a reflective manner requires the input of these story-tellers in any analysis. Bauman (2003: 10) also explores how old meanings and modes of life often disappear from our memories and are replaced with new logic 'unbound by the worries of continuity and relieved from its burdens'. The shift in discourse gives individuals a version of their past that makes more sense in the present day lives. The following quotation illustrates how stories act as a creative process whereby both the storyteller and the audience build new, and shed layers of, community in a dialectical process:

This constant transaction between the creative storyteller and the imaginations of those who receive the stories builds community and may underpin a capacity for shared vision and action. The personal feeds the collective while the storytelling collective nourishes the personal. (Smith, 2001: 3).

Telling stories can help individuals make sense of social change and inculcates newer members to the community. Indeed, storytelling is an important method of fostering belonging to a community (Stanley, 2008). Norrick (1997) states that communal identities and group cohesiveness is reinforced through regular retelling of well-known local stories. Riesmann (2001) argues that storytellers are performing in front of peers and incomers to convey a sense of what it means to be a part of their present and future lives. Smith (2001: 3) suggests that storytelling is a means for individuals to reconnect with other individuals following the corrosion of trust brought about by an 'economic system driven by impersonal



mechanisms and objectives'. In communities like Fallin, which have encountered the displacement of local industry (Phillips, 2010), local institutions which have remained constant throughout change act as important symbolic spaces to recollect, reminisce and reproduce community and belonging. In many ways, storytellers are the narrators who frame a version of community in a way to instil connection and belonging among its members. Whether they are manufactured memories, myths or musings about the past mode of life, stories can tell us a great deal about how community and belonging are reproduced. It does not necessarily matter if the stories are true, it is the meaning they have for those who tell, and who hear, them which is important (Nadel-Klein, 1991: 509). Indeed, as Plummer (1995: 174) suggests, 'stories gather people around them'. Storytelling can act as a social glue to bind seemingly diverse individuals so that present-day connections to the past are empathetically reproduced. For Jackson (2002), stories allows for relationships to be maintained and for individuals to be rooted in the wider community:

This empowering aspect of storytelling is inextricably linked to the sharing and integration of one's experiences with that of others. In recounting one's own story, one salvages and reaffirms, in the face of dispersal, defeat, and death, the *social* bonds that bind one to a community of kindred souls. (Jackson, 2002: 133).

Storytelling also allows communities to forget (Blenkinsop, 2012; Stanley, 2006).

Individuals, episodic events and poverty can be airbrushed from the collective conscience in favour of a version of community which is framed as being better than their present day experiences. Hobsbawm and Ranger (2002) argue that many traditions are not remembered accurately but are socially constructed to validate the present, and future, paths of the community. Stories can act as expedient tools to shape individuals, for example, on what it

means to belong to a community or how men ought to act. It is why Cohen (1982) and Stanley (2006) suggest that community is remembered and acts as a controlling technique to manage social change. It is important for this study to be aware of the historical context of how stories are presented as often what is not said, may arguably be useful in understanding how community and belonging is reproduced (Blenkinsop, 2012; Gordon, 2008). Storytelling is thus a useful method for social researchers who can understand the importance of nostalgia in shaping identities.

#### **2.4 Memory making and community romance**

In relation to this study, acknowledging the cohesive facet of manipulating memory reinforces the importance of understanding the community from the men who live and socialise in this domain (Cohen, 1985). To merely describe, or rely upon, documentary data to make inferences about the fabric of this community would only paint a partial picture of it. One needs the depth afforded by an ethnographic study which can offer insights into the importance of the stories they share (Blenkinsop, 2012; Wight, 1993). This will be developed in Chapter Three that explores the methodology and ethical framework of this project.

Following on from the cohesive quality of remembering community, it can be argued that understanding the construction of communities relies on the power of myths, diaspora and solidarity (Amit and Rapport, 2002; Andersen, 1991; Bauman, 2000; Delanty, 2003: 118). Dumont (1980) suggests that imagined communities help individuals perform in social worlds that are still strongly bounded by tradition. The rituals, shared past and public performances are loaded with symbolism that helps reproduce community over generations. Cohen (1985) develops this understanding of community suggesting how important nostalgia, belonging and idealism are in constructing present day communities. For Cohen (1985: 19) the symbolic importance of community enables individuals to make meaning of their lives. Each construction of community is relative and Cohen (1985: 20) embraces such *verstehen*-

like principles in preferring to understand a community through the eyes, actions and identities of individuals who reproduce it. Understanding community enables academics like Andersen (1991) to suggest that imagined communities afford comradeship and affinity even in the smallest of examples and that 'people in the community will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion' (Andersen, 1991: 6-7).

The premise that the past can live on in the present through images, narratives and symbolic exchanges captures the social constructionism of community which this thesis adopts. The blend of mechanical and organic solidarity in communities, such as Fallin, helps maintain the imagined community which acts as a reference point for the men in this study and others (Blenkinsop, 2012). It is possible to suggest that Andersen's (1991) ideal-typical understanding of community does not account for incomers and outsiders who share communion for different reasons. The work of Homans (1974) was deemed the most useful means to understand such seemingly expedient cohesion. In *Social Behaviour: Its elementary forms* (1974), Homans was interested in group behaviour in small groups and particularly how influencing people in this setting afforded them greater status.

Homans (1974: 100-102) describes five responses to how individuals act within a group or an organisation. Firstly, the 'True Believers' who, in Andersen's (1991) terms, most readily reflect and reproduce the ideal-typical version of the community of the Bowling Club and the Pub. Secondly, are the 'Freeloaders' who share many of the hopes and aspirations of the community yet are not as active in publicly maintaining them (Birchall, 1988: 163). The 'Sceptical Conformers' are reluctant passengers in the community who are not prepared to embody the dispositions of the group yet seek benefits from participation (*Ibid*). The last two categories of participation are the 'Holdouts' and 'Escapees' who are on the periphery of the group and play little positive part in the maintenance of the community (Homans, 1974).

Crucially, each classification of individual helps maintain community through their own needs and values (Durkheim, 1964). Homans (1974: 113) suggested, in the following quotation, that stratification of individuals, within a seemingly homogenous group, are inherent and help perpetuate commitment to a social group, like a Bowling Club:

In every group there are apt to be members, the true believers, who would conform in any event. Some others are led to conform in order to avoid losing the social rewards that the true believers would deny them if they continued to deviate...but if deviates manage to hold out against this pressure, there comes a point where their nonconformity begins to increase instead of decreasing, and the group has lost control over them. (Homans, 1974: 113).

Homans (1974) was influenced strongly by Goffman (1959) and formed his theories reflecting on a range of social experiments into group behaviour. The power relations within a group is key in order to maintain conformity and how dissenters can actually serve as a catalytic force to compel the 'True Believers' to cling to their community and mode of life. Homans' (1974: 100-102) typology is used as an analytical tool in Chapters Six and Seven to explore the differentiation of the men in this study. Such typological tools have been used by other academics in their attempts to differentiate belonging. Gilligan (1987: 80) placed individuals on a sliding-scale around whether they were an incomer or a local in his study of a Cornish town. Phillips (1986:144), in his study of a Yorkshire village called Muker, developed a similar approach of classifying individuals to the method adopted by this project (Homans, 1974). Shades ranged from being labelled as 'real Yorkshire Dales-folk' at one extreme, to 'people from away' at the other, with 'real Muker', 'new incomer' and 'old incomer' among others in between (Blenkinsop, 2012: 40). Such arbitrary labels help the

researcher to understand how the group functions with many disparate factions within its midst. Indeed, conflict within a community can be viewed as a positive force that galvanises the ‘True Believers’, or ‘Real Yorkshire Dales-folk’ in Phillips (1986) study, into defending their version of community (Durkheim, 1964). Frankenberg (1957) explored divisions in society and how they in fact affirmed unity within a rural community on the Welsh-English border. Blenkinsop (2012) reflects upon Frankenberg’s (1957) study and how researching public institutions can offer tantalising inferences into social solidarity and change:

Frankenberg is particularly interested in three public activities: politics, football and the carnival, all of which bring villagers into contact with outsiders, and with incomers used as ‘fall-guys’ whom villagers can blame when things do go wrong, further contributing to village cohesion...Cohen (2005: 607) writes that its underlying theme was communal conflict in the face of economic decline, discussing how Frankenberg focused on communal events as a context in which to study this conflict, to generate insights regarding social and economic change in Britain more generally. (Blenkinsop, 2012: 40).

Reflecting on both Homans’ (1974) and Frankenberg’s (1957) attitudes towards difference within a community, one can find links to Durkheim’s (1964) understanding of crime and deviance as a prime force in reinforcing solidarity within society. Difference is in fact now an important requirement for communities, like the Bowling Club and the Pub, to continue to reminisce about a ‘society acting and living within us’ (Durkheim, 1964: 24). Homans’ (1974) work is thus a useful conceptual tool for critically understanding how social change is managed, and reproduced, within communities.

Imagining a community plays a central part in the reproduction of identity which is reinforced, and shaped, by myths of shared consciousness and communion from previous generations (Bradley, 2007: 17). Such a concept also can be applied lower down the ladder of abstraction (Sartori, 1970) through exploring how communities harbour a strong sense of collective effervescence based on the history of a specific community (Kerr, 1991). Cohen (1985) captures the importance of immersing oneself in the community or social world one is documenting in order to fully grasp the importance of belonging to it:

As one goes down the scale of objective referents of the boundary become less and less clear, until they may be quite invisible to those outside. But also as you go down this scale, they become more important to their members for they relate to increasingly intimate areas of their lives or refer to more substantial areas of their identities. (Cohen, 1985: 13).

The history that individuals share with one another, means a great deal to them, their families and their community. Castells (1997: 61) highlights how individuals are now trying to find local solutions to global problems that uprooted long settled populations and industries (Bauman, 2003: 19). The disconnection of people from their community has led to individuals becoming more tribal in order to protect themselves from danger. Castells (1992: 61) argued that individuals were ‘defenceless against the global whirlwind, people stuck to themselves’. Bourdieu’s (1958) study on the Kabyle people in Algeria suggested that they held on to their traditional *habitus* as the onset of colonialism and capitalism engulfed their social world (Sallaz and Zavisca, 2007: 35). In light of uncertainty, communities close rank and seek sanctuary in belonging and remembering an idealised version of life (Cohen, 1985).

Wacquant's (2004: 44-46) analysis on the urban ethnography of a boxing community illustrates how the memories and legacy passed on from a previous generation are manifested in the present. He shows that young men who have been inculcated in a stable working-class environment most readily adopt the pugilistic *habitus* of their forefathers in the boxing sense (Sallaz and Zavisca, 2007: 35). Wacquant's (2004) methodological and reflexive approach to researching the Chicago boxing gym members is also extremely pertinent to this project. Hilgers (2009: 742-3) states that even though Wacquant was embedded into the fabric of gym life, he was still different from the boxers and his social trajectory was on a different path to his peers:

Wacquant's book shows that adopting the Manly Art in the ghetto cannot be reduced to the moments spent in the ring or in the gym training. Becoming a fighter is to acquire an ethos and ethic of life transposable outside the ring. (Hilgers, 2009: 743).

Wacquant's (2004) experience as a boxer was a choice, an academic curiosity, which was almost peripheral to his life outside the ring. Such demarcation was not available for the professional and amateur boxers who fought and trained alongside him. This trajectory was what they had been training for through their consumption of the working-class pedagogy of their neighbourhoods (Hilgers, 2009: 743; Wacquant, 2009: 142-143). Like Wacquant, I had a different life to the men I drank and played bowls alongside. Reflecting on Wacquant's (2004) approach allows individuals with freedom to acquire the necessary dispositions needed to belong to a specific field (Hilgers, 2009). It also highlights that despite his best efforts, the process of remaking one's self is tough and is often prohibited to the individual by their early socialisation process (Wacquant, 2009: 142).

Day (2006: 38) likened community to the ‘most seamless of webs’ and the dexterity and pervading nature of such a metaphor reflects many of the community studies mentioned. The individual, and their aspirations, is largely subsumed by viewing the community as an entity that exists *sui generis* (Day, 2006; Ennew, 1980). Williams (1976: 76) suggested that the concept of ‘community’ is unlike all other forms of social organisation such as nation, state, society in that it is universally seen as positive. Yet, many recent scholars have challenged this and point out the ‘darker side’ to communities as places of exclusion, oppression and a key site for the interplay of social divisions (Crow, 2002; Crow and Maclean, 2006, Crow and Mah, 2012: 2; Hoggett, 1997). Other sociologists have suggested that community is now an echo of halcyon days which have become harder to find in real life (Bauman, 2000). In the words of Hobsbawm (1994: 428): ‘Never was the word ‘community’ used more indiscriminately and emptily than in the decades when communities in the sociological sense became hard to find in real life’.

Similarly, Castells (1997: 66) suggests that when ‘social networks dissolve time and space, people anchor themselves in places and recall their historic memory’. It is why this thesis, having reflected upon the literature, believes that for the men in this study, community has arguably become a symbolic construction. To the vast majority of citizens, traditional communities like Fallin are no longer isolated islands protecting those who belong to them from outside forces (Bauman, 2000; Day, 2006). The rise of social networking is one arena where individuals are breaking free from the messy intimacy of communities whilst still taking the positives from being a part of a group (Bauman, 2000: 54; Bauman, 2004; Crow and Mah, 2012: 2). The processes of making friends, and de-friending, offer a remedy for individuals who attempt to overcome the conflict between liberty and security (Bauman, 2004: 107). Such perennial tension between liberty and security, makes the computer-mediated community a primary tool for individuals who yearn to belong. Individuals



continue to have the complex web of community along with the ultimate freedom of painless disconnection. Bauman (2004: 107) highlights how transient social networks appear in relation to our traditional understanding of real communities by writing that ‘the network feels worryingly like a wind-blown dune of quicksand rather than a building site for reliable social bonds’.

New versions of community can be viewed as reformulating the very fabric of social relations as they are transient and not forged upon the collective remembered past that members share. Indeed, some contemporary researchers now speak of ‘boundaries’ adding new dimensions to our notions of belonging to social groups (Crow and Mah, 2012: 2). Social networks allow individuals to fabricate community based on tastes and aesthetics (Bourdieu, 1984). Blackshaw (2010: 75) speaks of virtual communities as moving beyond traditional understandings of social solidarity which is based on kin or locale. Social network analysts are interested in the interactions within the community, power relations and the use of storytelling as a means of social capital (*Ibid*). It moves beyond the assumption that community is a structural entity, rather it is a key site for understanding social relations and memory making. Through researching local institutions and applying this critical approach, one can shed light on who, what and why community is remembered. It is important to mention at this juncture that many of these examples have been used to document male interaction in the community. This is a deliberate decision of this project due to the fact that this study only has looked at twenty-four men’s version of community.<sup>11</sup>

## **2.5 Masculinities**

The masculine world of the local pub...to the outside makes no sense. It transgresses the norms of daily life and offers a grotesque affront to seriousness. Yet it is by no means insignificant, nor is it meaningless. Life at the local pub, the actual content of

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<sup>11</sup> This is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

activities, is structured according to the cultural understandings which dominate the whole way of life of the suburban dweller. (Sulkunen et al., 1985: 16).

The local pub is one setting where masculinities can be performed and reproduced. Yet, as Sulkunen *et al.* (1985: 255) suggest, the version of masculinity which is performed and rewarded is often an antithesis of what is expected outside the confines of the pub. This section will explore the literature concerning masculinities and suggest that social spaces, like the pub and sporting settings, encourage types of masculinity to be performed by individuals (Sands, 2000).

Seidler (1997) suggests that men are trapped into living out ideals that are not their own making. The societal pressure, manifested through education, sport and family require young boys to prove that they can be ‘man enough’ to fit into dominant gender regimes. Rutherford (1998) argues that discussions around masculinity were consistently reduced to cumbersome generalisations that labelled men as either as a ‘retributive man’ or a ‘new man’. The ‘retributive man’ classification represented men who represent traditional masculine values of strength and conflict with the ‘new man’ defined as being associated with being emotionally open, embracing more traditional women’s values and in terms of how they sold their labour. This led many academics to become interested in men’s studies to dispel the notion that there was ever a uniform definition of masculinity (Hobbs, 2013: 384). Instead, they wanted to shed light on the many versions of masculinity that have traditionally been subsumed in traditional representations of men as leaders and oppressors (Hobbs, 2013: 384). The following quotation captures areas which academics have researched in order to reframe masculinities:

The fields of interest now considered under the umbrella of men's studies include: the body, sport, sex, family (particularly fathering), military service, masculinity in culture and art, violence against women, and masculinity in institutions. (Hobbs, 2013: 385).

By undertaking research in a variety of settings, literature on masculinities has naturally favoured case studies as useful means to make inferences about how gender relations and identities are understood. Foley's (1990) ethnography of an American high school football team provides a useful leisure/historical comparison with this study on how a game can lead to the celebration and reproduction of dominant codes of gender. The whole school positioned themselves in accordance to the most admired form of masculinity which indirectly marginalised other versions of it (Connell, 1995). Also, community studies have often been useful gateways for researchers to understand more about the private and public representations of masculinities (Dicks *et al.*, 1998; Sulkunen, 1985; Wight, 1993). Yet, the very nature of these studies leads to contextually specific findings and to questions about how masculinities can be understood (Hobbs, 2013). Connell and Messerschmidt (2005: 832) suggest that there are a great many masculinities but there is a normative version in each society in accordance to which men position themselves. This can be defined as 'hegemonic masculinity' which provides men, and researchers, with a template of 'the currently most honoured way of being a man, requiring all other men to position themselves in relation to it' (*Ibid*).

This is important for studies such as this one which is interested in how community and belonging are maintained. This study seeks to question whether the men of Fallin do in fact position themselves in accordance to the hegemonic masculinity in each field or whether they reject such binary constructs. It is also important to note that Connell (2000) stresses that

alternative masculinities are not erased when understood next to hegemonic masculinity. Rather, they are subordinated and, in turn, act as a ‘weaker counterpart for validation’ (Hobbs, 2013: 386). Through sport and pastimes, gender codes can be performed and reproduced in other spheres of society such as the family, workplace and education. This project is keen to add to the growing volume of men’s studies by providing a study of two local institutions that are almost universally populated, and shaped, by men. It is now important to explore empirical studies that have helped shape this research project.

## **2.6 Community Studies**

Visits provided an excellent opportunity to collect members’ impressions of community life and first hand observations...they provided an opportunity to check out previous accounts and provisional interpretations. (Cavan, 1978: 271).

In her study of a North Californian rural village, Cavan (1978) highlighted the importance of depth in the research process. Corroborating thoughts through interviews, observations and documentary analysis are methods that often accompany ethnography (Stanley and Wise, 2006: 4). This thesis is a partial ethnography, focusing on two local institutions as they are the sites to which the men interviewed were affiliated. It is argued that their interrelationships are so intimately tied with the wider community of Fallin that they act as a useful proxy for understanding how the community was constructed and maintained (Mair, 2010). These men were often former miners, the central industry which the community of Fallin relied upon for its development, former councillors, licensees and longstanding residents of the village.<sup>12</sup>

The studies that influenced this approach will now be discussed.

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<sup>12</sup> This is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

In *Workers not Wasters*, Wight (1993) researched a small community in Central Scotland that has greatly influenced the theoretical and reflexive approach to this thesis. Wight (1993) introduced the village of 'Cauldmoss' to explain how social relations were complex and worthy of academic attention. The importance of work in the construction of the hegemonic masculinity initially led this thesis to focus on masculinities and the importance of work in their lives (Gorz, 1999). Of particular relevance were the similarities in the narratives he was describing to the lives and identities of the men in this thesis. Wight (1993) understood belonging to 'Cauldmoss' in a manner somewhat different to Cohen (1982) whereby birth, kin and kinship were the fundamental precursors for belonging (Young and Willmott, 1957):

Some estimated that two thirds of the population in the early 1980s was related to each other in some way, and consequently: 'if ye speak ill o' yin, ye speak ill o' all' ...It was one's ancestors' participation in the village that gave one the right to say 'I belong to Cauldmoss', which suggests that were it not for them having lived out their lives in the village the place would have had no current social existence. (Wight, 1993: 49).

Many local commentaries and sources spoke of Fallin in these terms (Kerr, 1991; Mair, 2010). It led to MacWhirter (2004) suggesting Fallin:

...is being covered by soulless suburban estates of Legoland semis. Only an incongruous memorial in the local shopping centre, dedicated to the dead in forgotten colliery disasters, testifies to the past. (MacWhirter, 2004).

Wight's (1993) study acts as a comparative reference point as the research was conducted during the 1980s. This was a period when Fallin's mining industry was abandoned and thus many men in the community never worked again. The closure of the local Polmaise colliery was a catalyst, in the eyes of Kerr (1991), for the decline in the moral fabric of the community. Wight's (1993) prose allowed the reader to familiarise with his own set of dispositions and how they shaped his interpretations of events. The reflexive and historical opening to his book helped shape Chapters Four and Five. Wight's (1993) study of 'Cauldmoss' offered a glimpse into the fabric of a 'real community' (Bauman, 2000) which one felt could be identified in the institutions and community consciousness expressed in this thesis. Through focusing on two local institutions, it is important to understand how community and belonging is understood and to what extent traditional understandings of masculinity feature in either field.

An article by Watson and Watson (2012) titled *Narratives in society, organizations and individual identities: an ethnographic study of pubs, identity work and the pursuit of 'the real'* provided this thesis with insights into doing ethnography in a pub. Watson and Watson (2012: 2) suggested that their participants viewed the pub as a space to tell stories from the past:

The 'pub world', it seemed, was a particularly narrative-oriented one. Often, for example, informants would tell us that for a drinking place to be a 'real pub' it was essential for there to be lively conversations and the 'telling of a good yarn' (Watson and Watson, 2012: 2).

The importance of narratives is something which this project will assess through understanding the ways in which men understand and maintain their community. The study by Watson and Watson (2012: 4) also utilise an interesting methodological approach by

employing ‘everyday ethnography’. This involves bringing the rules and capital on display in the field you are studying back to your own daily lives which recognises that ‘public houses and the narratives relating to them are part of the mundane, day-to-day functioning of our society’ (*Ibid*). This is particularly useful in my situation due to my social closeness with the men and in keeping with Becker’s (1971) work on sequential analysis whereby researchers were analysing, modifying and charting the phenomena throughout the data-gathering process.

An interesting book titled *Man walks into a Pub: a sociable history of beer* by Brown (2003) explores the central role which the Pub has played in British culture. The importance of the British Pub was symbolic as it was practical. It allowed for stories to be told, friends to reunite over drink in a way which allowed them to be ‘men’ and free from the trappings of their jobs, home or other responsibilities (Brown, 2003). The book explored the enjoyment in drinking in a way which this project recognises as it was often a means to a greater end – that being to renew friendships and to belong. This is interesting for this project as it draws upon the idea that the pub is a social space where men go to perform a version of themselves – with the pub being their spiritual home. This draws upon the work of Wight (1993) where men used the pub as a means to interact free from the social codes prescribed in the home or in work. Studies such as Brown’s (2003) highlight the sociological importance of researching pubs as they are arguably still a key site of versions of masculinity for many men in communities across Britain.

*A Phenomenology of Working-class Experience* by Charlesworth (2000) provided this thesis with theoretical insights which led me to look more closely at the work of Bourdieu. Charlesworth (2000) suggested, like Wight (1993), that the community of Rotherham experienced an extreme socio-economic down turn following local deindustrialisation. The working-class of Rotherham now lived in an *anomic* landscape. The narratives of the

individuals were supported by the theoretical work of Bourdieu (1984) and Merleau-Ponty (1962) which supported his epistemological approach of understanding experiences through the discourse and biographies of the individual. The experience of the working-class was likened to that of vulnerable and marginalised groups, in that mainstream society had rendered them economically powerless and politically dispossessed. By focusing on the public performances of the men in two local institutions, as well as through unearthing their narratives, this project seeks to add more layers to Charlesworth's (2000) study. The omission of an ethnographic method arguably limited the data available to Charlesworth (2000) which this thesis shall address by supplementing interview data with observations, photographs, village chronologies, demographic data and documentary analysis.

*On the Margins of Inclusion* by Smith (2005) explored the means by which individuals and communities resist, adapt and develop in light of changing labour markets and the impact it has on their lives. Like Charlesworth (2000), Smith (2005) also documents how his interpretations were shaped by growing up in the South-East London area which he researched. The use of his own personal experiences with the narratives of an industrially dispossessed section of society makes it a useful critique of social policy which was said to be stigmatising large sections of society (Smith, 2005). The use of coping strategies was identified from in-depth unstructured qualitative interviews and supported by work histories and other methods (Crow and Mah, 2012: 17-18). The longitudinal nature of ethnographies like *On the Margins of Inclusion*, encourage the use of sequential analysis<sup>13</sup> to be undertaken whereby researchers can develop theory and themes by going back to the field (Becker, 1971). By researchers sharing the primary *habitus* with those being researched, this form of analysis is further validated by understanding the context upon which behaviour and identities are performed (Wacquant, 2014: 4). The privileged access and shared dispositions

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<sup>13</sup> This will be discussed in Chapter Three.



which I shared with men in both institutions will reflect on the experiences of Charlesworth (2000) and Smith (2005) and their respective studies. It is therefore important to ensure that reflexivity, methodological and ethical justifications are described in detail so that readers are privy to how the data is gathered and gleaned (Emond, 2000).

In *Urban Bonds*, Blokland (2003: 19) carried out research in the Netherlands which skilfully explores place, identity and the construction of a community that places significant emphasis on nostalgia and collective memory. The ethnographic study of Hillesluis, a Rotterdam suburb, charts how immigration and secularisation have led the community to evolve and change. Among some of her findings of particular relevance to this thesis has been how nostalgia protects many of the ‘native Hillesluisians’ from becoming lost following migration of different nationalities and ethnicities. The social and symbolic capital on display in these acts was found in Blokland’s (2003) study where stories and storytelling performed an essential function in maintaining their version of community:

In their stories about the way Hillesluis used to be, Hillesluisians often depicted a cohesive, cosy working-class neighbourhood. Even people who indicated that this impression was inaccurate would recall it at several moments. People’s recollections about the past reveal at least as much about the interpretations of the current social reality as about the way life used to be. (Blokland, 2003: 191).

This quotation captures a version of Fallin’s community that is found in the literature (Kerr, 1991; Mair, 2010; McCormack, 1989; Phillips, 2010). Academic studies on the social and symbolic meaning of nostalgia suggest it is a defence-mechanism used by individuals in light of significant social changes that have occurred in their community (Gans, 1962: 73). The catalysts for concern were migration in Blokland’s (2003) study with strangers sharing space

in the community of Hillesluis. The seemingly inevitable social response for individuals across the studies discussed so far is to look to the past for assurances that their mode of life can still exist in transient times (Castells, 1997; Harvey, 1990).

As well as theoretically, Blokland (2003) influenced this thesis methodologically by employing an innovative method which this project has utilised. Via the means of an imaginary walk around the streets of Hillesluis, Blokland tried to transport the reader into the world which was under scrutiny. Such an approach is indicative of the reflexivity which Bourdieu suggests is an essential element of every research process (Deer, 2008). This mental map constructed by Blokland (2003) gives the readers an insight into how she viewed the community as well as the descriptive detail documented. Recent community studies have employed visual methods to provide additional insights into the communities, neighbourhoods and local institutions (Crow and Mah, 2012: 23; Rose, 2007: 238). Harper (2001) presents over 100 photographs to provide the reader with visual sources to chart the social, economic and cultural changes to agriculture in the United States of America. By supplementing her qualitative, longitudinal methods with images, Harper (2001) is employing a variety of means to best illuminate social change over generations.

Blokland (2005) followed up this study with *Memory Magic: how a working-class neighbourhood became an imagined community and class started to matter when it lost its base*. Blokland (2005: 123-126) suggested that the natives re-engaged with their imagined past in light of outsiders living, and working, among them. This study draws upon Andersen's (1991) concept of imagined communities through asserting that within working-class community older residents retrospectively construct a sense of being working-class through their shared experiences (Blokland, 2005: 124). Consequently, knowledge of the community history performed a type of screening process and safeguarded their shared class, ethnicity and religion because of a common past (Blokland, 2005: 138). Returning to the

definition of community outlined in this thesis, we see how community is symbolically constructed and reproduced through ‘othering’ of incomers as a referent of their identity (Cohen, 1985: 118). The following quotation encapsulates the power of imagining communities retrospectively and the functions for doing so:

...newcomers such as migrants remained outsiders, and the memories of the good old times did their magic in not only creating a collective history of a working-class community, but also constructed a contemporary imagined community to whom some belonged, and some could socially identify with, while others certainly could not. (Blokland, 2005: 138).

Similarly, Robertson, Smyth and McIntosh (2008) conducted a study of three villages in the city of Stirling in order to understand how neighbourhood identity is formed over time and place. In *Neighbourhood Identity: people, time and place*, they explored the dynamic relationship between these concepts and how a greater understanding of them can account for why community regeneration policies often fail. Of central importance to this study is how they argued that reputations of housing estates are often labelled as ‘good’ and ‘bad’. The reproductive nature of these labels is found in the identities of the individuals who live in these locales:

Neighbourhood identities are underpinned by social class and social status, and these identities are very resilient to change...neighbourhood identity was found to be associated primarily with outmoded notions of social class based on outdated male employment patterns, best characterised by the mining identity... (Robertson, Smyth and McIntosh, 2008: vii).

The geographical proximity of this study with Fallin is important to note as both studies fall within the city of Stirling. Sociologically, Robertson *et al.* (2008) also explores outdated notions of male employment patterns and social class which this thesis seeks to critique as the central research question of this project is to understand the ways in which community is remembered, performed and understood by men. Robertson *et al.* (2008) also identified that in each of the three neighbourhoods studied, the bonds between family, peers and neighbours were important factors in sustaining community. These ideas can also be found in Frankenberg (1957), Cohen (1982) and Blenkinsop (2012) whereby they also explored the dynamism of difference which helps energise communities. Incomers, whether they be economic migrants (Blokland, 2005), incomers from over the border (Blenkinsop, 2012) or from neighbouring villages and towns (Wight, 1993; Young and Willmott, 1957), are important for community making as they present physical emblems for wider social changes like decentring of work, migration and housing tenure (Bauman, 2003). Blokland's (2005) study provides a cross-cultural comparison to this thesis that reinforces the importance of belonging and memory-making. It also questions the New Labour housing policy of 'mixed communities' which seeks to transform communities by having a mix of housing tenure in its locale (Cole and Green, 2010: 4). This attempt at endeavouring to transform communities by dispersal has led to an increased social mix with no real evidence of integration between incomers and outsiders (Lupton and Fuller, 2009).

In *Lifestyle and Social Integration: a study of middle class culture in Manchester* Savage *et al.* (2005) works with Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* in studying how individuals operate within the community of Cheadle. They found that individuals understood the collective *habitus* of the locale and shared many similar values with one another while still being able to be different in terms of occupation and kin (Savage *et al.*, 2005: 96). Even

within a predominantly middle-class culture with differences of occupation, leisure pursuits and lifestyles, the residents of Cheadle shared a local attachment to the area (*Ibid*). This is relevant to this thesis as it offers support across the class divide suggesting that individuals are social beings that require a blend of freedom and security (Bauman, 2000). Belonging to a community can be the modern day opiate for individuals to draw upon for support and a purpose to their lives. As this project is researching two local institutions, the individuals are actively, and regularly, taking part in the public ceremony of belonging to a community. This is why Blenkinsop (2012) views community activities as a worthy focus of research as she presents a version of community which recall traditions, memories and myths.

A study by Dicks *et al.* (1998) titled *Redundant Men and Overburdened Women: local services providers and the construction of gender in ex-mining communities*, based on a South Wales mining village, looked at how many men within ex-mining communities were now redundant, yet many women were now overburdened:

The pit clothes lying beside the fire, worn by the men and maintained by the women, symbolized the provision of the family wage, at a time when the mines provided work for thousands of men, and the role of women was to service the family. In the present-day mining community, women continue to service the family, but under very different conditions. (Dicks *et al.*, 1998: 287).

The women in such communities are said to not only deal with a frustrated, redundant spouse, they also provide subsistence and support for siblings (*Ibid*). Dicks *et al.* (1998: 288) suggest that the loss of male jobs in the area has acted as a catalyst for a cycle of social deprivation which exists in various spheres of life from the private depression of not fulfilling their masculine responsibility of providing an income to a dysfunctional family upbringing.

This study informed my decision to explore how the men in Fallin understood their role following the abandonment of the Polmaise Colliery in 1987 which employed so many of them (Connolly and Healy, 2004; Roberts, 1993; Stead, 1987; Wight, 1993).

Indeed, in a follow up study, Dicks (2008) suggested that despite changes in the public sphere, both men and women in former working-class villages in South Wales still assumed the gender roles characteristic of previous generations. The women were now encountering ‘superwoman syndrome’ in that they were expected to perform duties in the private and public sphere (Newell, 1993). Such men in Dicks (2008) study were perhaps suffering from a crisis of masculinity following deindustrialisation within many villages and towns in the United Kingdom (Jones, 2011; McDowell, 2003). Dicks (2008: 437) argues such communities based upon a working mode of life possess a symbolic value which contrasts sharply with the crime-ridden estates borne out of their demise. Additionally, the expansion of white-collar service based jobs at the expense of blue-collar industrial labour has separated the place of work from the community in communities like Fallin (Charlesworth, 2000; Wight, 1993; Willis, 1977). This study is important for this thesis as it further illustrates the significant shift in social relations across traditional communities.

The recent book by Jones (2011) titled *Chavs: the demonization of the working class*, captures the sense of *anomie* and loss that pervade de-industrialised localities decades after industry became displaced. The displacement of work from communities was suggested as a fundamental cause for the bleak prospects for successive generations of young people. Social problems such as drug misuse, increased divorce rates and teenage pregnancies were symptomatic of the failure of successive governments to deal with long-term unemployment following the collapse of industry in towns and villages of Britain. Jones (2011) used the former mining town of Ashington as a case-study to contextualise his left-wing critique of neo-liberal economics that have seen many working-class individuals become dislocated

from work. The loss of employment has increased the volume and severity of such social problems in pockets of contemporary British society.

A study by Lupton (2003) entitled *Poverty Street* examines neighbourhood relations in twelve disadvantaged areas in England and Wales. The mix of qualitative and quantitative methods critique the effectiveness of New Labour's (1997-2010) social policy initiatives, like the 'Community Development Programme' and the 'New Deal for Communities', from both a community and national context (Crow and Mah, 2012: 18). A study by Wallace (2010) also explores how regeneration initiatives in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century were understood by those directly affected, the residents. In *Remaking Community: new labour and the governance of poor neighbourhoods*, Wallace (2010) also explores the lexical meaning of 'community' and how it became an integral part of policy-making discourse. Studies like Jones (2011), Lupton (2003) and Wallace (2010) introduce policy-makers' responses to communities which have been said to be in need of regeneration following the demise of local, heavy industry (Kerr, 1991). Through researching two local institutions in Fallin, it is important to understand how the men encounter, and deal with, social change.

Finally, Rogaly and Taylor's (2009) *Moving Histories of Class and Community* provides contemporary support for researching the seemingly entrenched white working-class communities who are threatened by the arrival of outsiders. Rogaly and Taylor (2009) use in depth oral histories from people across three communities in Norwich and, of most relevance to this thesis, some individuals take a great deal of pride in their often run-down estates. Their findings are similar to that of Robertson *et al.* (2008) and the theoretical work of Cohen (1985) who stated the more locally one researches, the greater the affinity and pride that individuals attach to their place. Another striking facet of this study was how identities move and develop throughout time. Once again, it is important to understand community from a particular perspective, whereby inferences can be made about how a particular community is

constructed through spending time and understanding the narratives of those reproducing community (Cohen, 1985: 118; Frazer, 1999: 76).

This chapter has so far situated this thesis within theoretical views on community, introducing the power of remembering and belonging to community as well as offering empirical examples that have informed my approach. The data presented so far in this chapter will be reflected upon in the subsequent chapters as I explore the ways in which the twenty-four men in my sample remember and maintain their version of community. It is now important to discuss the work of Bourdieu in depth as his concepts, views on society and empirically reflexive research provide the framework that influences every facet of this research process.

## **2.7 Theoretical Framework: Working with Bourdieu**

Bourdieu is, in many ways, a sociological enigma in that many academics have cherry picked some of his concepts and applied them to a variety of diverse disciplines covering education, sport, the arts and community studies (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 4-5). Often the holistic and encompassing natures of his theory are marginalized as a consequence of concepts being dissected and applied in isolation of the others (Grenfell, 2008). To talk of *habitus* without reference to field and vice versa serves only to fetishize the concepts by abstracting the context upon which meaning is grounded (Maton, 2008: 61). This very practice is common across a range of studies yet this is not how Bourdieu should be understood and applied.<sup>14</sup> This thesis has not just utilised Bourdieu's social theory, it has drawn heavily on his methodological offerings.<sup>15</sup> Mahar *et al.* (1990: 3) suggest that working with Bourdieu's conceptual repertoire provides a sound theoretical base for researchers to embark on their

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<sup>14</sup> See Connolly and Healy (2004) and Rhynas (2005) for studies that only use portions of Bourdieu's concepts and fail to appreciate the breadth and application of his sociology.

<sup>15</sup> See Chapter Four on reflexivity in the research process. Bourdieu (1990) strongly advocates the researcher to document how their dispositions shape their views on those who are being studied.



chosen research setting. A cautionary note is necessary when working *en masse* with a theorist's ideas and concepts, that it is expedient for researchers to manipulate their own data to fit into pre-classified parameters set in a different context (Emond, 2000). This section provides a brief summary of the sociology of Bourdieu. This shall offer a succinct discussion of the core concepts that are characteristic of his work and the applicability of them to this thesis. These include the terms:

- Theory of Practice (a framework of practice which takes account of subjective and objective constructions).
- Field (a network of objective relations and a site for social research).
- Capital (varying degrees of economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital affect stratification and power relations within a field).
- Habitus (the embodied meanings of the field, unconscious behaviours internalised as normal through history).
- Symbolic violence (symbolic domination which is often invisible to its victims, a mode of control).

Throughout each section, it shall be argued that his empirically grounded theory and concepts are a belated gift to community studies because they emphasise the duality of structure and agency in understanding how social life is constructed and reproduced within a specific field or locale (Savage *et al.*, 2005: 98). Additionally, efforts are made to discuss the merits of applying, and working with, Bourdieu's brand of sociology in the community of Fallin. Specific attention shall be given to the inter-related nature of the various forms of capital (symbolic, social, cultural and economic) and how this affects the embodied *habitus* within

each field observed within this working-class village (Bourdieu, 1979: 114; Grenfell, 2008: 47).

Taken as a whole, the purpose of Bourdieu's work is to transcend the sterility of the 'irreconcilable perspectives of objectivism and subjectivism...and transform them into a dialectical relationship between structure and agency' (Mahar *et al.*, 1990: 1). This motif is evident throughout much of his academic work from the anthropological study of the Algerian Kabyle people in the 1950s (Bourdieu, 1958), the influential discussion of taste, culture and domination in *Distinction* (Bourdieu, 1979) and more recently his offering on educational and gender practices in *Masculine Domination* (Bourdieu, 2001). It is the purpose of the social sciences to purposefully create the methods and concepts which can accurately address this (Mahar *et al.*, 1990: 3-4). Bourdieu proposes 'generative structuralism' as the theoretically informed method of researching the social world which suggests making 'explicit the truth of primary experience of the social world...and excludes the question of the conditions of its own possibility' (Bourdieu, 1977: 3). Put simply, the purpose of social research is to understand the role of the person in conjunction with the structures and groups they interact within (Bourdieu, 1986). In the context of this thesis, I attempted to adhere to Bourdieu's principles of generative structuralism by accounting for how my self was generated in light of my relationship to the social structures of the Bowling Club and The Goth.<sup>16</sup> This process, in turn, reflected how these structures were reproduced through my actions in a dialectical relationship.

It should be said that Bourdieu was trying to go beyond the work of Marx, and also to a lesser extent Durkheim and Weber (Robbins, 1991: 14), through critiquing the one-dimensional practice of explaining social relations largely on the basis of economic capital (Mahar *et al.*, 1990: 4-5). Bourdieu's strength, and appeal, stemmed from synergising and

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<sup>16</sup> See Chapter Four.

galvanising many disparate concepts and theories and presenting these in a unified corpus of work (*Ibid*). For example, Bourdieu's layered approach to capital highlights how the interplay of objective realities, like the family, education and the community, all impact on the various forms of capital (social, cultural, symbolic as well as economic) prescribed and internalised by individuals within a specific field (Grenfell, 2008: 47). The layers of capital are an important addition to the work of Marx, yet I would argue Bourdieu still acknowledged the general thrust of much of what Marx posited. This all too brief account of his epistemological position is the skeleton upon which to pin the various other insights of Bourdieu's work and, specifically for this project, to understand the identities of those interacting within the fields of the Bowling Club and the pub (Maher *et al.*, 1990).

The generative structuralism which Bourdieu advocates when researching, and explaining, the social world requires a framework which incorporates both structure and agency in a unified manner (Robbins, 1991). A 'theory of practice' is such a framework which represents the practices and experiences of a social group that takes account of both the objective and subjective realities (Rhynas, 2005: 181). This ontological framework suggests that theory must be used to retrieve the practices of agents that it studies and thus becomes a 'practical, engaged social activity – the practice or the craft of the sociologist' (Robbins, 2008: 37-38). It can be viewed as a move away from structuralism and the notion of agents being the passive objects of interpretation of academics looking at structures, towards a vision of agents being the key foci of theory generation (Robbins, 2008: 38):

The theory seeks to understand and explain individual and group actions in the social world. Bourdieu recognizes that the actions of social groups cannot be explained simply as the aggregate of individual behaviours, but rather as actions that incorporate

influences from cultures, traditions and objective structures within society. (Rhynas, 2005: 181).

This is extremely pertinent for work on community studies because it emphasises the interactive relationship between the community and the inhabitant as well as the manner by which identities, behaviours and traditions may be constructed (Robbins, 2008). It illustrates the sterility of looking at either/or structure and agency through blending the paradigms of subjectivism and objectivism (Bourdieu, 1977: 3). It is important to note that subjective behaviours occur autonomously, yet within the parameters constructed by the particular *habitus* of the field in which individuals interact (Maher *et al.*, 1990). This means that the theory of practice can be viewed as an overarching research guideline that seeks to attain a holistic picture of events through employing methods best suited for this aim. Employing case studies is deemed as the most important way to assess how well the theory is enacted at ground level because of the in-depth, detailed account of the milieu of social life (Bourdieu, 1999).

