Discourses of 'class' in Britain in 'New Times'

In 1988, in the *New Times* issue of *Marxism Today*, John Urry wrote that '[s]ocial life, culture and politics are no longer organised in terms of social class … because current inequalities of income, wealth and power do not produce homogenous social classes which share common experiences … [a

'new times' and the 'post-Fordist' economy, economic and cultural changes seemed to be ushering in an era where 'personal identity and individual self-assertion' were most highly valued, and membership of any 'collectivity' rejected.[1] This was a Britain where new social movements of all kinds had proliferated, bringing people together to organize politically a   lity, and the values of peace, environmentalism and internationalism. It was a Britain with ever increasing consumer choice, and the proliferation of new channels of mass media, in particular with the beginning of Channel 4 and cable TV. It was a Britain where people seemed more individualistic. This was a compelling vision of the decline of 'class'.

Marxism Today had become under Martin Jacques's editorship one of the most influential political publications of the 1980s. In the first instance, it became so influential because its writers seemed to take 'Thatcherism' seriously, to treat it as something new, not merely the old capitalism plus Conservatism with a new leader. This was most obviously the case in Stuart Hall's influential articles, most particularly 'The great moving right show', published as early as 1979.[2] But by the late 1980s *Marxism Today's* leading lights felt they needed to move beyond analysing 'Thatcherism' and the crisis of the left, and attempt to 'make better sense of the world, and, on that basis, to realign the Left with that new world'. Urry's thoughts on the decline of 'class' as the organising principle of British social, cultural and political life fitted into a la   l and cultural changes identified in the seminar organised by *Marxism Today* in Mary 1988 and the subsequent *New Times* project. Hall and Jacques summed up the changes affecting 'advanced capitalist societies' thus in their introduction to the book: 'new times' (or perhaps, though they did not use the term, post-modern times), were characterised by 'diversity, differentiation and fragmentation, rather than homogeneity, standardisation and the economics and organisations of scale which characterised modern mass society'.[3] 'Class' was just one of the masses, the structural phenomena, which were seen as fragmenting in 1980s Britain.

In this article, I examine the place and meanings of 'class' in British national life in this period. In particular, I look at what people said in oral history interviews and responses to Mass Observation Directives about class in this period, as a corrective to studies of discourse which take only public and political statements, cutting out the individual and subjective.[4] But before turning to those individual discourses, it is necessary to examine in more detail some of the poli   l a
lass' in the controversial maelstrom of the 1980s.

Political and academic discourses of 'class' in Britain in the 1980s

From several perspectives, both positive and negative, it has been suggested that 'class' died out, or at least changed radically, in this period. In cultural a   li   l histories of 'class', Thatcher often figures as the key villain. From her election as leader of the Conservative Party in 1975, Thatcher embarked on a sustained mission to explode the supposedly 'socialist' concept of class.[5] She suggested in 1975 that with mass prosperity, 'the income groups have got all muddled up,' an analysis which was backed up in a 1976 pamphlet by sociologist Ferdynand Zweig, published by Keith Joseph's new think-tank, the Centre for Policy Studies, wherein Zweig argued that with the growth of homeownership, real wages, savings, and education, the very 'idea of class' was 'relegated, in the workers' minds, to something unimportant.'[6] In 1977, Thatcher claimed that most people 'no longer [thought] in terms of class.'[7] By 1988, she was arguing that '[i]n the world in which we now live, divisions into class are outmoded and meaningless. We are all working people who basically want the same things. We all share the desire for higher standards of living, of health, of education, of leisure.'[8] This was a blu   l of the importance of 'class'.

In the place of an image of British society as divided into 'working-class' and 'middle-class' groups, Thatcher put a three-fold image, divided into a small, feckless underclass, a small, effete elite and a large majority in the middle of 'ordinary people' or 'ordinary working people.' Thatcher used these terms in at least 175 different public statements between 1975 and 1990. What united this group was values and aspirations – 'for higher standards of living, of health, of education, of leisure.' Over the course of the 1980s, Conservative propaganda attempted to sideline 'class' imagery; old, stereotypical images of blue-collar, working-class men fell out of use, replaced by more 'classless' figures.[9] The Thatcherites' approach to class was, as with most political rhetoric, part description and part exhortation: partly a genuine attempt to describe the world as they saw it, and partly an attempt to bring about the sidelining of class they argued had occurred. But did it work?

