

Gender and locality studies: a review and agenda

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Introduction

The rise, and fall, of locality studies in the 1980s as an approach to understanding the spatial dimensions of economic, social and political processes represents an important discourse in contemporary human geography, particularly in Britain. Its importance lies partly in the torrent of empirical and theoretical work generated by the idea and practice of locality studies over this period; partly in the ready institutionalisation and legitimisation of this approach in policy-making and research funding circles in Britain, *in spite of* its 'radical' (Marxist-inspired) roots; and partly in its promise, however fleeting, to give spatiality a theoretical substance which would augment the status of geographical concerns in the wider social sciences.

These themes feature prominently in the reflective accounts of advocates and critics of locality studies alike (Cooke, 1987; Smith, 1987; Savage *et al.*, 1987; Duncan, 1989). The particular significance of locality studies which I want to explore in this paper is one which has received little of the limelight - their treatment of gender. Notwithstanding the many criticisms which can be levelled at the way in which gender has been treated in locality studies, the extent to which they have incorporated a 'gender dimension' still makes them remarkable as a body of predominantly nonfeminist geographical literature.

Locality studies might be taken to represent perhaps *the* prime example of what Sophie Bowlby and others have called 'a new orthodoxy' in geographical analysis in which some statement on the relevance of gender has come to be regarded as 'de rigeur' (1986: 327). For there would be more than a grain of truth in the suggestion that locality studies, like many other arenas of critical social science research, became caught up in cultural shifts which made 'genderawareness' a necessary professional accessory. But such an interpre-

tation is not the whole story, and does an injustice to the motives and achievements of many of those involved. At a time when the public autopsy of locality studies continues to occupy Geography journals (notably *Antipode*) and conference sessions (notably the IBG) it, therefore, seems appropriate to reflect on the way in which gender came to be taken up in this discourse, and the lessons to be drawn from it.

In the first section on the paper I outline the approach and aims of locality studies, focusing specifically on their treatment of gender. At the risk of greatly oversimplifying the range and complexity of research conducted within this broad framework I shall keep my discussion of their general themes and characteristics to a minimum, sufficient only to introduce this peculiarly British phenomenon to an audience perhaps less familiar, and less touched, by its intricacies. I then turn to discuss the contribution and shortcomings of recent critiques of the treatment of gender in locality studies by feminist geographers (Bowlby *et al.*, 1986; Foord *et al.*, 1986; Rose, 1989). In the final section of the paper my aim is to move beyond the contributions of feminist geography as critique, and to explore the ways in which developments in feminist theories of gender relations and identities might inform a reorientation of geographical theories of spatiality and advance the analysis of local socio-cultural, economic and political landscapes.

Locality studies

At one level the term 'locality', like restructuring, has become so loosely used as to have lost any precise analytical meaning. But from the more narrowly defined literature formally identified with 'locality studies' a somewhat clearer picture emerges¹. This literature is the product of three research programmes funded by Britain's Economic and Social Research Council; they are, the Changing Urban and Regional Systems programme (CURS); the Social and Economic Life programme (SCEL); and the Economic Restructuring, Social Change and Locality programme (known as the Sussex programme)². CURS is perhaps the best known of the three, showing a considerable shift in thinking about locality during the course of the programme (compare, for example, Cooke, 1986a and 1989b) and with one of the CURS research teams, the Lancaster Regionalism Group, developing a distinctive voice of its own (see Murgatroyd *et al.*, 1985; Bagguley *et al.*, 1990). The Sussex programme also has a substantial, if more diffuse, profile in print (see Barlow and Savage, 1987; Savage, 1987; Duncan *et al.*, 1988). It is this literature that I am primarily concerned with here.

The term locality has been interpreted differently in each programme (indeed there have been some lively exchanges between research teams see, for example, Duncan and Savage (1989) and Cooke (1989a) but, in practice, they share two common uses of the term. The first use is methodological, defining the area in which research is conducted and ostensibly following the lines prescribed by Newby to treat localities as 'laboratories for the investigation of particular theoretical and empirical issues (rather than as) objects of study to be investigated for their own sake' (1986: 214)³. The CURS methodology equates locality with 'local labour market' using official statistics on 'travel to work areas' to define what Cooke terms their *study localities* (1986b: 245). The seven localities studied under this programme were selected to represent different 'types' of labour market in terms of their broad industrial and class structures (see Cooke, 1986a and 1986b for

details). The six localities studied under the SCEL programme adopt the same methodology. The Sussex programme was also based on 'case study areas' (Savage *et al.*, 1987: 35) but relied on a wider range of criteria, particularly local government boundaries, to define and select the three regions and five towns/districts in which they conducted their research (see Savage *et al.*, 1987 for details). The location of all these study areas is shown in figure 1, which highlights the absence of any rural locality studies and the predominance of English towns amongst those selected⁴.