The study of specific practices of fields can allow for the delineation between different theories of practice and the varying degrees of emphasis upon certain types of capital for example (Maher *et al.*, 1990: 15). This is discussed in great detail in *Distinction* where Bourdieu empirically deconstructs the ethno-centrist snobbery of the French Bourgeoisie and how their tastes and preferences are shaped by their overarching theory of practice which is often in conflict to those of other classes (Bourdieu, 1979). As Bourdieu (1988: 7) says the purpose of sociology is ‘to uncover the most profoundly buried structures of the various social worlds which constitute the social universe, as well as the ‘mechanisms’ which tend to ensure their reproduction or their transformation’. By acknowledging the relationship between the researcher and the participants, one is able to utilise the flexible

nature of Bourdieu's concepts and sociology (Mahar *et al.*, 1990: 3) and not force data to pre-classified compartments (Emond, 2000).

In many ways, the concept of 'field' is the canvas upon which practice is portrayed and is an important frame of reference for research (Jenkins, 1992: 84-85). Examples of fields include institutions (hospitals, nursing homes, schools), cultural pursuits (sport, leisure), employment (hierarchies, types of occupation, classes), power (politics, status, heritage) as well as housing or locale (Jenkins, 1992: 84). The fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth (pub) are the sites chosen for this research. They were chosen because they represent key sites where a version of community is performed, understood and reproduced by the twenty-four men. They were also chosen as I had privileged access in that I had membership of each institution prior to research commencing in 2008.<sup>17</sup> In one of Bourdieu's (1991b: 99) earlier works, *Language and Symbolic Power*, he explores how public spaces are highly ritualised with strict rules that facilitate membership for some and prohibit others. Bourdieu (1991b: 99-100) explores the pub as such a site where individuals go there not just to drink but also to feel free from the 'realities of life'. The behaviours, functions and roles one adopts in this field are contingent on the requirements of the company they find themselves in (*Ibid*). The following extended quotation explores how Bourdieu's sociology can greatly enhance understanding of social interactions in fields such as a public house:

One goes there to laugh and to make others laugh, and everyone must do his best to contribute to the exchange of comments and jokes, or, at the very least, make his contribution to the fun by underlining the success of others in adding to his laughter...The possession of a talent for being 'the life and soul of the party', capable

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<sup>17</sup> This will be discussed in Chapter Three yet I have been involved in both institutions since 2000, eight years prior to commencing research.

of incarnating...the ideal of the 'funny guy' which crowns an approved form of sociability, is a very precious form of capital. (Bourdieu, 1991b: 99).

This social world could be viewed by some, like Garfinkel (1967), as a game that requires each player to possess the necessary resources in order for this ritual to be played through to a satisfactory outcome for all players (Bourdieu, 1991: 99-100). Bourdieu often speaks of social life as a game and throughout sections of his work he draws on the work of Goffman and his idea of dramaturgy (Thomson, 2008: 68-70). The competition and rivalry emblematic of a game between individuals within a field is best illustrated in the following quotation:

I define a field as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation...in the structure of the distribution of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions. (Bourdieu, 1993: 37).

Bourdieu (1990: 66) develops the game analogy when exploring how fields can be understood in a phenomenological sense:

Because native membership in a field implies a feel for the game in the sense of a capacity for practical anticipation of the 'upcoming' future contained in the present, everything in it seems sensible: full of sense and objectively directed in a judicious direction. (Bourdieu, 1990: 66).

The rules are specific to this field but are laden with capital, language, hierarchies and symbolic power which preclude outsiders from instantaneous acquisition of the *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1991b: 99-100). Like most games, there is a degree of competition and opposition in operation within fields, like a pub, which is how social change is reproduced in fields (Savage and Silva, 2013: 114). The following quotation captures the friction within fields and how this reaction acts as a unifying force: ‘...the literary or artistic field is a ‘field of forces’, but it is also a ‘field of struggles’ tending to transform or conserve this field of forces’ (Bourdieu, 1993: 30).

The competing reasons for participation in each field can be understood by reflecting on boundaries, as opposed to being constrained by them (*Ibid*). This is called ‘field analysis’ which is a social scientific analytical framework with its emphasis on the forces, intensities, dynamics and processes within a social space (Savage and Silva, 2013: 111).<sup>18</sup> Nettleton’s (2013) field analysis of runners in the Lake District in England highlighted how a passion can bring people together. The field thus became a very active site whereby competing shades of capital were performed, rewarded and challenged.

Through researching fields in this manner, Savage and Silva (2013: 114) suggest people are actors in a field which shapes their dispositions, performances and narratives. An example of this can be found in the work of Wight (1993: 148) where he identified different drinking establishments and clientele which consisted of different types of people from the village. Within each field, there exists a different *doxa* which is both the product, and producer, of a *habitus* which is often distinct and appropriate from others (Jenkins, 1992: 84-85).<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Field analysis will be defined, and discussed, more fully in Chapter Three.

<sup>19</sup> *Doxa* means taken-for-granted tenets of behaviour where ‘the natural and social world appears as ‘self-evident’ (Bourdieu, 1972:4). In *Distinction* (1984), the *doxa* of the symbolically and culturally dominated classes inhibits social mobility through individuals internalising their own objective position based on their set of dispositions.

The continued acknowledgment of the relationship between objective structures and subjective realities of individuals reinforces Bourdieu's holistic brand of social theory and, in many ways, his move beyond the work of Marx (Maher *et al.*, 1990). Yet, within a field, there is the potential for conflict, power and change as individuals expropriate their various forms of capital in order to determine their status in the game being played (Crow and Mah, 2012: 2; Thomson, 2008; Wacquant, 2014). This can be witnessed in his influential series of essays *Acts of Resistance* where he critiques the neo-liberal regime that has infiltrated much of the structures and institutions in the same way Marx did of the capitalist mode of production (Bourdieu, 1998). A key similarity between Marx and Bourdieu can be found through looking at their respective key concepts of class and field which are the arenas for locating differentiation.<sup>20</sup> The following quotation illustrates how closely Bourdieu has utilised the economic position of Marx as a fundamental precursor for explaining social status:

Positions stand in relationships of domination, subordination or equivalence to each other by virtue of the access they afford to the goods or resources (capital) which are at stake in the field. (Jenkins, 1992: 85).

A key difference between the two is the multi-layered approach by Bourdieu upon which symbolic domination and indoctrination is manifested. This is found in the community study by Charlesworth (2000) who utilised aspects of Bourdieu's sociology and stressed the importance of symbolic, social and cultural capital, as well economic capital, in how identities are shaped and formed. Charlesworth (2000: 247) speaks of the 'primary culture of dominant groups' and how their manner, leisure pursuits and appearance all confirm their

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<sup>20</sup> In his later years Bourdieu was a champion of the socialist political left in France (Deer, 2008).



disproportionate dominance over others based on their capital. Bourdieu's concept of field is the place whereby conflict, division and solidarity are found which makes it an essential focus of any research interested in de-mystifying such concepts (Thomson, 2008). It is now important to diverge slightly from such similarities with Marx and discuss Bourdieu's concept of capital which helps explain the heterogeneity of fields.

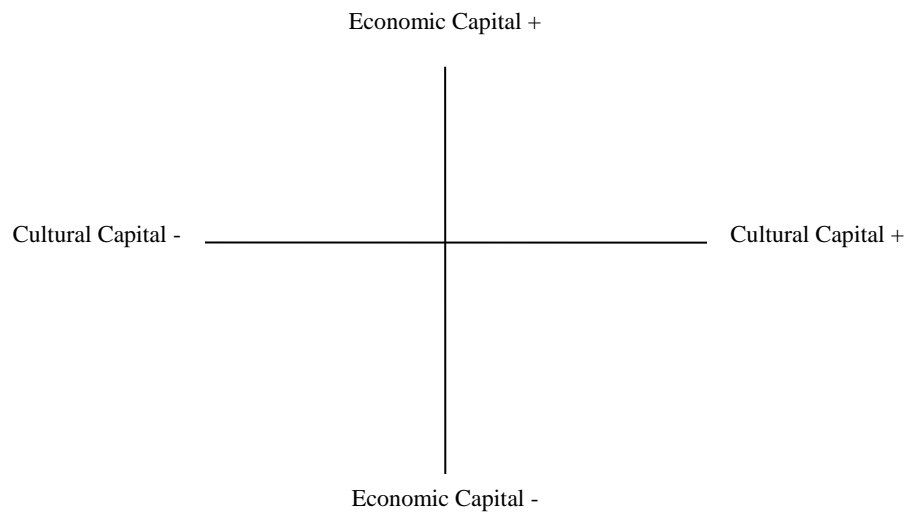
Bourdieu (1984) indeed identifies four different forms of capital: economic, cultural, social and symbolic. All four interact and help navigate individuals within their social space. Rhynas (2005: 181) suggests that 'capital represents the power of a person and can be exchanged or used in order to improve their position within the field'. Listed below are what each strand of capital advocates:

- Economic (material resources: wealth, income and property).
- Cultural (cultural knowledge, educational credentials, heritage).
- Social (social connections, patronage, networks).
- Symbolic (language, dress code, body postures, respect, reputations).

(Bottero, 2005: 148).

Bourdieu's acknowledgment of the multiplicity of capital in shaping stratification is perhaps more indicative of Weberian sociology and how individuals congregate in certain fields: namely class, status and party (Crompton, 1998). Bourdieu (1998: 270) reasoned that fields could be plotted through understanding the types of capital that the individual may have (see Table One, below). Bourdieu (1988) places greater emphasis on the economic realm of capital as it brings 'more status and power than cultural capital, although both together are highly advantageous in the field of power' (Thomson, 2008: 71).

Table One: Bourdieu's 'Axis of Capital' (Bourdieu, 1998: 270)



The plotting of an individual's capital on this figure indicates the field that they are likely to be a member of which is useful for researchers locating the types of field, based on the capital they possess. For example, a social survey could attain some data for both variables which could be interpreted in numerical form in order to produce a scatterplot. Yet, in order to get the necessary depth needed to understand the capital needed by individuals, interviews and observations are needed to situate this. Using Bourdieu in this manner is extremely beneficial because it encompasses a more holistic understanding of village life, the institutions within the community and how individuals interact. This is discussed further in Chapter Three where Bourdieu's views on methodology and methods are presented.

Bourdieu's concept of capital is also very useful for understanding and explaining research on other community studies because of inhabitants' pride in the cultural heritage of a specific community (Dicks *et al.*, 1998; Dicks, 2008), the continuance of a masculine socio-economic *doxa* (Charlesworth, 2000; Wight, 1993) as well as the symbolic capital embodied within many villagers of their past, present and future identities (Blokland, 2005). One is reminded of Blokland's (2005) study of a Dutch working-class community which highlighted

the power of the inhabitants to imagine their community and construct a collective identity based on their past. It marginalised many incomers and galvanised the historically dominant social group to re-invent the past, in the present, in order to safeguard their future survival from immigrants and secularism amongst other factors (*Ibid*). Like Cohen's (1982), Strathearn's (1982) and Blenkinsop's (2012) studies of their respective communities, the past is remembered with utopian like fondness that precludes outsiders from ever truly belonging. Capital in these terms can be viewed as an expedient mechanism that reflects, and reproduces, dominant or less powerful groups. It is now important to explore the effect that the various strands of capital have on the individual and introduce more fully the concept of *habitus*.

*Habitus* is at the centre of Bourdieu's sociology as he was curious as to why working-class children often ended up in working-class jobs, why middle-class individuals tend to have certain tastes classed as distinct or elite (Maton, 2008:50). A study by Willis (1977:1) on how working-class children often ended up in blue-collar employment also addressed this seemingly *doxatic* quandary and suggested the answers were found in their socialisation process. Such regularities seem so entrenched that they are almost assumed as natural and inevitable, even though there are no such explicit rules dictating this (Bourdieu, 1977: 4; Maton, 2008; Willis, 1977). This led Bourdieu to focus his research as 'all of my thinking started from this point: how can behaviour be regulated without being the product of obedience to rules?' (Bourdieu, 1994: 65). Here we see the unveiling of the individual in Bourdieu's work whilst still stressing the importance of interpreting individual behaviour in light of the structural factors surrounding them. Bourdieu (1990: 56) makes reference to this concept throughout much of work and this extended quotation incorporates the essence of *habitus* and the applicability it holds for researching a working-class community:

The habitus – embodied history, internalised as a second nature and so forgotten as history – is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product... The habitus is a spontaneity without consciousness or will, opposed as much to the mechanical necessity of things without history in mechanistic theories as it is to the reflexive freedom of subjects without inertia in rationalist theories. (Bourdieu, 1990: 56).

This illustrates the importance of the narratives of previous generations and how they are manifested in contemporary relations. Andersen (1991), through his work on imagined communities, emphasised the importance of such narratives at a national level in harnessing the private and public identities of citizens. Narratives of the past shape the *habitus* of the community and individual which is pertinent to the community of Fallin with Kerr (1991) talking of the ‘lost community’. The internalisation of narratives is at the heart of Bourdieu’s sociological conundrum whereby he questioned why the shared past often shapes the identity and life-course of agents within the specific field (Bourdieu, 1994). Social actors are unaware of such spontaneous inculcation taking place, presuming instead that they are rational beings, capable of making their own destiny.

*Habitus* is the concept that has been most readily used by many academics in fields of education, leisure and cultural studies as it is often directly applicable to many facets of their research. The fact that it is embodied history, the concept focuses upon the effects of structures on individuals (Maton, 2008: 49). Yet it is also one of ‘the most misunderstood, misused and hotly contested’ (*Ibid*) concepts developed by Bourdieu and applied by other academics. It is important not to view this concept in isolation and to relate it to the other concepts discussed earlier otherwise part of the meaning, it is possible to argue, is lost. The *habitus* is the researchable entity that can unearth narratives and identities which are the crux

for many community studies (Dennis *et al.*, 1956; Frankenburg, 1966; Wight, 1993).

Whereas the field is the site for research and capital explains the dynamics, or state of play for individuals; it is the *habitus* which is the manifestation of these effects and can shed light on the past, present and future dynamics of the individual and community.

Bourdieu in his own anthropological work on colonialism in Algeria during the 1960s showed how the struggles of peasants, that were equipped with a traditional *habitus* forged in a pre-capitalist economy, kept a hold of their cultural attaché even when they were thrust into a market economy (Sallaz and Zavisca, 2007: 35). In many ways, clinging on to their communal identities is the most obvious thing for many people to do in such *anomic* times. Bourdieu (1977: 55) asserts that the autonomy of the individual works in accordance with structural crutches to produce a more holistic account of the socialised-individual. Earlier community studies share some striking comparisons with Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*. The following quotations from community studies conducted in the 1950s illustrate that some of what they presented can be associated with the notion of *habitus*:

Many stories are told of families who would rather camp in the kitchen of their uninhabitable blitzed houses or sleep in public shelters than accept accommodation in another area of the Burgh. (Young and Willmott, 1957 cited in Frankenburg, 1969: 179).

...the transferred miners had great difficulty in adapting themselves to the strange customs and practices of their new work places. For a while coal-mining unites all workers in an experience of dark and dirty conditions and of industrial battles unknown to other industries, it also divides them through highly developed local customs. (Dennis *et al.*, 1956 cited in Frankenburg, 1969: 116).

Here we see the relationship between locale and *habitus* with both examples illustrating the importance of familiarity at a time of social change (urbanisation and mine closure in these examples). Such ‘familiarity’ towards a ‘lost community’ is very much evident in chronological and other sources in relation to the Bowling Club and the Goth (Kerr, 1991; McCormack, 1989). Fallin villagers, from reference to sources, prided themselves on the ‘communal nature of the blocks ensured an organic solidarity which contributed to the pit (Polmaise) having the longest strike in UK labour history’ (Bone, 1994: 4). Such pride in hardship has been replaced with an acceptance of the hardship and demise of a way of life that has been replaced with vandalism, unemployment and the misdirected youth. The following quotation documents the community of Fallin in such terms and provides a glimpse into the centrality of the colliery in how the village was developed:

Polmaise (the pit) was closed on July 17<sup>th</sup> 1987. Since that day Fallin has been a pit village without a pit. What prospects now for its future?...Village life continues. The congregations still meet for the frequent sermons at one of the many meeting corners. The gossip reverberates around dogs, pits and parochial tit-bits. In this age however, a worrying aspect is the rise of vandalism. A misdirected reaction from a youth, eager to express a rebellion born of a society which has long ceased to convey either aim or ambition to their lives. (Kerr, 1991: 61).

Although this source is now over two decades old, it is worthwhile questioning whether the intervening time has resulted in any change in how outlooks, and identities, are focused on a bygone era. It is a central aim of this project to try and unearth more about the *habitus* of Fallin in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century through the means of exploring the narratives of the twenty-four

men in this study (Stead, 1987: 4; Wacquant, 2004: 44-46). In a piece of urban ethnography on a boxing community, Wacquant (*Ibid*) suggests that young men who have been brought up in a stable working-class environment readily adopt the ‘pugilistic habitus of their forefathers’ (Sallaz and Zavisca, 2007: 35). The socialisation process was steeped in an environment that promotes, and also perhaps requires, a working-class grit and determination which is reproduced through the generations. Bourdieu incorporated these facets of socialised behaviour within his work on *habitus* where he introduced it as a ‘thing’ which embodies the individual and is more deeply rooted than people’s attitudes or identities (Savage *et al.*, 2005: 98).

The concept of ‘symbolic violence’ focuses on how agents encounter such domination through seemingly neutral structures like the education system, the state as well as other more biased institutions like the media and family (Connolly and Healy, 2004). Once again, we can see links between Bourdieu’s sociology and the work of Marx which the following quotation from Marx captures:

Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. (Marx, 1954: 15).

Bourdieu (2001: 1-2) suggests that symbolic violence is a useful analytical tool for understanding dualism between the complicit, rule-abiding behaviour of agents and how institutions coerce individuals in a gentle barrage of symbolic domination:

Symbolic violence is...a gentle violence imperceptible and invisible to its victims, exerted for the most part through the purely symbolic channels of communication and

cognition, recognition, or even feeling. This extraordinarily ordinary social relation thus offers a privileged opportunity to grasp the logic of the domination exerted in the name of a symbolic principle known and recognized both by the dominant and by the dominated. (Bourdieu, 2001: 1-2).

This is best described in *Distinction* which shows how the taste of the elite serves as a function of inculcation of both the dominant and the dominated. Bourdieu (1984) uses the example of higher education and individuals from the lower-classes often foregoing their right to pursue education further because their *habitus* suggests that they lack the required capital to succeed. In relation to the symbolic domination of women in French society, Bourdieu (2001) asserts that women have internalised their oppression and think it is almost natural. It is a ‘hypnotic power’ manifested through structures like the state, law, education, family and the community which acts in such a mystical way which makes agents complicit in their own fate (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 185; Bourdieu, 2001: 42; Schubert, 2008: 185). The reproduction of such symbolically charged domination results in the increased likelihood that they will ‘become durable and thus habitualized element of the subconscious’ (Connolly and Healy, 2004: 513).

This concept is the underlying reason why Bourdieu believes social scientists ought to research vulnerable and marginalised sections of society in order to unearth, explain and ultimately change inequalities that are fundamental to this discipline (Bourdieu, 2001: 3; Schubert, 2008: 183). In relation to this thesis, it is possible to argue that working-class communities like Fallin have undergone a prolonged period of deprivation and worklessness following the abandonment of the local colliery (MacWhirter, 2004). It is thus important to shed light on how the community has dealt with this change and assess the impact that this could have on the next generation who inhabit the village.



Shades of difference helped instil cohesion (Cohen, 1985) which helps reproduce versions of their community in the next generation of men. This take on different degrees of participation differs somewhat to how Bourdieu (1984) views a dominated *habitus* and how they interact with social structures. Bourdieu (1984) suggests the lack of social and symbolic capital in working-class children prevents them from feeling content in pursuing further education. Fallin has also been identified in the most recent census in 2011 as faring particularly badly in terms of the Multiple Deprivation Index (MDI) which takes into account social welfare benefit uptake, unemployment, and health and substance misuse. Willis' (1977) study on working-class children and how they inevitably ended up in working-class jobs appears to be supported by the concept of symbolic violence, in as much as they are complicit in accepting the power transmitted through the narratives of their parents.

A key aim of this study is to evaluate whether the younger men of Fallin have adopted the values of the older men who have often experienced extended periods of unemployment and suffer poor health for example. This will help address the research question of this thesis which is understanding more about the ways in which the men in this study understand, create and maintain community and belonging. The adoption of habits, values and activities are important indicators on whether such a transfer of behaviour has taken place (Sallaz and Zavisca, 2005). For example, data from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (2012) which divides Scotland into 6,505 small areas has Fallin as the 103<sup>rd</sup> most deprived data-zone in relation to skills and education. This means that the community of Fallin is in the bottom 2% in Scotland in terms of their education and skills output.

Other community studies have illustrated this conflict within a field between outsiders and the in-group because their *habitus*, values and traits are different to theirs (Blokland, 2005; Dennis *et al.*, 1956; Strathearn, 1982; Wight, 1993; Young and Willmott, 1957). This is important as such symbolic conflict, although negative in many ways, can actually instil a

sense of cohesion within a social group and can lead to greater solidarity even if at expense of others (Cohen, 1985). It is possible to unearth, understand and explain such behaviour in this thesis by observing the interaction between individuals in the minutiae of social life.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

This chapter has illustrated the applicability of Bourdieu's sociology in relation to community studies and specifically this project. The inter-related nature of his concepts embraces the holistic nature of community life and how the individual shapes, and is shaped by, the community. The theoretical influence of Marx in much of Bourdieu's work has been documented and it has been argued that Bourdieu has contemporised much of his work through the multiple layers of capital, field and symbolic violence. Bourdieu's wide-ranging work has informed much of this research project and analysis shall continue with this theme in mind. Researching fields like the Bowling Club and The Goth enables this thesis to explore the different degrees of capital needed in these sites. Using Bourdieu's sociology also embraces the use of narratives in order to understand how *habitus* is reproduced (Wacquant, 2014). It is now important to explore the methodological and ethical foundations of this project to justify the benefits of conducting an ethnography in the Bowling Club and The Goth from 2008-2012.

## **Chapter Three: Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

As previous chapters have illustrated, research related to community and belonging has historically been concerned with providing in-depth accounts of individuals who help maintain community. These accounts are worthy and it is not the aim of this project to undermine their findings or means of researching communities. Rather, it is an aim of this research to provide a different account of community whereby I had privileged access of researching 'friends' (Armstrong, 1998).

This chapter will critically explore the mechanics of the research process which will help the reader understand how the data were produced. At the heart of this approach will be the premise that researchers ought to understand the lived realities of the group which they are studying. The following quotation from Gouldner (1971) summarises this ethos:

We should increasingly recognise the depth of our kinship with those whom we study. They would no longer be viewable as alien others or as mere objects for our superior technique and insight; they could instead be seen as a brother (sic) sociologist, each attempting, with his (sic) varying degree of skill, energy and talent to understand social reality. (Gouldner, 1971: 490).

It is hard to argue with Gouldner's (1971) position of parity amongst peers when one is about to embark on forays into the field. Ethnographic research is the closest tool sociologists have at their disposal to tap into our communal hearts and minds in order to obtain data in its purest form, from the source and through the actions and words of individuals. Efforts shall be made to justify how this methodology best furnishes a more complete understanding of the identities of the men who drink and play bowls in the fields of Fallin. Such self-awareness of

the potential benefits and shortcomings of data-gathering tools like participant observation and interviews enables a degree of reflexivity in the research process which Bourdieu was a firm advocate of (Robbins, 1991). Therefore, this chapter shall attempt to offer the following:

- To justify researching friends and how informed consent was granted.
- To outline the compatibility of a Bourdieusian approach with the theoretical and methodological framework of this project.
- To discuss the practicalities of undertaking the ethnographic method as well as contextualising the method, through reference to a wide range of ethnographic studies, in order to illustrate its merits for unearthing the public and communal identities of individuals within the fields of The Goth and Bowling Club.
- To discuss the ethical issues of this research and subsequent attempts to alleviate any such issues.

### **3.2 Negotiating access with friends**

Firstly, it is important to provide a clear rationale as to why I have chosen the sites of the Bowling Club and The Goth in order to address the research question of how men understand, belong to and reproduce community. The Bowling Club has had a membership of between 25-40 men from 2000-2014. During the intervening fourteen years, there have been women members but they have been largely invisible to the paying members as they only played on Sunday evenings which was not often used by the men.

I joined the Bowling Club in 2000 as a 17 year old due to the reputation it had as being the most successful and competitive club in Stirlingshire. I was already representing my county at this age yet I knew very little about the make-up of the club or the community of Fallin. I started my undergraduate degree in 2002 and for my dissertation in 2006 I negotiated access with the local Rangers Football Supporters' Club as I was interested in the

sectarian discourse. This heightened my interest in the community of Fallin and in 2008 I wanted to understand more about the men themselves, their community and a way of life which was said to becoming more unique. In those intervening eight years, from first contact to my decision to research them, they became some of my closest friends and played a large part of my life. To research 'friends' can provide the researcher with many positives as well as some challenges.

Doing research with friends allows you to draw upon the rapport you have established to minimise social distance in the research process. Pahl (2000: 1) likens friendship to a type of 'social glue' which helps individuals navigate their way throughout their life-course. The concept of 'friend' can cover a broad range of meanings from close informal relationships through to social network friends who we may never meet or even interact with (Bauman, 2004). Yet sociologists are becoming more interested in the growing centrality of personal communities, which can be selected and nurtured, as opposed to geographical or work-situated communities (Pahl, 2000: 2). In many ways, this project is straddling all three of these sites on how friends are understood. As an outsider to Fallin and the fields, I actively created a personal community of friends who frequented in The Goth and Bowling Club. However, the men in this study still primarily based their friendships on work and locale. This presented a dilemma for this project.

My notion of friendships is more transient as I was not bound by the confines of my locale as demarcating my likely circle of friends. This was highlighted in this project when upon becoming a father, in the words of Bauman (2004), I 'painlessly disconnected' from my Fallin friends because I was no longer visible in their community. I was seeking their consent to undertake research, tape-record their thoughts and invade the private space of their front rooms. Friendships, for the men in this study, seldom involved this degree of intrusion as

relationships were cultivated in work, The Goth or the Bowling Club. By researching friends, it highlighted the culturally-specific expectations of relationships during research.

Coghlan and Brannick (2014: 155) suggest in their research with colleagues, many of whom were their friends, that participants need to be informed and actively involved in the research process. In addition, they need to be protected from possible ramifications in their involvement and in many ways the bonds of trust need to be stronger when researching peers or friends. The researcher also needs to guard against skewing their accounts or being biased due to personal connections (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014: 155). What is important when doing research with friends is negotiating informed consent so both parties understand how their stories and opinions will be applied (Bryman, 2004).

Gaining the approval to observe, interview and research in a public place was viewed in the preliminary ethical approval stage of the School of Applied Social Science Ethical Committee (2008) as being a fundamental issue to address. It was quickly noted that it would be cumbersome to ask every patron in The Goth to sign an ethical form allowing me to observe and interpret their regular Tuesday night drink in their local. It was also deemed unethical and inconsiderate to bypass some form of communal consent for researching the regulars on a Saturday afternoon. In the summer of 2008, I shared a drink with the licensee, and friend, where I outlined my plans to observe and research The Goth and interview patrons. These being:

- I was conducting a study of the Bowling Club and The Goth.
- To see how the community developed and how it is understood in the present day.
- To understand more about the 'beat' of The Goth by observing patrons and taking notes.

This is not exactly common practice in The Goth, so I explained that there would be no tape-recording of any sort and efforts would be made to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. My request was granted in an incredulous, disbelieving manner. I have received this knowing, somewhat bemused, facial expression on interviewing almost every one of my participants which I qualify by saying ‘that someone has got to be interested in you lot’. I am aware that this tacit consent is not legally binding, stipulating specific details and publications rights, yet it is perhaps a distinct benefit of researching in an area where you are a member of those you are researching (Charlesworth, 2000; Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). They have perhaps a far greater form of retribution should any harm come as a result of this research project, in that they know me and will isolate me from the group and withdraw their trust (Homans, 1974). Being aware of this unwritten form of chastisement has been with me in my interactions with them since 2008 and I found it to be a very accurate ethical compass to conduct good research.

Gaining access to research, observe and interview members of the Bowling Club was done through a Bowling Club committee meeting in 2008 where I stated my research aims. These being:

- I was conducting a study of the Bowling Club and The Goth.
- To see how the community developed and how it is understood in the present day.
- To understand the reasons why people played the game of bowls.

Being on the Bowling Club committee, I thought this was a useful forum to negotiate informed consent and it was duly granted with similar tones of bemusement from the eight members present. A noteworthy by-product of my research was the approach made by the Bowling Club, through the committee, for me to compile a history of the Bowling Club as

part of centenary celebrations for 2011, which I agreed to do, completing this task in March 2011.<sup>21</sup> Similar to my negotiated consent with The Goth, this form of agreement is just as binding on my part as I have made a commitment to my peers to complete a task on their behalf as well as not creating harm or embarrassment to my Bowling Club. Reflecting on Coghlan and Brannick's (2014) view when researching peers and friends, it is important to negotiate informed consent collectively through gatekeepers and then additionally face-to-face during interviews. Attention shall now turn to empirical examples which have influenced this approach to negotiating consent in public spaces and membership groups (Armstrong, 1998; Sands, 2002).

Armstrong (1998) conducted an ethnographic study of the hooligan firm attached to Sheffield United known as the 'Blades'. His core aim was to seek an understanding of the fans' behaviours and to explain, not justify, the various ways the 'Blades' went about supporting their team. Being a lifelong Sheffield United fan, Armstrong (1998) felt he possessed sufficient cultural capital and contacts to become a 'Blade' for the purpose of his research. It is such relationships that allow the researcher to be understood as a 'marginal native', suggesting that one can share similarities and traits with participants but not quite be a part of the clique. This mirrors much of Homans' (1974) typology of group participation that I have used to classify myself and then men in this study. Such a position is insightful for an ethnographer to be in with Agar (1980: 456) suggesting the intimacy of social proximity enables the researcher to understand subtle forms of behaviour, perhaps invisible to the outsider. Armstrong (1998) does however guard against assuming a common voice, which this gift of social closeness affords with a cautionary point about interpreting culturally relative behaviour:

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<sup>21</sup> Similar in some respects to Bourdieu's feeling of gratitude towards his participants after conducting interviews whereby he wanted to give them gifts (See Maher *et al.*, 1990). Compiling a centenary booklet was a mutually convenient form of exchange for my intrusion into the club's members and its history.



In my own case, I was not a mirror of the Blades, and I cannot claim to represent them. I recognise I am what Parker (1974: 63) calls the ‘third man’, who both reconstructs the action and interprets these in my writing-up my version of events. (Armstrong, 1998: xiii).

This example is pertinent for discussions around researcher-participant proximity that as it shows that despite your best efforts, ethnography is ultimately a ‘matter of greater or lesser misrepresentation’ (Humphreys, 1970: 170). When working with Bourdieu, facing Armstrong’s (1998) epistemological quandary is not negative, it is in fact a positive of doing research with a symbolically dominated group that you empathise with. Being a ‘third man’ as Parker (1974: 63) suggests, sparks connotations of being a narrator documenting for the masses the phenomena they are both being exposed to. In some respects, being an informed outsider or ‘third man’ represents the effect of bridging the subjective and objective dualism that has concerned Bourdieu and many sociologists.

The ethical concern of participants’ involvement in research focused primarily upon key local informants who had produced books, commentaries and had been heavily involved in the 1980s mining strikes for example. It was important that the project sought data from a wide range of sources and no avenue should be discounted. This led me to write letters to John McCormick (N.U.M. delegate for Polmaise), Archie Bone (local historian and campaigner, now deceased) and Hugh Kerr (author of *Tales from a Mining Village*, 1991). Through my contacts with The Goth, they put me in touch with a local historian, Craig Mair, who had been commissioned to write a centenary booklet for the Goth. I also wrote a letter to the Bowling Club asking for access to their minute books and the licensee of The Goth also enabled access to historical records and time in his company. All of these requests resulted in positive outcomes for this project. Being a ‘friend’ to key informants in the local area did

help smooth the introductory stages of asking for information which was always forthcoming. Word of my research spread to other regulars and locals who asked me how my work was coming along and if I needed any photographs of the colliery, I could get copies. Altruism is something that I have found in abundance during my time in Fallin, as long as you were willing to put something back. The participants saw my intentions were noble, genuine and borne out of an interest in their past that moved many of them to help me in my quest.

### **3.3 Bourdieu's Method**

A Bourdieusian approach to research centres around the application of three guiding principles which enable an *aide-mémoire* for researchers embarking on working with Bourdieu's concepts and sociology (Grenfell, 2008: 219). They are:

- The construction of the research object.
- A three-level approach to studying the field of the object of research.
- Participant objectivation.

Firstly, the way in which the object is constructed is integral to Bourdieu's approach. He argues that we must embrace a relational form of thinking instead of the tendency of positivist approaches which treat 'activities and preferences specific to certain individuals or groups in society...as if they were substantial properties, inscribed once and for all in a sort of biological or cultural 'essence' (Bourdieu, 1998:4). This cumbersome labelling of groups based on behaviour, such as alcohol use for example, posits a static view which is somehow applied to all those who drink alcohol leading to stereotypes and prejudice. Bourdieu favours relational thinking that accepts 'activities and preferences as our research uncovers, are understandable only in terms of social spaces, positions and relationships pertaining in a particular time and place' (Grenfell, 2008: 220-221). This manner of approaching research is

much more compatible with research projects like this one which is conscious of the speciality of the research based on geography, chronology and individual expressions (Dennis *et al.*, 1956; Young and Willmott, 1957). This furthermore emphasises the importance of taking Bourdieu's sociological concepts as a whole as it simply makes much more sense to do so, as it situates the data within that specific context.

Secondly, Bourdieu asserted the importance of a methodological approach which incorporated three distinct levels which:

- Analysed the position of the field.
- Mapped out the objective structure of relations occupied by agents who compete for the legitimate forms of specific authority of which the field is the site.
- Analysed the habitus of the agents; the systems of dispositions they have acquired by internalising a deterministic type of social and economic condition. (Wacquant, 1992: 104-7).

Bourdieu advocates analysing sites, such as the Bowling Club and The Goth, in relation to other fields that operate within their social system, such as the home, work or education to understand not only more about the field itself, but also the individual behaviour and how they interact with other fields (Grenfell, 2008: 222). This leads onto the dramaturgy, or the game, going on within the field and the hierarchy and roles individuals play within The Goth and Bowling Club. This is where Bourdieu's concept of capital emerges and which type (social, economic, symbolic and cultural) is recognised as the most prominent form of cultural exchange (*Ibid*). In simple terms, understanding why certain types of resource are most sought after in the field you are studying and similarly acknowledging which resources are of least value in the hierarchy of a field (Nettleton, 2013; Wacquant, 2014). In different

fields this structure of relations would not be constant, hence the need to keep in mind the position of the field in relation to others (Wacquant, 1992). The third level, the habitus of the individuals, in relation to their interactions with the field is analysed. This constitutes their background, trajectory and their position within the field which in turn, allows the effect the field has upon individuals to be understood and analysed (Grenfell, 2008: 223; Wacquant, 2014).

Through using such a tripartite approach to field analysis, Grenfell (2008: 224) argues that it helps fulfil Bourdieu's aim of transcending the sterility of qualitative and quantitative paradigms as the researcher requires the best data analyses to embark on the 'construction of a relational analysis, both within and between fields'. This project shall embark on such a field analysis by using documentary analysis of The Goth and Bowling Club's history as well as looking out with this field to locating it within the broader community of Fallin, both currently and historically.<sup>22</sup> Interviews and participant observation enable the researcher to unearth the entwined link between the field and *habitus* which facilitates understanding the effect of the field holds over individuals.

Thirdly, reflexivity is central to Bourdieu's method and participant objectivation is the concept which he uses to move beyond the seemingly trivial awareness of socio-historical context when embarking on qualitative research (Grenfell, 2008: 225). He also moved beyond the postmodernist reflexive approach whereby the researcher became overly embroiled in such practices and, in turn, became the object of research as opposed to other participants (Wacquant, 2014). Bourdieu wanted to embark on an epistemological critique of how knowledge was formed in a particular field which requires the researcher to direct their own epistemological thinking to those who produced the knowledge. Wacquant (2014: 8)

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<sup>22</sup> See Chapter Five about history, place and demographics.

surmises this nicely in relation to researching institutions like the Bowling Club and The Goth:

...institutions weed out agents who do not adopt the requisite social categories of perception, evaluation, and action; individuals drift away from settings that do not gratify their social libido and gravitate towards settings that do, where they congregate with others more likely to resemble them in their dispositional makeup and therefore reinforce their propensities. (Wacquant, 2014: 8).

In effect, I would have to look at my position within the field which I am studying, look at my *habitus* and how that affects my interaction with those in the field and how my shades of capital affects my standing amongst those I study. In Chapter Four I apply Bourdieu's methodological approach by discussing my relationship, dispositions and identities in relation to the fields of research and the men I researched. Through adhering to these three guiding methodological principles, we can begin to see how all stages of the research are inter-linked and require a common thought process throughout. It also, as Bourdieu argues, provides a more complete and rigorous investigation of the issues being researched (Deer, 2008). It is important to expand upon these issues through looking at the career of Bourdieu and how he researched phenomena.

Bourdieu's introduction to social research immediately placed pragmatism at the heart of social inquiry (Back, 2009). A young Bourdieu was conscripted into the French army in 1955 and sent to Algeria as part of the ongoing colonial struggle between the two nations (Back, 2009: 472). Bourdieu did not last long in the army and an intervention from his parents in 1956 prompted those in command to re-assign Bourdieu to the documentation and information of the General Government (*Ibid*). It was the start of his scholarly career and he

would witness first hand, along with the wealth of books at his disposal, the destruction of a colonial society (Yacine, 2004: 491). He conducted fieldwork for around four years during a period of war and upheaval which prompted Bourdieu to operate in a very specific manner which perhaps laid the foundations of his methodological dogma:

To conduct sociological fieldwork in a situation of war compels one to reflect upon everything, to monitor everything, and in particular all that is taken for granted in the ordinary relation between the observer and the informant, the interviewer and the interviewee. (Bourdieu, 2004: 426).

His fieldwork consisted of field observation, statistical analysis and photography which he used to capture, represent and analyse the Algerian War of Independence during 1954 – 1962 (Back, 2009). Bourdieu was interested in photography because of the aesthetics which are revealed through images, and it allowed a snapshot of the tastes and desires of that particular society places upon individuals (Back, 2009: 474). Such an approach is emblematic of the earlier description of Bourdieusian methodology which embraced the three-pronged approach of the construction of the research object; a multi-layered approach to researching the field and; participant objectivation (Grenfell, 2008: 219). In *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*, Bourdieu (1984) clarifies, and empirically grounds, much of his earlier thoughts through a robust piece of research which again adheres to his methodological mantra.

*Distinction* was another extensive research foray that lasted four years during the mid-1960s which mainly employed questionnaires and social survey methods, as well as some interviews and ethnographic observations, arguing that taste is acquired and used to legitimate cultural differences between classes (Bourdieu, 1984: xii). It was also the

introduction of 'field analysis' which has become an important method of social enquiry in cultural studies (Savage and Silva, 2013). It is often the *habitus* of the dominant class which is deemed as discernible thus subjugating those of other tastes to be of less cultural refinement, whether in France or in other parts of the world (Bourdieu, 1984: xiii).

Participants were asked about a manner of things relating to their personal taste on music, art, culture and so forth which Bourdieu analysed expertly to substantiate the multi-layered meaning of capital, domination and taste which advances the debate on class started by Marx and Weber several decades earlier.

In *Distinction*, Bourdieu (1984) adopted a specific methodology which sought to not just perform as an ethnography of contemporary France, but also tell us about the social snobbery which is everywhere in the bourgeois world. In 1963 Bourdieu conducted a preliminary survey of 692 people by using extended interviews and ethnographic observations in Paris, Lille and a small provincial town in France (Bourdieu, 1984: 503). In order to obtain a large enough pool of data to 'analyse variations in practices and opinions in relation to sufficiently homogenous social units'; he carried out a survey in 1967-68 which brought the total number involved to 1,217 (*Ibid*). In a fashion typical of Bourdieu, he suggested that despite the time gap he was confident that this did not affect their responses due to the stable nature of the dispositions of participants (*Ibid*).

What *Distinction* offers followers of a Bourdieusian methodology is a way of comprehensively studying phenomena using the best means available to present a robust piece of research. This project cannot replicate the scale and complexity of *Distinction*, yet it shall undertake a field analysis of the Bowling Club and The Goth by drawing upon a range of methods to understand the forces, dynamics and processes on display (Savage and Silva, 2013: 111). It seems obvious, by Bourdieu's logic, that social researchers should employ such pragmatism to their choice of research methods yet, paradoxically for Bourdieu, there still

remains entrenched paradigm divisions (Bryman, 2004). In one of his last major works before his death, Bourdieu (1999) in *Weight of the World* directed a team of sociologists who spent three years studying new forms of social suffering in contemporary society in areas of housing, family and modern employment. Methodologically, this was very different from *Distinction* in that they presented a series of case studies (Bourdieu, 1999: 1) whereby researchers were left to choose their respondents from people they knew or could be introduced to by mutual acquaintances (Bourdieu, 1999: 610). As their remit was to document social suffering, they wanted such social proximity between the parties to represent nonviolent communication (*Ibid*). Such familiarity is in keeping with the Bourdieusian methodology outlined earlier where it is important to be aware of the construction of the research object. The relational nature of undertaking research is summarised in the following extended quotation which also summarises the research relationship of this project:

When a young physicist questions another young physicist (or an actor another actor, an unemployed worker another unemployed worker etc.), as someone sharing virtually all the characteristics capable of operating as major explanatory factors of that person's practices and representation...their questions spring from their dispositions, objectively attuned to those of the respondent. (Bourdieu, 1999: 611).