As has often been noted, 'Thatcherism' had a major effect on the Labour Party. From the election of Neil Kinnock as leader in 1983, the leadership started to try to strip the party of its old-fashioned, profoundly classed (and gendered) image. In his pitch for the leadership, Kinnock wrote of Labour's 'failure to respond to a reshuffled class system.'[10] Kinnock's (and la   lair's) influential pollster and strategist Philip Gould argued in 1985 that Labour need to ditch its 'cloth cap image.'[11] Over the course of the 1980s, the Labour modernizers increasingly argued that the 'class system', and the 'working class,' had changed. In 1983, Kinnock suggested that the 'old working class,' which had retained a 'habitual' loyalty to Labour, was declining, while a 'new working class' grew up.[12] He described this 'new working class' in his 1987 Party Conference speech, arguing that Labour must celebrate 'ordinary people getting on,' like the docker who 'owns his house, a new car, a microwave and a video, as well as a small place near Marbella.'[13]

Philip Gould, and la   lair, went further in their description of how far the 'working class' had changed; in a famous passage in *The unfinished revolution*, Gould described how in suburban Britain in the postwar period the 'old working class was becoming a new middle class: aspiring, consuming, choosing what was best for themselves and their families.'[14] By the late 1990s, modernizers were more confident in talking about a 'new middle class,' and when he came to write his autobiography in the late 2000s, Blair was blunt: much of the 'working class' had in postwar Britain become 'middle-class.'[15] Thus politicians on both left and right were frequently found in the 1980s and 1990s claiming that 'class' had changed. Thatcher argued it was no longer an important structuring force in British society, speaking of 'ordinary working people'. Labour modernizers argued the 'working class' had shrunk hugely and changed dramatically, developing new lifestyles, aspirations and values.

Similar claims came in the 1990s from influential sociologists and philosophers, including Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck, who argued that in 'late modernity,' or the 'risk society,' class identities (and corporate identities generally) were becoming much less important.[16] Such theses seemed to be paralleled in the realm of political science and psephology by academics like Ivor Crewe. Crewe described the 1970s as the 'decade of dealignment', suggesting that 'class' had fallen off its long-held pedestal as the key structuring force in British political behaviour.[17] And in the field of sociology, the once-dominant mode of studying 'class', the 'structure-consciousness-action' model, crumbled under the weight of evidence that suggested that the structures in which individuals found themselves at work, at home and in the community did *not* link up in any straightforward way with a sense of 'class consciousness'. This, along with other factors, led to a fragmenting of the discipline, with some sociologists focusing on large-scale data analysis to uncover structure inequalities in British society, while others pursued new avenues of research, particularly into gender and race.[18]

This falling out of favour of the idea of 'class' as the primary structuring force of British society and politics led, ultimately, to the appearance of books like Jan Pakulski and Malcolm Waters' *The death of class,* published in 1996. Though sharing a left-wing orientation and noting that British society was becoming more unequal, not less, the authors argued that the structure of society and assumptions of individuals were changing such that economics no longer meaningfully divided society up into classes. The key shifts were, 'a wide redistribution of property; the proliferation of indirect and small ownership; the credentialization of skills and the professionalization of occupations; the multiple segmentation and globalization of markets; and an increasing role for consumption as a status and lifestyle generator'.[19] This was similar to the *Marxism Today* diagnosis of 'new times'. Indeed, modes of analysis more broadly in social and political sciences, politics and the humanities, seemed to have shifted between the 1970s and 1990s such that one recent American scholar of intellectual and cultural history has labelled the period the 'age of fracture'.[20]

From the mid-1980s, a fruitful new line of class analysis opened up in the field of sociology,