The second use of the term locality is theoretical, as shorthand for a wider set of arguments with a pivotal claim that "understanding the spatial organisation of society... is central to our understanding of the way in which social processes work out, possibly to our conceptualisation of some of those processes in the first place, and certainly to our ability to act on them politically" (Massey, 1985: 17). In this, locality studies can be said to have been inspired to a large degree by the pioneering work of Doreen Massey (1978, 1984). She depicts the competitive transformation of the global structure of industrial activities through the adoption of new technologies and labour practices as a process building on and, at the same time, creating particular spatial divisions of capital and labour. Her account of the economic restructuring process suggests that, on the one hand, 'the social and economic structure of any given local area will be a complex result of the combination of that area's succession of roles within a series of wider, national and international, divisions of labour' (1978: 116). On the other, the unique local matrices of social and economic relationships created by past episodes in the restructuring process are seen, in turn, to influence the particular way in which current and future episodes take place.

Locality studies have combined these methodological and theoretical usages of the term locality in various ways to provide a vehicle for "studying the relationship between economic and spatial restructuring... and particular forms of social action and cultural consciousness" (Newby, 1986: 214). But it is here that much of the confusion and difficulty at the heart of locality studies originates. These difficulties centre on tensions between the theoretical and methodological definitions of their object of analysis and between a simultaneous focus on economic and spatial restructuring as *supra-local* processes, and on local social (and political) action and consciousness.

I do not want to dwell on these tensions here for they are the meat of published debates about locality studies; debates shaped primarily by the crisis in Marxist geography and competing interpretations of the role of empirical investigation in social science (Gregson, 1987). Moreover, there is a remarkable sense of *deja vu* about some of these debates. For example, if we transpose locality and community in the following passage (originally published in 1940) we find a comment as pertinent to current debates in geography as in their original context. "The thing-in-itself, the community as object is imperfectly separated, in concept and in practice, from the use of it, as field or sample, where the community is that within which work is done, observations made (and) relationships traced out' (Arensberg and Kimball (2nd ed.), 1968: 8). Equally, while the slogan that 'space makes a difference' has been successfully popularised by locality studies, long-standing disagreements as to exactly what kind of difference it makes go on unabated. However, I shall return to these tensions in the final section of the paper because they are points which I think lie at the heart of some of the weaknesses of the way locality studies have tended to treat gender; weaknesses which existing feminist critiques have

largely failed to address but where feminist analysis offers some potentially valuable insights.

In practice, the primary focus of locality studies has been the process of economic restructuring and changes in the fabric of industry and employment in the local areas studied. However, their focus has extended to examine the relationship between this, economic, aspect of restructuring and the social, political and, to a much lesser extent, cultural dimensions of local change (Jackson, 1990). While gender has not been in any sense a central or systematic focus of any of these themes in locality studies, 'women' have had quite a high profile as an empirical 'feature' of the changing social and economic landscapes under analysis, and these about gender are necessarily implicit in many of these accounts (Walby and Bagguley, 1989: 277). Women have been written into locality studies in a number of ways, but by far the most important one has been in terms of the impact of economic restructuring on local labour markets and the changing composition of the waged workforce.

Women in the 'workplace'

The force of empirical trends in the labour market in Britain has been the starting point for most of the attention given to gender in locality studies. In particular, it is the spectacular rise in women's employment from 34% to 45% of the workforce between 1959 and 1986, against a steady decline in men's employment since 1965, which has proved impossible to ignore. In the face of these trends it is principally as *cheap* waged-labour that women have figured in locality studies; 'workers' typically characterised as 'low-skilled', part-time and un-unionised, and associated with the growing service and light industrial sectors of the corporate economy. This portrayal has become something of a 'misleading stereotype' (Sayer, 1985), established as much by repetition of the statistics as by detailed investigation of the gendered nature of industrial organisation. As Nigel Thrift recently remarked with respect to some key texts on 'post-modern' industrial geography, reading these accounts one could be forgiven for thinking that women's chief role in life was as low-cost labour (1990: 34).