The minimisation of social distance helps even the most obtrusive nature of questions to be empathetically managed because often they themselves have experienced similar issues. Such an approach to research indicates his views on the ethics of doing research, especially among those who are deemed to be suffering in the modern world, and how best to minimise the obtrusive nature of research for advancing knowledge at their expense. In relation to the community of Fallin, Kerr's (1991) account of the *anomic* landscape following the



abandonment of the colliery indicates they have experience of the harsh realities of modern modes of life. Their work career is often sporadic, low-paid and for many has been linked to the local mining industry. Bourdieusian sociology makes it clear that we have to have an empathetic approach to our participants (Bourdieu, 1999: 611). Such an approach is similar to Becker's (1966) famous methodological dogma that researchers ought to take the side of the underdog and be attuned to the lives of the participants (Gouldner, 1971: 49). This is not to advocate active partisanship but rather that social research ought to acknowledge the inherent biases individuals encounter in every social situation. Bourdieu alludes to this in his methodological principles of best practice research suggesting that participant objectivation is essential in order to be aware of your own embodied dispositions and the effect they will have on the research process (Grenfell, 2008: 225). This led Bourdieu, in the latter part of his academic career, to act as more of a social lobbyist in terms of his work which was often read by the general public as well as in academic circles.<sup>23</sup>

In *Masculine Domination* Bourdieu devotes his attention to the perceived constancy of sexual structures which result in the dominant masculine hegemonic identity subordinating women and other versions of masculinity (Bourdieu, 2001: vii). Bourdieu (2001), like Marx, sought for agents to mobilise and change the structures which permeate their subservience to the elite:

It (calls on women to mobilise politically) expresses the wish that they will work – within the social movement itself, and supported by the organisations that have sprung from the revolt against symbolic domination, of which, along with homosexuals, they are one of the main victims – to invent and impose forms of collective organisation and action and effective weapons, especially symbolic ones,

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<sup>23</sup> See Bourdieu (1999) on academic power; Bourdieu (2001) for gender relations.

capable of shaking the political and legal institutions which play a part in perpetuating their subordination. (Bourdieu, 2001: viii-ix).

In writing *Masculine Domination*, he did not conduct research as such but he did base his monograph on an issue that had been central in much of his work throughout his career (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 134). What Bourdieu did was draw on his vast empirical back-catalogue and supplement his theoretical work with research done on the Kayble people in Algeria and from *The Logic of Practice* (Bourdieu, 1990). Bourdieu (1999) argued strongly that specific structures still symbolically embraced the androcentric approach despite efforts to dispel these inequalities through social policy and pressure groups. Kerr (1991) and Mair (2010) speak of The Goth as a local institution which has largely remained unaltered throughout the decades in terms of décor and types of men frequenting it.

Although not explicitly focusing his attention to community studies, Bourdieu's methodological influence in this area can be found increasingly in modern works which embrace such pragmatism in applying methods. A common motif found within the community studies literature is in fact the blend between in-depth, contextual qualitative accounts from the researcher and inhabitants of the village with demographic and statistical data, often longitudinal in nature (Charlesworth, 2000; Rogaly and Taylor, 2009; Wight, 1993; Young and Willmott, 1957). In recent years, a large scale piece of community research, Savage *et al.* (2005: 16) conducted 182 qualitative interviews using a mixture of face-to-face interviews and telephone conversations which, due to the vast volume of content generated (1.5 million words of transcript), required a pragmatic blend of quantitative coding and retrieval techniques. This draws links to Bourdieu and his research on *Distinction* which also embarked on research of this magnitude. Although this study shall not be as large as the study of the Manchester conurbation, there is a need for numerical data to be used in order to help

provide descriptive factors, such as population and home-ownership that will enable the research to be located within the wider community study literature. By utilising such demographic data alongside the interviews data and ethnographic observations, one can tackle the research question of how the community is reproduced and remembered by adding depth and detail to social change that has occurred within Fallin in the past thirty years. This project shall argue that an ethnographic imagination is the best means to attempt to capture a snapshot of aspects of community life through the twenty-four men engaged in reproducing versions of it.

### **3.4 Ethnography – The reflexive approach**

It is an obligation of ethnographers to not only provide descriptive accounts of the behaviour they encounter in their fields but they must also engage in the reflexive process (Henderson and Vesperi, 1995). Yet, too much would, as Bourdieu (2000) argues, negate the fundamental principle of research which is participant objectivation, whereby it is essential to systematically control the pre-reflexive elements of their method, classifications and observations (Deer, 2008: 200):

The process of reflexivity is an ongoing encounter between the researcher and the other. As an ethnographer it is essential to establish openness as it cultivates tolerance of the researcher while at the same time generates willingness to share on the part of those researched. (Roberts and Sanders, 2005: 42).

Whilst in theory, Roberts and Sanders (2005) position on reflexivity is scientific, admirable and entirely correct, in reality a conversation with a friend/acquaintance/participant in a socially contrived situation of a tape-recorded interview does not cultivate such openness on both parts. Goffman's idea of impression management may help one through the range of

different circumstances encountered by an ethnographic study as ‘different audiences need different identities and this is not always realised beforehand’ (Roberts and Sanders, 2005: 45). Yet, arguably Bourdieu’s (1984) approach of looking at the working subject is an important development in ethnography as it encourages reflexivity without the need to be narcissistic or uncritical (Barnard, 1990: 58). The commentary on Bourdieu’s approach to reflexivity by Barnard (1990: 74-75) is worth quoting as it moves beyond the anthropological and interpretative ethnography that often characterised early community studies:

Reflexivity is not achieved by the use of the first person or by the expedient of constructing a text which situates the observer in the act of observation. Rather it is achieved by subjecting the position of the observer to the same critical analysis as those of the constructed object at hand. (Barnard, 1990: 74-75).

This means that the purpose of research and analysis ought not to be the presentation of the researcher’s intelligence and symbolic domination over the participants. Rather, it is displaying the patience and information that shall enable the reader to understand the relationship between the two parties. In Chapter Four, I will provide the reader with such a reflexive account of how data were produced and interpreted. It is now important to explore the ethnographic methodology which has acted as the research framework for this project. This section shall outline merits, and drawbacks, of doing ethnographic research whilst continuing the discussion around the centrality of the Bourdieusian methodological approach and its compatibility with researching The Goth and Bowling Club. Before that, it is desirable to define what ethnography is in terms of its methodology:

Ethnography is the study of people in naturally occurring settings or ‘fields’ by means of methods which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner without meaning imposed on them externally. (Brewer, 2000: 10).

This definition, although not exhaustive, encapsulates the version of ethnography which I embarked upon and the one most closely related to community studies outlined so far.

Bryman (2001: x) lists five key features which are indicative of an ethnographic methodology:

- Ethnographers immerse themselves in a society.
- Ethnographers collect descriptive data via fieldwork.
- Ethnographers are concerned with the culture of its members.
- Ethnographers take the perspective of the meanings members of that society attach to their social world.
- Ethnographers render the collected data intelligible and significant to fellow academics and other readers.

Ethnography is a methodology which advocates researching phenomena in a certain way through the application of a variety of methods (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1985: 1). A key motif of ethnography however is the extensive period of time in the field gathering data ‘based on empirical descriptions of the social and cultural worlds of a particular group’ (Emerson, 1988). My research has resulted in over five years of time researching the social world of the Bowling Club and The Goth, albeit sporadically and mainly in the summer

months. The methods I have used have been diverse, from observing behaviour in the pub through to interviews with men, taking photographs and documentary analysis of minute books and archival sources. Such an approach to fieldwork is similar to Bourdieu (1958) in his research on the Kayble people in Algeria where he applied a pragmatic approach for garnering information from a variety of methods (Back, 2009). If we take each of Bryman's (2001: x) five pillars of the ethnographic methodology in turn, it is easy to see the similarities with this approach to researching the fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth through a Bourdieusian gaze.

The premise that ethnographers immerse themselves in society is very much akin to Bourdieu's approach to conducting relational research and Cohen's (1985) understanding of how communities ought to be understood (Grenfell, 2008: 220-221). As mentioned previously, this centred on the idea that activities and behaviours uncovered are only applicable to the group at that specific time and researchers, subsequently, should not generalise their actions onto others. Therefore, it was imperative for Bourdieu to immerse himself into the culture, field, or social world he was observing in order to best represent their voices at that particular point in time (Bourdieu, 1958). This is witnessed in his ethnographic work in Algeria but also in *Distinction* and the *Weight of the World* where he employed research that was often produced over a long period of time and contextually relevant to those he was researching. This is also akin to the third and fourth premise of an ethnographic methodology which displays a concern with the culture of its members and representing their interpretations of phenomena. Like Becker (1966) and his argument that social scientists should take the side of the underdog, Bourdieu (1984: 5-6) leans towards this in much of his academic work which often is an open-ended critique of bourgeois tastes and preferences:

Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed. (Bourdieu, 1984: 5-6).

In the *Weight of the World*, Bourdieu (1999) and his researchers seek to magnify the voices of the unheard, invisible masses who suffer in modern-day capitalist society (Schubert, 2008: 195). Such seemingly philanthropic gestures of academic attention towards vulnerable and marginalised groups is in-keeping with a deep-rooted empathy with the culture in which he researches, and indeed, the culture from which he came (Grenfell, 2008). Suffering, and specifically his concept of symbolic violence, is evident in much of his work and how social scientists ought to document this in various spheres of public and private life: ‘symbolic domination...is something you absorb like air, something you don’t feel pressured by; it is everywhere and nowhere, and to escape from it is very difficult’ (Bourdieu, 1992 cited in Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1992: 115).

A useful means of highlighting this type of behaviour is through employing unstructured interviews (Bryman, 2003). This method is said to enable the researcher to learn about the narratives and experiences of the participant which subsequently empowers them to discuss their experiences using their own language. A case study conducted by Svendsen (2006: 44) in a rural Danish village explored the relationship between local people and newcomers through by undertaking unstructured interviews as part of his ethnography. Svendsen (2006) undertook an inductive and highly explorative epistemological position throughout his longitudinal study. Unstructured interviews are, in Bernhard’s (1989: 209) words, based on the premise that ‘the idea is to get people to open up and let them express themselves in their own terms, and at their own pace’. The researcher also benefits from this

form of social enquiry as they have the freedom to explore themes and to develop analytical ideas based upon reflecting on previous interviews (Svendsen, 2006: 45).

Charlesworth (2000), in his community study of the working-class in Rotherham, applied this approach through using their language and dialect in direct quotes to give power to their discourse. The author felt that presenting their words as spoken by them, empowered an embattled and emaciated social group which he contrasted with his own use of academic language to interpret their stories for the patricians (Charlesworth, 2000). Bryman (2001: x) also suggested ethnographers should collect descriptive data from fieldwork to ready it for academic consumption. The classic anthropological studies of Malinowski (1927) and Turner (1969) provided rich data of life amongst the natives, yet arguably failed to represent the meanings and behaviour from a culturally relative perspective, instead imposing their own values on what they observed (Sands, 2002). A Bourdieusian example of collecting descriptive data which was interested in how those studied, themselves, were dealing with the dramatic transformations around them was his research on the Kabyle people in Algeria (Back, 2009). As mentioned earlier, this ethnographic study used observations, archival information, interviews as well as being supplemented by photographs which provided a rich tapestry of the *anomie* encountered during the war of independence. The key for Bourdieu was to mould this mass of data, insights and discoveries into a piece of work to be disseminated by public and academic discourse. The holism of Bourdieu's approach to research was that research must be empirically grounded in order to be accepted as scientific by authors, academics and artisans alike (Grenfell, 2008).

### **3.5 Methods in Practice**

This discussion is important as doing ethnographic research in Fallin I felt that I too needed to collect a range of data through various avenues that would result in a complete picture of



life in the fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth. This section will critically discuss the choice of methods in this thesis. They are:

- Twenty-four unstructured interviews with men from The Goth and Bowling Club.
- Extended ethnographic observations in The Goth and Bowling Club over a period of two years.
- Documentary analysis of The Goth and Bowling Club minute books dating back to 1910.
- Secondary statistical data of Fallin in order to identify demographic trends.
- The use of photographs.

This was achieved by collating minute book details, ethnographic notes, archival information, photographs, interviews and relevant sources. Indeed, it has been as much of an exercise in storing and retrieving information as attaining it. Paper copies of interview transcripts, field notes and summaries of archived material were placed into themes which were emerging throughout the data collection stage. I preferred this technique to using analysis software because I found that my technique afforded me more familiarity with the data. The key for this project, as Bourdieu so eloquently perfected in his various publications, is to present information which is contextual, empirically grounded and also capable of advancing the debate on working-class masculinities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Previous research indicates that when men are researching other men, both parties become aware of their ‘masculine self’ which could be affected as a result of the research (Bridges, 2013; Messerschmidt, 2000; Schwalbe and Wolkomir, 2001). The inquisitive nature of the interview process can be interpreted as a threat, especially when the interviewer is from a different social class (Luker, 2008). Messerschmidt, (2000: 15) suggests that there is an

overt 'masculinity challenge' as a result of questions surrounding their past, their presents and identities. It has led to many researchers interested in masculinities to adopt the 'least-masculine role' whereby researchers wanted to create a greater degree of social distance so that researchers did not present a masculinity challenge (Bridges, 2013: 55). It allowed Bridges (2013) to play a naïve outsider prompting participants to further articulate stories and feelings in a way which was sourced in a more ethical manner. Such a position was not naturally available to me due sharing the same space with many of the Bowling Club members prior to starting the research project. Yet, this methodological position was utilised in discussion with many of The Goth's regulars where I could utilise the 'least-masculine role' in order to find out more about them in a non-threatening manner. They could talk about their feelings of loss, unemployment and hardship without the threat of their masculinity coming into doubt. I was, in their words, 'different' and crucially not a threat to their version of masculinity. The following quotation captures how this position can evolve over a prolonged period of time in the field and provide rich, contextual data:

Ethnography uses participant observation as a method of uncovering the intricacies of social life that might not be caught by other methods. Yet, when performed well, the least-masculine role can lead others to understand ethnographers less as participant observers and more as observant participants, blurring the boundaries of the relationship. (Bridges, 2013: 62).

However, this ontological position does present some ethical challenges. By conforming to the hegemonic version of masculinity in a social setting, it can lead to researchers becoming complicit in the behaviour of the group (Bridges, 2013: 62). For example, as I was trying to find about the regulars in The Goth, I was often present when sexism, racism and bigotry was

commonplace yet I would never challenge it. However, it was not my place to question their behaviour. I was there to find out more about their behaviour and the 'least-masculine role' allowed me to do this accurately whilst not acting as a challenge to their masculinity.

### **3.6 Participant Observation**

In terms of using an ethnographic methodology, the method of participant observation is most closely associated with the ethos of ethnography. This method has a long history in community studies and the wider discipline of sociology. A broad definition of the methods used under this term is as follows: 'active looking, improving memory, informal interviewing, writing detailed field notes, and perhaps most importantly, patience' (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002: vii).

Participant observation enables researchers to learn about people, phenomena and communities in a natural setting often over a prolonged period of time whilst either living, or spending a great deal of time, in the social setting. It is used by researchers to give greater context to their work. Bernard (1994) suggests that researchers ought to establish rapport in order to gain as true a reflection of life as possible whilst maintaining a sense of objectivity through distance. Bell and Newby (1974: 55) state that exponents of the participant observation technique shared a great affinity with those they were studying:

They talked and listened to, people in their natural habitat...they were very close, physically and emotionally to what they were studying...the implication of this is that usually the sociologist must somehow both 'fit-in' and be 'fitted-in' with this ongoing system of interaction. (Bell and Newby, 1974: 55).

I was very close to the men I was studying and spent a great deal of time socialising in the community and living in it for several weeks at a time.<sup>24</sup> This relationship will be explored in Chapter Four, yet in terms of using participant observation as a method of inquiry I felt that it was essential in order to provide a rich account of the community I was studying. I wanted to ensure that, through using this method and my social closeness to the men, I could blend into the community so that the men would act naturally and then upon removal from the setting I would be in a position to analyse the data from a privileged perspective of having shared space with friends.

This method has been criticised by some as generating overly sympathetic portraits of locality and groups due to the blurring of lines between objective, scientific research with personal connections and empathy (Bell and Newby, 1974: 55). The perceived lack of scientific rigour results in findings being specific to that community and to that point in time (Dennis *et al.*, 1955). However, despite the validity of these limitations, participation observation can provide rich data to the academic community of often under-researched groups which contributes to the advancement of knowledge.

### **3.7 In-depth Interviews**

In-depth, or unstructured interviews, are different from other types of interviewing in that the researcher gives the participant a brief opening summary of what they are interested in which then allows the interviewee to tell their stories (Corbin and Morse, 2003). The conversational style of social inquiry is often used when researching peers, friends or young people as it is said to minimise power imbalances which can be associated with more structured interviews (Bryman, 2004). It can be challenging for the researcher who often has to have a good knowledge of the issues being discussed in order to keep discussion flowing as an everyday conversation does. Indeed, the range of time which interviews lasted differed from 27

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<sup>24</sup> I looked after people's homes while they were on holiday.

minutes to 1 hour and 39 minutes. However, fifteen out of the twenty-four interviews lasted between 35 and 45 minutes.

The volume of data which was generated from the men was significant and for the shorter interviews (up to 40 minutes) I transcribed them myself the next day. This resulted in ten interviews being transcribed by myself with the remaining fourteen transcripts completed by an outside transcription service. I found that being able to transcribe the data so quickly after it was produced helped me to prepare for future interviews and gain confidence in holding conversations about a broad range of personal, local and national topics.

Using in-depth interviews was challenging, yet I felt that it was the prime method to understand twenty-four men's construction of community. As I was known to all of the interviewees prior to research, I chose the sample to evenly reflect participants in each field. Table Two overleaf illustrates the objective characteristics of each participant.

Table Two: Sampling Data

Participant: Homans (1974) Category	Age Range	Occupation (Miner denotes previous occupation)	Residence	Field (Bowling Club, The Goth or both)
<i>A: Sceptical Conformer</i>	50-59	Storeman	Airth	Bowling Club
<i>B: Freeloader</i>	70-79	Miner	Fallin	Bowling Club
<i>C: Freeloader</i>	70-79	Miner	Fallin	Bowling Club
<i>D: Freeloader</i>	60-69	Salesman	Cowie	Bowling Club
<i>E: Freeloader</i>	40-49	Engineer	Plean	Bowling Club
<i>F: Freeloader</i>	50-59	Electrician	Fallin	Bowling Club
<i>G: Sceptical Conformer</i>	30-39	Accountant	Falkirk	Bowling Club
<i>H: Sceptical Conformer</i>	20-29	Surveyor	Borestone	Bowling Club
<i>I: Freeloader</i>	60-69	Miner	Fallin	Bowling Club
<i>J: Freeloader</i>	20-29	Unemployed	Fallin	Bowling Club
<i>K: True Believer</i>	30-39	Storeman	Fallin	The Goth
<i>L: Freeloader</i>	70-79	Miner	Fallin	The Goth
<i>M: Freeloader</i>	50-59	Miner	Fallin	The Goth
<i>N: True Believer</i>	50-59	Binman	Fallin	The Goth
<i>O: True Believer</i>	30-39	Fireman	Fallin	The Goth
<i>P: Freeloader</i>	50-59	Security	Fallin	The Goth
<i>Q: True Believer</i>	50-59	Joiner	Fallin	The Goth
<i>R: Sceptical Conformer</i>	20-29	Labourer	Fallin	Both
<i>S: True Believer</i>	20-29	Scaffolder	Fallin	Both
<i>T: True Believer</i>	60-69	Mining Engineer	Fallin	Both
<i>U: Freeloader</i>	60-69	Miner	Fallin	Both
<i>V: Freeloader</i>	20-29	Gardener	Fallin	Both
<i>W: Sceptical Conformer</i>	70-79	Security	Fallin	Both
<i>X: Sceptical Conformer</i>	70-79	Driver	Fallin	Both

The main decision when undertaking sampling decisions was to ensure a balanced representation from each field. Occupation, age and residence were not part of the original sampling of participants yet these categories are indeed important for understanding the

socio-economic constituency of the sample. Homans' (1974) categories were applied after the interviews were concluded. In relation to each field, there are no 'True Believers' who solely frequent the Bowling Club because they were not fully immersed in the drinking culture, regular attendance, locale or gender roles expected of them. There were two men who were classed as being 'True Believers' who frequented both as they fulfilled the roles expected of them in both fields. They played almost every bowling fixture, embodied the winning ethos of the Bowling Club and also drank regularly through the week with other regulars. The four other men classed as being 'True Believers' solely frequented The Goth. They include current and previous licensees of The Goth. I found their interviews to be the most illuminating in terms of understanding the subtle differences between the fields and the importance of routine, reliability and regular face-to-face contact for men to be classed as belonging to the community. The six 'Sceptical Conformers' all had involvement with the Bowling Club with four of them seldom setting foot in The Goth, lived outside the village, had higher status occupations and used the Bowling Club to advance their bowling achievements. The remaining two 'Sceptical Conformers' did have dealings with The Goth but were often the butt of jokes because they were different in terms of their occupation and they also took themselves out of company if there was too much drink being consumed by others. The remaining twelve 'Freeloaders' all displayed characteristics which found favour in either field yet often did not fully reflect the 'True Believers' commitment to reproducing behaviours which were becoming increasingly difficult for these men to uphold.<sup>25</sup>

### **3.8 Use of Photographs**

The use of photography in social sciences has a long shared history with Heisley and Levy (1991: 257) stating that the '*American Journal of Sociology* from 1896 to 1916 regularly used photographs to dramatize the need for social reform'. Contemporary use of photographs in

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<sup>25</sup> This included regular drinking through the week and the omission of women from company.

the social sciences, and indeed wider society, is becoming more widespread due to the advances in digital technology and the rise of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Yet, as Henning (2000: 171) suggests, photography invites ‘voyeuristic looking’ which creates a degree of uncertainty on what is acceptable to photograph, document and apply. This project wrestled with the dilemma of whether to use photographs or not. A key benefit of using photography is that it allows the reader to visualise the décor of the pub and to bring the text to life. As Banks (2005) points out, social sciences in their quest to be scientific still aims to be a disciplines of words and often only uses photos in a supporting manner to add layers to what is being discussed.

This thesis, where possible, has endeavoured to translate the visual into text. However, in some instances the use of photographs was needed to illustrate insights into social groups (Bourdieu, 1990: 6). This presents ethical concerns relating to informed consent. The photographs which have been used in this thesis are either of buildings and social spaces with no individual faces or they include individuals who have knowingly posed or been aware of the photo being taken. This, like observing behaviour in open settings, is my ethical justification for using these images for research purposes. Crucially, for this project I never took any of the photos which have been used. This is important in terms of the analytical and methodological application of photographs as the following quotation by Becker (1971: 15) illustrates the concerns which I have of framing research situations:

...as you look through the viewfinder you wait until you see what you see ‘looks right’ until the moment makes sense, until you see something that corresponds to your conception of what is going on. (Becker, 1971: 15).



By using photographs as a means of corroborating your interpretations of social situations, one can assert that you are imposing your interpretations of what is occurring. Rather, Harper (1998: 34) argues that participatory photography allows an opportunity to see phenomena ‘through the lenses of the cultural other’ which reduces the prospect of researcher bias and fosters the collaborative nature of research. Indeed, due to this project researching friends, it is in keeping with the ethical ethos on which informed consent was negotiated (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014).

### **3.9 Ethics**

Ethnographic research is a methodology which has attracted much attention about the ethics of doing research in social worlds (Bryman, 2001; Homan, 1991). This research project had to undergo rigorous ethical checks to ensure that the fields of research, and those participants within them, did not encounter undue harm as a result of the research process. Such a process is common for many ethnographers, especially those who research in dangerous sites such as hooligan ‘firms’ (Armstrong, 1998; Giulianotti, 2001), criminal and deviant sub-cultures (Hobbes, 1988) and drug users (Henslin, 2001). This section shall discuss the following:

- Key ethical issues that needed to be justified in the ethical approval stage.
- Ethical issues which have arisen during, and after, fieldwork.
- Discussions of empirical examples which have helped solve, inform and validate ethical choices.

Looking back at the ethics proposal from November 2007 highlights many relevant issues, such as the slight changes in general aims and the rather optimistic timescale put in place.

What has remained steadfast and true some years on are the five central ethical issues which the proposal centred upon. They were:

- Protecting research participants and honouring trust.
- Anticipating harm to the community through dissemination of research.
- Negotiating informed consent in a public domain.
- Participants' involvement in research.
- Maintaining professional and scholarly integrity through painting an accurate portrayal.

These issues were highlighted following reference to The British Sociological Association statement for ethical practice (BSA, 2004) and the Association of Social Anthropologists' (ASA, 1999) ethical guidelines. It is necessary to revisit these core issues and discuss how they have been managed, overcome and presented during the research process.

To safeguard the welfare of research participants became integral to sociological discourse following the high profile case of Laud Humphreys' covert research on a group of homosexuals, more commonly known as the *Tearoom Sex Study* (Humphreys, 1970). This study sparked controversy when Humphreys conducted covert research deceiving more than 100 men into believing he was also a homosexual when in reality he was performing a role to gain information and access to a group of men embarking on homosexual activity for publication a year later (Bryman, 2008: 114). Similarly, O'Connell Davidson and Layder's (1994) study on prostitution was also conducted in a covert manner without negotiating informed consent of the 'punters', yet they were untroubled by this intrusion of trust. They argue that the clients were anonymous and they were not 'in a position to secure, store, or disclose information that could harm them' (*Ibid*: 214). The key difference between these examples in hard-to-research social activities is that the latter example protected and honoured trust of participants. Humphreys (1970) went to the participants' homes after

tracing their place of residence through noting their car registration numbers and interviewed them about health issues and some questions discussed were about marital sex (Bryman, 2008: 114).

These empirical studies highlight the importance of the role of the researcher and how this position can easily facilitate the manipulation of the situation to either strengthen, or break, trust. A key concern in the ethical planning stage was not to break the trust of The Goth, Bowling Club and individuals who allowed me to undertake research. Indeed, in accordance with the ASA (1999) researchers should 'endeavour to protect the physical, social and psychological well-being of those whom they study and to respect their rights, interests, sensitivities and privacy'. Through my decision to be open about my role in such environments, it was imperative to be honest about my intentions from the outset and before any observations were noted. This was done through outlining my plans during a committee meeting of the Bowling Club and through more informal conversations with the licensee, bar staff and regulars of The Goth. This collaborative type of research (Van den Berg, 2004) came around through accident yet was very fruitful in terms of data collection and rapport (Emond, 2005). It is also in keeping with protecting participants and honouring trust as they are often more forthright than I in terms of the exchange of information.

I planned on jotting notes of key observations in my car, relying on memory in order to safeguard authenticity and not jeopardise my impression management (Goffman, 1959; Wight, 1993). This is a classic case of planning research from a distance in academia not quite working on the ground as note-taking in the car was quickly shelved in favour of writing up notes the next day in the office. I found this much more beneficial as it gave me a consistent formula enabling the collection of notes which, looking back, represent a vast array of field-findings which was accessible for sociological analysis. In terms of maintaining my role as a participant observer, my relationship with the participants has changed over the

duration of my research, but this can be attributed more to changes in personal circumstances as opposed to the researcher-participant relationship.<sup>26</sup> Moving house further away from the village and becoming primary caregiver for a new child did result in the regularity of my presence in the fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth becoming more sporadic and usually involving less alcohol. This unforeseen outcome has perhaps impacted on the level of trust afforded to me, for being visible and reliable is highly sought after cultural capital in these fields. As much as I planned on protecting the rights of research participants, I think it is a duty of the researcher to portray their interpretations of events which may lead to an additional ethical dilemma in the dissemination stage. This point does bring the discussion back to empirical examples of community studies which have presented their findings, much to the scorn of those participants and the wider population (Homan, 1991).

Dissemination of research has always been a central ethical consideration of this project especially due to the close relationship between the researcher and the researched. Failure to accurately portray the village, fields of research and participants, or indeed portraying them too accurately, could cause undue distress to friends and the wider community (Homan, 1991). It is perhaps why chapters in ethnography textbooks are devoted to such methodological and ethical issues as the nature of research is often much more intimate and invested on the part of the participants than other forms of social research (Bryman, 2008). Attention shall now turn to examples which have informed the stance of this project on how to deal with, and present, a version of events that most reflect the narratives and values of the men interviewed.

A well discussed empirical example so far in this project is that of Wight (1993) who approached such concerns in a manner which sought to protect and safeguard the anonymity of the village. He employed the fictional name of 'Cauldmoss' for his community study and,

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<sup>26</sup> See Chapter Four.

although he gave demographic indicators and told the readers it was in Central Scotland, Wight (1993) endeavoured to guard the location and participants as he felt it offered both parties positive outcomes to the research. For example, it allowed the researcher more freedom to present his truths as he was guarded by the veil of anonymity he proffered to the participants of *Cauldmoss*. Additionally, the villagers did not experience any stigma or recriminations for being open and honest in their admissions, as there were very few quotations and Wight (1993) ensured it was purposefully complex for people to identify themselves should they read the research. Efforts have been made to follow Wight's (1993) example as much as possible, yet it should be said that even ardent attempts to follow this path can result in ethical transgressions and harm to the community upon dissemination (Homan, 1991). Yet, the omission of the individuals' voices in Wight's (1993) study was arguably a slight weakness as, at times, the voice of the author was the guiding force when reading his account. This project has favoured employing many quotations, which only provide age and occupation as their descriptors, as they are so illuminating and succinct. The decision to not disguise the name of the village or the fields was made due to my openness with each institution. Throughout the planning of the project I had anticipated using a fictional name for the village yet the men's curiosity and input into my research project was often matched with a willingness to read it once completed. In my judgement, to mask their community was not in keeping with how the data was collected.

Another study which informed my ethical framework was conducted by Boynton (2002: 6) which involved street prostitutes. Boynton's (2002) study highlighted the ethical right to protect the anonymity of respondents with the goal to not just reproduce stereotypes, but to also 'present honest information'. As this research was part of a report into street prostitution which was being disseminated to stakeholders, such as the police and social agencies, Boynton (2002: 6) cut quotations which 'were too identifying'. Through fear of

harming an already vulnerable and marginalised sector in society, the researcher's choice to manage the data with the interests of those participating highlights the complex nature of ethnographic research (Bryman, 2008). This project is not researching a population which many would view as being vulnerable, yet this does not render such ethical precautions redundant. A possible downside of researching in an area where you will frequent after research has finished is that you may be asked by participants to read the finished work. Boynton's (2002) dilemma of presenting an honest account with protecting anonymity will be tested should this arise. Perhaps one is being overly cautious about this as, in everyday social interaction, often people gossip and try to see who is saying what and with whom. I tend to side with both Wight (1993) and Boynton (2002) in that it is better to be prepared for the worst, than to not be prepared at all:

We aimed to protect our participants through the production of the report, and in its low-key launch. We were also honest about the negative effects could emerge, and discussed strategies for such problems. Other researchers in this area have noted...that problems around participant and researcher protection can be lessened by being open about perceived difficulties, and anticipating as many negative reactions as possible. (Boynton, 2002: 7).

I have been open throughout the research process with all interested parties in my intentions to observe, interpret and present a piece of research based on those men who frequent The Goth and Bowling Club. The very nature of what is being discussed is part-and-parcel pub talk; indeed I have heard most of it before without the burden of a tape-recorder in front of us. It is what prompted my interest in these men and their identities previously (2000-2008), so it would be churlish to present a diluted version of their truths through an absolute ethical

pre-occupation about safeguarding anonymity. This project suggests that these men should have their voices heard and this must include quotations aimed at highlighting their stories and identities (Charlesworth, 2000). The phenomenological account on the Rotherham working-class by Charlesworth purposefully used quotations in their own slang and dialect, to give a voice to the forgotten passengers of post-industrial Britain. This project has applied the same technique in order to present grounded interpretations which will ultimately fulfil a fundamental principle of doing ethical social research by presenting accurate, empirical information (BSA, 2004).

Another concern I had prior to embarking on research was whether alcohol would be a factor in acquiring data. I was concerned about how my ability to interview the men or document observations in the public settings of The Goth or Bowling Club would be impaired by my consumption of such alcohol. To the best of knowledge, none of the twenty-four participants interviewed had been drinking alcohol in the time prior to our interview. This was partly helped with many of the interviews taking place during the day and in their home.<sup>27</sup> Observations regularly involved men who were under varying levels of intoxication and this was deemed as ethically acceptable as it was a public place and my intentions were widely known to those involved. It was my intention to blend into the group of individuals in the Bowling Club and The Goth, of which I was an active part of, so I too drank alcohol whilst doing observational research (Hobbes, 1988). As is mentioned later in the analysis chapters, if I were to drink five cans of Coca-Cola as opposed to five pints of lager I would arguably not gain the true picture of events that occur. Ethically, the problem of maintaining a scholarly integrity whilst doing research, this was deemed as not imperative to uphold and on occasion I took notes when under the influence of alcohol. I wrote up field notes the next day, reflecting back on the day before events which was a useful experience. It allowed a

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<sup>27</sup> Data from the interviews highlighted that drinking alcohol in the home was quite rare, usually confined to the festive period or on family celebrations and visits. Also Wight (1993) commented on this in his study in 'Cauldmoss'.

sense of preliminary analysis to occur in the aftermath of the event in ways similar to Strauss and Corbin's (2008) approach to grounded theory and Becker's (1971) sequential analysis. The roles the men performed, and the purpose of their interactions in the field could be tentatively analysed and themes explored through subsequent interviews (Becker, 1971; Svendsen, 2006: 44). The following quotation from the ASA (2009) highlights the moral and social obligation that ought to permeate social research:

(Researchers) should do their utmost to ensure that they leave a research field in a state which permits future access by future researchers...their work (should) attempt to promote and preserve such confidence without exaggerating the accuracy or explanatory power of their findings. (ASA, 1999).

Being so familiar with the men in this study, painting an accurate picture of their identities was deemed as of pivotal importance. This study also has to realise the historically and socially constructed context by which the data are produced (Bourdieu, 1999). Reflecting the community studies tradition, and to a lesser extent anthropological studies, researchers embarking on studies like this one ought to make tentative inferences about how their findings impact on any other social space other than the locale that was researched (Young and Willmott, 1957). Keeping to this tradition ensures depth is maintained and a rich tapestry is produced of the men, fields and the village concerned. Researching institutions in communities like Fallin is still important because arguably there is little known such places in contemporary society as their identities, distinctiveness and community spirit was thought to have been disappearing at the same time as their local collieries (Crow and Mah, 2012). Indeed, this is captured by Beck (1992) when he suggested that 'traditional forms of community beyond the family are beginning to disappear' (Beck, 1992: 97).



Politicians and academics have become reinvested in such communities in recent years seeking to understand more about the generic labelling of 'Broken Britain' (Jones, 2011). Fallin would fall into this bracket with its high levels of social deprivation following from the collapse of the mining industry in its locale. It is therefore important to present accurate and informed accounts of the men's transition and the effect it has had on their identities.

From a personal point of view, I want to present a true reflection of the interviews and observations I gained from the men who I consider my friends. It is one of the reasons why I agreed to compile a centenary booklet of Polmaise Bowling Club in 2011 as it was important to give something back to them after they accepted my intrusion into their lives. This altruistic act also served to, in part, preserve academic integrity by ensuring individuals are not unduly inconvenienced by my research. It is hoped that the men interviewed will recognise the sensitivity and depth given to their words and will recognise my interpretation of their community. For example, their use of language was something that I wanted to illustrate effectively and accurately. Charlesworth (2000) in his phenomenological account of the working class felt it essential to express the diction of the people he interviewed the way they spoke it. He juxtaposed this with an overt academic prose which he used to highlight the alienation of their lives, identities and class by the academic class. I agree with Charlesworth (2000) that their words ought to be read the way I heard them yet they ought to be reflected in a more balanced approach to interpreting their version of events. It is why I have sought to use a prose which reflects the humour and familiarity with which the men spoke to me.

### **3.10 Processes of analysing the data**

This project utilised sequential analysis to generate hypotheses and explore them through successive readings of interview transcripts and observations (Becker, 1971). Sequential analysis, according to Becker (1971), involves four stages of data analysis. The first stage

involves the identification and definition of problems, concepts and social groups that seem most likely to answer your research question. Secondly, sequential analysis involves checking the frequency and distribution of the observed phenomena in order to avoid impressionistic accounts of phenomena. The third stage consists of incorporating the individual findings into a general model of the social system or organisation under study. The final stage of sequential analysis often occurs after the completion of fieldwork in order to check the accuracy of statements, test hypotheses and present the findings in a manner which preserves the rich description characteristic of ethnography. This research project followed a similar pattern to that outlined by Becker (1971) with interview data being tested alongside participation observation in order to provide robust findings which are grounded through empirical enquiry.

There was no use of qualitative data analysis software to code the data. The process of sequential analysis requires the revisiting of transcripts, reformulating hypotheses and I felt the software was too cumbersome to do this. This is reminiscent of Stanley's (2008: 28) comment regarding interviewing and analysing data whilst in the field that 'in one direction we gaze upon the field and on the other upon the academy' (Stanley, 2008: 28).

This reflection upon the data whilst in the acquisition stage resulted in hypotheses to be tested in future interviews, observations and field notes. McCormack (2002) used in-depth conversations to understand individual accounts of experience and then returned to the same participants with her interpretations to gauge if they were a true reflection. It is possible to suggest that whilst this collaborative research has its place, I favoured testing my hypotheses on other individuals operating in either field. This view reflects Stanley and Wise's (2006: 5) view that the role of the researcher is to present 'facts' which are grounded in evidence so that they allow the 'plausibility of interpretations and conclusions' to be gauged by the reader.

McCormack's research differs in some ways from my work on Fallin. She conducted tape recorded conversational interviews and then analysed the content through 'active listening' after the fact before testing her hypotheses on her participants for their responses which is something I have not done. The area which I found most useful when referring to McCormack's (2002) approach was her commitment to analysing stories that occur within conversation as data and to explore recurrent themes that come up across such stories, which is useful as a way of thinking about stories of belonging and community. This was an active approach to avoid making the findings seem impressionistic as I was trying to, in some ways, triangulate and verify anecdotes by seeing if they came up in other interviews or observations. I have endeavoured in Chapter Seven to provide the reader with an indication of how widespread the behaviour or identities were.

### **3.11 Conclusion**

This chapter has introduced, and justified, the various methodological and ethical considerations which affected the project throughout all stages of the research process. From designing the project through to leaving the field, doing ethnographic research requires a great deal of flexibility on the part of the researcher and a strong sense of pragmatism to ensure data is collected, analysed and presented in the best possible format. It is hoped that the broad range of methods used will help add depth to the study and provide the reader with rich descriptions, informed analysis and visual representations in order to illustrate the importance of belonging to this community for the twenty-four men in this study. Attention shall now turn to my relationship to the men and the fields of study by presenting a reflexive account.

## **Chapter Four: Reflexive Account**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Employing a reflexive sociology requires a systematic exploration of the ‘unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable and predetermine the thought’ (Bourdieu, 1982: 10). Social enquiry ought to avoid the unconscious embedding of predetermined knowledge and value-judgments that will invariably skew the lived realities of those being researched (Bourdieu, 1990). In reality, adherence to Bourdieu’s commandments of sound social research was more complex in my case as I was a part of the group prior to commencement of research and was in some respects researching my own identity (Denzin, 2002). It is this central premise of my research experience that acts as a methodological paradox in that the intimacy of my relationships with the individuals enables understanding whilst potentially (and perhaps invariably) falling into the trap of being unable to avoid predetermined knowledge (Bourdieu, 1990). This chapter will act as a form of preface instructing the reader of the means by which the knowledge presented before you was constructed. A brief reflection upon academic support of employing reflexivity is presented prior to documenting my reflexive account. It shall be argued that the research process cannot be considered as external to the researcher and therefore an acceptance must be made of the subjective nature of research (Gouldner, 1971).

### **4.2 Sharing space with strangers**

When referring to his own personal trajectory and experience, Bourdieu always stresses that the purpose is to illustrate how the reflexive approach may be used by the scientist to objectivise his or her relations to the object of study as well as his or her own positions and action within a field. (Deer, 2008: 210).

Academics have been debating the importance of reflexivity in the research process for several decades (Gouldner, 1971) and in many ways it became crystallized during the second wave of feminism in the 1970s (Smith, 1988). Put simply, biases were said to be inherent in every discourse, statement and piece of research. Rather than try and pacify such inevitable biases through the guise of the positivist scientific method, one should in fact embrace value-relevance and openly interact with the subjective nature of the researcher (Deer, 2008; Emond, 2000). It is widely accepted in social research and social anthropology that the ethnographer's self influences how ethnography is produced (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983; Wight, 1993: 16). Bourdieu's (1980) perennial preoccupation with the duality of subjectivity and objectivity being needlessly prescribed paradigms which stifle the research process led him to suggest reflexivity as the means by which the researcher can do honest and scientific research (Deer, 2008:200). Bourdieu (2000) advocated the importance of 'participant objectivation' which acted as a frame of thought enabling social scientists to analyse in a methodological manner 'whilst controlling the pre-reflexive elements of their method, classifications and observations' (Deer, 2008: 200). In other words, reflexivity for Bourdieu requires all social researchers to recognise their own objective position as participants in knowledge creation. This project shall reflect upon Bourdieu's sociological approach and as Emond (2000: 124) said in her PhD thesis:

Reflexivity, as a sociological concept, allows for this dialectic to be embraced...the reader is granted insight into the ways in which the data are interpreted and furthermore provided with a sense of how the data are gleaned. (Emond, 2000: 124).

Doing research in this manner requires a degree of introspection from the researcher in that they must turn the lens away from those they are studying in order to fully emancipate their

narratives. Many of the early pioneers of anthropology, like Malinowski (1927), only gave a partial account of those they studied as their own subjective prejudices, values and realities were not shared with the reader. The ensuing chapter shall describe the ways in which relationships with the men were established and how my presentation of self alters depending on the definition of the situation (Goffman, 1959). It is important to discuss the fields of research and explain the evolutionary relationship that I have had with both the Bowling Club and The Goth as I have progressed from a care-free teenager to a father in his late 20s. It will be largely autobiographical and shall employ self-reflection which will be supplemented on occasion with data from interviews. As Bourdieu asks: 'How can we claim to engage in the scientific investigations of presuppositions if we do not work to gain knowledge of our own presuppositions?' (Bourdieu, 1999:608).