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with sociologists like Bev Skeggs pioneering a new culturally-focused, Bourdieusian analysis of 'class' cult   lusion was that 'working-class' was such a gendered and stigmatized identity that women in manual jobs in the north of Engla   lt deeply unwilling to identify with it, even this research contributed in important ways to building up the idea that 'class' identities had declined in importance, or been marginalised and stigmatized.[21] This in many ways fit with what historians following the 'New Political History' approach in Britain from the 1980s onwards posited. Historians like Gareth Stedman Jones asserted that *political discourses* are important in stimulating or marginalizing popular political identities (such as class identities), suggesting that if these have declined, it is not simply the result of 'social change' but of the failure of politicians to mould such constituencies.[22] Insisting on the relative autonomy of politics was, of course, a political as well as an intellectual move. It allowed blame for any supposed 'death of class identities' to be laid at the door of politicians, rather than of the impersonal forces of social and cultural change.

It is the *political* discourses around 'class' which, above all, mean that some politicians and poli   l activists, such as Jon Cruddas and Owen Jones, have recently argued that Thatcher and New Labour 'destroyed' class identities, thus undermining the possibilities for a progressive, collectivist poli   laim that has been backed up in prominent and important works by historians like Selina Todd and Ben Jones, who suggest that the late twentieth-century 'neoliberal' era saw a sustained attack on 'class' identities and 'class' politics, though both Jones and Todd want to argue that in fact, most people still saw themselves as 'working class', even in the 2000s, after many years of Thatcher and New Labour.[24] In light of these claims about the power of political rhetoric and the decline of class identities, this paper sets out to explore popular attitudes to 'class' in the 1980s. It asks whether it was true that by 1990, when Thatcher fell from power, people 'no longer [t

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(particularly working-class identities) remained strong in Engla
lso misses important changes in understandings of 'class.'

Cultural discourses of 'class' and nation in 1980s Britain

Increasingly, the idea of 'national character' came under fire in the postwar decades. Trends in sociology and psychology undermined the very concept of 'national characters', once a scientifically respected view.[26] From the 1980s onwards, under the influence of Benedict Anderson's influential work, national identities were increasingly seen as 'imagined communities' rather than real, measurable entities.[27] And the sense of a peculiarly English or British national character was disintegrating on some fronts. Affluence disrupted class boundaries that were once easily

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recognisable, individualism was on the rise, immigration introduced new diversity into Britain, and Scottish and Welsh nationalism flourished.[28] The assumption that certain traits or cultural objects could be listed which could define the British, or any nation, thus seemed increasingly problematic. Yet a 1988 MORI poll in Britain found that 'class conscious' was the *most commonly* selected 'national characteristic,' identified by 52 per cent of respondents.[29]

The British character, perceptions of its nature

	All (%)	ABC1 (%)	C2DE (%)	Difference C2DE-ABC1
Class conscious	52	61	47	-14
Patriotic	43	52	38	-14
Hard working	33	28	37	9
Care about the underdog	30	35	27	-8
Tolerant	28	28	27	-1
Materialistic	28	36	22	-14
Self-reliant (willing to stand on own two feet)	25	22	27	5
Lazy	24	25	23	-2
Competitive	20	20	20	0
Pessimistic	20	23	17	-6
Optimistic	20	18	21	3
Willing to take risks	17	14	20	6
Ambitious	15	13	17	4
Appreciative of people who succeed	13	14	11	-3
Receptive to new ideas	12	10	13	3
Idealistic	8	10	7	-3
International in outlook	6	7	5	-2
None of these	2	2	2	0
DK/no answer	4	4	4	0

Interpreting opinion polls is notoriously difficult. Far from 'taking the temperature' of public opinion, as George Gallup held, polls are more usefully seen as manufacturing a new form of 'public opinion'.[30] They often encourage 'fast thinking' responses from interviewees, snap judgements, and superficial thinking. Respondents may interpret even the most carefully-judged questions in a variety of ways, which it is difficult to reconstruct retrospectively. And respondents may use their response to the poll question to signal something about themselves or their attitudes that the interviewers did not anticipate. For this reason, a sophisticated body of literature has grown up around the industry.[31] The problems with interpreting historical polls may well seem so daunting as to make it appear a fruitless task. Nevertheless, the data can suggest some insights. In particula   link

in the popular imagination between Britishness and diffuse ideas about 'class consciousness'. Given a list of statements and adjectives which might be applied to the British, very few respondents chose 'Don't Know' or refused to respond. Most were comfortable enough listing the characteristics of their 'imagined community'. And 'class conscious' was by a significant margin the most commonly selected, with a 9 percentage point lead over the next most common choice, 'patriotic'.