However, by no means all locality studies are equally superficial in their analysis of the gender division of waged work. Massey and McDowell (1984) demonstrate an early commitment to working through these issues. They examine the varied articulation of capitalism and patriarchy, and its consequences for women's experience of waged work, in 19th century Britain in the very contrasting local economies of colliery villages and cotton mill towns in the North, the rag-trade in Hackney (London) and agriculture in Norfolk. But perhaps most notable has been the work by members of the Lancaster Regionalism Group. Where their collective publications (Murgatroyd *et al.*, 1985; Bagguley *et al.*, 1990) show a much greater sensitivity than most locality studies to the nature and significance of the gender recomposition of the labour market, Sylvia Walby in particular has attempted a fuller exploration of gender and restructuring centred on a theory of patriarchy (Walby, 1986; Bagguley and Walby, 1989).

To a much lesser extent women have entered the analytical frame of locality studies through attempts to connect changes in industry and waged-work ('production activities')

with the household and home, and with community politics ('reproduction activities') (Warde, 1988). The impetus for these forays into the relatively unknown territory (at least for economic geography) of home and community derived from various theoretical and political debates on the left in Britain. In several senses, the first of these was the Marxist-feminist 'domestic labour debate' in the 1970s concerned to make sense of women's unpaid 'domestic' work as 'housewives' largely in terms of the 'service' this provided to capitalist industry in reproducing a cheap supply of workers (Kaluzynska, 1980). A second originated in Manuel Castells' work on collective consumption, and the role of the capitalist state in providing 'welfare' goods and services (1978), but became more influential with the dramatic retrenchment of state welfarism during the Thatcher years and the consequent privatisation of many of these previously 'collective' activities (Pahl and Wallace, 1985). A third, and quite independent, impetus can be traced back to theories of deindustrialisation heralding 'the post-industrial' society, which began to suggest that the corporate/wage economy was being fragmented into a wider diversity/of livelihood strategies and forms of enterprise than had hitherto been imagined (Gershuny, 1978).

Home and community thus became established as secondary arenas of interest in locality studies, associated with the social and political 'fallout' of economic restructuring in the arena of primary interest - the waged workplace. Sometimes referred to collectively as 'civil society' (Urry, 1981a), the links between these and other dimensions of the restructuring process (state and economy) were forged through two main arguments⁵. Firstly, the spatial restructuring of the economy was argued to be dissolving many established, broad-based social and political alignments and heightening the salience of *local* systems of stratification and conflict. Secondly, it was argued that local political affiliations and class alignments could not simply be 'read off' from the structure of the local labour market but were tied into the social relations of household and community (Savage, 1987).

The terms on which women were drawn into each of these two secondary arenas of locality studies mirrored the primary concern with their increased participation in the waged labour market which was seen to be having 'quite important fragmenting effects on households and their relationship to community' (Cooke, 1986a: 3).

Women in the 'home'

All three of the above themes point to the neglected significance of the household in structuring local social relations. Urry makes this connection explicitly, arguing that "the analysis of the formal (waged) economy cannot provide an adequate understanding of the likely patterns of contemporary politics,... because such an analysis neglects an absolutely crucial dimension, namely, the characteristic social relations and social practices within and between households" (1985: 23). The household's significance is seen mainly in terms of its being a site of domestic consumption which, during a period of cutbacks in the state provision of welfare services and goods, has become of increasing importance in securing the social capacity to work. To a lesser extent it is considered as a site where social values and identities are shaped, and hence influential in the development of class consciousness and political allegiance. In this domestic arena of the home, women figure as 'housewives' and 'mothers'; roles under threat from their increased participation in the waged labour market.

Most work within locality studies is content to assume rather than investigate this domestic arena and the structure of household gender relations. An important exception is research by Lydia Morris⁶. She looks at what happens to gender relations in the household, particularly the division of household work, in South Wales which she describes as a 'prime example of an area which has recently seen increased participation of women in the waged labour force, alongside the shedding of a predominantly male work force by heavy industry' (1985: 221). She demonstrates that despite high male unemployment and increased participation by women in waged work the division of domestic labour in the household remains almost unchanged. Women continue to bear the burden of domestic work and rely on networks of women outside the household (relatives or neighbours), rather than unemployed husbands, to reorganise this burden around the demands of their paid job.