Laying your cards on the table and embarking on an introspective look into your own set of dispositions is the minimum that social scientists ought to undertake upon carrying out research. It should not be an appendix attached symbolically to appease the reader; a reflexive account ought to be placed prior to any analysis chapters to facilitate a more holistic experience for the reader. Given this, it is important that some background information is given about me and how my set of dispositions was developed and how they interact with those of the men in this study. Being born in West Lothian and then moving through to Bannockburn at the age of four, I grew up in a private housing scheme on the outskirts of Stirling. My mother was a former nurse and my father was an accountant. They, like many of their generation of baby-boomers, found a job and kept it until retirement and worked so that they could afford to purchase their own home. Educationally, I was fairly average in national terms but was near the top of my year in terms of academic attainment. I liked school; it allowed me to mix with different types of people from the fairly sterile environment of life on my estate. Not being great at sports, I relied on being funny to avoid bullying and I was

already learning the early skills of a social enquirer by embarking on my own version of dramaturgy (Goffman, 1959). This version of socialisation in my formative years through to seventeen (the point at which I joined Polmaise Bowling Club) moulded me into a very malleable and inquisitive person. This meant that I got on well with everyone, was not fazed by most situations put in front of me and sought all sorts of company.

Having initially decided to pursue a 9-5 career with an insurance company upon leaving school, I quickly decided that I was not as malleable as I first thought and struggled with the monotony and respecting orders from those above me. I left for university by the age of nineteen and enjoyed the freedom it bestowed upon you. Polmaise Bowling Club and The Goth took me by surprise. It was an environment that I had been sheltered from by my parents who were not big drinkers nor confrontational and not very loud and vivacious. Upon walking through the doors on a Saturday afternoon for the first time as a naïve seventeen year old, I walked into something that intrigued me and has been doing so for the past twelve years. The noise of laughter, shouting and drink orders being blended together by the unnaturally loud horse racing commentary gave your aural senses an immediate shock. The air is stuffy, the carpets, seats and decor having been witness to many long drinking sessions with more than the occasional spillage which has been left to dry in. Prior to the smoking ban, the scent of ashtrays dominated the space and ensured that upon returning home you in fact smelled like you had been drinking out of an ashtray.<sup>28</sup> Personally this was complemented by the feeling of isolation in that you were a stranger in their domain and all parties knew it.

I knew a handful of members through bowling circles and quickly sought their company to stave off this loneliness in the midst of the crowd. I got through this shock to the

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<sup>28</sup> The smoking ban was enacted in Scotland in 2007 and ensured that patrons wishing to smoke had to do so out-with the comfort of the Public House.

senses with the help of a stranger who I now call a friend and was interviewed for this study. He came over to me, put his arm round me and said: ‘Can a’ be yer pal? Naebody likes me here and we will look out for each other awrite?’ (Retired Engineer, 70, ‘True Believer’). It turned out he was everybody’s ‘pal’ and this was his way of welcoming me to the club, pub and the way of life that captivated me for the best part of a decade. With each visit to the club, I became more accepted. With each pint I took and bought for them, I became more accepted. With each trip away and recital of a past story, I became more accepted. This experience was somewhat contrary to Wight’s (1993) experience in his community study where he felt it hard to maintain conversations about what he saw were ‘inane topics’ based upon what he was accustomed to growing up with ‘a high volume of cultural capital’ (Bourdieu, 1984 cited by Wight, 1993: 16-17). I enjoyed talk about old characters, current village gossip, football and any other topic as it allowed me time in their company having a few pints of lager. It was not for any sociological benefit, even after I decided to research them, it was for my own as their company was engaging and helped me see a different side of life. I do not mean to come across as condescending, indeed, in most ways I favoured their outlook on life to the one prescribed to me by my parents and community. Their comradeship, ability to be self-deprecating and humour is something that I yearned for and led me to decide to study these men for this thesis. Crucially for this project, I never became, as Homans (1974) would say, a ‘True Believer’.<sup>29</sup> My *habitus*, the set of dispositions given to me by my middle-class upbringing, would never fully mesh with their working-class value system (Blenkinsop, 2012: 209; Wight, 1993: 16-17). Their racist and sexist jokes would always receive a passing grimace of tolerance and my choice of employment, and latterly becoming primary caregiver for my son, did not fit with their view of hegemonic masculinity

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<sup>29</sup> See Chapter Six for fuller description and application of this concept.



(Connell, 1994). This was not to say my own parents and community did not hold the same prejudices, they just did it in a different way and often in a different, more private setting.

There was no danger of me ‘going native’ as primarily my liver function would be compromised. It is, in many ways, a perfect epistemological and ontological position that I found myself in because I was not constricted by lack of social capital and empathy encountered by other ethnographers (Bourdieu, 1999; Wight, 1993: 16-17). I was close enough to them to gain trust as I had done my probation over the past decade of membership and drinking in The Goth. Yet, I was not one of them whereby my own values could blend into theirs (Blenkinsop, 2012). I had to learn about them and do so through face-to-face contact as well as historical research which was facilitated by this research project. I played the role of a naïve incomer who was asking all these obscure questions about issues they took for granted as being life, or their *doxa* (Gouldner, 1971). One is reminded of Wight’s (1993: 3) insistence that social researchers should be concerned with the ‘ordinary’ lived realities of the working-class man and not some vogue topic that sweeps academic institutions. It is also indicative of Charlesworth’s (2000) phenomenological position in his study of the working-class where he possessed a degree of social and cultural proximity with those he was researching yet by his education and prose that was somewhat separate from their lived experiences.<sup>30</sup> Bourdieu (1988; 1999) in *Homo Academicus* and *Weight of the World* advocated a school of thought whereby social scientists empathise with the value-systems of those they research through participant objectivation. I believe that this is an essential starting point for researching social groups and I have endeavoured to understand and empathise with the men’s dispositions as well as I could.

The transition from a regular member and drinker towards being a researcher who often took notes the following day after an interaction was strange for me. I started

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<sup>30</sup> He grew up in the community he was researching and professed to be a member of the working-class.

deconstructing my friends' behaviour and the roles they played socially. Yet, upon reflection, I was always observing the individuals in company, understanding the subtle nuances in group behaviour and acting differently depending on the company in which I found myself. Once news of motivations became common knowledge, some of the regulars came up to me, quite abruptly and overtly by the code of The Goth, and wanted to talk to me about the strike of the 1980s or the history of the Bowling Club. I took it as a sign that I was non-threatening and how many people I have interviewed are grateful for someone documenting their mining legacy as it has in many ways defined them. I too found that being a researcher was coming to define me to my friends in the Bowling Club and The Goth, something that actually made me feel like I was doing my job. Having amassed a significant volume of notes, data and memories from my interviewee friends it has made me feel a sense of duplicity that they have given me so much for very little tangible reward. So much so that I offered to compile a centenary booklet for the Bowling Club, helped out painting sheds of the interviewees and summarising Health and Safety guidelines for The Goth to administer.

The interview stage of the research was the time when I felt a shift in my commitment to the Bowling Club, The Goth and the men themselves. The symbolic, social and cultural capital upon which our relationships were forged was compromised by a tape-recorder placed in front of us in their living room. Our chats, their histories and opinions were now data in my computer that I was at liberty to reflect upon and use to put forward assertions and interpretations about their social world. Going into their homes was unusual and broke the normal traditions of interacting in The Goth whereby it was neutral (Bourdieu, 1991: 99-100; Wight, 1993). The men's wives were often at home and asked after my family affording me the hospitality of a guest. Coffee and biscuits were commonplace but on two occasions I was given a bacon sandwich (with brown sauce) and on some occasions I left with cakes, potatoes and books after several interviews. It was encouraging and I drove home reflecting on the

chats and often keen to start transcribing them that night. I thought it was interesting that I was being rewarded for giving the men an opportunity to share yet, upon reflection it was probably borne out of a working-class generosity where people give what they can so that visitors left their home with something.

Themes emerged very quickly during the first dozen or so interviews; namely how engrained their ties are to their locale and the traditions forged within its borders. People were reinforcing each other, my thoughts and providing very concise quotations that crystallised themes. After these initial flurries of interviews were conducted, I felt I was ready to put the tape recorder aside and start writing up yet I was also aware that my sample, although rich, was too small. The remaining interviews were much more laborious yet they did offer me themes that provided a much more holistic view of the fields and types of men who frequented them. It became evident that there were a significant number of men who were not bound to the group as tightly as I assumed. This will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Six yet it ensured that I returned to the literature to find out more about commitment to a group or cause (Homans, 1974). Specifically, it led me to social psychology to understand the roles that individuals internalise for both the functionality of the group and their enjoyment from the situation.

Homans (1974) provided the conceptual framework of how the men's commitment and belonging to each field was understood. Personally, I embraced the rules and behaviour of The Goth when interacting in their social world but quickly shelved this layer on the drive west into Stirling towards my home and other social worlds. Adopting different personas and acting in an expedient manner was paramount in my interactions – something that perhaps make me apt for ethnography, yet a trait that I felt was magnified by the conflicting fields I was operating within. The Goth and Bowling Club rewarded a completely different kind of 'capital' than the academic circles I was spending much of my other time in. Swearing,

drinking and a sense of humour were the main overt differences that one had to play up, or down, depending on the situation I found myself in. This was exemplified during office nights out, which were often chastening experiences depending on who had the misfortune of sitting next to me.

In April 2009, I became a father and my new found role whittled away much of my time and motivation from The Goth and Bowling Club. It was no longer as easy to nip out during the week for a game of bowls and a sociable pint, let alone embark on a drinking session with the men on a Saturday. I was not able, as many of the men expressed to me in this study, to work during the day and then leave the wife and kids at home on the weekend to 'relax'. My visits became sporadic and I could no longer be relied upon by the Bowling Club members to be there on a Saturday afternoon which did affect my membership of the clique. My absence was often noted by the regulars and the bar manager who often asked after my boy and knowingly reminded me how priorities change once you become a parent. It undoubtedly did for me, and it had a detrimental effect on this research project as it became much more of a negotiation with my conscience, my partner, PhD supervisors and my weary eyes to finish the interviews and write up field notes. There is no doubt that on Homans (1974) commitment framework I became much less committed to the successful functioning of both fields and at times was an 'Escapee'. Having moved to Bridge of Allan in 2010, I drove past many bowling clubs and pubs on my way to Fallin and this further inconvenience led me to question whether I wanted to be a part of either group in the future.<sup>31</sup> I would walk the dog down to the local Bowling Club and many members would urge me to join their club. It gave me an excuse to vent about Polmaise Bowling Club which was going through a period of turmoil and low membership which was something my actions exacerbated. It is important to document these issues that were surrounding the latter part of my fieldwork as it

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<sup>31</sup> Bridge of Allan is a middle class Victorian Spa town situated to the north of Stirling and adjacent to the University of Stirling.

undoubtedly impacts on my commitment and social proximity to the men I was researching. Shifting levels of commitment to regularly attend and participate in each institution is perhaps an obvious criticism of this research project.

In 2011, following the completion of my fieldwork and in the analysis and writing up stage of my PhD, our family moved down south to England for work. Bowling and drinking in The Goth had become a thing of memory only realised through field notes and interview transcripts. It actually empowered a stronger desire to interpret and analyse honestly the data free from any loyalty to my friends. I was free from the tangled up nature of being a researcher as well as a friend to the subjects of research. Their words, stories and views began to be removed from my lived experiences and I could see them for what they were in their own words, not from my relationships with them. Analysis chapters were produced, documentary analysis was done from distance and literature was revisited with more informed eyes that were not limited by my own views of the fields and the men themselves. Bourdieu (1998), however, warned against the ethnocentrism of the scientist where observations, discourse and judgements are made when the individual has withdrawn himself from the social world they are studying (Deer, 2008: 207). It is partly why Bourdieu, in his later years, embarked on a series of projects that sought to show how the social scientist could engage with the social world and actors one is studying through sharing the knowledge of their symbolic domination with the downtrodden themselves (*Ibid*). In *Acts of Resistance: against the tyranny of the market* (1998) and *Firing Back: against the tyranny of the market 2* (2003), Bourdieu actively sought to question the perceived legitimacy of neo-liberalism and the inevitable inequalities this form of political-economy imposed on individuals.

My absence from the fields helped to distance myself from the analysis and enable the men's narratives to take precedence over my value-judgments. Academically, I found that Bourdieu's sociology allowed for the different views, motivations and sets of dispositions to

be understood within a relatively static field such as the Bowling Club clique or The Goth. Difference, conflict and flux actually helped the group remain intact in light of external pressures like incomers into the village and the erosion of the mining way of life (Blenkinsop, 2012; Cohen, 1985). Without taking myself out of the situation and enacting a buffer between me and the participants, I feel that I would have missed the nuances of individuality in each field. By 'sharing space with strangers' I gained an insight into a social world that has intrigued me for the best part of a decade. As Gouldner (1971: 495) writes:

...the assumption that the self can be sealed off from information systems is mythological. The assumption that the self affects the information system solely in a distorting manner is one-sided: it fails to see that the self may also be a source of both valid insight that enriches study and of motivation that energises it. (Gouldner, 1971: 495).

### **4.3 Conclusion**

In 2012 our family returned to the locale but I continued to maintain a distance from the men, Bowling Club and The Goth. I decided not to join the Bowling Club for the 2012 season which limited my interactions with those interviewed and my time spent in The Goth. It is partly because of this research project being completed that I feel that this stage in my life is coming to a natural end and spending so much time away from home is not as rewarding as it once was. Because I was never fully immersed in the village, The Goth or the Bowling Club and so committed to them that I could not withdraw my membership and custom, I find my choice natural and free from any tug on my conscience.

As the reader will see in Appendix One, I have undergone a full-circle experience with the men in this study. The early days of admiration and curious bemusement in their behaviour gave way to my partial renegotiation of membership upon life-changes towards my

escape from the fields. Appendix One applies Homans' (1974) five typologies of commitment to the group to show that they are not fixed and how I feel I have shifted path over the years. At the core, the 'True Believers' category is depicted as '0', through to the Escapees depicted as '5'. The bulk of what you shall read in this project was written towards the completion of the circle where my commitment and affinity with the fields and men were diminishing. I feel that this ontological and epistemological position is fruitful for analysing and writing up research. The following chapter will introduce the fields of analysis charting their historical development and their local significance to the wider community of Fallin.

## **Chapter Five: History of Fallin, The Goth and The Bowling Club**

### **5.1 Introduction**

...any attempt to construct a rounded understanding of coalfield society cannot ignore the presence of divisions, complications and contradictions which belie the image of a homogenous, organic whole. (Williams, 1998: 62)

Wight (1993) provided a useful template in his study of 'Cauldmoss' where he devoted a whole chapter to describing, locating and adding depth to the locale he was about to talk about. Similarly, the 'imaginary walk' employed by Blokland (2003) has been applied so that the reader can better understand the geography and imagery of Fallin. Reading Wight (1993) and Blokland (2003), I could visualise the colour and noise of the Gala Day celebrations, the imagery and setting of the surrounding landscape as well as the characters of the local drinking establishments. The time and effort displayed by Wight (1993) which he spent living amongst those he was researching illuminated the words capturing aspects of 'Cauldmoss' community. This chapter shall reflect upon these examples and contextualise Fallin and the local institutions of this study. Efforts shall be made to supplement this from ethnographic observations from my time in the field, demographic data as well as documentary analysis from local newspapers, minute books and photographs. It is hoped that upon reading the remainder of this thesis the reader can also visualise the fields of research, the wider community of Fallin, the camaraderie and the reproductive power of belonging and community.

Through researching local institutions and the individuals who reproduce them through their narratives and identities, one can shed light on how conflict helps perpetuate community and belonging (Cohen, 1985; Crow and Mah, 2012). Ethnographic studies must



display an awareness of the wider social context in which it finds itself in order to aid understanding of the peculiarities of local prejudices, behaviour and identities (Frankenberg, 1967). This chapter will provide the reader with a summary of the development of the village of Fallin, the Bowling Club and The Goth. Throughout, attempts will be made to illustrate the tension between the fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth (Mair, 2010) and argue that they are symbolically important local institutions which help shape individuals' views on community and belonging in contemporary society.

## **5.2 The village of Fallin**

Fallin is a relatively young village, only emerging on the lands of the Polmaise estate in 1904 following the discovery of vast quantities of coal (Mair, 2010: 11). Miners moved into the pit blocks built by the coal companies from 1903 coming from Stirlingshire towns and parishes as well as from Lanarkshire (*Ibid*). The village of Fallin lies four miles east of the town of Stirling in an area locally known as the 'Eastern Villages' along with Cowie and Plean, villages of similar size and scale which had collieries until the 1950s. The village itself is located on a patch of greenbelt which is buffered by fields on the east, west and south sides of the village with the River Forth acting as a natural barrier to the north. The highest point in the village is known locally as 'The Bing' which is now a grassy hill but was formerly the colliery shaft for Polmaise No. 4. This vantage point provides spectacular views of the Ochil Hills to the north, uninterrupted views of Stirling Castle to the west and sights of the oil refinery site at Grangemouth to the east.

I almost always entered the village from the Stirling end by car. The main road from Stirling to Falkirk dissects Fallin with housing spreading outwards from either side of the road. Census data state the population in 2001 as 2,710 with 56.3% of the population living in social housing which is significantly more than the Stirling borough or Scottish average. These houses were built following the demolition of the pit blocks in the 1940s to provide

suitable, affordable homes for the miners and their families throughout much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Mair, 2010). On the eastern side of the village you find private housing schemes that have brought many incomers into the village from the 1990s onwards (*Ibid*). The disused colliery railway is a popular walking route for many people from the city of Stirling to the former site of the Polmaise Colliery. The local primary school is non-denominational and has been at heart of the development of the village since 1907 (Kerr, 1991: 11). The Alpha Community Centre opened its doors in 1969 and is located next to the primary school. It provides a wide range of community learning, social and recreational activities and is cherished by the Alpha Centre Council volunteers who manage the project (Stirling Council, 2004). Fallin has a Church on the eastern end of the village which is affiliated to the Church of Scotland and is well-attended. There are several take-away premises on the main street along with other convenience stores located throughout the locale. Just outside Fallin lies the village of Throsk which has around twenty homes and is home to Banded Industrial Estate which has a large general industrial and storage complex that meets the requirements of medium to large manufacturing and distribution users (Scottish Places, 2011). There are several smaller industrial premises in the village of Fallin yet heavy industry is no longer found in the village. Notably for this project, on the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2006 The Polmaise Murray Mining Museum was opened in order to show the next and future generations the type of machinery used in the Colliery at a cost of £64,000 (Bone, 2008). On this site a Miners Memorial can also be found in memory of the men who lost their lives in Polmaise 3 and 4 Colliery costing £36,000 (*Ibid*). The plaque was opened by John McCormack who gave so much in his capacity as the local union delegate and on it states: ‘Their Light Shall Never Go Dim’.

This thesis has used this epitaph as a template for formulating the research question as it reflects the belonging, nostalgia and sense of pride in the men’s relationship with their

community. Their narratives, identities and way of life projects facets of the mining heritage which can, in my opinion, be found in successive generations of men. This phrase also captures the hope that future inhabitants of Fallin will hold on to the memories of past generations who helped create the community of Fallin.<sup>32</sup> The methodological and ontological approach of this thesis is also mirrored in this simple message. By employing extended quotations, spending time in their company and in some ways sharing similar dispositions, I feel that my role is that of a narrator. Their identities have often been neglected by social scientists who are often found eulogising about the end of industry and communities without giving due attention to those who underwent such iconic social change (Bauman, 2000; Castells, 1994).

The village has three licensed premises to sell alcohol. Grays is a brewery owned pub which is closest to the centre of the village located adjacent to the playing fields off the main road on the south-side.<sup>33</sup> Fallin Miners' Welfare is still operating as a local for many villagers and has snooker, pool, darts and function facilities. Fallin Public House Society Ltd (or The Goth) is one of the research fields for this thesis and is located adjacent to the Miners' Welfare on the eastern end of the village off the main road on the north-side. It was the first licensed premises in the village opening its doors in 1910 and was the popular haunt for the miners. It had a dance floor upstairs, now two flats, and still has a function suite at the back of the premises which holds around 100 people. I have drunk in all three premises and I prefer The Goth, mainly because people know me now and the measures are 35ml.<sup>34</sup> It is a familiar setting for many who drink there which is seemingly impervious to the passing of time, the sign of a good local keeping patrons' spending money. It is now important to locate Fallin within the wider landscape and provide more demographic data about the village and

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<sup>32</sup> Sadly in 2012, the mining museum was vandalised and this sign was defaced.

<sup>33</sup> At the time of writing, the playing fields have since become a mixture of social and private homes.

<sup>34</sup> Most pubs serve spirit measures of 25ml, however certain pubs, such as The Goth, serve 35ml measures as standard.

its residents. This shall help the reader gauge that even though this is a community study of Fallin, many of the themes may be found in other villages throughout the Stirling region and beyond (Dennis *et al.*, 1956).

By all accounts, Fallin is a fairly unremarkable place on the surface. Scratching beneath the surface and comparing demographic details of Fallin with the wider borough of Stirling and the Scottish average, suggest Fallin experiences marked inequalities. It is first important to explore the pivotal period in Fallin's socio-economic development, the loss of the mining industry, and locate the effects it had on people's way of living.

Mining was in the bloodline. Mair (2010) spoke of the time when the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher announced through its proxy, the National Coal Board (N.C.B.), that on 6 March 1984 there would be closure of twenty collieries (including Polmaise) with the resulting job losses totalling 20,000 (620 in Fallin). By this time, the men of Fallin were already out on strike with *The Evening Times* suggesting the Polmaise miners were the first in Britain to start picket lines on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1984 (*Ibid*). The local pit delegate, John McCormack, had written to *The Goth* on the 29<sup>th</sup> February to provide a donation to the strike fund which was duly granted to the tune of £150. Times were hard for many in the village and *The Goth* set up a fortnightly raffle in the May of 1984 to help the Fallin Miners' Wives Relief Fund which often resulted in fortnightly donations of £20 and at the AGM in June the shareholders of *The Goth* decided to donate a further £100 to the fund. The Bowling Club also displayed a sense of togetherness with men who were working providing 'subs' for those on strike to ensure they could continue to enjoy their hobby. Bowling marathons raised monies for various charitable and religious causes during this time which were being used in huge numbers during the year long strike (Mair, 2010). Yet, many of the participants of the research spoke of these seemingly desperate times with nostalgia:

It was the best year of my life...there was more togetherness than anything else. I had a pal, I was on strike for a year – he came down and gave me half his pocket money for the year, £12, I gave Jock six quid. That’s the kind of spirit we had. If you had something, ye shared it...Am telling you it was the best time of our lives. Coming up towards Christmas, the council paid our rent. We had a kitchen up there, we got fed. (Former Miner, 71).

Such an account was common. Men spoke of trips to the National Union of Miners (N.U.M.) conferences in Yorkshire, trips to the seaside, community togetherness at soup kitchens as well as Christmas presents sent over from the Polish Solidarity Party with Lech Walesa at its helm. In relation to this thesis and the research question is how the community spirit was performed, maintained and remembered in positive terms (Blenkinsop, 2012; Cohen, 1985). Relying on your neighbour, being relied upon and sharing the collective resources of the community are ideals that the men in this study reminisce fondly about.

That said, the 1970s and 1980s were a tumultuous time for Fallin and many other communities in Scotland (Wight, 1993) that were characterised by a great deal of macro and micro level change that significantly impacted on these local communities. The significant downturn in coal production coincided with the development of North Sea Oil and Gas which the Thatcher government from 1979-1990 favoured (*Ibid*). The neo-liberal politics of Thatcher’s reign favoured the free-market to help guide industrial relations and the nationalised coalfields were not profitable and did not reflect their future vision for Britain (Heywood, 1999; Stewart, 2009). Housing initiatives allowed tenants of council housing to buy their homes at a reduced price which symbolically took the housing stock out of the hands of the community and into the estates of individuals (Stewart, 2009). Data provided by Stirling Council (2011) highlight how local authority housing provision has consistently

dropped in Fallin coupled with the increase in owner-occupation. These two historical events, the abandonment of the local mining industry and the change in housing tenure, have had a significant impact on the community of Fallin. This thesis will now illustrate why this was the case.

As of 01/01/1991 Stirling Council had 766 council houses which dropped by 25% to 575 units in 01/01/2001 and down by a further 27% to 419 Units on 01/01/2011. This can be attributed to the significant number of new houses being built by private housing builders as well as former council tenants taking the opportunity to buy their own homes (Stewart, 2009). Such a trend away from Social Housing can be found in wider Scottish society (Scottish Household Survey, 2010) yet the community of Fallin still has a large percentage of local authority stock within their locale. Housing tenure statistics indicate that a slender majority of the population of Fallin still lived in social housing which was out of kilter with the wider Stirling Council trend that stated in 2000 only 22% of households lived in socially rented property. This is important as it shows that Fallin still possesses a stronger degree of collective ownership in light of the national average (Phillips, 2010). It could also be indicative that many tenants in Fallin are not in a position to buy their homes due to their socio-economic status being lower than the Stirling and Scottish average. Either way, remnants of collective ownership of public resources contributes towards a version of community specific to former mining communities like Fallin. In relation to the central aim of this research thesis to understand how men remember, create and maintain community, housing statistics offer insights into how people live within their community. This will be explored further in Chapter Seven as housing and incomers were themes which emerged during the interview process. Many men viewed this relatively recent shift as a threat to the purity of their community as they now did not know their neighbours' lineage as intimately as they once did.

In order to locate Fallin in the wider Stirling context, census data is used to chart the development of the village with neighbouring communities known collectively as the ‘Eastern Villages’. The most recent census and local council data suggest that in 2008 Fallin’s population was 2,760. The following table details the shift in population of Fallin and the two other neighbouring villages, Cowie (2.4 miles away) and Plean (4 miles away), from 1961.

Table Three: Derived from Census data

<u>Year</u>	<u>Fallin’s Population</u> <u>(% Shift)</u>	<u>Cowie’s Population</u> <u>(% Shift)</u>	<u>Plean’s Population</u> <u>(% Shift)</u>
1961	2,944	2,639	1,639
1971	3,159 (+7.3%)	2,866 (+8.6%)	1,785 (+8.9%)
1981	2,663 (-15.7%)	2,511 (-12.4%)	1,953 (+9.4%)
1991	2,479 (-6.9%)	2,049 (-18.4%)	1,668 (-14.6%)
2001	2,710 (+9.3%)	2,387 (+16.5%)	1,671 (+0.2%)
2008	2,760 (+1.8%)	2,580 (+8.1%)	1,930 (+15.5%)
1961 – 2008	(-184) (-6.3%)	(-59) (-2.2%)	(291) (+17.8%)

This data situates the onset of de-industrialisation of the mines throughout communities like Fallin from the 1980s through to the present day. External socio-economic factors were

threatening the Fallin way of life which was said to contribute to the partial erosion of the sense of community (Kerr, 1991; Mair, 2010; McCormack, 1989). The growing privatisation and individualisation throughout the 1980s and through to the 21<sup>st</sup> century of Scottish society contributed to Fallin and other local communities experiencing a fall in population. The shift away from localism towards greater interdependency was indeed theorised by Durkheim and Tönnies and in more recent times by Beck (1992), Bauman (2000) and Sennett (1998) in how they felt that globalisation is having a significant impact on the renegotiation of communities and individual identities. In relation to the miners of Fallin, this renegotiation was manifested in incomers moving into social and private housing, the removal of industry from the locale, unemployment and subsequent increase in social welfare dependency. As mentioned earlier, commentators charted these events as signalling the start of the breaking up of the community which no longer afforded individuals a prescribed path through life (Kerr, 1991; Phillips, 2010).

As this project is an ethnographic study, it afforded me an intimate opportunity to chart and understand the effects of macro level changes in the ordering of society; an often understated benefit of community studies like Wight (1993), Roberts (1993) and Blokland (2005). This longitudinal reflection upon communities' development can inform policy makers and academics of the real-life effect on the identities and lives of the populace (Lupton, 2003; Smith, 2005; Wallace, 2010). It is clear from looking at sources on Fallin, other industrial towns and charting demographic data that social change has been experienced harshly by many in 'real communities' like Fallin (Bauman, 2000). Jones (2011) and Crawford (2013) assert that the transition from full-employment through to the de-industrialised communities that they now find themselves in has led to the working-class being re-classified from the 'salt of the earth' to 'scum of the earth'. This shift led to many local commentators (Kerr, 1991; Mair, 2010; McCormack, 1989) charting the decline in their



village and community spirit with a level of articulation that supersedes much academic work about de-industrialisation.

In relation to the research question which seeks to explore how community is reproduced, it is important to locate the nostalgia and belonging within empirical data. The purpose of using population figures illustrates how the villages of Fallin and Cowie underwent a population decrease following its peak in 1971. The 1960s and 1970s in Fallin were spoken of by Kerr (1991: 53) as an era of industrial prosperity with the colliery employing many men from Fallin, Plean and Cowie following the closure of its pit in 1957. There were also local manufacturing jobs in the community supporting mechanics and a small engineering plant that ensured unemployment was low with the villagers being able to afford relative luxuries like refrigerators (*Ibid*). The community of Cowie lost their mine in 1957 and the residents traced a decline in community spirit upon the abandonment of their colliery. Some of the miners sought work at the thriving Polmaise Colliery or much further afield in Fife, yet many other men pursued work in other industries that were available around the Stirlingshire area. *Cowie* was no longer a self-contained unit with little dependence on the outside world - it was more open to outside influences.

Communities like Fallin and Cowie became accustomed to having heavy industry within their locale which, in turn, shaped how it was constructed, understood and reproduced. Being able to live and work within your village was traditionally a central premise of being a community (Frankenberg, 1957; Wight, 1993). Thinking of a community as a self-contained unit is important and symbolic. Communities which became increasingly affected by outside forces were under threat. Other studies have suggested that the darker side of community emerged as they became prime sights of social exclusion (Crow and Mah, 2012: 2). The removal of local industry arguably became the catalyst for reinvigorating the core values of

communities in order to protect traditions and identities (Blokland, 2005; Cohen, 1985; Crow, 2002).

People left either village as large-scale employment was becoming more uncertain and eventually in 1987, Polmaise Collieries 3 & 4 were abandoned resulting in the locales Fallin, Cowie and Plean having their lowest population points in 1991. Another purpose of comparing Fallin with Plean and Cowie is that many of the men in these villages worked in the Polmaise Collieries located in Fallin. One respondent suggested that the men from Plean worked in various pits around central Scotland in search of work after their local collieries were closed in 1963:

The miners from Plean originally worked in the mines in and around Plean. There were also clay mines around Plean which they also worked in. The later years they worked were ever there was work for them, Fallin, Bogside, Solsgirth, Longannet. Most of them were based in Fife. (Chemical Engineer, 45).

The community of Plean was perhaps not as exposed to the downturn of the 1987 pit closure at Polmaise Collieries as they were already more used to travelling out of their community in search for work. Their dependency on mining was far less and much more in line with the average of the UK who were occupied as miners at around 3-5% based on estimates from statistical data (University of Portsmouth, 2009). The similarities in local commentaries across each of these communities highlight their dependency on the coal mining industry and the traditions, social relations and solidarity that this unique industry fostered (Wight, 1993). Many local and national political gestures have attempted to revitalise Fallin, Plean and Cowie (collectively known as the 'Eastern Villages') since the early 1990s that has been a prime site for housing developments and community projects. A report done by Pearson

(2006) on the eastern villages reflects this statement yet questions the sustained success of any regeneration:

The communities (of Cowie, Fallin and Plean) have been identified as having poor health, high unemployment, low incomes, low educational attainment and relatively high crime rates. In order to address this a variety of renewal and regeneration measures have been identified by central and local government in an attempt to reverse the decline of these communities...Indeed the most recent Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation shows Fallin to be suffering from greater disadvantage than previously. (Pearson, 2006).

The same report commissioned a range of socio-economic data to describe the inequalities that people living in these villages are said to experience in recent times. The following tables collate the information which was extracted from the *Regeneration Outcome Agreement 2005* which was produced by Stirling Community Planning Partnership (2005).

Table Four: Mortality: NHS Forth Valley – Standardised mortality rates 1999-2003.

	<b>All causes</b>	<b>Cancer</b>	<b>Coronary heart disease</b>
<b>Plean</b>	164	137	204
<b>Cowie</b>	111	102	137
<b>Fallin</b>	125	148	147
<b>Stirling</b>	85	91	81

Table Five: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation – Hospital admissions

	<b>Emergency hospital admissions per 100,000 (2003)</b>	<b>Hospital admissions for alcohol misuse per 100,000 (1999-2002)</b>	<b>Hospital admissions for drug misuse per 100,000 (1999-2002)</b>
<b>Plean</b>	13,482	661	178
<b>Cowie</b>	11,158	711	53
<b>Fallin</b>	13,479	1,380	128
<b>Stirling</b>	9,166	574	86
<b>Scotland</b>	9,022	759	139

These two tables describe trends in health and wellbeing that highlight inequalities between Fallin and the wider fields of Stirling and Scotland. What is striking, as much of this research is based in a pub, is that Fallin seems to have a problem with alcohol misuse with hospital admissions 82% higher than the national average which is already the highest in the United Kingdom (Scottish Health Survey, 2009). One could suggest that Fallin’s relationship with drink could be an expression of a hegemonic masculinity, highlighted in the interview process and observations of this project, which rewards heavy drinking. This will be explored in Chapters Six and Seven yet it is worth reflecting on Wight’s (1993) study on ‘Cauldmoss’ where he learned to become a heavier drinker as this was the cultural form of exchange demanded of him in order to maximise his rapport with the villagers. Data such as this highlight the importance of alcohol in social interaction and as a means to be accepted by the ‘True Believers’. Such data helps locate this project in wider society and gives the reader a sense of what type of social problems exist in the community of Fallin. The following tables continue to describe socio-economic inequalities that continue to affect Fallin in recent times.

**Table Six: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation – Unemployment**

	<b>% of working-age population classed as employment deprived (2005)</b>	<b>% of 16-24 claiming Job Seekers Allowance (2004)</b>	<b>% of population 16+ claiming Income Support (2004)</b>
<b>Plean</b>	24	3.16	8.9
<b>Cowie</b>	19	4.28	9.2
<b>Fallin</b>	25	5.31	10.2
<b>Stirling</b>	11	2.88	5.3
<b>Scotland</b>	14	3.86	7.7

Low income in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation is classed as earning 60% of the contemporary median income before housing costs. Pearson (2006) states that social groups that are most likely to fall into this category are pensioner families, lone-parent families, workless households, people in socially rented accommodation and people with no educational qualifications. The data suggests Stirling has a relatively strong economy which is characterised as having one of the most extreme levels of socio-economic inequalities in any local authority in Scotland (Stirling Council, 2011). The relative affluence of Dunblane, Bridge of Allan and Causewayhead is juxtaposed with pockets of high unemployment often found in the Eastern Villages (Pearson, 2006). Fallin’s young people experience similar, or indeed higher, levels of worklessness in contemporary society due to the structural forces as well as relatively poor educational attainment in relation to wider society.

Table Seven: Stirling Council Research Team – 2001 Census data

% Residents with no qualifications	
<b>Plean</b>	51
<b>Cowie</b>	52
<b>Fallin</b>	57
<b>Stirling</b>	27
<b>Scotland</b>	33

This table shows that the majority of people from Fallin are not well equipped in terms of qualification attainment that limits their work choices. Traditionally, lacking an educational certificate of your achievements was not an issue for the men and women of Fallin throughout much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to the local collieries and other blue-collar occupations. ‘Learning to labour’ was grounded in the education system of this period in history with men in particular treating school as a means to forge relationships with future workers in heavy industry (Willis, 1977). This data in Table Seven does not take into account age with many of the younger generation of Fallin leaving school with qualifications of some sort. However, many young people in Fallin are experiencing their early adult life dependent on the state or households who themselves are more likely to be income deprived than many other Scots (Pearson, 2006).

The village of Fallin also experienced a steady population rise from the 1990s through to the present day which partly came about with families from neighbouring villages moving into the village; private housing schemes were built throughout the 1990s and 2000s in the shadow of Polmaise No.3 and No.4 (Mair, 2010). As well as incomers into private housing schemes, the social policy of giving individuals choice about their preferences on where to live within a local authority upset many of the men interviewed as they viewed it as divisive

tool that diluted the sense of community in Fallin. The following table illustrates the significant differences in areas of economic activity, health, housing tenure that was collated from the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics Authority.

**Table Eight:** Economic activity derived from Scottish neighbourhood statistics (2010).

Economic activity and benefits	Fallin	Stirling Council	Scotland
<b>% of 16-24 year olds claiming Key Benefits</b>	21.3	8.3	13
<b>% of 25-49 year olds claiming Key Benefits</b>	23.1	14	16.1
<b>% of 50 year olds to pensionable age claiming Key Benefits</b>	35.1	18.4	23.3

Fallin has significantly higher rates of individuals on benefits with 16-24 year olds encountering an extremely high level of worklessness in relation to Stirling and the Scottish average. For example, the extent of individuals relying on Key Benefits across the age spectrum highlights how the community fares poorly in terms of its working population.<sup>35</sup> The culture of benefit dependency has been spoken of in academic and political circles and many families in Fallin will be disproportionately exposed to this social problem. In relation to the literature surrounding Fallin, it seems that Kerr’s (1991) label of Fallin being a ‘lost community’ holds some weight in this data as the community went from a position of strong

<sup>35</sup> Key Benefits stem from eight potential benefit groups:

- Jobseekers Allowance.
- Incapacity Benefits or Severe Disablement Allowance.
- Lone Parents income support with a child under 16 and no partner.
- Carers Allowance or others on Income Related Benefits.
- Pension Credit Claimants under state pension age.
- Disabled Living Allowance (DLA).
- Bereaved Widows Benefit.
- Bereavement Benefit or Industrial Death Benefit.

employment rates to weak figures since the collapse of the local mining industry. Kerr (1991: 61) suggested the apparent increase in vandalism was due to a 'misdirected reaction from a youth, eager to express a rebellion born of a society which has long ceased to convey ambition to their lives'. Some twenty years ago, when Kerr (1991) wrote his book, Fallin was arguably an *anomic* landscape that fostered a discontinuity between prescribed cultural goals and the legitimate means by which the young people could and can achieve them (Merton, 1938).

Unemployment figures from 2001 state that 4.5% of Fallin's working population was unemployed which was higher than the 2.9% Stirling Council average and only slightly higher than the national Scottish average of 4.3%. A key aim of Thatcher's government of the 1980s was following on from Friedman's monetarist economic belief that there is an acceptable level of unemployment needed in every prosperous society (Stewart, 2009). In current times with youth unemployment (16-24) reaching 20% in Scotland, fissures in society are beginning to widen and the data presented above highlights how Fallin has traditionally bore the brunt of social inequalities. Manifestations of tough economic times can be seen in the fields of this research with Bowling Club membership falling to its lowest levels in recent years and The Goth's takings stagnating (Mair, 2010). A proposal from the Bowling Club committee is to ensure membership fees (£55) are paid within two weeks of the season opening in 2012 as many members were paying in instalments or not at all.

The experience of relative poverty or worklessness in some cases can have significant social and cultural ramifications for the men who cannot fulfil their communal obligations. For example, the study by Wight (1993: 203) found that if men could not conform to the conventional form of interaction they would withdraw from social activities. The men who were on the 'bru' (state unemployment benefits) would reduce the regularity of their participation and when they did participate in social drinking, for example, it would be



around the time they received their 'bru money' and participated in the conventional manner (*Ibid*). Coffield *et al.* (1986: 62) encapsulates this position and the view of many men in Fallin who displayed an impressive amount of self-regulation and internalisation of the symbolic capital prescribed in each field:

...one of the many tactics the young adults used to maintain their respect was they felt the need to participate in the customary activities of the community for two or three days a fortnight, and for this it was worth being broke for the other ten days. (Coffield *et al.*, 1986: 62).

In Fallin, those who do continue to play bowls at Fallin often forgo the customary drink after ties and club matches as they simply cannot afford it. Speaking personally, I always try to ensure this tradition was fulfilled partly out of respect and the opportunity to have a pint. Yet, it was also a good opportunity to speak one-to-one with the individual where you often found a different shade of their personality away from the group. The Bowling Club's tradition was a key bone of contention for The Goth's committee who spoke ill of the current crop of bowlers who were said to rarely come in for a pint anymore. As one member put it when describing this trend among the younger members:

The young wans just do their own thing and nothing wrong with that – they just go hame and have a drink in the house afore they go out up town at night. A dinnae blame them, the price of a pint is pretty high fur them. (Former Miner, 70, 'True Believer').

There has been a great deal of reference to the fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth and how they act like coercive structures over malleable individuals who drink, play bowls and socialise in their confines. It is now important to explore each institution more thoroughly in order to emphasise the shades of capital needed to be integrated into either field. This section shall primarily rely on ethnographic descriptions, archival information and village chronologies to support the view that The Goth is a working-class man's pub. Prior to this, it is important to provide some descriptive information about the foundation of each institution. This shall allow the reader to understand the local significance of each institution in Fallin's development. This section shall go on to describe the wider locale of Fallin and how, specifically the mining legacy, has shaped the fields of research. It shall be argued that the wider field of Fallin is represented as a microcosm in the fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth.

### **5.3 The Goth**

The Goth is the oldest drinking establishment in the village of Fallin and, like the Bowling Club, has largely been the domain of men over the years. The Goth has also had a history of charitable donations to village good causes, like funding the village nurse in the 1920s to providing funds for sick children to have their homes adapted in the present day (Mair, 2010). It is still relatively well used by the community for functions, regular drinking and prides itself in being a hub for charitable causes (Mair, 2010). I had to work harder to access this site as I was not a heavy drinker and did not have a mutual interest in common, as I often did with members of the Bowling Club. This site was essential for my research as it provided the backdrop for the stories, identities and belonging which many of the men in this study recited fondly. Both sites are almost exclusively the domain of men and thus gave me access to many suitable, and willing, participants.

Fallin was a 'dry' village until 4<sup>th</sup> November 1910, until the Gothenburg opened its doors and saved the men catching a horse and cart into Stirling for a drink (Kerr, 1991).<sup>36</sup> The Goth was, however, more than just a drinking house in the early days with Kerr (1991: 16) suggesting 'it was also a centre of community life with a library and a recreation hall with a meeting room'. This section shall describe The Goth, its history and the importance of researching the men who frequent it. The following ethnographic field note and photographs are used to provide the reader with some visual images to relate to:

The pub itself is fairly small, with seating room for around fifty people and a few more standing at the bar. I liked it, but many friends and family of mine are not so keen. They have expressed to me that they felt like they were on trial as they are not from these parts. This is understandable and common in many pubs in communities that I have been in. The bar is located at the opposite end to the doors which swing open making a screeching noise announcing the arrival or departure of a punter. In between the door and the bar lie two banks of seating with a trophy cabinet set above them acting as a symbolic partition. This used to be the site for the old circular bar, spittoon and all, prior to renovation in 1995 (Mair, 2010). Around the perimeter of The Goth lies seating which are comfortable and of a nice, but well worn, form of maroon material.

The tables are made of a light shade of wood that always require you to pull them out in order to sit in the bank of seats. Dispersed throughout various corners of the pub are plastic flowers, slightly discoloured following their planting some fifteen years earlier to presumably make the pub more women friendly. The darts board is well lit on the same wall of the bar itself. There is a 'puggy' next to the gents toilet –

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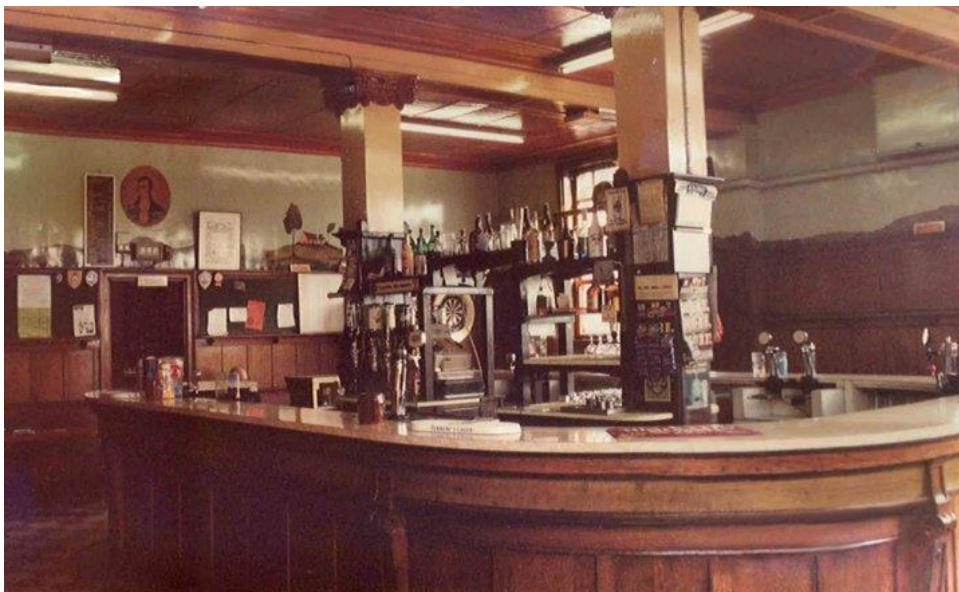
<sup>36</sup> A 'dry' village means that there was no licensed premises within the locale which was able to sell alcohol.

the women's toilet is through a door leading to the function room at the back of the pub. There are two televisions in the pub, one above the optics behind the bar which is always on whether it be screening a sporting event, a bit of news or some music. The other Television is located in the corner, where I often found myself as it was customary for those who lost to sit there, which is used for horse racing. The walls are littered with mining imagery, photos of bowling successes and rather randomly a fly - fishing rod. There is a mural of Robert Burns on the wall and a depiction of Tam O'Shanter sitting on his horse, Meg, being chased by 'Nannie' in the Ayrshire countryside. The painting of the mural was done on behalf of the Burns Society of the Goth in 1955 which was maintained at the request of the committee during the renovation of the bar in 1995 (Mair, 2010). The poem centres on a man who spends too much time drinking in a public house and witnessing a disturbing vision on his way home. (Monday, 8 June 2010).

Photograph One: The Goth and the entrance to the Bowling Club (2011)



Photograph Two: The interior of the Goth prior to renovation in 1995 (unknown).



The Gothenburg Trust Public House movement originated in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century in Gothenburg, Sweden as an attempt to control the drinking culture at the time. The Swedish people had the right to distil their own spirits freely yet this was stopped in 1855 with a law

being passed which made domestic distillation illegal. A trust was initiated which was designed to control pubs, restaurants and off licenses in a manner which would not encourage excessive consumption of alcohol. A key caveat of these trusts was that they should not be attractive or welcoming so as to avoid the glamorisation of consuming alcohol and to appease the temperance movement (Mair, 2010: 6-7). In addition, the shareholders of the trust were to receive a maximum of 5% of the trust's profits annually with the rest used to benefit the local community (*Ibid*). This is important for this project as it shows the importance that each institution has played in the development of the community.

Mining communities in Scotland seemed to welcome the possibility of operating licensed premises under the 'Gothenburg system'. Mulhern (2006) suggests that mining communities operated in an expedient manner when attaining permission to have their own 'Goth' through embracing the temperance principles publically, yet privately just wanting a local boozier to frequent. Villages like Fallin at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were different from most non-mining villages as the centrality of coal in people's lives ensured that the mining company operating in their locale had more power than elected town councillors for example (Mair, 2010: 8).

The desire of the coal companies to ensure their workers were indebted to them for this gift of drink, whilst maintaining an encompassing control over their ability to work, suggests both proletariat and bourgeoisie were open to manipulating the 'Gothenburg system' of temperance at a price. Indeed, the charitable nature of the Gothenburg model associated the coal owners with community improvements such as libraries, bowling greens and sporting clubs which could be viewed as another vehicle for exerting yet more control over the workforce and the altruism of both parties was called to question (Kerr, 1991; Mair, 2010). Powerful institutions help create social conditions for the formation and reproduction of 'a Centaur-state that practices liberalism at the top of the class structure and punitive

paternalism at the bottom' (Wacquant 2012: 66). Control was at the heart of the bourgeois coal companies and petty-bourgeois foremen who wanted further influence over the proletariat in the periods in between life underground.

Some temperance campaigners thought that the introduction of such trusts actually led to an increase in the drinking culture within many working-class mining communities due to the cheapness of alcohol (Mulhern, 2006). In addition, the altruistic nature of redistributing the profits back into the community may in fact legitimise the consumption of alcohol and alcoholism. The subsequent spread of 'Goths' across Scotland witnessed the style and appearance being replicated by architects in each incumbent building. Inside, the temperance influence of making drink a necessary evil was expressed by an austere and imposing interior with few having any tables or chairs and often limited heating (Mulhern, 2006).

The Goth in Fallin opened on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November 1910. It was a cold, dark Friday evening which was made all the more bleak through having no electricity connected to the premises (Mair, 2010). The hastily arranged opening drew in the punters who, for the first time in their lives in Fallin, experienced the taste of bottled beer and soft drinks supplied by James Duncan's lemonade business on the Drip Road in Stirling (Mair, 2010: 19). The opening came as a result of discussions and actions with prominent miners, the Murray estate (landowners) and the coal company (Archibald Russell) who got planning consent and permission from the State on their firm belief in the temperance doctrine typified in the 'Gothenburg system' (Mair, 2010: 12-13). The first committee of the Fallin Public House Society Ltd. as it was to be known were strongly associated with the mining industry in the village.

It appeared there was social and economic capital on display in the early years of The Goth in Fallin with the committee men all holding positions of power in the workforce. The increased income these men accrued, in comparison to the regular miners, allowed them to

buy shares in the Fallin Public House Society which, although it was largely symbolic as they never received large dividends, highlighted their status within the village of Fallin (Mair, 2010). It is said that these mining men had the choice of whether to construct a swimming pond or a Bowling Club on the land next to the Fallin Public House (Mair, 2010). Perhaps expediently, the office bearers in The Goth wanted to have a nice game of bowls before their pint or the office bearers of the Bowling Club appreciated a nice drink to quench their thirst after a game. The Goth committee provided the initial £286 to level the ground next to the Public House and subsequently ploughed hundreds of pounds into the club in its formative years (Mair, 2010:23-24). Such close links between the two fields at the heart of this research have remained interlinked throughout the past 100 years leading to Mair (2010: 114) intimating at several stages in his chronology of 'The Gothenburg' that:

The Bowling Club was perhaps the greatest drain on Goth resources. Hardly a year went by without the shareholders having to agree to yet more expenditure. During the 1990s alone, The Goth subsidised the repair of the green's banks, an extension to the clubhouse, a new wall, the repair of the mower, replacement of rotten doors and gutters, sponsorship of tournaments, the provision of a trophy display cabinet in the public bar and so on. (Mair, 2010: 114).

In relation to the research question, in what ways do men understand, create and maintain community and belonging, it is important to locate how the sites of research were created and how they have in turn shaped the community of Fallin. For example, the intimate relationship that each field has with alcohol, the colliery and the wider community of Fallin justify the choice to focus on both the Bowling Club and The Goth. Being a member of the Bowling



Club or a patron in The Goth comes with an awareness of the history of each field and how these traditions are still important today.

#### **5.4 The Bowling Club**

The two fields of this research, namely the Gothenburg Public House and the Polmaise Bowling Club, have a common history with the latter being heavily reliant on the Gothenburg for its inception and continuance to this day. Photograph Three, below, shows the entrance to the Bowling Club, the green and the outside of The Goth on a bleak summer evening in 2009.

Photograph Three: The entrance to the Bowling Club (July, 2009)



As a research field, bowling clubs are significantly under-researched with no academic research being published on one of the most played pastimes throughout the UK.<sup>37</sup> Bowling clubs are occasionally mentioned in community studies literature yet following an extensive

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<sup>37</sup> Membership details in 2012 indicated there were 90,000 lawn bowling members in Scotland (Maunder and Kelly, 2011) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-12911969>

search, they have never been used as a site of research (Kerr, 1991, Tranter, 1989 and Wight, 1993). They are, in many ways, gated communities that keep outsiders out in terms of their rules, membership requirements and even their histories. The privileged access that I have to Polmaise Bowling Club will allow an insight into an under-researched social group. I have been a member at Polmaise (2000-2011) and was on the committee (2007-2009). The club itself only numbers about 25 active members (all male) with a junior section (under 16) of around 10. The lack of women members is not because they are not allowed, merely the fact that all the women members have gradually left. The diminishing numbers of members is not unique to Polmaise Bowling Club. Indeed, it is emblematic of a national decline in people playing bowls which has been attributed to the image of the sport as being old (hard to attract newer members); the opening up of 'other' sports and leisure activities as well as the erosion of the community and working class links with bowling (Maunder and Kelly, 2011; Tranter, 1989).

Sociologically, the parallel development of these institutions within the broader local community is arguably a novel opportunity to chart the societal changes on individuals and institutions. For example, the effect of the General Strike in the 1920s impacted on the local community with the men not earning enough money for their families. The Goth provided donations to help fund soup kitchens and the Bowling Club offered their facilities to villagers to boost their morale (Mair, 2010). The core point is that these fields did not exist within a vacuum and responded accordingly to the macro changes such as strikes, wars and the demise of the only industry in the village (*Ibid*). The manner in which they responded is insightful for this research as they put the community at the forefront of their thoughts. I would suggest these fields have been significant in fostering such a sense of community cohesiveness throughout their development. Researching the past, informs much about the present as this

project argues communities like Fallin, and the fields of The Goth and Bowling Club look back to solve the challenges of the present.

Both the Bowling Club and The Goth had strong roots in the mining industry with Mulhern (2006: 1) suggesting that the coal company owners used leisure pursuits as a means of controlling the un-waged aspect of their workers' lives as well:

The coal companies built the mines and the homes in which their workers lived, and owned the shops in which their workers shopped.... There was, however, one area to which the authority of the coal company rarely reached – the very little amount of time available to the miners for leisure. To the coal companies, the Gothenburg system was an attractive way in which the problems of excessive drunkenness could be combated. There is no evidence that the coal companies sought the abolition of the sale of alcohol, even though some of the owners and managers were themselves strict teetotallers... For a relatively modest expenditure of capital, coal companies and others could establish a controlled system of alcohol retail whilst also helping to enhance resources in these communities. (Mulhern, 2006: 1).

The inception of the Bowling Club was also intimately linked with the prominent miners who wanted a hobby in the village where the men could unwind under the watchful eye of their paymasters (Mair, 2010). The intertwined nature of all these fields helped create the identity of Fallin and the working-class *habitus* of its inhabitants. Yet, the eventual closure of the pit in 1987 ended such a happy union for the men who worked down there and for the women and children who grew accustomed to the colliery towering over their landscape. Such a dramatic departure of industry impacted negatively on the economic and social vitality of the village (Stirling Council, 2005). Kerr (1991) described the village as being a 'lost

community' in the aftermath of the pit closure with disenchanted youth, redundant men and overburdened women. As one participant eloquently put it:

...if you take the only decent manufacturing piece of kit out a small village, the village is gonna suffer like many other villages in Scotland done. Especially in Fallin, every single family had a bit of mining in them. (Chemical Engineer, 47, 'Freeloader').

Yet the solidarity, which was galvanised during the last strike of Fallin's industrial heritage, has arguably been reproduced in the field of the Bowling Club. An extract from my field notes captures the positive function of the Bowling Club as a means of performing, showcasing and enjoying community and belonging in the present day:

When Polmaise go anywhere, they tend to leave their mark! Not sure if it is a throwback to the mining strikes of the 1980s where they travelled to all parts of the British Isles attending rallies and meetings *en masse*. Today was no different, the youth and old yins alike found suitable vantage points and proceeded to cheer on the lads for duration of the 3 hour game – only leaving us temporarily to have a pit stop and top up their pints.<sup>38</sup> People never believe me when I say some big bowls games are emblematic of football crowds with two partisan sides cheering on their team and, at times, cheering the misfortune of their opponents... This was like a village day out – young and old, men and women all left Fallin in good spirits and came home in better spirits. (30 May 2010).

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<sup>38</sup> 'Pit stop' means to go to the toilet.

Such a community feeling is the main reason behind my fascination with these fields and the men who help to maintain this heritage in their own inimitable style. The opportunity which playing for a Bowling Club affords individuals is the chance to belong, to represent a community and write a small footnote in the history of the village. It is why the years leading up to starting this research in 2008 were so important in forming the academic interest in the Bowling Club as a worthwhile source to understand more about community and belonging.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

Crucially for this project, I believe that community and solidarity has been cultivated by the men in both these fields. It perhaps explains, in part, why many men view Polmaise Bowling Club as being one big clique and how some men view The Goth as a community pub which makes them feel awkward. If you are not a part of either field, you perhaps naturally view them as being remnants of a distant past with no basis in reality. That is exactly what they are for the men, they are an important reminder of the best days of their lives when their community was under siege and they fought together to protect it. They are still protecting it in their own way by regular attendance, recalling old stories and drinking and playing alongside likeminded men. Attention shall now turn to an analysis of the interviews of the twenty-four men and how their narratives help answer how they belong and understand their community.

## **Chapter Six: Storytelling and Remembering Community**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Storytelling played a central role in the remembering and maintenance of the community. The fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth, acted as platforms for stories to be recollected and presented in not only a nostalgic manner, but also in an expedient way. Incomers, outsiders and younger men would be expected to listen to well-rehearsed stories like church-goers would when listening to the minister. Not all of the men did listen, many opted out which knowingly placed them on the periphery of the community. Yet, even they expressed an appreciation of the past in shaping contemporary understandings of community. This chapter will introduce some of these stories as said to me during my time researching these men. I have indented direct extracts from field notes in order to provide the reader with distinctions between field notes and my interpretation of the data. I have distinguished between stories which were told to me and those which I overheard as part of the general conversation of company. This is important as it offers insight into the type of stories which were told irrespective of the presence of the researcher.

This chapter links the research process together by, for example, charting the shift in my own relationship to the men outlined in Chapter Four. The empirical and theoretical work of Blenkinsop (2012) and Cohen (1985) is employed by actively engaging with the process of storytelling and collective remembering. Finally, the humour of the men will become evident with tales that have captivated many of those who have come into their company. By focusing on the jovial nature of stories, I feel I have added an additional layer to other similar studies which often fail to document the happiness of being a part of a community (see Charlesworth, 2000; Dicks, 2008; Roberts, 1993). This chapter shall be split into episodic events which seek to describe and interpret how the men understand, create and maintain their community. The tales from the Bowling Club and The Goth will be utilised to advocate

the importance of storytelling and an ethnographic methodology. It is hoped that ethnographic notes, interview quotations and documentary information shall bring the thesis to life and offer a longitudinal picture to my time in the field. This chapter encapsulates several themes discussed throughout this thesis like the process of collective remembering of community, the primacy of work and leisure as well as the conflict which ensures the community is reproduced (Blenkinsop, 2012; Cohen, 1984; Homans, 1974; Wight, 1993).

## **6.2 ‘There was a dog in the corner with a hat on with a cigarette in his mooth...’**

A story which I got told last night made me laugh – and continues to make me smile as I write these notes. A ‘True Believer’ mentioned that in one of the Pubs in Fallin, during the 1990s, there was a dog sitting in the corner next to his owner with his ‘bunnet’ on with an unlit cigarette in his mouth. The story was recalled because a regular in The Goth and Bowling Club brought his two dogs with him. They were called ‘Left’ and ‘Right’ due to the side in which they positioned themselves in relation to him. I found this amusing as I have had very little luck in training my own dog to even recognise his own name. The chat in company turned to the aforementioned dog with a cigarette in his mouth, poaching with hawks, ferrets and shooting rabbits down by the River Forth. My contribution to this story was to be the active listener who laughed on cue.

This story from 14 May 2010 was prompted by my curiosity in the obedience of two dogs. Often stories were recalled due to my presence because I liked to listen to the stories. However, the majority of stories which I was involved in occurred as part of normal discourse in both fields which I happened to be there to listen to. Blenkinsop (2012) stressed the importance of storytelling in the creating, remembering and revitalising of a community.

This was also the case when observing social interaction in The Goth and Bowling Club. Often, for the men in this study, humour was a key component of stories which held a captive audience in anticipation for their well-rehearsed conclusion. Characters were eulogised, reminisced about and used as emblems of a time when life was better. I believe that listening to the stories told by the men in interviews and from my time spent in company in The Goth were key resources in addressing the research question of this thesis. To understand how the men in this study understand, create and maintain community required their narratives to be interpreted by myself who understands their dispositions, community and identities without actually being bound by them. This position has, in my view, given me a unique insight into how their community is constructed from the core looking out (Cohen, 1985). This chapter relies heavily upon field notes and tales that I have heard recited from many of the men in this project. Photographs, tournaments, regular fixtures, casual drinking sessions and trips away will all hopefully add great depth and intimacy to the men in this study and answer the research question. Subsequent analysis has been used to discuss themes which has been revisited throughout the fieldwork in a process which Becker (1971:1) labelled 'sequential analysis'.

Humour is very important in each field and being able to make people laugh or to take a good joke helped me become integrated with the men. An example of this was a story which I overheard following my late arrival to the company. This story from field notes from 28 June 2009 illustrates the type of humour, language and behaviour which was accepted by bowlers whilst sitting in The Goth:

I joined the company of several of the young team slightly later and had a pint of lager on the table waiting for me, I nodded appreciation and then took a sip and settled in to the beat of the conversation. The table next to us consisted of several



members of the Old School and a few of the Superstars as they/we are known by members. I overheard how this table of men were basically gossiping about fellow members who were not present. They were suggesting that the member had an unfortunate looking girlfriend and that they “wouldn’t even ride her into battle”. This was met with loud laughter and talk continued towards how they had heard that they were having relationship problems which was why he was not playing as much bowls as he would like. With one member of the company saying “if I had to look at that all night, I would never be away fae the Club”.

This story serves the purpose of bringing the men in company together through a version of masculinity which rewards machismo, heterosexuality and a type of discourse which objectifies women. Humour, and the type of language used, is the hook by which this is done to, in their eyes, delineate them from women who gossip. The hyper-masculinity evident in this story, which I overheard, has no victims in the eyes of the men. It may be viewed as crude and cruel with no place in contemporary society, yet it served a positive purpose for the men who came together, laughed and exchanged information over several drinks. In many ways, for the men in this study, The Goth and the Bowling Club were vehicles for storytelling to occur which were seemingly so commonplace during the time of collieries which had since been abandoned. The following extract from my field notes was from the same occasion as mentioned above, 28 June 2009:

I stayed for the next two hours and talk ranged widely from the sexual exploits of one person in particular, the make-up of the teams for the upcoming tournaments and the tennis which was on in the bar (Andy Murray, the local boy or else unlikely it would be on).

There were five men and one girl who was with her boyfriend in our round and a lot of drink was consumed. Ceri, my girlfriend, then came in with the section draws for the forthcoming tournament, which I was organising, which were shown to the company and macho remarks were made between members as some were drawn in the same section. I stayed out of it, just laughing and watching the competitive banter playing out before me.

Ceri came into the company and suddenly became the centre of attention along and diverted conversation towards her and bowling. Within those two hours in the pub it was jam packed and it is as if your senses are heightened and you catch up on club gossip, personal news and inform others of progress and private matters in a manner that is not found in other social situations. You can drift from one conversation to the next with a range of people and put on different masks depending who you were talking to, for example when speaking to The Goth chairman I was very gracious and reassuring that things were going to work great for the pub and how much we appreciated his efforts.

Then when another woman came into The Goth, I enquired into well-being of her pregnant daughter and partner who I know and subsequently answered some questions about Ceri and my living arrangements in a mutual exchange of 'chat'. Then there was the group personality which is often something that is hard to pinpoint because I feel I act differently with many people in company based on their personality and finally when Ceri came in.

It can be quite an exhausting process in many respects as you are constantly listening and trying to get your point across whilst ensuring the codes of practice within company are satisfied, like standing your round and drinking at a similar pace.

Reflecting on field notes like the one above, reaffirms how the research process was shaping my interactions and views of those in each field. I was embarking on sequential analysis, testing out theories such as Goffman's 'impression management' concept and observing these men in their leisure time. I was unearthing behaviour and interactions which, it is possible to argue, reinforced traditional understandings of gender roles and community. Of particular relevance to this project, younger men were often at the forefront of this through their stories and mutual respect and drinking with the 'True Believers'. It was interesting to see the behaviours in the public settings and how they contrasted quite markedly in their homes when I conducted interviews. For example, the men's body language was much more reserved during interviews, their language involved less expletives and the objectification of women was not as overt. It is possible to argue that The Goth and the Bowling Club are highly context specific platforms for men to adorn a hyper-masculine persona which is shelved, or often softened, when they return home to their private lives. I believe this to be the case for many of the men in this study with only the 'True Believers' having a less pronounced difference in either setting. These men were less likely to, in Goffman's words, utilise 'impression management' because the Bowling Club and The Goth were merely an extension to their private sphere.

### **6.3 Bowling Club**

Before I describe some of the social interactions that took place at the Bowling Club, it is perhaps important to talk about the game itself. This facet of bowling, the actual rules and excitement of the game, was not something that I felt was worth discussing. This changed following a meeting with a keen Bridge player who wanted to explore the similarities between Bridge and Bowls as she was interested in the 'game' aspect of both pastimes.<sup>39</sup>:

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<sup>39</sup> Bridge, the card game, too complex for me but apparently quite addictive. This was from a discussion with Professor Samantha Punch, Professor in Sociology at the University of Stirling in 2009.

- Focus on extraneous parts of the game such as ‘card sense’, being able to manage emotions, dealing with partners emotions and mistakes – looking at ways individuals best furnish performance.
- Social aspects of bridge – wider nature of why people play bridge, at what level and why some people take breaks from the game.
- Dynamics of bridge – do they mirror or rebuke sociological canons of gender, class, age and generation. Additionally, the role of power, status and hierarchy are to be explored as they are prevalent in much of the bridge interactions. (Punch, 2009).

This was quite revelatory for me as I had assumed that every person who played bowls at my Bowling Club was like me. For example, they played bowls as a means to get out of the house and have a drink with their mates. What the interviews, and this meeting with the avid Bridge player, highlighted was that there are types of individual who play the game for differing reasons. This is important in relation to the research question about the ways in which men understand, create and maintain community and belonging as it highlights the importance of how diversity helps create cohesion. From my time in the field, I identified four types of Polmaise bowler:

- The ‘Superstar’: The bowlers who are known by the general Club as being the automatic picks in the prestigious games. Often contribute, in the eyes of the ‘Old School’, very little in terms of supporting the Club in friendly matches and take from the Club in terms of spots on teams and such. Often an outsider in terms of where they come from. They are often the ‘Sceptical Conformers’ in Homans’ (1974) terms but remain as part of the community as they get a lot from playing the game at a successful Club like Polmaise.

- The ‘Club Bowler’: These are the bowlers who are always there for the friendly matches on a Saturday afternoon – often get picked to play in prestigious games but sometime do not. They are the core of the Club and give a lot back in terms of time, commitment and reliability. Without this large group, the Club would not be able to function. Often they are the ‘True Believers’ who believe in the values of the Club and want to see it succeed.
- The ‘Old School’: As mentioned earlier in Chapter Six, these men have played for the Club for many years and grew up and lived in the village for the same period. They form the crux of the ‘True Believers’ category and play bowls for social connections but often are competitive and like to remind the younger ones of their place. They are often the most vociferous of supporters and regularly support Club both locally and nationally. Many of the men in this group are former-miners and are also regulars in The Goth.
- The ‘Youth’: The younger generation of member who are collectively known by this generic label as those being around under 25. Important to note, not all under 25s or around that age, are labelled in this bracket as some are in the ‘Superstar’ category. They are the guys who come up and play bowls quite competitively and like a beer on the Saturday. In contrast to most bowling clubs throughout Stirlingshire, they are quite a large group in Polmaise numbering ten out of a membership of forty. Sociologically they are also those born around the demise of the mining industry in Fallin yet still buy into the version of community prescribed by the ‘True Believers’. In many ways, they are the most interesting group as they offer an insight into how community can be remembered and passed on to the next generation.

The blend of these types participating within the Bowling Club help energise the community (Cohen, 1985; Frankenburg, 1957). It is important to take the reader through a typical season for a Polmaise member and how this helps us appreciate more about how the men in this study understand, create and maintain their community. Prior to that, it may be prudent to provide an overview of the purpose and rules of bowling. The object of the game is to get your bowls closer to the jack than your opponent(s). A jack is centred on a rink between 23-35 metres away and you stand on a mat in the centre of a rink and deliver your biased bowls towards it. It is a simple game, often complicated by exponents and can be played by people of all ages, disabilities and abilities. Games can be between a single opponent (4 bowls each), between pairs (4 bowls by each player), between triples (3 bowls by each player) and between fours (2 bowls by each player). Each player alternates in their delivery of the bowl and a game is won by whoever reaches a set score, or who scored the most after a certain amount of ends, win the game.

#### **6.4 Springtime in Scotland: Taken from Research Diary on 21 April 2009**

I went down to the Bowling Club for the first throw of the season as it was not raining or snowing – so just right for bowling. I was joined by three other members and we proceeded to play for around a dozen ends. The game itself was good fun, lots of banter and the usual remarks about who was closest to the jack etc. To keep up with my customary form, I was often furthest away and took the slagging the way it was intended, with a smile on my face and giving plenty of it back.<sup>40</sup> This was standard practice for friendly games at the Bowling Club as the men often used this as a means to catch up with gossip.

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<sup>40</sup> ‘Slagging’ is Scottish slang meaning to be teased or mocked about something.

Sociologically, this type of social interaction was traditionally viewed as an inevitable part of men interacting in the workplace and in the village of Fallin. Many of the men interviewed spoke of the banter that they shared with fellow miners, bowlers or drinkers. Across the types of bowler, gossiping was common but the content was different. The ‘Superstar’ often spoke about team selections, other bowlers’ form and, to my annoyance, recited well-worn conversations of when they were scorned by a selector in the past. The ‘Club Bowler’ and ‘Old School’ were more jovial in their gossip, often talking about what was going on in the village or in The Goth. They were not defined or consumed by bowling and used it as a vehicle to gossip, remember and socialise in a familiar setting. The ‘Youth’ often spoke of their plans for the coming week, work, the opposite sex and was based much more around popular culture. I often found it harder to socialise with them as, even though I was the same age, I grew up in a different social circle and was not a ‘worker’.<sup>41</sup> I got on well with them, but very much in a Goffmanesque way, I played down shades of capital and made more of others in order to not make them feel uneasy. I found it easier to be myself around the ‘Superstars’ because they were not interested in the extraneous social traits, merely my status as a bowler who had represented the Club, County and Country. Lake (2013: 6) argues that sports clubs are:

...important sites where broader societal processes and issues are reflected where social norms, values, ideologies and power relations can be critically challenged or reinforced...voluntary sports club in particular, provide excellent locations for analysing power relations between members, and how social status and cohesion are emphasised.

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<sup>41</sup> By this I mean I did not get my hands dirty, I was on a scholarship at the University of Stirling and they were cutting grass, scaffolding, cleaning cars or labouring.

The cohesive nature of the Bowling Club was often only emphasised when we played against another bowling club. Like other clubs, Polmaise Bowling Club is stratified and divided based on a variety of factors like ability, length of membership and crucially for this project, kinship and belonging to the community. The following field note explores the development of my rapport and confidence in interacting in both fields and playing a small part in the maintenance of community and belonging:

As is customary for myself, when I finished playing bowls I usually went into The Goth for a pint to see if anyone is there that I knew. On this occasion I knew several people. As I went to the bar, I offered to buy a drink, all said they were fine, and went to sit with a 'True Believer' who had earlier spoken to me on the green about my thesis.<sup>42</sup> As part of my access to the Bowling Club, I offered to compile a centenary booklet for the committee of the Bowling Club to celebrate in 2011. This was the first time I sat with him and it was in strange surroundings next to the 'bandit' where you could see The Goth in its entirety.<sup>43</sup> Normally the bowlers sit at the centre bank of seats facing away from where I was sat tonight. We proceeded to have a chat about my research, The Goth, Fallin, politics, bowls and the football which was on the TV in the pub. It was a great chat which was littered with anecdotes and potentially rich information. I wished I had a tape recorder but I thought my memory was sufficient this time.

A story which stuck in the memory was when the 'True Believer' was when it was common for the owners/foremen to say to a father of a boy about to turn sixteen that he was offering him a job in the pit starting on the following Monday. The father would say that he was trying to get him into a trade, basically anything but a job down

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<sup>42</sup> The previous month I had asked both The Goth and Bowling Club to interview some members and drinkers as well as do some research on each local institution. It was agreed.

<sup>43</sup> A 'bandit' is otherwise known as a 'games machine', 'puggy' or 'slot machine'.



the mines.<sup>44</sup> Their response was to say that if his laddie was not working down the pit on the Monday that their home would get emptied the same day.

This story, which was told to me directly on a one-to-one basis, reminded me of *habitus* and how individuals could try and break the cyclical nature of employment relations, yet they were prevented from doing so by those who controlled the means of production. It also offered me an insight into how the mining industry was viewed and that the romanticised versions of this mode of life often recited by the ‘True Believers’ often forgot the negative aspects of this work (Connerton, 2009: 3). Communities have the ability to forget, as well as remember, history (*Ibid*). The following quotation captures this reluctance to work underground yet emphasising that coal was still a prominent part of his life:

Respondent: ‘Eh...I didnae fancy it and nobody wanted you to go down the pit in these days, they were trying to put you off going down the pit in these days...am talking about friends and family as it was getting to the stage when it...they closed down Cowie and they were moving us all around the place you know.’

Interviewer: ‘So when was this roughly time-wise?’

Respondent: ‘I left the school in 1961...early 60s, but as a say I still worked in coal as worked for the coal merchant in Stirling. So a wis still coal, it was still part of yer life’ (Coal Miner, 75).

This individual captures the integral role that the mining industry played in many of his peer’s lives. The communities of the Eastern villages were based on coal being excavated from under the foundations of their homes, churches and pubs. It struck me that despite

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<sup>44</sup> I found that this was common. Despite the men, and the wider community, having a great affinity with the mining industry, they often wanted better for their son. The risks to their health and lives were very real and often they wanted their son to get into a trade to prevent them from working underground at the coalface.

Polmaise Colliery being very much a part of the fabric of the community (Kerr, 1991), the father often wanted better for his son:

I also commented that it would be great to live in a time when you could walk into a job as the current economic climate seemingly operated with an acceptable level of unemployment. It was unusual for me to speak like this in this field as I felt I had not legitimacy to speak of work, worklessness or their history as I was merely observing it second-hand.

What I found when I became more confident with the 'True Believers' was that they respected me for taking an interest in them. I was genuinely interested in their histories and they gave me their version of events (Cohen, 1985). It reminded me of watching football highlights on Match of the Day after I had watched the live game earlier in the day, the former were more exciting, succinct and said more about the overall tale of the match than the whole event. Being involved in story-telling was crucial to building trust between members of both fields and myself. It allowed them a stage to perform to an interactive audience member. The following extract, which was said to me on a one-to-one basis, highlights how stories can provide rich examples of control within mining communities such as Fallin:

Another story the 'True Believer' mentioned was when he drank in The Goth and it was common for the pit masters to sit at one side of the bar and the miners sit at the other end. It was common for men to hear a shout from their gaffer to go down the road as had three pints which was deemed to be enough.

These accounts provide anecdotal support to Mulhern's (2006) view that coal company owners used the Gothenburg system to control the private leisure time of their employees. The coal companies helped build The Goth, the pit blocks where their families lived as well as providing other local amenities for the Polmaise miners. The Gothenburg system of trying to moderate alcohol consumption whilst reinvesting a portion of the profits into the community to enhance resources made economic sense for those in charge of the colliery (Mulhern, 2006). It is possible to argue that control and suppression by the owners of the means of production played a significant part in many miners' lives. This is supported by the following quotation from a miner:

It was just the done thing back then, ye finished yer shift, had a pint, doon the road fur some dinner and a wash, then back up The Goth for another few pints afore closing time. That was what we aww did back then, then we got up and done the same the next day. (Former miner, 64).

Public drinking acted as an extension of the control the colliery owners and foremen had over the men when they were working underground. For example, the foremen acted as a proxy for the colliery owners by enforcing the importance of temperance so that drunkenness would not inhibit their productive capacity. I was interested in how the foremen were viewed in the community. Crawford (2013) suggests that the closer a person moves, in social space, towards powerful groups and individuals, the more their political views are inclined to reflect those of the 'legitimate' view, embodied by the dominant discourse (Bourdieu 1984; Bourdieu, 1991). I found comparisons to the roles of the worker and the foremen in Bourdieu's concept of 'illusio' where there is an acknowledgment by both parties of the stakes involved in the field and how individuals sought to acquire interests and investments

prescribed by the field as beneficial in order to advance their own situation. These men born into the same community shed cumbersome social and cultural capital which no longer provided them with value in social interactions. In relation to the research question, the foremen play the role of ensuring the reproduction of community through control. The miners adhered to their prescribed mode of life and it thus became a part of the wider community of Fallin.

As Bauman (2000) mentioned of the modern day elite, these men no longer required the ‘messy intimacy’ of community relations and choose to protect themselves from any collective obligations. This is reflected in my own relationship with these fields when ultimately in 2011, I withdrew from membership with a painless disconnection associated with social networking. As Bourdieu (1984) comments, *habitus* evolves by making transitional changes in preferences and classifications as people make the transitory journeys required in meeting the aspirations of their perceived social trajectory (Crawford, 2013). In some respects, I shared the views of the capitalist colliery foreman whereby I weighed up the obligation to my fellow members with what I would get from the situation. I found the tale of the foreman keeping a close eye on the miners quite ironic as I viewed the ‘True Believers’ as being The Goth’s modern day ‘Panopticon’ as they acted as a perennial reminder to younger men in this study to not become too outspoken, or ‘gallus’.<sup>45</sup> Control and moderation of one’s behaviour are important skills to harness in The Goth which are perhaps not synonymous with public drinking. Although, as Fox (2004), Hey (1986) and Wight (1993) state in their accounts of drinking in public settings, they argue that individuals are required to display an awareness of the expected behaviour of the pub or risk sanction (Bourdieu, 1978). For example, the ‘Youth’ were often publically scorned for being loud and, in the eyes of the ‘True Believers’, obnoxious. They often reminded the ‘Youth’ to go home before they

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<sup>45</sup> Scottish word for someone being arrogant or cocky.

got told to leave for having too much to drink. This extract from my field notes, following a one-to-one conversation with me, captures the importance of conformity and routine within his stories:

The 'True Believer' suggested that before 1910 when the community were applying for the premises to have a drinking license that there were five objectors to the plan. He also said they were never seen in the village after it was granted. He spoke of the early committee men and their roles and names like they were his own contemporaries. He was also a local councillor of Fallin for twelve years (Labour), a miner for thirty-eight years and had his name above The Goth as licensee for nineteen years. He is a serious man, but a fair man and highly respected by all who know of him. I observed that when he went to the bar, the barmaid never had to ask his drink (common for everyone in The Goth that night it has to be said) and when I went to buy him a drink and asked what he was after – he said 'Barmaid will know what a drink'. He gets the 10.30pm bus down the road with another regular who came up to him and mentioned that the bus had arrived two minutes earlier last night so they should get out that wee bit earlier than normal so as not to walk the mile or so down to the village.

I find this ritualised behaviour insightful as it reflects the habitual nature of social drinking. It also indicates how the 'True Believers' understand, create and maintain their community. The constant, beat of their routine is crucial in the bonds that individuals share which The Goth and Bowling Club reproduce regularly. This can be found in many of the 'True Believers' which I interviewed. Repetition, reliability and rituals are qualities that are rewarded in this community and I too found comfort in such behaviour. Drinking lends itself to replicating

aspects of their behaviour from ordering your usual drink from the bar, sitting in the same seat, drinking the first one quickly before settling into the rhythm of company. When you add the social interaction on top of the symbolic rituals, you effortlessly blend into the running of The Goth if you are reliable, a regular and remember the rules of the game. I feel it took me around nine years of drinking in The Goth to feel comfortable enough to drink alone there.

From his interview, the 'True Believer' spoke of community as a hobby which required regular and constant maintenance in order to gain the benefits of being a part of something bigger than himself. Catching a regular bus, which deviated slightly from its normal timetable, may seem trivial to many but I believe that this sort of detail highlights how their community, based on camaraderie and sharing resources, is maintained. The importance of having an order to one's life can be found in other regulars who arrived in The Goth at their usual time with the bar maid having their drink ready for them. Both parties will be aware of the standard amount of drinks the regular will have and what time they will depart. Wight (1993) spoke of this in his study on 'Cauldmoss' and any deviation in the routine are noticed more than their presence in the pub.

I spoke to this 'True Believer' about all sorts of issues and when there were pauses in conversation, it was often he who spoke about something of potential interest to me. I realised that 'True Believers' enjoyed talking about Fallin, The Goth and their interests and gathering enough data was never going to be an issue. I enjoyed getting the information in The Goth and the thought of taking them out of their setting and into my domain of a closed room seems to detract from the honesty they express. This is not the case for everyone as many bowlers did not give off this aura and felt more comfortable in the privacy of their front room. Yet, returning to the typology derived from Homans (1974), it was the 'True Believers' who offered more information in either of the fields than in the comfort of their front room. The methodological issues of using both interviews and ethnographic

information was apparent, yet I felt that by using both methods I was able to offer a more in-depth account of the men and how they understand, create and maintain their community. An example of the importance of using field notes can be found in another discussion in *The Goth* on the same night:

A bit of humour came out in the evening when I spoke to another 'True Believer' and asked whether I would be allowed on the green with my new bowls as they had the Aberdeen F.C. logo on them. Being a staunch Rangers fan, he said that his son would be trying to break my bowls even if he was on my team. Another 'True Believer' overheard the chat and said to me 'I wish I took that drink aff ye now ya cunt after hearing that'. We laughed and I felt much more comfortable in regulars' company that they could laugh with, and at me. The underlying joke is that many Rangers FC fans dislike Aberdeen because of a longstanding rivalry based on an infamous injury to a Rangers player at the hands of an Aberdeen player. Minimising social distance was something that I was almost perennially aware of in this situation and it was a big moment for me sitting with these three guys as I knew, in Bourdieu's terms, that I did not possess social, symbolic or cultural capital needed to be one of the guys, but I was trying to acquire it and this did/does not go un-noticed by them.

This was exemplified in my quest to organise, run and participate in a large open bowls tournament on the Saturday which coincided with local Orange Order celebrations. This event attracted twenty-four teams of three individuals from all over the country to play, drink and spend money in *The Goth* and increase Bowling Club coffers. *The Goth* put on a karaoke and buffet, whilst ensuring the bowlers were well hydrated from 9am on the Saturday morning till 1am on Sunday. Both parties were happy with the day and it has become an

annual event even after I left the Club in 2010. An extended ethnographic account of this day can be found in section 6.6 yet the following field note highlights perhaps a high-point in my research and affinity with the men in my study:

Overall, that night was amongst the best sociological trips to the club. I also enjoyed it tremendously as I liked these people and I think they liked me. It was great fun talking to them and it gave me confidence to do it more often in order to explore the ways in which these men understand, create and maintain their community. It became clear that I did not want to betray their trust by presenting false truths about their identities and understandings of their community.

### **6.5 The Job Offer – July 2009.**

An interesting twist in my fieldwork happened when I was offered employment by the licensee of The Goth. The job offer transpired from my attendance at a funeral of the licensee's father in law (Togie) who sadly passed away in July 2009. The aforementioned Togie was a hugely respected local figure in Fallin and was a regular at the Bowling Club and The Goth where he could be found every Saturday night with his wife.

Togie would always ride up to the club on his push-bike and sit and watch any bowls that was on – then leave at 8.30pm to cycle back down to have a few drinks with his wife before they went to bed. This was regardless of whether a game he was watching was reaching its conclusion, he liked his routine and I for one always liked to see him sitting watching me play bowls. Another thing I remember fondly about Togie was his regular Saturday night out in The Goth with his wife and a few of his friends and their wives. I found myself in their company one night after a bowling



match and it turned out to be one of the most enjoyable nights I have had in The Goth. They had a new face to talk to, tell stories to, and reminisce about tales from the village with while the men in the company ensured that they stood both their own and their wife's round (Blenkinsop, 2012). It is hard to explain, but such familiarity and contentment in their surroundings and company was reassuring. I never managed to go to the bar, they included me in their round, along with their grandson who I was drinking with, but I always made sure when Togie was out supporting us when we played in competitions I offered him a vodka and Irn Bru.