Women in the 'community'

Women's association with domestic provisioning and consumption issues is linked in some locality studies to what is seen to be an important political realignment within local systems of social stratification⁷. Following Urry (1981b), several writers in the locality studies genre focus attention on the rise of non-class (workplace or union) based social movements and political action, organised at a 'community' level and centred on consumption issues such as cutbacks in a range of basic services at the point of delivery, the local state. For the most part, women tend to figure emblematically, rather than to participate actively, in these accounts of local community politics but, again, there are some honourable exceptions. Perhaps most notable here is work by members of the Sussex research programme. Susan Halford and others, for example, have examined the way in which the institutions and practices of the local state are bound up with the restructuring of local social and political alignments and consciousness. Specifically, they look at the incidence of women's initiatives and committees in local authorities in certain spatially distinctive configurations of civil society definable as 'Labour Party strongholds' (Halford, 1987; Duncan *et al.*, 1988).

In summary, locality studies can be argued *in the main* to have addressed questions of gender through a number of recurring female figures associated with particular spatial arenas, or scenes in the pageant of local restructuring - the workplace, home and community. This has produced a very fractured representation of women's experience of the restructuring process and an even more fragmentary theorisation of gender relations and identities as these shape, and are shaped by, the restructuring process in specific contexts. Feminist critics have already begun to point out some glaring inadequacies in this approach.

Feminist critiques

Detailed critiques of locality studies by feminist geographers are not numerous (Bowlby *et al.*, 1986; Foord *et al.*, 1986) and, with one exception, stem from socialist-feminist perspectives (see Rose, 1989). All share a common conviction that gender relations both reflect and affect the spatial organisation of society and that these relations get short shrift in locality studies. But they highlight different inadequacies or, sometimes, differing views

of the same inadequacy and developments in the literature on locality studies between publication of these critiques in the mid— and late 1980s need to be born in mind.

The main concerns of the earlier critiques of locality studies by Sophie Bowlby, Jo Foord and others are threefold. The first focuses on their common practice, exemplified above, of treating gender as if it meant women. Thus, while women may have been 'added in' to these studies as an empirical feature of local restructuring, the social categories of 'men' and 'women' are largely taken for granted and the *making* of masculine and feminine gender identities remains untheorised. Thus questions about how and why particular types of worker (say a steelworker and a secretary) become gendered and particular gender divisions of labour (say between different stages of textile production) persist cannot be effectively addressed. Their most important observation, to my mind, is that this sloppy thinking "implicitly portrays men's lives and activities as the 'norm' against which a 'gender difference' embodied in women's lives and activities is presented" (Bowlby *et al.*, 1988: 328). In other words, women become an analytical surrogate for gender because they are assumed to be the ones who are 'different'.

A second, related, criticism concerns the implicit or explicit recourse in locality studies to 'role theory' as a basis for analysing gender divisions. Role theory reduces gender differences to a relatively static set of attributes or behaviour patterns supposedly characteristic of women and men. We can recognise this in the localities literature reviewed above in the treatment of women as wage workers whose 'role' is characterised as unskilled, un-unionised, cheap and part-time. The difficulty with role theory is that it leaves us without an explanation of why and how these roles change over or time or vary between particular places. Foord *et al.* (1986) argue that we need instead to theorise and investigate the process of active power relations between men and women, through which these roles come to be established, contested and redefined. They seek to unravel these 'work roles' further by tracing the ways in which they build on, and inform, specific gender identities which are constituted in particular local contexts and hence vary over space; masculinities and femininities forged through the experience of work, sexual relations, emotional ties and family obligations ⁸.

Their third criticism of locality studies follows on from this and revolves around the way in which their ability to comprehend gender relations, as power relations, is restricted because their primary focus on waged-work and the institutions of the market economy eclipse the significance of other key 'sites' in which gender relations are contested—such as at 'home' and in the 'community', or civil society. They note the residual status of the way in which these arenas of social, political and cultural activity are conceptualised,— as what's left over from the 'economic sphere', literally 'non-workplace' relations. Despite the importance ostensibly attached to concepts of household and community noted above, they are very poorly theorised, if at all. This residual status is felt to be particularly deeply engrained in locality studies because of the methodological basis of the definition of locality, the local labour market. "We need (they argue) to examine rather than assume the degree to which the spatial organisation of non-workplace social relations derives from or is related to labour market relations" (Bowlby *et al.*, 1986: 329)