Connection and belonging to the men in this study is something I am proud of and I look back with my own nostalgic gaze on time well spent (Cohen, 1985; Rogaly and Taylor, 2009). Looking out from the core of a group is a rare epistemological position and being somewhat of a social butterfly, flitting in between the various groups of members. Sitting at Togie's wake, his grandson and I reminisced about the time we won a local tournament, and upon travelling back from the venue to The Goth for a celebratory drink, Togie mentioned that every traffic light turned green on our arrival. I also volunteered to paint his porch as I was tall and he took me up on my offer and I ended up spending a couple of hours one summer's evening painting the front of his porch. Upon completion, he invited me in, gave me a vodka and Irn Bru along with £20. This form of connection to just one of the men in this study illustrates the importance of prolonged exposure in the research field. It gave me an insight into their community which, in my opinion, sheds more light than merely interviewing strangers, observing social change through documentary analysis or conducting a social survey. These methods have their place, yet when trying to understand how a community of men remember, maintain and are often the embodiment of their community, this form of empathetic ethnography goes beneath the public veneer. At the heart of this

research project I aim to shed light on an under-researched group of men and how their identities are grounded in a version of community that academics have consigned to history (Bauman, 2000; Beck, 1992; Sennett, 1998). The following extract highlights how I was trying to do research *with* these men by trying to understand how they understood community and belonging:

I was offered a night to work behind the bar which I have to say was a bit of a surprise. I have worked behind a bar in the past and I explained to him this, and how I would have to think about it in regards scholarship, juggling home-life amongst other things and get back to him. The chance to work behind the bar one night a week to help out with my research was a very kind gesture and one which I considered. In the end, I decided to turn it down on ethical grounds as I felt that I would in fact be too close to those who I am researching.

Following the birth of my son and becoming the primary caregiver, I had less spare time to spend in each field and became more sporadic in my visits. Having a degree of distance, both physical and socially, aided the analytical process as I was not engaged in each setting. At this stage in the research process, I had established a good rapport and set of friendships that I was comfortable to talk openly about my research and how I was interested in them. Often the men thought I was interested in their mining days and the strikes, picket lines and hard grafting down the mine. I was, but I was also interested in how they spoke, what they drank, their language, habits and their views on politics. Storytelling was a means by which the men often made them feel at ease and gave me an insight into their pasts without the messy intimacy of invasive questions in a front room. Sixteen out of the twenty-four men who were

interviewed told me the same story when talking about religious identity of the village. The following quotation captures this often recited tale:

There was an open tournament going on at the Bowling Club and there was thirty-six bodies on the green and only one Catholic (laughter)...and guess which wan got stung by the bee (laughter)? Even oor bees dinnae like Catholics. (Engineer, 47).

Stories like this act as an ice-breaker for these men and also as a means by which to gauge your reaction and religious identity. Throughout much of my time as a member and as a regular in The Goth, my partner was a practicing Catholic from the Raploch, a town in Stirling. She was often mocked when she was late to pick me up, with some men asking her if she was late because she was 'lighting candles in the Pineapple' or 'playing with her rosary beads'. When I asked the men why they often mock or 'slag' people, they say it is often a term of endearment:

If we like ye; we'll slag ye. If we dinnae like ye, then we'll slag you anaw (laughter). Look at Tony Montana, he's a gid Tim and wee Frank was another gid Tim.<sup>46</sup> Got to understand big man, Fallin is a Blue village, always will be' (Joiner, 30).

Beneath the stories, there is an underlying message which the men want to transmit. In this case, it was that the community of Fallin is based on a Protestant religious identity. In other examples, certain individuals in The Goth actively sought me out to tell me of a story they remembered and how they thought it would be useful for me. This often included stories on the picket lines, trips to Nottingham with the National Union of Miners (N.U.M.) and

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<sup>46</sup> The term 'Tim' is a colloquial term for a Catholic.

prominent bowling achievements from yesteryear. I felt a debt of gratitude towards those who did this and when they would not accept offers of alcohol, I resorted to alternative avenues which made use of my time spent in front of a computer.

An example of this was when I produced some teaching notes for the bar staff in light of new drinking and Health and Safety regulations. It was at the funeral when the licensee asked me what I did (of course this means what work you do) and he anticipated I did some course at the college about religion. I told him I do a bit of teaching as well. He then, with a smile on his face it has to be said, asked me sheepishly whether I could do something for him. I agreed and then he went into the back room and came back with this material and instructions which I duly did a week later. When I returned it to him, there was myself, him, a regular and the barmaid. He bought me a pint and I stayed and had a chat with them at the bar. This was unusual for me as there was a bowls game on and normally I would go out there but I was dropped so I stayed in the pub as a protest.<sup>47</sup> We stood there, talked about the bowls, when he played, certain individuals, certain incidences in the past when selectors have made their decisions. It was good, I drank my pint quicker than normal and he then bought me another one. This forgoes the rituals of pub etiquette, I buy one, you buy one etc. The deed I did came with a few pints and who am I to argue? So we had another and continued chatting.

Conversation turned to The Goth and the past. Partly, this was my doing as I am genuinely interested in these things but also when I came back from finding out the score of the bowls, I saw them watching the news and a guy doing some blacksmith work. I remember from snippets of conversation that he was a blacksmith

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<sup>47</sup> I got dropped because I was not playing regularly following the birth of my son. This somewhat represents the hegemonic masculinity that irrespective of the private sphere responsibilities, you should be able to commit to the bowling club unless you are working.

down the pit and I mentioned this to him and then the rest was history. We talked about strikes, police dogs being stolen by the crowd, life back then, everything. It was great, I just listened and tried not to appear ignorant because this was their time (we had been joined by a couple of other regulars), their expert knowledge and I suddenly realised how little I know about this topic. I was captivated by their stories and how the regular was not even a miner, but went on rallies and protests to all parts of the country because he was one of them, they were his mates. I stumbled across a veritable gold mine of information and was doing my best to try and remember it while keeping up with the conversation. I kept looking at how they were saying the stuff, almost with a smile on their faces and with a sense of masculine solidarity that they were remembering through their stories (Blenkinsopp, 2012). I was tempted to say: ‘they sounded like good times’ but I anticipated that even if they fondly recollected with a smile on their faces, they may well have been bad times which were difficult. This was expressed in the story of picket lines and how it cost him a relationship with his father for the period of the strike in 1984. I since found out from interviews that many people spoke of the strikes fondly in terms of how the community of Fallin reacted. Listening to the stories of the men in The Goth about the village generated more data than hours of reading about the miners’ strike in the University.

This conversation links back to Cohen (1985) and Connerton’s (1980) theoretical work on how nostalgia and remembering the past is often seen through rose-tinted glasses. Imagined histories were recollected, recreated and maintained through the power of storytelling their experiences to the younger generations or outsiders in my case (Blenkinsopp, 2012; Homans, 1974). The men needed a stage and a captive audience upon which to recite their lines to

which The Goth and I obliged. They spoke of the comradeship with other likeminded people that they may not know, but they share a common past, present and future life trajectory. This conversation explored the idea that being there in this episodic period of British history is worth remembering fondly, opposed to the harsh realities which they all faced. They mentioned how their wages went into the miners' fund and how there was not much to spend. I asked how the families survived; they replied they got on very well. It was an Indian summer apparently and all the kids were out playing and got toys and all that from Poland and some got holidays over there. They got raffle tickets which entitled them to pints in the Miners Welfare from their shifts on the picket lines.

During this conversation, I also got invited into the back room of The Goth as I was speaking about my interests in The Goth and how it has been a great institution over the years in Fallin. The licensee took me into the back room and showed me the old minute books and the share-books which allowed local residents to buy a share (if they were accepted by the committee) for £1 throughout The Goth's history but in recent years they were now £10. He told me that their reward was a 50p dividend each year which shows that it is largely symbolic and reinforces the type of pub it was, and still is. The room itself had many photos of old committees, the original stamp, minute books, a safe and umpteen trophies that would not fit in the trophy case in the main bar won by The Goth's various clubs. I was quite proud that I am privy to such things and have been trusted enough to do so.

### **6.6 Drinking with a purpose: 28 August 2010**

The Goth is, for many men interviewed, an institution which enables them to re-affirm their friendships, acquaintances, camaraderie and rivalries with other pub-going folk. I found the act of public drinking to be much more about the social, symbolic and cultural capital that it

represents as opposed to the act in itself (Bourdieu, 1990). Drinking there seemed to be a communal event that garnered solidarity with the regulars and demarcated them from others in the community of Fallin who did not venture through The Goth's doors. This was also found in other community studies mentioned in Chapter Two where participation in public events galvanised the community and actively remembered their community (Blenkinsop, 2012; Yerbury, 2010). The Goth acted as a platform for the men in this study to maintain their version of community:

I found the experience of social drinking fascinating and often spent time looking at who was sitting where, who they were talking to and whether they ordered a pint or a can of Tennents. The symbolism of whether they bought a can or ordered a draft may seem trivial. Yet as the can cost around a quarter less than a draft pint, it tended to be those who frequented The Goth very often who drank the cans. In my time in The Goth, I never saw these men drunk but I also never saw them without a drink in them. They were invariably there playing dominoes or in their familiar place in the layout of The Goth.

For the purposes of this research project, I interviewed several of these men, all former miners, and they drunk not to get drunk but out of a longstanding habit and a feeling of contentedness drinking among friends or on their own in the pub:

I like a pint, like quite a few to tell you the truth! I drink cos it's boring in the hoose, wi me working noo, I like finishing up and popping doonstair for a few pints, watch the fitba on the telly and catch up. (Former miner, now Binman, 52).

They were all classed as being a 'True Believer' in The Goth's values as I viewed them as an extension of The Goth when I observed, spoke and drank with them. Their language, appearance and values were accepted as normal by the community and, in their own way, were well known and respected by the wider community of Fallin. It was often noted when these men were not in The Goth yet often anonymous when they were there. This category of men captivated my interest as the lifestyle that they choose was very different to the life that I was encouraged to pursue. These men are important to the renewal of community as their lifestyle is still rooted in Fallin's mining past when it was customary for men to work and then head to The Goth to share drinks and company with their workmates. By reproducing a version of the past in the present day, they act as a reference point for other drinkers and members about what The Goth was like. Crucially for the research question, these men offered younger men a glimpse into their potential futures when they stopped working. Their lifestyle, identity and cultural capital appealed to some of 'The Youth' and they were respected.

I observed that Homans' (1974) typology of individual commitment to a group, institution or cause could be reflected in how the men chose to spend their time in this communal environment. Along with being extremely ritualistic there was also a large degree of individualism and idiosyncratic behaviour in terms of what you drank, where you sat to how many cubes of ice you had (Wight, 1993). Some men sat by themselves seemingly deep in their own thoughts forgoing the offer of conversation from other regulars. I saw one man in particular come in and sit at his usual spot adjacent to the bowlers seating area and drink three dark rum and colas without saying a word to anybody in The Goth, including the barmaid. Others were loud, brash and outspoken often gesticulating at the TV when watching football. They used the public space as a means of formulating opinions on events and mixing with likeminded people that they had known for years. The regulars were quiet in each



other's company with the game of dominoes and going out for a smoke being the event which sparked verbal interaction (Wight, 1993).

Often it is not what is said or what is being drunk that is of importance, rather it is the fulfilment of your place in the routine of the pub that marks it as communally significant. Absence from The Goth, when you should be there, is noticed by the regulars and in many ways it is this communal obligation to your comrade and foe alike that facilitates the continued participation. Drinking in The Goth was more than just participation in the village; it was also an assertion of the membership of a version of community. Drinking was the vehicle for these men to remember, maintain and reproduce their community. An example of the importance of public drinking can be found in the following quotation from a 'Freeloader'. It captures the repetitive nature of the company, the humour, the importance of male bonding and ultimately how community is remembered by these men:

Respondent: 'A think it is to relax, a form of relaxation to find out how everyone is getting on. Take away the tension from your week, it just eases out. It is awright to hear "talk to your wife" or this and that...likes of myself when I am out there, I was working 60 hours a week. When I go down there I can just relax, ye get a laugh, ye talk about everything general'

Interviewer: 'Men need men's company?'

Respondent: 'That's right, men need men's company whereas women don't need women's company, they don't need each other whereas we need each other and we just talk about, we boast to each other, we boast with one another, he's this and that. It's just a laugh...it eases all the tension fae the week as well as having a refreshment.'

Interviewer: ‘Thinking about last Saturday with people of different ages – different generation getting on together is that key?’

Respondent: ‘Yes, that is a big thing. Interested to hear how the young team are getting on or someone else and you are getting all the stories about what the young yins are getting up to as well. You try to look back on your youth as well when ye talk to the young wans, no so much about the bowls because a never played when a wiz young, just the chat. You will always find that there are various subjects brought up by the table and the various people give their own opinion on it’ (Retired Salesman, 70).

It is important to note that often drinking is seen as a vehicle for some men in this study to reconnect with friends to remember and belong (Connerton, 1980). The importance of storytelling was clear in this quotation as a means of bridging the age gap between young and old men. The habitual nature of drinking for some men is viewed as an essential part of the weekly routine which is often understood and accepted by the women in their relationships.

### **6.7 Sunday 16 May 2010 – Polmaise Bowling Club Top-10**

The club was in all its splendour. The flag was flying high, clubhouse had been cleaned and the sun was shining for what is the biggest outdoor tournament a club can participate in. Polmaise Bowling Club won the honour to represent Stirling County in 2009 in the national tournament and the first round was drawn against Stanley from Perthshire. The format of this game consisted of the following teams:

- Singles: (one player on each team with four bowls: first to 21).
- Pairs: (two players on each team with four bowls: 17 ends to be played, accumulative score).

- Triples: (three players on each team with three bowls: 15 ends to be played, accumulative score).
- Rinks: (four players on each team with two bowls: 17 ends to be played, accumulative score).
- Overall: two points per winning discipline, one if a draw, winning club with most points. If it is 4-4 then goes on shots won.

I was selected to play in the pairs so I arrived at club an hour before the game was due to commence (1pm) to have a few beers with the team and supporters. Many members and locals turned out to watch and Stanley brought with them a bus party of around thirty-five so it was a good atmosphere. The game itself was quite exciting with Polmaise managing a dramatic fight back to win 6-2 and progress to last 16. Unfortunately for myself, we lost our tie but our teammates carried us through and we were not allowed to forget in the bar afterwards. A game of bowls at Polmaise often gets in the way of a drinking session with your mates and today was no exception. The topic of conversation among the bowlers is different than what you find when you drink with The Goth regulars.

Nostalgia, storytelling and remembering past glories transcends either field yet in the context of Polmaise it is largely to do with bowlers past and present. I always think of this social event as a vital expression of the masculinity that is rewarded in this field (Bourdieu, 1990). Heavy drinking, arrogance, choice of language and even your body posture all act as a barometer of whether or not you are part of the clique. For example, it would not be appropriate to sit with your legs crossed, drinking a dry chardonnay and to speak in your posh voice. It is expected that the men sit in their chairs, legs open, lean forward to engage with the company using slang and strong language whilst drinking a pint of lager or beer. This

serves as a symbolic reminder that in order to be a part of the company, you ought to adhere to the codes of behaviour expected. These codes were often identified by ‘Sceptical Conformers’ as being barriers for their increased participation which the following quotation captures:

The Goth just isn't my type of place. The inside of the place is not welcoming, it is stuffy and I just don't feel comfortable sitting in the middle of the pub. I don't drink, well a had a wee dram when ma boy got married, so just go in there to show face as it is important to keep up the tradition of buying yer opponent a drink after the game. (Storeman, 58).

Like the individual above, it is customary to stay behind and have some drinks with opponents and mates alike and this happened again and like most weekends I ended up going home later than anticipated but this was to be expected during the bowling season. It is this expectation, by both men and women that the men have a few beers at the bowls and come home often ‘gassed’ which is something which I find quite important and is something that came out in the interviews stage.<sup>48</sup> The case for most of the men is that because they work hard during week, the weekend is when they relaxed with friends and let off steam with a few beers. When women come to collect their husband or partner, very seldom did they come into The Goth and sit in company unless they knew that another woman was there. This *doxatic* trend is acknowledged by both parties and reflects an important trait to which the ‘True Believers’ attach importance. Namely, that membership in these fields ought to be the realm of men (Bourdieu, 1990; Hey, 1986). This has been documented by Hey (1986), Wight (1993) and Mair (2010) and each field has done little to encourage women’s participation

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<sup>48</sup> ‘Gassed’ is a slang term, used by the men of Fallin, to describe the condition of being drunk or under the influence of alcohol.

other than when they assisted the Bowling Club when serving the men tea when fixtures are on.

The conversation in company is often punctuated with arrogance, humour and bravado. Stories were recited of how they defeated opponents in the past with the bravado of a champion boxer (Wacquant, 2004). The pugilism, discourse and mentality were embodied by young boxers in the working-class communities which they grew up in and were reproduced in their ability to be a fighter (*Ibid*). Similarly, the working-class community upbringing of the men in this study rewarded a version of masculinity which showed how they could beat other men in terms of skill, strength and bloody mindedness. The following quotation captures a younger respondent who epitomises this engrained *habitus*:

Like that time I humped you in final of the Championship, back then naebody could beat me oot there (laughter). A had nae distractions, just went oot and played and nae cunt would beat me. Noo, the young team hink they are awesome but they never beat me when a wiz gid. (Joiner, 32).

The aggressive speech when referring to his abilities is typically associated with a working-class discourse that is reproduced in various environments (Wacquant, 2004). From the school yard to the building site, the overt use of language and bravado is often expected as a matter of course. Sexual terminology like ‘humped’ and ‘cunt’ were used to remind me of their status and that it is was up to me to adapt, accept and adopt this discourse or else face my masculinity coming under ridicule. As has been mentioned before, the different worlds which I inhabited during the course of research often required polarised attitudes, language and humour in order to blend in. Such traits undoubtedly get perfected in the bar or on the way to a game in order to give the bowlers an edge. I have witnessed this sort of cultural and

symbolic capital when I played internal ties against many of the men I interviewed. I was often called a 'big girl's blouse' or a 'woose' which demarcates a subordinated version of masculinity based on lack of strength and depicting the other as effeminate (Laberge and Albert, 2000: 17). This was attributed to me because I was different in terms of where I grew up, how I earned money and being more softly spoken than was the norm in the Bowling Club.

Methodologically, I believe that this level of interpretation can only be understood through almost auto-ethnographic accounts which add depth to wider social trends which are described by social scientists (Denzin, 2000; Wacquant, 2004). One of the unexpected benefits of employing an ethnographic method to research has been the positive and productive relationship that I had with the men in this study. A 'True Believer' was very helpful post interview and spoke to me on several occasions about old Polmaise minute books and photos held in the club which would be of interest to me. The positive impact of my research on participants is something which I am pleased about and word of mouth has spread and I got asked by Jock (the licensee) when he wanted to interview him.

Returning to the versions of masculinity and the gender roles and expectations, I found that it was largely expected for the overwhelming majority of men to have in their relationships or marriages a degree of freedom to have a 'good drink' with the guys on a Saturday which was understood by their partners. A few individuals who did not have such an understanding with their partners and wives are often reminded in a mocking manner of this for example every time the phone goes in The Goth immediately the company sought out this individual with a chant of 'hen-pecked' or pronounce the person's name in a feminine voice. Often when discussing 'our women' passing remarks about them often relate around the fact that they were 'alright' about spending a lot of free-time at the bowls whether at weekends or through the week. This tacit acknowledgement that what they/we do is somehow

pushing the boundaries, yet is culturally expected and embodied behaviour within the field of the Bowling Club and The Goth, is salient and is perhaps a remnant of the old pit days when the public and private were very much still gender segregated. Bourdieu's (1990) concept of symbolic violence can be applied to this example and how both genders are complicit in the domination of one gender over another. In relation to the research question about how men understand, maintain and reproduce community and belonging, such overt expectations about what type of man you should be highlights the importance of the male breadwinner model which was arguably fundamental to the community's development. Men were the providers, women serviced the family and this has arguably been maintained in each field by the affirmation of traits associated with the community of the past (Dicks, 1998). This version of community is reproduced on a weekly basis during the summer and ensures for the men in this study that they are maintaining rituals and behaviour that reflect a past mode of life.

As mentioned earlier, men often commented on how their spouse never stopped them from participating in their version of community life and drinking was a key part of this. The transmission of this practice of drinking being a male domain in the younger generation was striking. Those younger members who did drink like the 'Old School' were adopting many of the habits from them in terms of their language, views and capacity to marginalise women from this field. Other younger members, and I include myself in this category, had to negotiate more with their partners and often could not participate as often or for as long as we would have liked. The onset of becoming a father acted as a rite of passage now for some men which precluded many men from continuing the legacy of previous generations. As one interviewee put it 'us younger guys cannae get away with it anymore, we have to think about our wives now' (Fireman, 32). This shift is important and ties in with the changing demographics of Fallin with more and more diversity of employment, housing and individuals now shaping the community and making the fields of the Bowling Club and The

Goth all the more removed from wider society. The following extract from field notes highlights my own dilemma on whether I can ‘get away with it’:

On the occasion in question, I fell into the category of those men who can’t get away with it and ordered a taxi for 18:45 (one of the first to leave) as I had guests coming to see our new home in the evening and my partner reminded me to be home at an early hour. I used this as an excuse to explain away my early departure – not the fact that my fiancé called me home, but that I had friends coming round for a few beers and had to go home accordingly. This constant need for me to accentuate my masculinity in this field by drinking even after I leave the pub and after consuming seven pints of lager during the course of a three hour drinking time speaks volumes for the masculine drinking culture surrounding the bowls.

### **6.8 Polmaise 30 May – Top 10**

The next round of the Scottish Top 10 resulted in an away game. The day started at 11:00 with a bus picking up the ten players and thirty supporters who were going through to play in the quarter final of the tournament in Markinch, Fife. Everyone was in good spirits and a lot of the elder statesmen of The Goth were there to offer support along with girlfriends and wives of the bowlers, ‘The Young Team’ as well as the regular members who all wanted the ten lads to win. These occasions often introduce women into either field as they are community occasions like a Gala Day or Orange celebrations. The chance to represent the village by travelling to other likeminded villages across Scotland is supplemented by the likelihood of drinking for most of the day. I sat up the back of the bus with a good friend, his wife and her friend as well amongst others. He never sat down much as he was too hyped up. Even before we left the village, the hyper friend got hold of a Polmaise tie which had my name on the



back of it which had been sown in by my mother all of ten years ago. Let's just say I was slagged about being a mummy's boy by quite a few and the bus was in stitches (excuse the pun) and my only reply was to say how wise it was of her 'as some cunt did steal ma tie after all'.

This type of language is not something I would often say in other settings, and even though there were women present, this is the language of choice and nobody faces any sanction because of it. Indeed, the descriptions of the language and behaviour superficially reinforce what some commentators have referred to as a common sense description of the hegemonic working-class masculine culture (Rogaly and Taylor, 2009:2). It helps perpetuate, what Bourdieu (1984) critiqued in *Distinction*, the taste and culture of a class system which demarcates those who are not privy to the rules of the game. By compartmentalising shades of my 'self', I felt very aware of my own set of dispositions and this in part explains how important the reflexive chapter is to understanding how this research was constructed. On reflection, I look back and ponder on how removed this form of written communication is from the phenomenological experiences of myself and those which I write about (Charlesworth, 2000). One is also reminded of the impression management that I unwittingly performed upon on a daily basis between the fields of research, my home life and the university. Returning to the bus journey:

...it was noted by a 'True Believer' the week previous that were was to be no lady supporters allowed on the bus – the spare seats would be needed for the 'Youth's'

carry-out.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, the carry out for the bus did in fact need a seat and when we left the bus I observed a good dozen cans had been tanned by the three guys drinking.<sup>50</sup>

When Polmaise go anywhere, they tend to leave their mark. From interviewing former miners and talking to them about the N.U.M. strikes of the 1980s, this type of carnival atmosphere reflects their accounts when they went across the British Isles attending rallies and meetings *en masse* (McCormack, 1989; Stead, 1987). The following quotation from a ‘True Believer’ summarises this behaviour as well as the collective bond that characterised this point in the community’s history:

I remember travelling doon tae Nottingham wi’ the lads as they were having a big protest and march doon there. A wisnae even a miner, just a young boy, but a went along and had a great time! Got gassed, ended up someone on oor bus got a Polis helmet aff some cunt and was kicking about the bus with it on the way back up the road! Mental, great laugh but it was important to go doon wi the boys and support the miners. (Binman, 48).

The trip to Markinch in Fife did not have any picket lines or police present, yet it was a chance for the young and old to support the village. Reflecting back on my ethnographic notes, I am reminded of my closeness to the men and how I was a part of them. Polmaise was a part of me and I was very proud to represent the Club and the wider community of Fallin:

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<sup>49</sup> A ‘carry-out’ in this sense is the alcoholic drinks that are to be consumed on the way to a match. Usually a much bigger ‘carry-out’ is purchased at the other end for the return journey back to The Goth.

<sup>50</sup> ‘Tanned’ is a Scottish phrase for finishing something quickly. Also can be used to describe a person who was beaten up in a fight.

The supporters found suitable vantage points and proceeded to cheer on the lads for duration of the three hour game and only left us temporarily to buy more drink from the bar. Some big bowls games are emblematic of football crowds with two sides cheering on their team and, at times, cheering the misfortune of their opponents. Not sure the Markinch club were quite ready for the battle as when I had finished my game and was in the bar watching the climax of the fours – an elderly lady called us ‘animals’ as we screamed as our player played a great shot.

Ultimately, Markinch won and progressed to national semi-final but we all did our best and it was a fantastic effort for a club of Polmaise’s size. After the game, we commiserated with each other but also congratulated the Markinch lads on their win. This was like a village day out. Young and old, men and women all left Fallin in good spirits and came home in better spirits. The result merely prevented us from doing it all over again in the next round. Bowling and drinking in this manner could be likened to how a football club facilitates a tribal connection for people.

It is possible to argue that social events, like football affiliation, is one of the last forms of social solidarity and community cohesion available for the working-class who lack the necessary forms of capital to participate effectively in wider society. In *Chavs*, Jones (2011) illustrates how in a matter of decades the working-class lifestyle went from being ‘*salt of the earth*’ to ‘*scum of the earth*’ which was particularly prevalent for the younger generation whose lives were interspersed with worklessness. Bowling, drinking and behaving in this manner are performances that can be viewed as fields which facilitate an escape from the trappings of our lived realities (Bean, 2006). Participating in a football crowd’s collective mind through singing their club’s songs and adopting the collective identity for the duration of the game can act as a catalyst for liberation. I found that the men in this study used bowls

in a similar manner and often felt secure in this company to expropriate the prescribed masculine identity which had been forged in the community for several generations. To reflect upon Jones' (2011) analogy, the working-class man clings onto arenas where their institutional social capital is rewarded as opposed to being deemed as redundant or problematic by wider society (Wacquant, 2008).

### **6.9 Saturday before the 12<sup>th</sup> of July, 2009**

In Scotland, this date is significant because it is when the annual Orange Order march is held in communities, towns and cities across Scotland. It can be a tense time in some communities and for local authorities, police and the Scottish Government as it can produce incidences of criminality and divide some communities based on religious identities (Bradley, 2007). In Fallin, the local Orange Order has a long heritage and meets in The Goth to plan the march. I did not interview any of the Orangemen for this study as they were not regulars in either the Bowling Club or The Goth. Yet, for one Saturday each July they came to the forefront of the public representation of the community of Fallin when they awoke the community with their drums and flutes and returned home to the village for their finale. The following section describes facets of how this event is understood, reproduced and maintained as well as how I organised a bowling tournament to coincide with this event. Efforts shall be made to justify this decision in terms of the benefits that my decision had for The Goth, the Bowling Club and my research project. Throughout this section, the ethical tenets of protecting research participants, honouring trust and maintaining professional and scholarly integrity through painting an accurate portrayal shall be discussed.

Polmaise Bowling Club relies heavily on The Goth to finance the running costs (Mair, 2010) which is supplemented by membership fees and fund-raising activities which, from 2008-2010, I had responsibility for as I was a committee member. I believed that

the Bowling Club ought to organise a large open tournament which would raise funds for the Club and The Goth. This involved inviting people from various clubs throughout Scotland to enter a round robin tournament with a monetary prize on offer for semi-finalists, finalists and winners. Twenty-four teams of three people (mixed sex, age) were involved and I also organised a raffle. We also laid on a disco/karaoke in The Goth after the tournament had ended in order to entertain the regulars and visitors. It resulted in a great day/night for everyone concerned. The Bowling Club had run a successful tournament and raised some much needed money for club coffers. The players had an eventful day with many sore heads the following morning. The Goth made a very healthy bar profit – as a direct result of the sore heads inflicted upon the players I should add. The only complaint was from the staff as they wanted to be at the other side of the bar.

The following photographs were taken from the event in 2009 after many of the players had finished bowling for the day and retired to the bar to quench their thirst. For information, in Photograph Six I am the one on the right sporting a t-shirt with one of my many nicknames.

Photograph Four: The Goth interior.



Photograph Five: Bowlers in the 'Crabbit Corner'.



Photograph Six: The Goth and some 'named athletes'.



This event was sociologically significant for me as it highlighted the organisational role that I had within the Bowling Club. It was also much more insightful for what the

karaoke achieved. In its 98 year history, this was the first ever occasion in which a band performed in the main bar. It was placed where the dart oche stands looking out into the confines of the pub. This event was also the first occasion when The Goth almost felt like a dedicated bowls club, and not a place where the bowlers went and drank. The normal seating arrangements were temporarily thrown out the window, with the visitors, bowlers and newcomers sitting in seats that were unaccustomed. It broke the routine for many of the regulars who embarked on their traditional Saturday night pilgrimage with their wives. I was responsible for this breaking of tradition and I did feel a touch nervous of how this would be perceived after the dust, and hangovers, had settled. Yet, perhaps to my surprise, the universal verdict was that of success with The Goth landlady, licensee and other regulars suggesting we do it much more regularly. I was pleased for what we had achieved as it showed that the Bowling Club could make a worthwhile contribution to The Goth's coffers. On a personal note, it felt like I had attained another badge on my own personal crusade to become more accepted by the 'True Believers'. As often mentioned in this study, I felt that I needed to go the extra mile to attain acceptance of this group. Indeed, it is something that I readily did as I felt like I wanted to belong to this clique at varying times throughout my time at the Club. It is what I understood to be the purpose of a Bowling Club was. It is a community of people who join together under an institution to socialise, get out the house and compete at regular instances.

Ethically, my involvement in this event was also based on researcher expediency in that I wanted to see how the Orange march was received by locals, incomers and by the research fields I was interested in. The Orange band, along with many local supporters, returned to The Goth around 3pm for a meal and refreshments which were being supplied in the function suite. The Goth was incredibly busy, often

three people deep around the bar trying to get served by the extra staff laid on to deal with the volume of clientele. I knew several of the Orangemen and I got drinking with one of them in the corner of the pub alongside other bowlers. The weather that day was miserable and he took off his sodden sash and put it over the back of his chair. What happened was a classic example of symbolic and cultural capital that I remember with such clarity I can still recollect the facial expression of the Orangeman several years later. One of The Goth's regulars was very drunk and came over and picked up the man's sash off the back of the man's chair when he was visiting the toilet, and put it on and proceeded to sing 'The Sash' whilst playing a mock flute.<sup>51</sup> The company which I was in thought this was amusing and some encouraged the gentleman to 'sing the second verse'. However, on return from the toilet the Orangeman took exception to this act and asked him to take this off as he was disrespecting the Order and what the sash stood for. I was keen to avoid an escalation of the event and tried to change the subject and succeeded along with the rest of the company to pacify the aggrieved individual. As a researcher, I was amazed at the symbolism of the event and how complex social interactions can be when religious institutions meet with those who merely reflect a religious identity.

This is encapsulated in the academic work of Bradley (2007) where he differentiates between religious faith and religious identities which are often assumed by the media, politicians and wider society to be inseparable. Events which take place in the marching season or manifest in sporting occasions involving the Old Firm, provide open vestiges from which religious differences permeate wider society. The company which I was in played a part in the performance of religious identity by encouraging this seemingly humorous, entertaining

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<sup>51</sup> 'The Sash' is an Orange Order song which celebrates King William of Orange victory over King James in 1690.



event whilst being ignorant to the wider importance of religious faith. One is reminded of how community can be understood in such personal and deeply held views where traditions, gender roles and habits are reproduced, maintained and remembered by those who believe in it (Crow, 2002). For those outsiders who are not privy to the nuances of the community, these beliefs and identities seem obtuse and removed from reality (Rogaly and Taylor, 2009). Traditional rules of The Goth were no longer applicable for this event and I had in fact, helped contribute to a social experiment designed to observe how individuals respond to a religious order presenting a version of their beliefs. I witnessed an act that although independent of my actions, my research aims in fact contributed to the alignment of two fields that would ordinarily not have come together at that point.

### **6.10 Drinking**

During this event, the Orangemen had not been drinking all day as is their custom. Wight's (1993) study on 'Cauldmoss' also focused on drinking alcohol and I found it to be a useful comparable reference for social drinking in Fallin. Wight (1993:148) views social drinking as suitable for a case study as it is one of the few areas where men were in control of expenditure. This is perhaps slightly surprising considering the continuing dominance of a male-breadwinner society in such communities but often household income is divvied up to pay for rent, bills, essentials and then the man is given money by the woman to spend on drink (sometimes gambling) in whichever way he sees fit. Drinking is intrinsic to social life and a main reason to increase earnings (Wight, 1993). This is very important because of the centrality of work in people's lives, the choice to spend more time in the pub as well as the solidarity and social functions it performs (*Ibid*). The Goth is a bastion for many men to socialise in and often the drinking is of secondary importance. Rather, it is the desire to gossip, socialise and be away from the family and their work which social drinking enabled for some of the men in this study.

Hey (1986) provides an excellent analysis of the intensely chauvinistic male culture of pubs which is usually shared by those who write about them. It is geared towards this type of patriarchy through décor, choice of things to do and the social norms that govern the pubs throughout working-class communities. The Goth used to be a sawdust on the floor type pub which many of their customers today often reminisce about because it set it apart from women and outsiders. The 'True Believers' still revel in being hard, sectarian, macho because of the type of solidarity it instils within their community.

The ethnography that Wight (1993) conducted concentrated on public drinking because it was easier to observe, but more importantly, because in 1984 it still represented the norm for alcohol consumption amongst most people (particularly men) in the village. In the intervening years it would be interesting to see whether this still holds true and could be indicative of any shift in gender roles, expectations and a wider shift in the function of a working-class pub today. For men, visiting the pubs and clubs was their most important form of integration into the community on a weekly basis (Wight, 1993: 152). This contrasts sharply with women and perhaps other men in surrounding areas who have their integration with community through children, other types of leisure and family gatherings (Fox, 2004). It is also similar to a *Gemeinschaft* type society that needs regular affirmation of ties, values through contact and it is perhaps an anomaly for contemporary Scottish society. This description of the pub-dwelling past-time by Wight (1993: 25) captures the importance of the local pub in 'Cauldmoss':

A great advantage of the pubs and clubs was their neutrality in terms of hospitality. To a large extent men could determine the extent to which they interacted with each other, ignoring people, exchanging a brief greeting, or having a prolonged conversation and swapping drinks. By meeting in the public house the level of

furnishing was of little interest, the privacy of someone's living room was not infringed and conversely no one felt obliged to accept a similar imposition in return (Wight, 1993: 25).

### **6.11 'Can't drink like the old school' – what goes on in 'company'**

It was a typical Monday night in The Goth for the twelve bowlers who had represented Polmaise in a trophy match in various parts of Stirling. It was 'run of the mill' as my team lost and the others won. As is custom, those who returned to The Goth following defeat sat under the television away from the normal bank of seats often reserved for the bowlers. To their credit, the rest came over and sat with me and my two disgruntled partners to continue their ritualised slagging at close quarters. The company was good. What many individuals in the Bowling Club would class as the 'Old School' were all seated around a couple of tables having a drink, chat and going over the game. It was busy in The Goth. The darts boys were in for their weekly practice as well as some of the regulars sitting in their own company playing 'doms' (dominoes). The darts guys were sitting in the normal seats for the bowlers as they look out onto the dartboard. It is always strange sitting in another part of The Goth yet this vantage point allowed you to see The Goth in its entirety.

On the night in question, there were thirty-five men in the pub at around 10pm. Some of the bowlers started to slip away after the one drink leaving the company to stand their rounds and drink the night away. The remaining company was invariably the 'Old School', a mixture of retired miners and engineers. It should be said that all of the men in this social situation were interviewed at some point for this research project. There was one part-time security guard who at 71 was still earning national insurance and getting ribbed about working at his age. Laughter ensued when he stood his round and whipped out a £20 note much to the consternation of the

group. This particular gent was also being gently ribbed about his wife letting him out to drink with the boys tonight, to which he replied that she will be waiting up for him on his return thus implying a forthcoming sexual encounter. He, like the company, knew full well this was as unlikely as his often recited story about them having sex twenty-eight times in a fortnight whilst on holiday.

I often listened intently to this chat as I felt that I couldn't offer much to the conversation. Laughing on cue was my contribution to proceedings. Often those telling stories, or reciting past exploits, talked directly to me, highlighting my role in the group. It reaffirmed my marginalised masculinity in terms of class, age and locale yet they are sharing with me their histories which is symbolically important in terms of integration into their field. As it was my night of gentle slagging due to my defeat, when I went to the bar to get my round I was asked if I was feeling well, won the lottery or came into money as it was not like me. Knowing full well that I always stood my round, it was a gesture in saying 'you are alright; you're one of us'.

In relation to the 'continuum of integration', this form of social interaction affirmed my place as part of the clique yet lacking the necessary capital to play an active part in the reproduction of the *habitus* of the men. The conversation often centred around the 'True Believers' stories. Their symbolic capital was utilised in company often leaning in to the 'Freeloaders' among the group when telling a tale or commandeering long periods of conversation. To use an analogy of a business meeting, the 'True Believers' set the agenda, discussed the items on it and ensured the staff understood their message. The role of the 'Freeloaders', was to facilitate them in their tasks by providing a platform for their performance. I liked it and I found I got a lot of laughs and information from these encounters. I could have easily sat there till closing

time hearing familiar stories but I had the car and a life to go home to at the other side of town.

I began to question the social purpose of the ‘Old School’ and regulars for drinking in The Goth which led me back to Wight’s (1993: 152) argument that visiting the pub was the men’s most important form of community integration. Tönnies’ ideal-typical description of a *Gemeinschaft* community, that needs regular affirmation of ties and values through face-to-face contact with likeminded individuals, can be witnessed in this regular gathering of men in The Goth. Pubs are the preferred place of performing such communal affirmation as they offer the advantage of neutrality in terms of hospitality. Men can determine the extent to which they interact with one another, whether it is in company or in cursory exchanges of acknowledgement to other punters. Meeting in The Goth did not invade the privacy of someone’s living room (Wight, 1993). Indeed, I observed that often each person in the company had a role which was well rehearsed and one with which they feel so comfortable they fulfil it without any script or prompts. We had:

- The ‘joker’, often making fun of himself for the greater good of the group.
- The ‘storyteller’ who would interact with the joker so set each other up for nostalgic stories.
- The ‘smart arse’ who would always be quick with the put downs.
- The ‘quiet one’ who was respected and looked to for opinion if needed.
- The ‘naive outsider’ who acted as an audience for the performers.

Drinking with the ‘Old School’ is an eye-watering prospect, and a feat that should not be attempted on an empty stomach. A typical Saturday’s drink consumption for me during my ten years membership of both fields made filling in health surveys a chastening experience

that often prompted me to forgo alcohol the following weekend. The rules of drinking with the ‘Old School’ are simple:

- Stand your round.
- Keep up.
- Don’t drink anything green.

### **6.12 May 1 2010 – Polmaise vs Borestone – Drunken research**

This annual friendly between two local Stirling clubs has been played out for the best part of 100 years. It takes place on the first Saturday on May for a match between sixteen players on either side. The scores are kept, but they are largely a trivial sideshow to the main purpose of the day which is enjoying the social aspect of playing bowls. Borestone are similar in many ways to the Polmaise bowlers in as much as they like a drink and possess a similar working-class, macho *habitus* characteristic of the wider bowling fraternity.

I decided that this fixture would be a good example to document and analyse. As a result, I left the car at home and got a taxi to the club to fully appreciate the day in its entirety. This meant getting drunk and staying till it was dark. This may sound like a typical student’s approach to the perfect research, indeed I have had to defend this position several times to my partner. Yet it is imperative to fully appreciate and blend into the social fabric of a pub, drinking soft drinks will not get you the same experience as drinking lager which is the norm in such situations. It is essential to document my drink consumption for the average bowling friendly to illustrate the importance and centrality drink plays in this pastime and field. This is not a boasting display of cultural capital on my part, rather it is indicative of the degree of

drink needed to integrate into the fields. Rather I have utilised a Goffmanesque approach on the ritualistic nature of places like the pub.

Timetable of intoxication:

13:30: Arrived and headed straight to bar to find a friend. **1 pint of lager consumed.**

13:45: First one always goes down quick – returned the round. **1 pint of lager consumed.**

14:15: Pub was busy with regulars and bowlers from both sides. I found myself in the company of the ‘Old School’ who got a round in. **1 pint of lager consumed.**

14:30: Game was due to start so prudent of us to get correct shoes on and head out to the green to play bowls. Took the drink out to side of rink.

14:40: After the first end, I asked my opponent, who is a good friend of mine, into bar for a drink. **1 pint of lager consumed.**

15:00: After a few more ends of play, my opponent returned the favour. **1 pint of lager consumed.**

15:30: Ten ends have been completed, and more importantly five pints of lager had been consumed which tended to give bowlers an appetite so all thirty-two bowlers made their way through to the lounge to have steak pie, ice-cream and coffee – although, this is another journey through to the bar and another drink is bought. **1 pint of lager and a cup of coffee consumed.**

16:15: Following the completion of the meal, we went through to the bar to tear our football coupons up as invariably some obscure lower league English side has decided to turn over the league leaders (Norwich City are the team in question). Pints were beginning to ‘bag us up’ so prudent course of action is to switch to the ‘hawfs’. **1 vodka and cola consumed.**

16:45: Drink was taking its toll on the bowls and the volume had been turned up and the guys on the green were very jovial. Opponent went to the bar and brought me back a drink and he decided it was time to start on the doubles. **2 vodka and cola consumed.**

17:15: The game itself was becoming even more of a sideshow and concluded with someone winning. At the time, I was not sure who but all eight on the rink decided to play back down for a pound (closest to jack at end of all sixteen bowls played gets the money). I never won; needed a drink to console myself. **2 vodka and cola consumed.**

17:45: Speeches were held in The Goth from both clubs and it turned out we did win. All bowlers were now sat in large company. Opponent was leaving soon, so decided to get me another double. **2 vodka and cola consumed.**

18:00: I could not have him go away having bought the last round so we both had a swift drink to celebrate each other's company. **1 Glayva consumed.**

18:30: Following the departure of the Borestone players, talk turned to bowls and the teams which had been picked for various competitions that year. The conversation was quite animated due to volume of drink consumed by all. **1 Blue WKD consumed.**

19:00: As above. **1 pint of Guinness consumed.**

19:30: I felt drunk as drinking with the 'Old School' was extremely difficult. **1 vodka and cola consumed.**

20:00: The conversation was still pretty lively and very few of us were left in pub. My taxi was booked for 20:15 so I decided it was time to admit defeat and miss out a drink from the round. I bought the company a drink in order to stand my round. I think I managed to finish all my drinks, with possible exception of the Blue WKD.



20:30: Returned home and had a glass of wine with my partner and proceeded to tell her all about my day while she cooked dinner. **1 glass of wine.**

22:00: Bed.

Table Nine: Tally of alcoholic drinks consumed

Drink Type	Volume
Lager (pint)	6
Vodka (35ml)	8
Glavya (35ml)	1
Blue WKD (275ml)	1
Guinness (pint)	1
Coffee (cup of)	1
White wine (glass of)	1

By no means was I the biggest drinker in the club. Other men, who are the subject of my research, arrived before me, left after me and drank more quickly and ardently than I. This was my only weekly session whereas for many men in this study this was replicated on Friday as well with some of the ‘Old School’ enjoying a midweek outing also.

In terms of doing research, I felt that to drink soft-beverages in this company would not result in me blending in and in fact staying as long to witness the subtle behaviours of certain older members cautioning the drunk member of our company, not through words, but by gestures, posture and omitting them from discussion and the round. A possible drawback to this is the fact that I am doing research visually impaired in some respects as you did get caught up in the situation at times and it is perhaps impossible to remember the minutiae of

the day. Yet, I would argue that ‘being one of the guys’ was important for the interview stage of my research as well as gaining the alternative side of non-problematic drinking. Very little is made of this in the literature and this accepted form of binge drinking is encouraged by members. I do see the negative consequences of this in that when the men return home, they are often still in the mind-set of the pub. You continue to swear, be argumentative and take some time to recalibrate your dispositions needed to avoid confrontations or disturbances in the home.

### **6.13 Conclusion**

This chapter has provided the reader with some episodic events during my time in the field which illustrates the importance of stories to the continued maintenance of community and belonging. The social closeness which I had with these men allows for their humour to come to the fore which I view as a strength of this thesis. Methodologically, through using participant observation and photographs, this chapter has captured a sense of the beat of the community through analysing routines, social drinking, away days and the evolution of relationships over time. Reflecting on the wider literature relating to masculinities (Hobbs, 2013; Messerschmidt, 2000), ethnographies which touched on drinking (Wight, 1993) and class consciousness (Lupton, 2003), I believe that this chapter not only answers the research question of this thesis but also contributes another useful case study for future researchers interested in these areas. It is now important to focus on the final analysis chapter which utilises themes introduced in this chapter and analyses the interview data of twenty-four men.

## **Chapter Seven: A Version of Community**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The aim of this thesis is to explore how the men in this study construct their community. This chapter discusses the research question: in what ways do men understand, create and maintain an idealised community and belonging? It is argued that these men rely on nostalgia to construct a symbolic, ideal-typical construction of their past community that is the reference point for the present day community (Cohen, 1985; Connerton, 1989). The importance of remembering community is that it enables individuals to perform in social worlds that are still strongly bounded by tradition (Dumont, 1980). Contrary to some academics (Bauman, 2000; Sennett, 1998), contemporary communities are still worthwhile sites for social scientists interested in understanding how individuals connect, engage and belong within society. This chapter introduces Cohen's (1985) symbolic understanding of community that places the definition of a community on those who live, perform and abide by the values it espouses. This is supplemented through the men's definitions of community of Fallin and how this invariably revolves around their notions of the past (Connerton, 1989). Reflecting upon the literature, this chapter argues that the men in this study focus on different aspects of the community and many are less committed to its values than the 'True Believers' (Homans, 1974). It is possible to suggest that the version of community is constructed by the men as a relational concept that relies on difference and outside pressures to solidify, and unify, their symbolic community (Dumont, 1980).

### **7.2 Symbolism, tradition, myths and reality**

Understanding and researching social relations at a local level is at the heart of this thesis. Cohen (1985: 13) argues that micro level research offers valuable insight into identities and the wider concept of community:

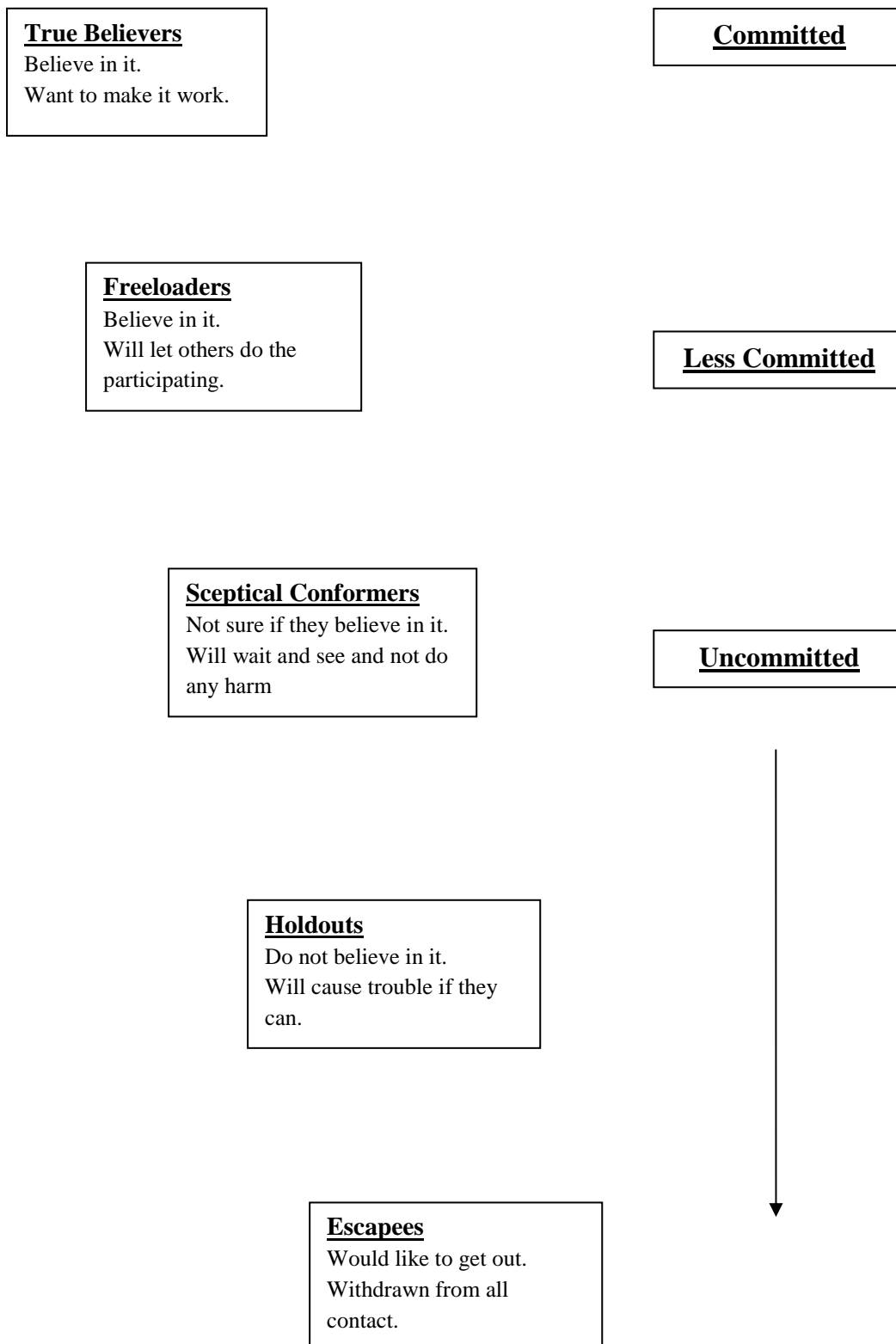
As one goes down the scale so the objective referents of the boundary become less and less clear, until they may be quite invisible to those outside. But also as you go down this scale, they become more important to their members for they relate to increasingly intimate areas of their lives or refer to more substantial areas of their identities. (Cohen, 1985: 13).

Cohen's (1985) assertion about the importance of social interaction for the reproduction of identities encapsulates the importance of researching the milieu of community life.

Individuals are still concerned with local boundaries and differences that solidify their community consciousness. Community matters more when its existence is believed to be under threat from outside factors and forces (Blokland, 2005). Conflict and difference to the assumed mode of life is said to galvanise social groups reluctant to change their *habitus* (Charlesworth, 2000). This chapter shall explore the construction of the community of Fallin and the importance of symbols, myths and traditions in making sense of realities of the twenty-four men in this study. The data used from the interviews helps illustrate this assertion whilst situating this project with other studies and social theories that acknowledge the importance of collective remembering (Cohen, 1985; Connerton, 1980; Wight, 1993). Prior to exploring the narratives of the men in this study, it is necessary to introduce a conceptual and theoretical framework that aids analysis.

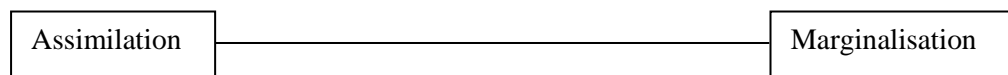
A schemata developed by Homans (1974) is used to better explain individuals' continued commitment to the community and how both insiders and outsiders use nostalgia to reinforce the present-day interactions of the men in this study. Figure one, overleaf, illustrates five categories of ideal-typical individuals and their attitude towards participating in a cause, community or co-operative in the case of Birchall (2001):

Figure One: Individual sources to participation. Derived from Homans (1974).



These categories reflect the heterogeneity of the men in the fields of The Goth and Bowling Club. Rather than displaying a uniform set of dispositions, as one may expect following a Bourdieusian theoretical approach, the interviews with the men showed how they participated in their community for different reasons. Bourdieu (1977: 78-79) did indeed acknowledge the fluidity of fields which reflect the duality of agency and structure in understanding human interactions. Many men are active in both fields yet do so without sharing or expressing the necessary set of dispositions imposed by both fields. This analytical typology was discovered following data collection stage thus enabling a grounding of the data with other research on groups. When conducting the interviews and interacting with the men in either field, I was employing a version of this categorisation which I labelled the ‘continuum of integration’ (see Figure Two, below).

Figure Two: Continuum of integration



This mental schema allowed me to locate the extent of immersion for each man within either the Bowling Club or The Goth. On the assimilation end of the scale, you found men who embraced, breathed and reproduced the hegemony of both fields chiselled out from their shared history with them. In Bourdieu’s terms, they embodied the structures that they encountered throughout their life course. They were the ‘True Believers’ in Homans’ (1974) sense who committed time and displayed the necessary capital expected of them. Sliding down the scale, I came across men who operated with expediency in their interactions and were less committed to the cause, but would not want the Bowling Club to close or The Goth to fall on hard times. This group of men was interesting to research as often they had left the

village of Fallin, had higher classified jobs and travelled to the fields as, and when, they desired.<sup>52</sup> This level of commitment was not as evident; it separated them from the ‘True Believers’ as they were integrated into the fields, not assimilated. They would be categorised as the ‘Freeloaders’ in Homans’ (1974) framework. At the marginalised end of the spectrum, lay men who, despite understanding the *habitus* of the group, found themselves unable or unwilling to conform and display the necessary capital needed to feel a part of the clique. These men were few in number, yet were often spoken about by the ‘True Believers’ and ‘Freeloaders’ as if they were a significant minority. These men were all bowlers who lived out with the village, did not share the embodied history of those men who grew up in the locale and also generally had higher classified occupations than the ‘True Believers’. This category encompassed the ‘Sceptical Conformers’ down to the ‘Escapees’.

Appendix One illustrates my own longitudinal relationship with each field using Homans’ (1974) typology. It is important to document from a reflexive and ethical perspective, that much of the content of this thesis was written and edited when my commitment and affinity with the fields were diminishing. I now propose to offer quotations of each type of man, starting with an extract of an ideal-typical representation of a ‘True Believer’. It is important to note how recollection of his past is crucial in how he describes and understands both The Goth and his version of community:

As a’ve said, gave the pub 50 years of my life and almost three quarters of it involved in running it and ye had to come up, well no huv te, ...but ye were driven by the thought of the pub to come and make sure everything was awrite... Worried to make sure everything was alright – and I must admit for all a’ve been married 52 year in

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<sup>52</sup> I have used the Registrar General Class Scheme: (I) Professional occupations, (II) Managerial and technical occupations, (III) Skilled occupations, (IV) Partly-skilled occupations, (V) Unskilled occupations.

August and been very active in the community and oot different places, boxing and what huv ye, ma wife has never stopped me wance. She has always been a driving force behind me. The auld saying is ‘behind every good man is a good woman’ and she never stood in ma way...

[Community is]... having something, ye have got to get people on your side. To make a strong community, be involved in the community, speaking personally as a councillor here but got to go to all the meetings within the village, make yersel noticed, listen to what the people are saying – work with people within the community and that way you create a better, well hope you get a better and stronger community... It means the world to me. The community of the village. As I said to you earlier on, a’ve never ever forgotten where I have came fae and I’ll look up to people within the community. That in itself, it brought it me on as I worked tirelessly for the community and the people in general. (Former Miner, 73).

This man was driven by his role in both the community and The Goth. He was on the committee for most of his fifty years association with The Goth and was also the licensee from 1990 till 2009 (Mair, 2010). The boundaries of where The Goth ended, and his where his identity began, is hard to differentiate in his own words and through his actions. Maintaining tradition, public appearances and routine are key facets of his interaction with both The Goth and the community of Fallin. His definition of community is particularly illuminating as it highlights the importance he attached to its functioning and strength. Links can be made to his understanding of community with the organic/mechanical solidarity said to be evident in communities by Durkheim (Cohen, 1985). For example, the traditional gender-roles indicative of the nuclear family enabled the individual to actively reinvigorate community through his role within it. Remembering his bond to his fellow inhabitants



reminds me of Durkheim's concept of solidarity whereby the community functions because the collective conscience inscribed upon members ensures individual interests are secondary to the communities' wellbeing (Timasheff, 1967). The community, in this man's eyes, was an entity that had to be maintained and nurtured through social interaction.

In many ways, his health and happiness was closely tied into the relative well-being of the communities of Fallin and The Goth. It is why I have used his narrative as an example of a 'True Believer' as he is undeniably committed to each field which is witnessed in his own set of dispositions. He is active in his reproduction of the values and normative behaviours expected of individuals in each social world. Understanding the legacy handed down from past generations was important in his own individual and collective identity that in turns replenishes the *doxa* of the past (Bourdieu, 1972; Cohen, 1985). Egalitarianism was also evident in his understanding of this community which could have been developed from his role as a National Union of Miners (N.U.M.) local convenor and from being a Labour councillor. Phillips (2010) documents how Polmaise miners, the community pit of Fallin, were dogmatic in their views that if one of their own was discriminated against or treated harshly they would down tools and strike.

Linking this narrative back to the research question, this individual maintains community through his active reinvigoration of normative behaviour that was embedded in the community in which he was born, lived, worked and socialised. Crucially, for the six 'True Believers' identified in this study, the past was always the symbolic reference point for the modern day realities they encountered (Connerton, 1980).<sup>53</sup> The past for the 'True Believers' rewarded their dispositions and The Goth and Bowling Club acted as social settings whereby they found sanctuary in the familiarity that they breed. Paralleling Bauman's (2000) discussion on 'gated communities', the fields of research act as a secluded

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<sup>53</sup> The age profiles of this group ranged from 59-75.

social space where members can shut out the outside world. From my own experience of both fields and interacting with ‘True Believers’, I find the following quotation by Bauman as indicative of how they view outsiders and the dismantlement of the community as they knew it:

Do you want security? Give up your freedom, or at least a good chunk of it. Do you want confidence? Do not trust anybody outside your community. Do you want mutual understanding? Don’t speak to foreigners or use foreign languages. Do you want this cosy home feeling? Fix alarms on your door and TV cameras in your drive. Do you want safety? Do not let the strangers in and yourself abstain from acting strangely and thinking odd thoughts. Do you want warmth? Do not come near the window, and never open one. (Bauman, 2000: 4).

Each field was claustrophobic in metaphorical terms with this close knit group of men reluctant to expose their domain to contemporary society (Roberts, 1993). Almost every member from each field spoke about getting more members or drinkers into their midst. Yet this was borne out of financial expediency rather than a desire to share their institutions with the wider community of incomers. Exploring how these fields were understood and negotiated by other men in this study substantiates this assertion and sheds further light on how contemporary community is related strongly to an imagined community of the past (Andersen, 1991; Blokland, 2005). Attention shall turn to the next category of men from Homans’ (1974) schemata.

The rather crudely constructed category of the ‘Freeloaders’, constituted the majority of the men in this study. This extended quotation emphasises the overall agreement and commitment of one such member to the cause of the group, whilst acknowledging an aspect of it to which they do not fully subscribe:

There is a clique at Fallin (Polmaise Bowling Club) where I would say everyone tends to be in it and it is a very rare thing in bowling clubs where everyone can sit together... I think it's a village thing, probably adapted fae years ago fae the miners especially the miners themselves... They were a close knit bunch who bowled together, drank together, they fought together (laughing), they fell doon aff pavements and into hedges together (laugh)...eh and the bloodline is there within the village and a wiz welcomed into that and a think it is probably within me as a tend to pass it on to younger yins...Well...a man, like a women does tae, needs time away and a bit of individuality back and forwards. But in this day and age, there is no a lot of time to do that and quite rightly so. Men should be socialising wi their wives and their partner and that's why ma wife joins me a lot noo, cos our kids are up and she can come and watch. We can sit and hae a drink till anytime we like. Years ago, that wusnae the case as we were bringing children up when she could come along for a wee while and a wiz having a drink. But a didnae always go away at the right time. (Chemical Engineer, 47).

Throughout the extract we can see concerted commitment to the group's cause and how his present day understanding of the Bowling Club and The Goth is constructed through reference to the past (Cohen, 1985). Reproductions of dispositions are important so that the younger men do not forget the legacy that they inherit when drinking and playing bowls in this company. He is active in reinforcing the values and normative behaviours through his *habitus*. Yet, he distinguishes himself from the 'True Believers', and indeed from his younger self, when stating the case for sharing his leisure time with his wife in these fields. It demarcates him visibly and symbolically from the 'True Believers' who seldom sit in mixed

company. For example, the 'True Believer' discussed above states how his wife never once stopped him from his various commitments that he also admitted was not afforded to other men. Crucially, the example of a 'Freeloader' suggested that his reasoning behind his wife joining him more in these fields stems from his belief that wider society has put pressure on women and men to maximise any spare time they have to enjoy and renew their relationships. If we return to Bauman's (2000: 4) summary about the tension between individualism and community, this example highlights how the metaphorical window was left ajar and led to competing discourse over gender-roles for example. Some men no longer have the liberty of dominating the public and private domain as there has been an infiltration of pragmatism and fairness into the family-unit which has emancipated many working-class women. Their *doxa* has been pricked and many men in the 'Freeloader' category had to negotiate terms with their wives in order to maintain a meaningful membership of the group.

This individual also lives out with the community of Fallin in a private housing scheme with a higher classified occupation which also resonates with Bauman's (2000: 4) statement by 'letting the strangers in'. Identities are complex for this category of men as they are in many ways torn between two paradigms of identity. On the one hand, they understand and still embody many characteristics of the 'True Believers' whilst wrestling with the wider social changes in employment, private sphere and rhetoric proclaiming the end of traditional patterns of behaviour. This individual's testimony also relates neatly to Bourdieu's (1984) understanding of membership of multiple fields and the negotiation and manipulation of capital depending on where one finds themselves. Managing one's impression is something I encountered sharply in my interactions in order to not alienate individuals by utilising the wrong set of dispositions for the occasion. Many of the younger men who were interviewed could be classified in this category. They were rooted to the heritage and values instilled in

them from their parents yet were faced with social realities, like different employment relations and shifting gender roles, which often forced a collision of interests for the men.

This example of a 'Freeloader' also states that as the children are no longer living at home and in need of care, his gender role does not require him to limit his leisure time accordingly. The shared *habitus* between this individual and the 'True Believers' reiterates his commitment to the group despite some conflicting ideals. He crucially sees himself as part of the clique. He is very much a part of the Bowling Club clique due to his continued participation in fixtures, running the Club and representing it with distinction. Yet, within The Goth, his normative behaviour does not afford him the same position as he does not abide by the same traditions and consistent attendance as the 'True Believers' in this realm. Here we see how some men are more integrated in one domain rather than the other yet there are several men in this study who are established in both fields. This category of men numbered thirteen and generally displayed traits of the normative behaviour expected of them.<sup>54</sup> They could not be classed as 'True Believers' as they were often sporadic in their commitment to either field. In relation to the research question of this project, they also relied on collective remembering of the past to relate their present day experiences (Cohen, 1985). They differed markedly from the 'True Believers' due to breaking the hegemonic ideals expected when interacting in each field. They chose, or were now expected to, spend more time with their wives and partners and rebuff the exclusivity of male company expected by the 'True Believers'. This category of men also expressed the tension between present day realities with the behaviour of the older 'True Believers', suggesting that even if they wanted to, society does not reward this form of behaviour like it did in the past:

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<sup>54</sup> The age profile of this group ranged from 22-62.

Noo, men cannae just say ‘Am going out that night, am daing this, am daing that’ whereas the younger generation we have to think about our wives, our wives are a bit harder than they were back then (laugh)... Men and women are mare equal than they were then and a think everyone knows that. But women are mare respected now and think about their feelings more noo so that is basically it. (Fireman, 32).

Arguably the development of social and political movements alongside the shifting employment experiences of both men and women (Delamont, 2005) has infiltrated the collective expectations of the younger generation of men in Fallin. At a local level, it is possible to argue that the de-centralisation of male employment from the community consciousness has played a far greater part because many men now find themselves working out-with the community, which is often sporadic and characterised by periods of unemployment. Rather than supplementing the family wage with a part-time wage, women were sometimes a key earner for the household which brought into question the hegemony of village life which demarcated gender roles so definitely in the past. This has led to many men in the ‘Freeloader’ category having to negotiate their leisure time, which is something that this man suggests younger men have to embark upon unlike previous generations. Again, reflecting upon the past is something that this man uses to locate the realities of men in contemporary society. The same interviewee eloquently captures the continued symbolic domination of gender roles in his community in the following quotation:

I think they [women] just see it as a man’s pub. Ma wife will go up the pub but 99 times out of 100 she is wi me. She wouldnae say on a Wednesday night ‘right, am away up to The Goth for a half’ the world doesnae work like that ye ken. If I say am going up the road for a pint it will happen. (Fireman, 32).

The distinction between what a man can do, with what he ought to do, is captured in these two quotations from the same man which is indicative of the majority of the ‘Freeloader’ category. Despite the discourse, policy and rights of women advocating equality between the sexes (Smith, 1997), the men in this study still suggest both genders are shaped by the expectations they inherited from the community in which they grew up. Dicks *et al.* (1998) also witnessed similar *doxatic* tendencies of both men and women in a South Wales former mining community. Men still expected the women to care for children, do the housework whilst working to fill the void left by many blue-collar industries leaving the community rendering the men redundant (Dicks *et al.*, 2008; Jones, 2011). For many of the men in this study, particularly the ‘True Believers’ and ‘Freeloaders’, they still played by the rules of the past when men provided money for the family and women expected the men to have their own free time away from work and the home (Stead, 1987; Wight, 1993). They viewed men who did not fulfil this understanding of masculinity as different. It is worth noting that strands of masculinities were identified during interviews and it led to this project rejecting notions that these men positioned themselves in relation to a normative version of masculinity. Rather, it is more fractured and is renegotiated based on definition of the situation. This is something I encountered during my time in each field as I was the primary caregiver for our child and my partner was the main breadwinner of the family.<sup>55</sup> Gentle banter would explicitly remind both parties that I was deviating from the normative gender role of a Scottish man, such as ‘How you doing? You no babysitting the day?’ (Former miner, 63) and ‘How is the job hunt going? About time you got a proper job and put doon the books!’ (Chemical Engineer, 47).

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<sup>55</sup> As discussed in Chapter Five

Referring to a man caring for his own son as ‘babysitting’ is a symbolic and social use of language that highlights the shades of institutional social capital that are rewarded by these institutions (Wacquant, 1992). It is a version of symbolic violence whereby both parties are aware of the connotations of the phrase and it is an attempt by the speaker to exert his version of masculinity as normative (Bourdieu, 2000). Such overt, yet subtle, interactions are an important part in legitimising their identities and are often an attempt to make up for their perceived lack of capital in other ways. For example, as I live in Bridge of Allan, some viewed me as placing more emphasis on economic capital which goes against the hegemonic strand of masculinity prescribed in each field. Belonging to a community and staying in it throughout your life is another key marker that separates the ‘True Believers’ from other men in the study (Phillips, 1986; Wight, 1993). Phillips (1986) spoke of shades of belonging in his study of a small Yorkshire village in the 1970s and 1980s and how incomers attempted to be accepted by the natives by taking part in public activities. Indeed, I reflected this in my time in Fallin by organising a large bowling tournament to bring in funds for the Bowling Club and The Goth. Approaching sponsors to donate money and prizes was an altruistic attempt to help each institution prosper through my actions. I even joined the committee for a period of three years (2007-2010) and compiled a centenary booklet for the Bowling Club in 2011.<sup>56</sup> Yet despite my efforts, I was never able to have the level of belonging that I hoped for because I was an outsider. This inevitable disconnect is highlighted in the following extract from a ‘True Believer’ which, once again, locates the present day community relations through reference to the past:

The Fallin spirit kind of left when the pit shut and they were bringing other folk in, you know, they were actually bringing other folk in from Bannockburn and then all of

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<sup>56</sup> As discussed in Chapter Two and Chapter Five



a sudden the doors are opened, know what I mean, they were doing too much... you couldn't trust nobody. (Former Mining Engineer, 67).

Almost every participant in the 'True Believer' and 'Freeloader' categories reflected this sentiment. Once again, it is possible to draw comparison with Bauman's (2000: 4) 'community of our dreams and the really existing community'. The reality of their community opening up to others can be likened to an act of unforgiveable treason that blurred the important link between belonging to a community as opposed to merely living within a community. This was reflected in many interviews with their wives articulating this to the men and furthermore addresses the research question of how community is constructed. It seems that belonging to a community like Fallin transcends most personality traits that may promote sameness or difference. The following extracts explore the seemingly perennial nature of scepticism towards incomers:

Respondent 1: 'Well, ma wife always says when folk are talking about folk coming into the village they are referred to as a "stranger" and she always laughs and says "a've been here 10 year and always will be a stranger". That's what they say and a widnae say that was very welcoming... But a suppose if you are going to a new scheme where everyone is new it is different but if you move next door, well they are talking about folk o'er the back they're moving oot and are moving somewhere else. And they were talking about who are we gonna get, a bet it is strangers ken?'

Interviewer: 'Do they no like strangers or is it fear of the unknown?'

Respondent 1: 'Probably that, aye probably dinnae ken who they are and a believe if someone moves in next door ma mum would find out who their mum wis, who their dad wis and (laugh)' (Storeman, 36).

Respondent 2: ‘Oh aye, oh aye, they are losing it (community) gradually because it is no the same...the villages now with all the new houses have got, what we call people who have come in a ‘parachute’ – they will never come fae the village. I will always come from Cowie, but those who come in stay in Cowie. You know, it is the same wi Fallin...you will find that people who have stayed in Cowie for almost as long as I have, they don’t come from Cowie.’

Interviewer: ‘That’s an interesting point...’

Respondent 2: ‘...they don’t come from Cowie, they stay in Cowie’ (Driver, 65).

These quotations capture the broad consensus of most of the older men’s desire for their community to remain constant when facing gradual change. This tension was at the heart of many of the interviewees for men in *the* ‘True Believers’ and ‘Freeloaders’. Knowing your neighbours, and specifically their family heritage, is important for many people living in the community of Fallin and Cowie in the last example. The last quotation reveals how it is different if you move into a new housing scheme which is un-established with little community ties to the past. These quotations question Bauman’s (2004) statement that society is in a permanent state of revolution. Many of the men articulated change, yet also the constancy of ties to community and belonging seem to be more fixed than Bauman (2004) suggests. There was a degree of continuity in spite of the change that was affecting the wider community. In relation to the research question, we can see coping strategies of men to manage and justify change. Similarly, Bauman (2000) suggests how there is an increasing trend for individuals in contemporary society to break out of the stifling, intrusive nature of traditional communities like Fallin.

It is now important to understand more about the individuals who do not possess the bloodline or preferred shades of institutional capital to fully integrate with the ‘True

Believers' and 'Freeloaders'. The next category of men in Homans' (1974) schemata are the 'Sceptical Conformers' and those who are often perceived as being uncommitted to the group's cause. The following example documents a participant's interaction with the local institutions and how his current understanding of the fields are based around the myth, nostalgia and collective remembering reinforced by the 'True Believers':

It was very very difficult to get accepted. Coming into a community you know nothing about – you know nothing. You just don't know anything. Extremely difficult. Over the years it has changed. Changed a lot. They (the bowlers) get to know you and what you stand for. It's almost like a religion playing at Polmaise. What you have to believe in. There are no losers, it is drummed into you that you must win. You do have to adapt. Some accept you straight away, but the better players don't until you have proved yourself. (Accountant, 36).

A striking phrase is mentioned by this incomer to the Bowling Club when he used 'you have to adapt'. The individual who comes into their field must learn the rules of the game quickly, it is not negotiable. Crucially for this project, for those men who have to try and attain the dispositions of the group, they shall invariably be viewed as being peripheral to the group. They have not been able to embody the normative values nor possess the 'bloodline' articulated by those who are more integrated. It is not expressed in their language, actions or capital. For example, one individual who could be located in this group finds his accent and mannerisms mocked as they are deemed feminine. Other individuals do not drink alcohol and have what are seen to be 'white-collar' occupations and have other interests like cycling, hill-walking and rugby which are all interests not typically associated with behaviours rewarded, or encouraged, by the 'True Believers'. Their membership and acceptance is not automatic

and they usually have to persevere with varying levels of indifference and hostility in what can be likened to a rite-of passage for the uninitiated.<sup>57</sup> This form of screening is expedient for the individual and the group as it helps create a cohesive communal clique that facilitates success in bowling terms.<sup>58</sup> Durkheim's (1964) concept of 'conscience collective' is personified in the adaptation of dispositions which maintain a sense of normality in light of change and flux brought from incomers into either domain. This can be witnessed in the moral panic expressed by one 'True Believer' where he believed the fields and the wider community of Fallin were being diluted by incomers. This hardened the core of the institutions to protect their traditions in light of potential *anomie* (Blenkinsop, 2012; Cohen, 1982; Durkheim, 1964). Social groups galvanise around threats and it is possibly why nations, communities and institutions need a degree of difference in their own midst to solidify identities and values (Cohen, 1985; Crow, 2002; Wight, 1993). The following extended quotation highlights the necessary capital that many of the 'True Believers' expect others to possess and the importance of alcohol, humour and specifically belonging to the community. I think it is important to document extracts from interviews in order to make the words spoken, appear in the context in which they were supposed to be understood. They also help articulate central themes of this project, namely how belonging and the concept of community are issues that these men have reflected upon:

Aye, as I says, the bowling club before 95% of the people that played bowls came from Fallin, know what I mean, and the boys that's came into the bowling club from outside, they've stepped in, they're the group and things like that, know what I mean. Everybody's made welcome and you could say that all the boys that's came to Fallin,

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<sup>57</sup> See Blackwood (2002) for further discussion on anthropological examples of rites of passage for masculinities and femininities.

<sup>58</sup> Polmaise Bowling Club is the most successful bowling club in Stirling County. Regular winner of District, County and even on four occasions national titles. Polmaise Bowling Club is ranked number five for appearances at National Championships for the whole of Scotland.

has knitted into the club, it's not a clique, it's just everybody enjoys everybody else's company...you can come down and have a game and things like that, you get a laugh and a joke, and I mean, sometimes you get a wee bit ribbing, you know, but that's common practice, you know, but sometimes you deserve it and sometimes you don't, know what I mean... I wouldn't say it was as good now because you used to go in and get a pint or two pints then you went on your way, but a lot of the boys now they can't have that because nine times out of ten they're driving and they can't take the chance...

So, as I says... you know, I think it was the environment's changed as such because of the distances they've got to come and well, there's you, you come in and you have a soda water and lime and wee Tetley comes in and has a blackcurrant and that, know what I mean, so it's also about that, you know...It's just not the same. And the women... there used to be a lot of women used to come down an the wives used to come down, sit and have a blether and a laugh and a joke. Sometimes you have your wee sing song, you know, on a Saturday night after the bowls. But as I says, because of the... a lot of the older boys have all passed away, you know, there's not a lot of characters. There used to be a lot of characters in the bowling club too. A lot of they characters has passed away and you miss they boys, you know what I mean. (Former Mining Engineer, 67).

Describing the incomers as 'they' is crucial for both parties as it reinforces the symbolic boundaries between the 'True Believers' and the 'Sceptical Conformers'. The passing of elder characters are a constant worry for the 'True Believers' who have left a void in their social space that is being filled by a different sort of man. It is a real concern for the remaining 'True Believers' that their romanticised nostalgic version of belonging to their

community is under threat from outsiders (Frankenberg, 1967). This quotation captures a wider trend of the 'True Believers' whereby their current interaction with the fields is a reflexive process based on their collective remembering of the past (Cohen, 1985). The maintenance of an idealised community is thus intimately related to interaction with the 'other' - whether it be the other typologies of men or indeed their modern day self. It is why Cohen's (1985) and Connerton's (1980) argument about the importance of the past in shaping present day realities is so pertinent for the men in this study. The antagonism between the outsiders and their present actual reality helps reinvigorate the field (Blokland, 2005; Durkheim; 1964; Gluckman, 1962). The 'Sceptical Conformers', although not many in number, perform a crucial function in the reproduction of the local institutions by galvanising the collective habitus. Lemert (1995: 146) suggests 'habitus cannot account for change in habitus' yet I would argue that through understanding how less committed, and marginal, members interact we can see how habitus evolves gradually through acceptance of the changes in wider society occurring around them. This is indicative of previous academic studies on community (Blenkinsop, 2012; Cohen, 1982; Stathearn, 1982).

Despite the perceived tolerance of the new breed of man into the fields of research, there is still pressure for the 'Sceptical Conformer' to learn the rules of the game. Adapting to the normative rules prescribed by the group is also a rite of passage that requires individuals to learn the cultural capital required to integrate with the other men. The terminology of beliefs being 'drummed into you' highlight the dogmatic tendency of the dominant masculinity to assert it through lexical terms that reflect the men they represent (Connell, 1994). For example, 'drummed into you' suggests physical superiority with little room for deviation from the norms and values of the 'True Believers'. Reflecting back to the version of masculinity evident in the 'True Believers', having something drummed into you contradicts the 'bloodline' symbolism where the normative set of dispositions is found from within with

little need to have them forced upon you (Connell, 1994). For those men who were not exposed to a working-class community lifestyle, the drumming analogy asserts that a version of masculinity was imposed upon incomers. The lexical meaning of community (Amit and Rapport, 2002) captures much of what many of the men viewed as important in terms of being a man, namely working in a blue-collar industry, possessing a Protestant religious identity and patriarchal values. This was exemplified for this individual, and all of the ‘Sceptical Conformers’, during one quite overt display of the masculinity expected by the ‘True Believers’:

We had a Top10 bowling game up at Thurso. We got beat but when a came into the bar with a green t-shirt a wiz kicked to the ground, punched, scratched and told never to wear ‘green’ again at Polmaise again. Prim went upstairs, got an orange t-shirt, threw it at me and said ‘that’s the colour of our club’. That will always be with me. (Accountant, 36).

This anecdote highlights the engrained intolerance of the Catholic religious identity permeating the field of the Bowling Club (Bradley, 2005; Devine, 2000). Sharing similarities to the Scottish football ‘Old Firm’ rivalry, it appears the fields allow the expropriation of bigoted masks and behaviour to garner a sense of belonging against the other, reaffirming once again the clique. The man was not aware of this faux pas until after the message had been ‘drummed into him’ by the dominant mode of masculinity where anti-Catholicism is part of the ‘bloodline’ of the village. Being an outsider to such entrenched prejudices leaves many men who come into the fields on the periphery of the clique. This is highlighted in the following quotations by Homans (1974: 103) where he suggests the greater sanction or

punishment is related closely to the level of importance that the group attached to the individual conforming on this particular issue:

...the non-conformers may, by the aggression-approval proposition, expect to be attacked in some way by the true believers, and attacked the more fiercely, the higher the value set by the true believers on the results of conformity. At its worst, the attack may take the form of physical violence. (Homans, 1974: 103).

Possessing a Protestant religious identity, for the men in the Bowling Club, is clearly seen as being non-negotiable in the eyes of the 'True Believers'. The symbolic importance of this story is significant for outsiders and younger men operating in this social space. Liechty and Clegg (2005) explored this concept further through developing a 'scale of sectarian danger' to explain acts of religious intolerance in Northern Ireland. At one end of the spectrum you found the bigoted, residual beliefs of disliking the other based on their dogma through to full-blown sectarianism, whereby the individual wants to overtly harm members of the opposite sect. It is possible to assert that the behaviour and dogma of the fields of The Goth and Bowling Club lie towards the residual end of religious intolerance. Most men in each field do little to hide their displeasure of the Catholic faith and there are often overt expressions of dislike, especially around football matches and when Catholics play at the club. Interestingly, they are often justified through humour, banter and ripostes of 'We are the people' and 'No surrender'. Often beneath the banter, the interviews exposed a historical basis for the residual beliefs that are reproduced in contemporary Scotland: 'We had no contact with the Catholic Community. We had our communities and values, they had theirs and that is how it was' (Miner, 54).



The power of tradition and understanding how it interacts with contemporary realities is crucial for all types of man (Connerton, 1980).<sup>59</sup> From a dramaturgical perspective, it is useful to learn that performing in a manner that antagonises the traditions of the ‘True Believers’ will often be overtly challenged. Traditions are there to maintain order, provide comfort and preclude others from changing it. Such hostility towards the Catholic religious identity could be traced back to the time when the local Polmaise colliery employed many men from neighbouring villages following the closure of other local pits during the 1950 and 1960s (Phillips, 2010). The community of Fallin believed the colliery was a communal resource to provide the local men with employment (Phillips, 2010). Men from Cowie, Plean and Bannockburn sought employment in Polmaise Collieries with each of these communities having more people of a Catholic identity.<sup>60</sup> The invention of tradition has perhaps transferred through the generations and why some men in this study took a sense of pride that Fallin was known as a ‘blue-village’.<sup>61</sup> The community is remembered from the mining way of life that is often articulated as much by the ‘Sceptical Conformers’ than either of the other two categories of men discussed.

Returning to the experiences and participation of a ‘Sceptical Conformer’, The Goth is somewhat more problematic for this individual as he cannot, nor seems to want to, prove himself to the regulars in order for him to feel comfortable in this field. This participant would be placed close to the marginalisation point on the continuum of integration. He continues to make efforts in both realms, yet knows that his presence is often a socially awkward moment for both himself and the ‘True Believers’. Wight (1993) likened this form of community-making in Durkheimian terms. Communities perhaps need moral entrepreneurs to reinvigorate the collective conscience. His experiences are not typical, nor

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<sup>59</sup> See Chapter Three and Chapter Four

<sup>60</sup> Neighbouring villages that once had collieries within their boundaries.

<sup>61</sup> The term ‘blue-village’ relates to the colour of Rangers Football Club who play in blue and are often seen as an embodiment of the established, Protestant culture of Scotland.

are they exotic. Out of the twenty-four interviewees, I would class six men as fitting into this category of being affiliated to each field yet not fully embraced by, or embracing, the values of the 'True Believers'.<sup>62</sup>

Embarking on categorising the men into types of member felt like a natural personal response to listening to participants' narratives and beliefs. When analysing the data, it seemed natural to me to perform such subjective typecasting of their narratives as it allowed me to see the extent of integration into the structures of The Goth and Bowling Club. It allowed a rudimentary understanding about my thesis by questioning how they constructed, understood and performed community. Each of these fields is a bastion of working-class masculinity where men seek sanctuary away from the encroachment of modernity (Sennett, 1998). For some, this was the case but for many more their participation was much more complex and subtle than this encompassing statement. Their experience was more nuanced, complex and perhaps much more indicative of other men who lived in Fallin but did not frequent either field (Dennis *et al.*, 1956). It is worth reasserting the temporal and limited specificity of the data gleaned from the men in this study.

My position in both fields fluctuated across the spectrum as I spent a significant period of time buying into many of the traits of the 'True Believers' yet I was never close to being an embodiment of either field.<sup>63</sup> In Homans' (1974) typology, I was classed myself as a 'Sceptical Conformer' in that I understood and respected the traditions of each field but did not play an active part in reproducing the norms and values. Primarily, I did not share the all-important 'bloodline' of the village which was integral to the ascription of the hegemonic masculinity of both fields. My dispositions were not shared by the collective *habitus* performed in both domains. I did not possess a shared history, occupation, or the necessary axis of capital to find myself participating in the prescribed masculinity required by these

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<sup>62</sup> The age profile of these men was between 24-55.