It is at this point that Gillian Rose takes up the critique and extends it from a rather different feminist perspective. She is much more insistent on the significance of non-

workplace relations and arenas of social life, arguing that the importance of the social relations of waged labour to local political alignments needs to be established rather than assumed (1989: 319). Her point is well made but loses some of its force because she tends to reduce locality studies to an easier and more uniform target than the literature reveals. A more important and original dimension of her critique is her development of earlier arguments about the structuralist and economic nature of the locality studies' account of the restructuring process. She draws attention in particular to the neglect of a hermeneutic dimension, that is a theoretical and methodological place for people's experience, consciousness and sensibility, which is above all locally contextualised, to inform the analysis of the restructuring process in local areas (1988, 89). This is a fundamental shortcoming of locality studies which rely only on statistical and survey data to generate their analysis of 'class consciousness'.

These criticisms are well founded but, interestingly, none of these feminist critics questions the idea of locality itself, while they reproduce some important basic concepts developed in locality studies in their own thinking. Bowlby *et al.*, for example, argue specifically for a more 'sophisticated' version of locality studies to be developed "through an understanding of the relations of the community and the home, as well as those of the workplace" (IBID: 329) Rose comes to a very similar conclusion with a "plea for geographers to pay greater attention to the politics of home and community and to recognise their explanatory power" (1989: 326). A common thread uniting these contributions to the feminist critique of locality studies is that they retain a deeply engrained geographical conception of work, household and community as places, or spheres, rather than as processes and relations.

Feminist geographers have been trying to build a bridge between these 'separate spheres' since the pioneering piece by Mackenzie and Rose in which they suggested that they 'generate a number of problems which geographers need to address' (1983: 159). Thus Bowlby *et al.*, for example, state that 'these three spheres should not be seen as separate and the interrelationships between them should be recognised as reciprocal. In many ways Rose's analysis of local politics in Poplar in the 1920s (1988, 1989) can be read as an embodiment of these ideas, organised around the key sites of waged workplace, 'community' and 'domestic life' and exploring the way in which the "social practices and sensibilities outside waged labour (domestic and neighbourhood life) shaped workplace resistance" (1989: 325).

But the language of these feminist accounts continues to overflow with the spatial imagery of arenas, domains, sites and spheres. Even in critique, the conception and expression of ideas of household and community as 'non-workplace' relations or relations "outside" the workplace continues. These difficulties can be traced to the deep-seated division in geographical analysis between a narrowly defined economic 'realm' —the waged workplace— and a social 'realm' comprised of household (home) and community (neighbourhood); and from the primacy accorded to the 'economic realm' in radical geographical research, of which locality studies is a prime example, but which much feminist research does not escape. As Suzanne Mackenzie noted recently it is a division which "permeates the whole history of human geography" (1989: 59). I have termed this pervasive imagery elsewhere the product of a 'spatially divisive imagination' (Whatmore, 1990). There is an increasing disjunction between the theoretical paths that feminist geo-

graphers advocate and the inherited language they use through which these relations and processes have come to literally take particular shapes in our minds as bounded places. In stressing their 'interconnectedness' work, household and community are still being imagined as domains *to be* connected, rather than as relations and processes interwoven in varying spatial configurations (Ardener, 1981). It is here that we confront the limits of the feminist critique and must turn to developments elsewhere in feminist scholarship for a way forward in theorising spatiality and gender.

Shifting ground: towards a feminist agenda.

In this review I have sought to argue that the critique by feminist geographers suggests some important ways forward for the concept and practice of locality studies. But these ways forward imply radical shifts in feminist analysis itself, as well as in the analysis of the substantive issues of space and gender, away from the divisive spatial imagination which has shaped so much of human geography.

Some glimmerings of new directions are provided by recent empirical work by some feminist geographers investigating 'new' spatial divisions of labour in the form of home-work. The novelty of women doing waged work from home is open to question. But as a form where 'production and consumption occur on the same site' (Fincher, 1989: 97) its significance is now being recognised in the search for less bounded ways of conceptualising these processes and their social relations. Drawing conclusions from research on the same theme, Mackenzie suggests that "in analytical terms gender becomes a space-structuring force, environment becomes a component of gender constitution" (1989: 45). To adapt her argument to the terms of this paper, the link between locality and social processes becomes the active use of time and space which simultaneously alters the nature of gender and local relations. But with its focus still firmly on wage work, this empirical case leaves undisturbed a number of conventions in the pageant of local restructuring produced by locality studies.