<sup>63</sup> See Chapter Five.

fields. Nor did I operate on the periphery of the group. My ten years of exposure in these domains led me to comport certain traits which has culminated in my confidence in walking alone into The Goth and standing at the bar alongside regulars. This symbolic act of masculinity is something that I eventually felt able to do through regular attendance and doing my best to blend in with the fabric of the field. Those ‘True Believers’, who lay towards the assimilation end of the spectrum, knew I was not like them but neither was I a complete outsider. They perceived me as a peculiar lanky fellow who asked questions about the mining strikes and soup kitchens who has yet to get a proper job. I made the effort to fit in to the best of my ability but lacked the necessary cultural, social and symbolic capital that the ‘True Believers’ so earnestly purported.

Nostalgia is used, reproduced and embodied in order to remind all categories of men in each field the expectations that membership ought to inscribe. The importance of possessing the necessary *habitus* performed by the ‘True Believers’ is internalised by the other sections of men interacting in each field. This is important to note for the wider community of Fallin as these sites carry a social and symbolic weight among the wider community. This means that they forge a reputation of being insular, wary of change and arguably rooted in a mode of life which is being challenged in many households in Fallin. As mentioned in Chapter Five, the isolated nature of the village of Fallin and the importance of each site in the development of the village, lends weight to the possibility of these identities affecting the wider community of Fallin.

The shared dispositions of the ‘True Believers’ are strongly associated with the mining way of life that was embodied and reproduced throughout much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The masculinity associated with this way of life marginalises some men who do not share, or perhaps were not exposed to this way of life in the community of Fallin. Crucially, the embodiment of normative values and expectations of behaviour in these fields are still

understood to be reflective of their past which was rooted in male employment with fixed gender roles (Connerton, 1980). Attention shall now turn to exploring how these groups of men understand community. It will be argued that they performed a version of community that placed a great degree of emphasis on remembering a version of community forged out of the mining legacy.

### **7.3 ‘Community means the world to me’**

Community is a concept which, like democracy and freedom, is often assumed to be universally seen to be a positive thing (Amit and Rapport, 2002; Bauman, 2000; Delanty, 2003: 118). Yet, these terms are often culturally and historically specific and if one is to try and define it, primacy ought to be given to those people who construct and live within it (Frazer, 1999). The community of Fallin was primarily discussed in relation to the past when men and women had clearly demarcated gender-roles and the blend of mechanical and organic solidarity ensured a healthy, vibrant community (Cohen, 1985). Nostalgia is evident in the following quotation which was mentioned by almost every participant across Homan’s (1974) typology, celebrating the lack of crime and vandalism, the togetherness of individuals and the public celebration of community through gala days and the like:

That was a good time (miners’ strike of 1984-5), it was everybody came together. Everybody came together then, everybody was fighting for each other because they knew... they knew they were fighting for their livelihood and they were actually fighting for the village, because it’s proved since that the village is dead compared to then. And I mean, the children’s gala days and things like that, they're away... When we were young we had nothing, you know, I had three weans and had nothing. I worked at the pit, I used to work seven days a week – I was the lucky one that could work seven days a week, things like that; but you always wanted your weans to have

more than what you had. You tried, but you worked together, you never stole or robbed somebody or hit an auld biddy across the head and stole her purse for money or something like that, but you worked for they things. In the village there was hardly any vandalism and hardly any crime when the pit was open. (Miner, 68).

The lifeblood of the village was under threat during the 1984-85 miners' strike. This galvanised the spirit of the community and led to many men and women taking steps to actively protect the community's industry (Phillips, 2010). For many men in this study, community entailed possessing a normative family unit with clearly demarcated gender roles alongside the public affirmation of the community that was expressed in the local institutions and community gatherings. Work was the glue that kept this mode of life viable for many individuals during much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Mair, 2010; Wight, 1993). This was not exotic nor confined to the narratives of those men from Fallin. Jones (2011: 185) speaks of the forgotten communities following de-industrialisation that led to many individuals losing a sense of community and a generation that was lost to the poverty and worklessness this entailed:

Mrs Parry is a woman battered by events that were outside her control. I met her in the centre of Ashington, a 27,000-strong community about seventeen miles north of Newcastle. It was the world's biggest mining village until the local pit closed in 1986, just a year after the defeat of the Miners' Strike. Thousands were thrown out of work; the community has never recovered. When I asked Mrs Parry what impact the pit's closure had on the community, she interrupted me before I had even finished the question. 'We died!' she responded with a combination of grief and conviction. 'Once all the mines closed, all the community had gone. It's just been a big depression ever

since, just struggling to survive, that's all.' Both her father and her then-husband were miners. They split up the year he lost his job. 'We owed not just our livelihoods, but our lives to the pits as well. My dad retired, and then he died. My marriage broke up. (Jones, 2011: 185).

It is perhaps natural that many of the older men in this study would look back to document their community and what it means to them as they felt that their community crumbled in 1987, the year the local colliery was abandoned. Crucially, the younger men also spoke of this time as being a catalyst for change in the community. They recited the tales that they had been told by their kin like how a minister would recite verses from the Bible. It was impressed upon me that the past meant a great deal to them and how the mining heritage will remain an integral part of the modern day community. Indeed, the remnants of the community are protected by local institutions, such as the Bowling Club, The Goth and the Miners' Welfare Club and by individuals who regularly affirm this way of life in their *doxa*, *hexes*, *habitus* and tastes (Bourdieu, 1984). Many of the men viewed how their own lives and identities were intimately related to the socio-economic heartbeat of their community: the colliery (Wight, 1993). This chapter shall now explore the importance that the mining industry plays in belonging to, and remembering, community.

Mining has never statistically played a large part in the economy of the United Kingdom even at its peak around the 1920s it only employed around 6% of the workforce (Vision of Britain, 2009). Symbolically, mining has occupied a much larger part of the national working-class consciousness throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the plight of the miners in the 1980s reflected the conflict between neo-liberal politics and solidarity (Crow, 2002; Stewart, 2009). Mining communities, where the collieries and other heavy industries like shipbuilding and steelworks were situated, employed a significant proportion of the male

workforce. Travelling down the ladder of abstraction away from national trends towards the local community (Sartori, 1970), changes of this scale were so significant that they still reverberate twenty-five years on. The actual levels were much higher than the local or national average would suggest and subsequently were greatly susceptible to the forces of production (Charlesworth, 2000; Jones, 2011; Mair, 2010; McCormick, 1987; Roberts, 1993). The local commentaries on Fallin (Kerr, 1991; Mair, 2010; McCormack, 1987; Phillips, 2010; Stead, 1987) all highlight how the loss of the mining industry from the village left so many sectors of the community with feelings of redundancy, worklessness and hopelessness (Dicks, 2005). The following quotation from a man in the 'Freeloaders' category encapsulates the importance of the colliery to the health of the community and the subsequent demise since its abandonment which was reflected by almost every participant during the interview process:

The community's changed 100% (since the pit closed). I used to know every kid... because I worked with the Alpha (community centre), I knew every kid and because I stayed in the village I knew nine out of ten folk in the village, so you could walk away and leave your door open and you knew it would be ok as folk looked out for themselves. When the pit shut folk started moving out and other folk were coming in, so don't know them, don't know them... but that's what Fallin is now. I could go along that street and am like 'who's that?' Janet will sit in the house and there's folk going up to nursery and go 'who's that?' (Electrician, 55).

To suggest that a community has 'changed 100%' is perhaps over-stating the extent of change and reflects the paradox of wanting continuity when being affected by social change. Bauman's (2000: 4) oppositional view of community, namely that the security afforded by

being a part of a community and the individual's desire for freedom are binary opposites, is once again reflected in the narratives of many of the men in this study. They seek a return to a more familiar version of community yet contemporary society has rendered this as a pointless nostalgic exercise with the innocent outsider being symbolised as a sign of the destruction of traditional communities. The closure of the colliery opened up the village to outsiders. Many 'True Believers' and 'Freeloaders' of the community now feel like their community is an *anomic* landscape and like Blokland's (2005) study, the natives sought to castigate incomers for the current social ills that they encounter. Bauman's (2000) analysis seems to hold weight in Fallin and the catalyst for this shift in social relations stem back to the closure of the mine:

In the past, wi the pits you kent everyone in the village. You kent the young yins. Noo a hardly ken a young yin in the village... am 70 year old noo an, I believe naebody would dae anything to me but the younger yins are mare into, whether it be drugs or whit, near enough every weekend at the tap of the road they are battling. (Former Miner, 70).

This is reminiscent of Pearson's (1983) argument that a perceived fear of young people has a long history throughout every generation and that society must be aware of the 'false memories of a golden era, usually twenty years earlier, when people knew their place, when society was safe and respectable people could walk the streets' (Berry, 2008: 830). The romanticised nostalgia that characterised Kerr's (1991) account of Fallin throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century is strongly reinforced by the 'True Believers' and 'Freeloaders' of this study. They spoke of respect of neighbours, amazing gestures of altruism in times of economic hardship and school-teachers that were hard, but fair and acted as an extension of discipline in the classroom. This version of community was viewed with nostalgia by many in the community



and the ideal-type relational construct that the modern day community of Fallin was compared against. One is reminded of Tönnies and Durkheim's concepts of 'Gemeinschaft' and 'mechanical solidarity' which placed primacy on the shared value system of individuals who belonged to a particular community. Such a community may be viewed by some academics and readers as stuffy, stifling and intrusive (Bauman, 2000) but for the men in this study it was a mode of life that acted as the reference point upon which people in Fallin should work towards (Connell, 1994).

Community was not confined to merely living within the locale for the men in this study, it was an organic entity that needed to be renewed and maintained. In Durkhiemian terms, these local institutions exist *sui generis* and which embody individuals who are exposed to them (Timasheff, 1967). Such a version of community transcended typological categorisations of men as Fallin was understood to be a close-knit community with local customs that precluded some men from being a part of it:

It (The Goth) is...strange. Still strange. You walk in and, am not a person that lives and dies by beliefs, but straight away you look up on the walls...things you see and hear...it is just a community pub. Working-class pub. But it is difficult to fit in. It is not a place I tend to socialise in just because it feels...what is the word...awkward. (Accountant, 36).

This example of a 'Sceptical Conformer', which was reflected by all in this category and a handful of men in the 'Freeloader' category, suggests that he is not socially predisposed to gain a natural acceptance into the clique due to his different set of dispositions and lack of exposure to the prescribed capital rewarded by the natives. The working-class Goth is problematic for this individual as he cannot, nor seems to want to, prove himself to the

regulars in order for him to feel comfortable in this setting. He continues to make efforts in both realms, yet knows that his presence is often a socially awkward moment for both himself and the group. He plays for the love of the game and his affinity with the field of the Bowling Club. It seems that contrary to the hegemonic view of the natives, those coming into their clique do not necessarily embody the *habitus* on display in either field. He sees The Goth as a microcosm of the community and what it stands for. Tellingly, this person relates his version of The Goth in the present despite his awareness of the importance of the past in constructing the values of this local institution. He was not exposed to their past so does not feel the need to relate his experiences towards the past. This is contrasted with how a 'True Believer' articulates the change in community suggesting that it is not solely down to the incomers diluting the hegemonic mode of life:

The interchange wi the neighbours is no the same as it used to be. Where yer mother could go to the shop for a loaf o bread or a pint a milk and you could leave yer door open...but in the age we are living in noo, ye just cannae leave yer door open. Ye have to lock the door when ye leave for the shop, lock it when ye come back. It's changing times... although a don't think ye can pin it aww doon to the folk coming into the village. A think it is a culture moving on fae when people were allowed to buy yer hooses, which is something am no against, but it changed people's outlook, changed their way of thinking and lots of times it chainged their political views as well. (Former Miner, 73).

The social legacy handed down by Thatcherite policies of the 1980s had a significant impact on the community of Fallin. Enabling individuals to take ownership of community housing stock was said by this man to be a symbol of the move away from community as they

understood it towards a locale for people to live in. As Phillips (2010) mentioned when speaking of Fallin during the mining-strike, the inhabitants felt their housing stock, colliery jobs and community services were under the collective ownership of those belonging to Fallin. Such socialist principles came under threat from outside structures, like social policy and de-industrialisation, which undermined the collective conscience that was forged by generations of inhabitants (Jones, 2011; Thompson, 1963). Remembering community from this period in history is thus an expedient practice for many of the men in this study as they felt they had more of a stake in their community than in contemporary times. It seems Thatcher's legacy to the community of Fallin was not only to erode the close links between work and community but also sever the co-operative nature of living and socialising in the community. The changes in housing tenure were also seen by other men as symbolic of a shift in how community relations were structured. People living in the community of Fallin no longer had the disposable income to frequent in the local pubs and Bowling Club which reduced the public visibility of individuals living in their midst.

Viewing community as a social construct, as well as a lived reality, we are able to understand the importance of the past in acting as a stable reference point for many of the men. The communal value of community still carries importance for these men. They yearn for social space that offers an opportunity to recreate their familiar community of closeness characterised by a claustrophobic wariness of outsiders. The Bowling Club and The Goth are fields which facilitate this nostalgic journey where they can relax and reflect (Bauman, 2000: 1). The following chapter shall explore each field further and specifically the shades of capital that are rewarded. Issues around masculinity, social class and religious identity will be used as examples of social divisions that still demarcate the 'True Believers' from other men (Homans, 1971).

#### **7.4 The Power of the Fields**

In applying Bourdieu's sociology to the fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth, it is important to compare both fields with each other and the wider community in order to understand the forces exerted upon individuals in each setting (Bourdieu, 1983). This section shall draw upon the work of Bourdieu and Homans (1974) in explaining the kind of power exercised within each field, its hierarchies and who exercised power and for what purpose. Homans (1974) suggests that cooperation and participation within a community requires different levels of commitment and attachment for it to be successful. Conflict, thus, galvanises communities to constantly assert and define membership. Bourdieu, in his work on the field of power, also suggests that social spaces, from artistic to economic fields, have social agents who are dominant in each field and thus shape how the field is reproduced (Thomson, 2008: 70-71). Bourdieu (1988) also believed that fields could be understood as being made up of opposing forces whereby cultural and economic capital operated as 'hierarchical poles in a social field' (Thomson, 2008: 71). Crucially for this thesis, the conflict, hierarchies and types of power exerted operate on the boundaries of the field where the economic, symbolic and social capital of agents bring into question the values of the field. This is the case with the Bowling Club and The Goth. There is no doubt that The Goth's committee holds a considerable amount of power in each field and they are populated by what I would class as 'True Believers'.

Well the Goth is, apart fae the pit and family, a big part of my life. As a customer, and leading onto the aforementioned stuff about my role in the pub, I have given it some 50 year of my life and I have saw a lot of changes. The older men in they days, had a different attitude about the pub to what you have now. The old men had their own traditional ways of living and when a came in they 4 men always meet on a Monday,

and that has never ever changed, where the wrote oot cheques etc., and they 4 men sat in here and that has never ever changed and they had 4 pints of beer. One would go, then the other until they all stood their round. And after the old regime went away, younger yins who then ran the pub finished what we were daeing in here then went intae the body of the Kirk and sat had a pint wi the customer – no drink wi them, but within them. So that was a big change ken? (Miner, 72 True Believer).

The fact that this former licensee maintained a degree of distance from the customer is important. It suggests that there was a hierarchy within The Goth which, although it was modified in more recent years, still had certain types of miners and kin differentiating themselves. To an outsider walking into The Goth, it would appear to be likeminded men sharing drink with comrades. Yet, both parties within the field knew there was still a hierarchy which needed to be respected. The men who ran The Goth, according to Mair (2010), were usually locally respected councillors, mining stewards, Trade Union members or even colliery managers. According to this ‘True Believer’, power was exercised symbolically and the purpose of it was to ensure social distance was minimised, yet never fully diminished. This degree of subtle power was felt by many in the Bowling Club and those who I categorised as belonging to the ‘Freeloader’ category of men. The following quotation captures this sentiment which also introduces the subservient relationship of the Bowling Club in relation to The Goth:

Respondent: ‘...we all went through the back of The Goth because we felt embarrassed sitting in the bar with women, because it wasn’t a women’s bar. Through the back that bar wasn’t the way it was the now, it was red tables and it was alright. But they (The Goth)got their act together a wee bit, gutting the place and done it as it

is just now and I think the bar's quite women friendly now, it's quite a good bar. I still think there's a lot of things they could do with it, you know, they're backward in their thinking, you know...'

Interviewer: 'Why do you think that is?'

Respondent: 'It is aww to do with the committee. Those boys in the committee are sitting there and they're not interested. I mean, one of the boys back in the day, mentioned it was to do with the bowling green, the state of it was a damned disgrace, the state of the bowling green here, he said "I'd build two damn houses there" I said to him "what's that going to achieve for the village and The Goth?" he said "well we've not even £30,000" I said "aye, and that'll be away in a year" I said "what else are you needing, it's what you get after you've bought that two houses, maybe somebody in for a pint?"' (Electrician, 50, Freeloader).

This quotation is important as it provides an insight into how those who exert power in The Goth have been viewed by those on the boundaries. It also illustrates that the Bowling Club has been viewed as a drain on resources and how they bring in relatively little in terms of bar turnover. The tensions between each field have been mentioned in Chapter Five but this quotation illustrates how those on the boundaries can have a positive influence in terms of modernising and thinking more about the wellbeing of the village. Here we see the dynamism within fields whereby individuals are not static on the fringes of the field. Both quotations mentioned so far indicate that power is exercised by the committee men in The Goth. Yet, The Goth also has considerable reach in the wider community of Fallin and balances the prestige and power of the committee with the altruistic roots of the local institution. The following quotation from a 'True Believer' captures the broad view of all the men in this study regarding the symbolic importance of The Goth in the wider community of Fallin:

Respondent: ‘Aye, the Goth is Fallin Public House Society and is basically a non-profit making pub. They do make profits to pay for wages, bills and that kind of thing. There is a 6 monthly meeting with the 32 shareholders with folk sending in letters asking for money, Fitba team, darts team, bowlers, disabled kids basically anything and it’ll get raised at the meeting. And we decide how much money we will give to them which I think is a really really good thing. Like last night ma Auntie was round and she was telling me about her toddler group that she goes to and how they are really struggling and lassies raising money for this...a said there is a meeting at the end of the month at The Goth and you might get £50 or a £100 but it is something and a lot of folk in the village dinnae ken what The Goth is. They think it is just a pub. Probably think that someone owns The Goth.

Interviewer: ‘Definitely, do you know how much money the Goth gives out each year?’

Respondent: ‘It will be in the books...but I would say every 6 months I would say about a thousand pounds anyways. Depends as Darts get a lump sum every year as they spend a lot o’ money they boys. The bowlers get the sponsorship, ken aww that comes into it and I would say on average it could be £2000 a year which is going into the village, it’s no going anywhere else’. (Fireman, 32, True Believer).

In the 100 years since its inception, the principles of ‘bevvy for benefits’ remain steadfast in the operation of The Goth. What is fundamental in relation to this section is that the community has to ask The Goth’s guardians for donations to help in their various causes. It may also help explain my belief that The Goth holds considerable symbolic power within the community because it has always been a source of altruism when times were tough. This was

typified during the miners' strike in the early 1980s where The Goth, and the Bowling Club to a lesser degree, acted as a focal point for fundraising activities (Kerr, 1991; Mair, 2010). The men, and it has always been men, who hold positions of seniority in The Goth are known locally as being trustworthy and honest. So, it is possible to argue, that their parameters of power extend beyond the confines of the public house and can be seen in the wider community of Fallin. They are, in effect, local gatekeepers.

In relation to applying the typology of Homans (1974) and assessing the analytical usefulness in the fields of this study, I believe by exploring the different power parameters in the village, we start to see the heterogeneity of individuals within a relatively static community. To the outsider coming into Fallin, they may see a collection of men drinking, bowling and providing the community with altruistic donations. Through spending a great deal of time with the men in the fields and by using Homans (1974) typology, I have explored the hierarchies within the group and who held the power. The 'True Believers' perhaps unsurprisingly hold the symbolic power but acknowledge their obligation of other patrons, members and the wider community who ensure these local institutions continue to preserve a version of community which is associated with the past. This is crucially acknowledged by other groups which operate within the field of power and provides support for this thesis to use Homans (1974) and Bourdieu (1988) as analytical tools. The following quotation from a 'Sceptical Conformer' captures this succinctly for all the men in this category when referring to the Bowling Club, illustrating reluctance to adhere to it whilst continuing to enjoy the benefits of membership:

I just don't buy into the clique. I play for the Club because we are a good team, we win and got a lot of good memories playing bools for the Club. I have actively



avoided taking committee positions as affects ma bools and, honestly, they just dae ma heid in. (Surveyor, 28, Sceptical Conformer).

This quotation also highlights the expedient reasons of belonging to a community. It reflects what Bauman (2000) and Castells (2000) suggest that people seek to create biographies of choice and are freer to pursue, refuse and tolerate facets of community based on a risk and reward rationale. This was of particular interest, as prior to embarking on the interviews I had envisioned that members omitted themselves from heavy drinking and taking on committee positions because of outside forces like work or family commitments. Rather, individuals actively exercised their own degree of power by operating within a field but often on the margins, liable at any time to leave if the effects of continued membership impacted on their enjoyment. In other words, they could take it or leave it. This was not an option for the other eighteen men who were not classed as 'Freeloaders'. They were so entrenched in the fields, community and rooted in a shared history that they continued to persevere and try to make things work.

## **7.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has argued that the fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth are key sites which encourage belonging and the reproduction of a version of community which once permeated all spheres of life in Fallin. For the 'True Believers', these sites act as important local institutions to protect, and encourage younger men to continue traditions associated with the mining mode of life long after the industry was abandoned in the locale of Fallin. Through using unstructured interviews which were supplemented with participant observation, demographic and archival information, I believe that the data presented in this chapter reflects a version of community which, as Bauman (2000) suggests, is regrettably no longer available to many of us. The importance of kin, belonging, religious and gender identities

continue to segregate many men from membership. Such men are worthy of study as they continue to drink or play bowls in the locale for personal reasons. They tolerate the social awkwardness, the symbolic violence and feelings of otherness because these fields do allow men to belong to something bigger than themselves. Whether it be playing bowls to win at a national level or to have a drink by yourself and forgoing expected customs, membership still provides men with a means of belonging.

## **Chapter 8: Conclusion**

### **8.1 Introduction**

In 2007, when I first contemplated doing this research project I had with me a curiosity about the lives of the men who I knew, socialised with and in the words of one participant ‘got drunk together and fell doon aff pavements and into hedges together’. This thesis explored experiences and understandings of community within post-industrial spaces in Fallin, of which there are many still in Scotland’s Central Belt. This was achieved through exploring twenty-four men’s version of community through employing a primarily ethnographic methodology which utilised unstructured interviews, participant observation and demographic data. The conclusions from the data have surprised me. There have also been some things which I would have done differently and there are also some limitations of the data and this study. Overall, this thesis uses my unique position as an insider to provide rich, humorous and unusual data of a collection of men who represent a section of society who are seldom the focus of social research. The overall position of this data questions the assumptions made by postmodern sociology which implies that traditional constructions of community are no longer important.

### **8.2 The Findings**

In relation to the research question of identifying how men understand, create and maintain community and belonging this study draws three clear conclusions. Firstly, it has been argued throughout that the industrial past of the village acts as a stable reference point for the men in this study to position their current identities and discourses. Belonging to, and inculcating the shared *habitus* of two key local institutions, The Goth and the Bowling Club, is arguably the most important factor for being a part of the community. The men in this study used these two sites as gateways into a social space which rewarded a set of dispositions strongly

associated with their past industrial mode of life. Regrettably, for many of the men in this study, these local fields were becoming more marginal for many inhabitants of the wider village of Fallin because, in the words of one participant, ‘people were being parachuted into the village’. The community of Fallin was losing its identity and The Goth and Bowling Club acted as sanctuaries for the men to drink, reflect on the past and perform identities which allowed them to continue to belong to a version of community which was becoming harder to define in real life (Hobsbawm, 1994).

Sharing a bloodline is a necessary requirement for acceptance by the ‘True Believers’ and many of the men articulated how important shared kinship was in understanding social relations in the wider village. The opening up of social housing, and the expansion of private home-owners in the village, brought in outsiders and many men viewed this as having a negative impact on the wellbeing and continuity of the community. Accounts from the men suggested that this was a key factor in the fracturing of a mode of life which characterised Fallin for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Kerr, 1991). Strangers were sharing their social space and, for an insular community like Fallin, this led to flux and social change which this thesis has documented through their narratives, observations and archival analysis. Crucially for eighteen men in this study, the Bowling Club and The Goth acted as social settings that enabled this version of community to be actively maintained.

Secondly, through utilising the theoretical concepts of Homans (1974), this study also suggests that the ‘Sceptical Conformers’ galvanise the fields of The Goth and Bowling Club and prompt the ‘True Believers’ to reproduce a version of community. The heterogeneity of all the men in these fields ensured that their community, identities and remembered history were regularly reinforced to protect the industrial mode of life which was synonymous with belonging to Fallin. This was uncomfortable for some men in this study who never shared the bloodline or working-class values which characterised belonging to the Bowling Club and

The Goth. Documenting the journey of the ‘Sceptical Conformers’, and their reasons for partial membership of the community, is something which this study did not anticipate prior to undertaking the research. These men were very important to the vibrancy of the community yet all six of the ‘Sceptical Conformers’ did not subscribe to the core values of it. It has also been argued that the younger men often bought into this shared *habitus* and learned how to be a man through regular interactions in The Goth and the Bowling Club. The ‘True Believers’ acted as the paternal role models on how younger men ought to live their lives. This resulted in some of the younger men adopting the normative behaviours and values surrounding their views on issues such as on gender roles and religious identity. In many ways, this study rejects the notion presented by Hobsbawn (1994) that younger generations of men and women have a cultural amnesia whereby their histories are often forgotten: ‘Most young men and women at the century’s end grew up in a sort of permanent present lacking any organic relation to the public past of the times they live in’ (Hobsbawn, 1994: 3).

It has been suggested that all the men in this study embark on what Connerton (2009:4) calls ‘place memory’ whereby the order of the past community will ‘preserve the order of the things that have to be remembered’. The ‘True Believers’ are presented as the key cultural carriers of this sense of community and remind the ‘Freeloaders’ and the ‘Sceptical Conformers’ of what the community stands for and how each local institution can help protect, nourish and reproduce it. It is possible that this version of community is paralleled in other communities throughout other post-industrial social spaces in Scotland. For example, Day (2006: 28) observes that where major social change occurs within a locale, the gatekeepers of the community tend to interpret events ‘as posing a threat to the community’s integrity and viability’. It is therefore important to continue to understand more about symbolically significant people in our communities as they often can shape how the

next generation of people understand their community and place. Although there were only six ‘True Believers’, their influence was extremely powerful on how their community was maintained and passed down through the generations of men in each field. The ‘True Believers’ values acted as a barometer for other men to gauge how they fitted in this social space. This was understood through the interviews with the ‘Freeloaders’ and ‘Sceptical Conformers’ who spoke of the ‘True Believers’ like they were an extension of the Bowling Club and The Goth. The symbolic and cultural capital of the ‘True Believers’, derived from their prominent role in the mining tradition, continued to hold a disproportionate level of influence in shaping the culture of the fields and potentially the wider community of Fallin. They were one and the same thing through their *habitus* which embodied each field.

Thirdly, this thesis has suggested that imagined histories were recollected, recreated and reinforced through the power of storytelling and sharing experiences to the younger generations or outsiders (Blenkinsopp, 2012; Homans, 1974). Cohen (1997:39) refers to this as the ‘community romance’ which is the process whereby tales are used to remind all men about the halcyon days of their version of community. Here, the golden era for the community spanned the time that the local collieries produced coal. The research sites of the Bowling Club and The Goth were important local institutions which provided the ‘True Believers’ with a stage to perform well-versed tales to the ‘Freeloaders’. Belonging to this version of community required men to value a long lost industrial mode of life characterised with full male-employment, the subservience of women in the public sphere, a Protestant religious identity and a clear appreciation of the importance of their role in that industrial history. For those men in this study who did not adhere to these values, their membership was partial, transient and often a source of unease for both them and the ‘True Believers’. The symbolic importance of the mining industry, the isolated geographical location of the village and the fields has helped to perpetuate a version of community which has outlasted the

industry which forged it. This study has suggested that all categories of men have played a key role in ensuring that this version of community remains a powerful reference point for men in this social space.

This thesis has the potential to add a great deal to the wider community studies literature. One of its main strengths has been the applicability of Bourdieu's sociological approach with the theoretical framework of Homans (1974). The social closeness which I had with the men provides an intimate account of a version of community that can provide future researchers interested in such post-industrial communities with a further case study to reflect upon. Of particular interest for the community studies literature is how difference and challenges to the collective *habitus* of the community are needed to reinvigorate the 'True Believers' into protecting a version of community that is associated with the past (Homans, 1974). Community was not confined to living within the locale for the men in this study, it was an organic entity that needed to be renewed and maintained. For the 'True Believers' this was achieved through regular attendance and storytelling; 'Freeloaders' provided an empathetic audience to the values of their community and the 'Sceptical Confirmers' played a symbolic role of galvanising community through their deference to aspects of it. The importance of possessing the necessary *habitus* performed by the 'True Believers' is internalised by the other sections of men interacting within each field. This is important to note for the wider community of Fallin as the Bowling Club and The Goth carry a social and symbolic weight among the wider community.

Politicians and academics have taken a greater interest in post-industrial communities like Fallin in recent years in order to gain a deeper understanding of why they are often hot spots for social deprivation (Jones, 2011). For example, the depth of this study goes beyond demographic data which paints Fallin as a community with high levels of social deprivation and inequality. The fierce pride of many of the men's accounts about their community

reflects Cohen's (1985) idea that the further down the scale and scope of community towards the local, the more affinity individuals have with their community and key local institutions within its borders. In an increasingly interconnected world, men from across the age range, expressed a desire to hold onto the mode of life that was 'drummed into them' from an early age (Sallaz & Zavisca, 2004). It is a paradox of understanding the concept of community that people often seek to protect it when the identities and mode of life that it prescribes is losing its importance in wider society (Blokland, 2005). The men here all understood the *habitus* of the fields yet also indicated how social changes, such as housing policy, the collapse of local industry and gender roles, were transforming the wider community which they inhabit. This thesis suggests that the men, particularly the 'True Believers' and the 'Freeloaders', actively try to remember and understand a place which has gone (Connerton, 2009). They promote their version of community in their places of symbolic and cultural power, namely, the Bowling Club and The Goth.

This project's findings have offered the wider community studies literature with another case study which illustrates the importance of understanding how the past shapes the present and future (Roberston *et al.*, 2008). The prolonged time in the field and social closeness to participants allowed for a significant depth of research and understanding, and is presented as a key strength of this thesis. It is possible to suggest that there are other similar places and communities across Scotland in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The study by Rogaly and Taylor (2009) states that communities are constantly changing structures and this episodic picture of this version of community in Fallin can possibly provide future researchers with a contextual study to reflect upon, in the way Wight's (1993) study aided this project. Indeed, recent studies by Blenkinsop (2012), Blokland (2005), Savage *et al.* (2005) and Robertson *et al.* (2008) have all highlighted the importance of researching individual and collective identities in locale and how they evolve over time. The working-class are not a static or homogenous



group. They differ between nations, regions, counties and religious identities to name some variables (Cohen, 1985). It is hoped that this thesis has contributed towards the recent academic literature on post-industrial communities by exploring how local institutions can tell us a great deal about the past, present and future trajectories of individuals who frequent them. This study helps explain how the symbolic power of the past is employed by individuals in social spaces in order to understand the places in which they inhabit today (Connerton, 2009).

### **8.3 Considering Methodology**

Community studies researchers have utilised various methods and methodologies in order to present detailed accounts of community. The opportunity to undertake an ethnographic study in a Bowling Club and local pub over an extended period of time has never been done. Originally, it was envisaged that this study would be a traditional community study, endeavouring to provide a holistic account of the broader community of Fallin. Yet, this objective was not pursued due to the richness of the interview data and the social proximity I had with these two local institutions. This decision was designed to mark off this project as different from other studies discussed in Chapter Two.

I was fortunate enough to be a member of each community and this provided me with good access to participants and with an empathetic understanding of their values and identities. This has been reflected in Chapters Six and Seven whereby the voices and meanings of the men have been presented in a strongly contextual manner. Due to my social proximity to these the men, I was ideally placed to present a version of their community because, to varying degrees throughout the project, I was a part of it. This is reflected in Bourdieu's (1999) belief that social researchers ought to investigate areas which they are culturally predisposed to so that they present informed sociological evidence.

This aspect of the project has also proven to be methodologically challenging in terms of ensuring that my voice does not silence the men's version of events. As mentioned in Chapter Four, leaving the country in 2011 enabled me to analyse the data in a more detached and objective manner as I was no longer socialising with the participants on a weekly basis. Bowling and drinking in The Goth became a thing of memory and the participants' narratives began to be removed from my lived experiences. This complete removal from the field enabled a more objective analytical approach which usurped my subjective inclinations based on my partial membership in each field. By sharing space with strangers, I gained a more complete picture of this version of community. Through using extended direct quotations, field notes and providing a history of the fields and Fallin, I have endeavoured to provide the reader with a more vivid account of the men's community and identities. For example, the language used by the men is presented as spoken and the field notes are designed to illustrate what their community is like. Another challenge of doing ethnographic research was the danger of going native and forgetting your role as a researcher. This was exemplified during Saturday drinking sessions in The Goth when it was easy to get caught up in the company instead of observing the company. My own relationship to the fields did however chart the malleability of belonging and sharing an affinity with a community. This is reminiscent of Wight's (1993) study where his relationship to those he was studying was close, yet was in a position to document the social function of drinking in a more objective manner. I believe that my social closeness during the data gathering phase and distance during the analysis and writing up stage have been positive aspects of the project. The blurring of subjectivity and objectivity, so that they are needlessly prescribed paradigms, is in keeping with Bourdieu's (1988) template for social inquiry.

This study chose to interview, and research, men due to the domination that this gender continues to hold in each field. Men played a prominent public part in the

development of the village, the fields of the research and through their paid employment. This should not be read as an omission of women from the history of Fallin. Rather, I wanted to present the reader with an in-depth account of how community and belonging are understood in two local institutions which were closely associated with men and the development of the community's *habitus*. This provided a different take on the community studies paradigm and other empirical examples which have attempted to gain a more complete version of how communities are constructed by interviewing, and observing, both genders. This thesis has concluded that men continue to expect clearly demarcated gender roles that were associated with a male-breadwinner industrial landscape despite this set of arrangements having long since disappeared from the realities of most men discussed here. This version of community which has been presented illustrates that the public spaces of the Bowling Club and The Goth are still the domain of men. More research ought to be conducted in communities like Fallin in order to assess whether this mode of life continues when the economic and social realities are rendering it as an anomaly.

This thesis has argued that employing an ethnographic methodology has allowed for an in-depth account of the narratives and identities of the men. The variety of methods used to gather information, over an extended period of time, has provided a rounded account of two local institutions and the men who help reproduce them. The following quotation captures how it is important for researchers to understand each community as a separate entity:

Separated from one another...villages could be represented as comparatively isolated and self-contained, each with its own customs and traditions, able to attract local loyalties and create a clear sense of identity, place and order, that could be recognised and accepted almost as natural and unchanging facts of life. (Newby, 1987: 79).

This study has endeavoured to provide the reader with an account of Fallin's community through in-depth scrutiny of two local institutions and the men who populate their space. The specificity of their version of community fostered a clear sense of identity which assumed that all men in their social space ought to embrace (Newby, 1987). Yet, many of the men here did not actively embrace this version of community as an unchanging fact of life and often tolerated local customs so that they could play bowls with a successful club or enjoy social drinking. I believe that the methods used in this study have facilitated a truer understanding of a community through exposing the social relations and conflict between groups of men in the Bowling Club and The Goth.

#### **8.4 Limitations of the study**

In order to develop this thesis, I believe that more attention could have been given to the wider community of Fallin in order to contextualise much of the findings. For example, the conceptual apparatus of Homans (1974) has been a very useful typology to explain how the men helped maintain, reproduce and understand their version of community in the self-contained social spaces of The Goth and Bowling Club. It would be interesting to apply this to the wider community and ascertain the level of support that the 'True Believers' understanding of community and belonging holds out with the sanctuaries of the Bowling Club and The Goth. This would help to further contextualise the findings of this project. It would also have the potential for informing policy-makers on housing and community regeneration solutions (Robertson *et al.*, 2008).

Another limitation is the lack of women's voices throughout this thesis. It would be useful to interview women and many of the 'outsiders' who now reside in the village to achieve a more complete picture of how community is constructed and understood. Women have been central throughout the development of Fallin, but they have remained partial in

each of the institutions studied. It would have helped to have women in this study to add validity to whether the gender roles expressed by men were actually rooted in the private sphere and not merely a public expression of their hegemonic masculinity. This is an obvious limitation of the study which could be revisited by other researchers interested in gender roles in working-class communities. An area of strength, my social closeness to the men, could also be viewed as a possible limitation. The social proximity which I exhibited with these men aided empathy and understanding during the data collection and analysis stages of research. Yet, my biases and assumptions may have unknowingly skewed their accounts and to increase the validity of this thesis, future research in this community would be encouraged and a follow up study charting changing community relations would be a useful avenue to pursue. This is particularly the case, given that there has been a recent increase in community studies research (2005-2012) which have explored three or more communities in order to provide more contextual accounts of identities and community (Robertson *et al.*, 2008; Rogaly and Taylor, 2009; Savage *et al.*, 2005).

By using unstructured interviews, there is an obvious limitation that often some themes were explored in more depth than others and, to a degree, the research question was not always referred to as often in some interviews as others. This could have been better managed by myself by employing a more structured approach to the interviews or using surveys to identify attitudes to certain phenomena (Bryman, 2008). Yet, I made the judgement that moving away from a more conversational style of social enquiry would perhaps alienate my friends and would lead to me compartmentalising their lives, identities and community into boxes (Emond, 2000). Indeed, by using Homans' (1974) typology I did in fact pigeon-hole participants into three categories of belonging based on my analysis of their interviews, observations and prior knowledge. A greater degree of objectivity in all stages of the research process would have perhaps added greater insights into their behaviour.

However, I was comfortable that the richness of the data and the empathetic nature in which it was produced, led to an unusual account of local institutions within a working-class community.

A further methodological limitation of this study was how participant observation data was recorded, coded and checked against hypotheses. The analysis of this data was done through successive readings of transcripts and was coded manually. This form of sequential analysis was designed to add depth and allow for re-checking of themes throughout the fieldwork process (Becker, 1970). As data from participant observation are often free flowing and the analysis much more interpretive than in direct observation it lends itself to a critique of subjectivity (Coffey, 2006). Also, the omission of using qualitative data analysis software opens up the potential for whether the data were summarised in a comprehensive and consistent way. I believe that my analytical approach did provide a rich account of the participants and both fields even if they were perhaps partial and, at times, subjective. This is also a limitation of conducting research on colleagues and friends because prior knowledge perhaps clouds the essential scientific rigour at every stage of the research process (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014).

Finally, it is possible to argue that the use of Homans' (1974) typology could be classed as a limitation of the study. I placed a great deal of value on his work which was largely formulated in social experiments or in reference to organisational structures (Homans, 1974). Specifically, the reference to 'Hold Outs' and 'Escapees' were seldom used in this study as many of the men still played a part in the maintenance of each field. Yet, I believe that the typology does have significant benefits as it provides the reader with insights into the power dynamic between men in each setting. It is compatible with Bourdieu's (1990) and Wacquant's (2014) arguments that, within fields, there is a great deal of conflict, synergy and

sameness which is needed to bind groups together organically. It would be interesting for future researchers to critique this typology in other traditional working class communities.

## **8.5 Conclusion**

To conclude, the version of community presented here highlights how the men in this study have attached symbolic meaning to these two fields and use them as a repository of meaning and a focal point to their identity (Cohen, 1985: 118). In answering the research question, these men maintained a strong sense of belonging and community through storytelling and continuing to reproduce customs and behaviour associated with their industrial past.

Somewhat paradoxically, perceived threats from outsiders could have the effect of further galvanising the central values of their community (Cohen, 1985; Homans, 1974). These conclusions resonate with other community studies (Blenkinsop, 2012; Rogaly and Taylor, 2009) and can act as a useful contemporary case study for other researchers interested in working-class communities.

This study has scratched, probed and dug beneath the surface to present a complex, nuanced conception of community. The heterogeneity of community participation and identities would not have been so readily understood and articulated without using the approach adopted within this thesis. Immersion in the fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth brought into sharp focus the nuanced nature and subtle identity traits which are often part of the upholding, and maintaining, of community relations such as those studied in Fallin (Blenkinsop, 2012: 206; Newby, 1987). A quotation by Cohen (1985: 13) captures how important this gradation of understanding is for truly giving an informed account of a community:

The question became not simply, ‘Are the Scots different from the English?’, but, ‘How different am I, as a particular Scot, from him, another particular Scot?’. In other

words, is the boundary dividing Scotland from England more meaningful to the highlander than those which distinguish him from the lowlander, the Glaswegian from the Edinburghian; the Shetlander from the Orcadian; the inhabitants of one Shetland island from the members of another. As one goes 'down' the scale so the objective referents of the boundary become less clear, until they be quite invisible to those outside. But also as you go 'down' this scale, they become more important to their members for they relate to increasingly intimate areas of their lives or refer to more substantial areas of their identities. (Cohen, 1985: 13).

Like Cohen (1985), the further down I delved into the fields of the Bowling Club and The Goth, the more I realised how nuanced, and important, issues of belonging and community are in relation to the men in this study. At a time when the world is becoming more interconnected, community relations are arguably becoming more important as individuals seek to find security in, or withdraw into, familiar surroundings (Amit and Rapport, 2002; Bauman, 2000). This project reflects Castells' (1997: 61) suggestion that individuals are trying to find local solutions to global problems that have uprooted established industries and stable ways of living. This study presented the Bowling Club and The Goth as the sites whereby solace was afforded to the clientele through remembering their former industrial mode of life when the community reflected their *habitus* in a way that was more directly attuned to their immediate world and less dependent on nostalgia and narratives of remembering. In the future, I hope more research is conducted in communities such as Fallin and 'Cauldmoss' (Wight, 1993) to assess the lasting impact of such post-industrial communities across the Central Belt of Scotland.



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## Appendix One