Despite the best intentions of locality studies towards a better theoretical integration of the economic, social and political dimensions of the restructuring process, their methodological parameters—defined in terms of local labour markets—constrain their achievements in practice. Moreover, this definition of the spatial parameters of their object of analysis distorts and, in some cases eclipses altogether, the spatially significant networks of power through which gender relations are expressed and constituted. I want to conclude this survey with some fairly speculative suggestions for future research, drawing on feminist work outside geography.

1. redefining the 'economic'. Locality studies continue the geographical tradition of defining economic activity in terms of the market economy, wage labour and corporate enterprise. This focus helps to create the misleading separation between 'productive' and 'reproductive' spheres of activity. Feminist anthropologists working in developing countries, and starting from an interest in people's livelihoods rather than capital accumulation, have opened up a whole world of economic activity eclipsed by traditional approaches; a world in which women are prime actors (Moore, 1988). Domestic work, household systems of production and a range of work practices and economic activities, rather inadequately represented by the term 'informal economy', come into play revealing much

more complex and much less clear-cut spatial divisions of labour. Such an approach could help to liberate our thinking about the spatial relations of economic activity from the confines of a discrete place or arena.

2. rethinking civil society. The notion of civil society has already been criticised as a residual, catch-all concept covering everything left over from the relationship between capital and labour. It is also highly problematic because, like the idea of 'citizenship' preferred by some (Cooke, 1989b), it assumes each individual to be equally constituted as a citizen. Attention to gender differences in this approach relates solely to differences in the way male and female citizens act. But as a number of feminist political scientists, notably Carol Pateman, have so convincingly demonstrated, women have traditionally been constituted as less than full individuals and less than equal citizens (1989). Whether in terms of property, voting or welfare rights, women's status across a range of political cultures has been circumscribed by their sexual identity and mediated by their relationship to men, particularly as fathers and husbands. If gender is to be fully incorporated into our understanding of the restructuring of local social and political relations it is at the level of some of our basic categories that we need to begin.

3. comparative analysis. A striking feature of locality studies has been their narrow empirical focus on cities in advanced industrial societies and, predominantly, in just one national context. This approach tends to reinforce taken-for-granted assumptions about the nature of the spatial organisation of 'home' and 'work', kinship and household structures and gender relations. In bringing together research from the diverse conditions of developed and developing countries books like "Beyond Employment" (Redclift and Mingione, 1985) provide an model of truly comparative studies of local social and economic change which force us to revise our habitual ways of thinking.

Locality studies do not provide the flagship for a "new regional geography" as some have claimed, at least not if that new regional geography is to comprehend gender relations as a significant dimension of the restructuring process. As Gregory remarked recently it seems that 'as geographers we need to go back to the question of areal differentiation but armed with new a theoretical sensitivity towards the world in which we live and the ways in which we represent it' (1989: 92); sensitivities and representations in which. I have sought to argue here, gender needs to be much more central.

Footnotes

¹ Although, even within this more narrowly defined locality studies literature Urry lists some ten different uses of the term locality (Urry, 1987: 441-3)

² While the CURS and SCEL programmes were organised through locality specific research teams, co-ordinated by a central steering committee, the Sussex programme involved five different thematic research projects all based at the University of Sussex.

³ Professor Howard Newby became the Chairperson of the Economic and Social Research Council during the course of the Localities programmes.

⁴ This is not to say that the idea/practice of locality studies has not been pursued in rural research in Britain. See particularly, Tony Bradley's work in five rural labour markets/localities (1984, 1985) and the collection of essays edited by Philip Lowe and Tony Bradley (1984) called 'Locality and Rurality'.

⁵ These arguments specifically countered earlier, cruder accounts of the relationship between economic, social and political restructuring (eg. Cooke, 1984) in which the social and political dimensions were essentially 'read off' from the local economic structure.

⁶ Lydia Morris's work is not strictly within the bounds of the localities programmes but is closely related and carried out in South Wales a much quoted locality.

⁷ Andrew Sayer (1989: 256) makes the interesting point that the interest expressed by locality studies in political realignment was prompted by the growing gulf in the 1980s between the actual political behaviour (large numbers of working people voting Conservative) and the 'objective' political interests assigned to various classes in radical social theory.

⁸ This theme is taken up more fully in a paper by Foord and Gregson (1986).

⁹ But note Cooke (1984) and some of the cross-national comparative housing research undertaken by people involved in the Sussex Programme (Barlow *et al.*, 1988).

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