Interestingly, the results of this survey differed between those falling into the 'ABC1' categories and the 'C2DE' categories. In the polling and market research industry's standard National Readership Survey (NRS) groups, ABC1 comprises people in higher managerial, administrative or professional occupations, intermediate middle class occupations, and supervisory or junior managerial, administrative or professional jobs. C2DE includes skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled and casual manual workers, and those dependent on state benefits. Those in more 'middle-class', white-collar jobs were more likely to say that they thought Britain was 'class conscious': 61 per cent of respondents, as opposed to 47 per cent of C2DE respondents. 'Class conscious' was still the top choice of the latter group, but they were more likely than the ABC1 respondents to say that Britain was 'hard working' and 'self-reliant'. This might be attributed to many factors. People might want to attribute to the nation the characteristics they wanted to associate with themselves. People from different social groups might be exposed to different sorts of cultural products. Though the NRS groups are a blunt and old-fashioned way of dividing up the population, nevertheless, the data offers intriguing hints as to different ways of imagining the British national character.

The data collected by MORI does not allow us to examine how responses varied between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This is unfortunate, as there might well have been some slippage between 'England' and 'Britain' in the responses. 'England' and 'Britain' have often been unselfconsciously elided by the English.[32] With the rise of Welsh and Scottish nationalism in the late twentieth century, the ethnic and civic identities around which these nations cohered were increasingly 'others' for a sense of 'class' which was seen as distinctively *English*.[33] Indeed, if it were possible to break the data down by region it might also be possible to find differences in the responses of northern and southern regions of England. Under Thatcher, many felt that Britain became ever more divided into 'two nations', and many in the north came to construct a more distinctive sense of identity, shaped by the grievances many felt towards Westminster governments which oversaw the collapse of many of the north's staple industries.[34]

The much-commented on 'heritage boom' in 1980s Britain probably also shored up a sense of English/British history as particularly marked by 'class'. As Patrick Wright pointed out in 1985, Thatcher's Britain saw an upsurge in cultural interest in British history and heritage, particularly in relation to the landscape and built environment. Peter Mandler's study of the fortunes of the English county house in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries shows country houses enjoying a renaissance in popularity in the postwar period.[35] By the end of the 1970s, country houses were widely seen as

central to England's 'national heritage' and even 'Engla

lization'.[36] The view they gave of the English past was reinforced by depictions of life before the Second World War which painted Britain as an irrevocably class-divided society, like *Upstairs, Downstairs* (ITV, 1971-1975)*,* a popular drama about life in a rich Edwardian London house. Lucy Delap has argued that 'heritage performances of domestic service' and Britain's class-bound past were increasingly popular in the late twentieth century.[37] These developments, culminating in the 1980s, might well have fed people's sense that Britain could be described as highly 'class conscious'.

There were other, even more direct, ways in which British culture in the 1980s seemed to circle around the themes of 'class' and snobbishness. Jilly Cooper's *Class: a view from middle England* was one of the most high-profile popular works on the subject. First published in 1979, it was quickly reprinted in paperback by Corgi in 1980 and sold hundreds of thousands of copies.[38] It enumerated, according to the *Guardian*'s reviewer, 'a veritable encycolpaedia of snobbistic foibles whereby position in society may be assigned', offered up with a 'garnish of outrageous generalisation, fair-to-good puns, and splendidly scurrilous assertions, such as the news that most of the upper classes share their beds with their dogs for warmth'.[39] *Class* was a humorous, rather mocking, but also almost loving representation of the British and their supposedly extreme graduations of class snobbery.[40] Ia

's 1982 book *The English middle classes are alive and kicking* was another example of the fascination with writing about the middle classes in the early 1980s.[41] 'Class' has been a hardy perennial of the British publishing industry in the postwar period, perhaps reflecting something of the fact that people often enjoyed reading about themselves (or what they imagined their society to be like).[42] Nevertheless, the late 1970s and early 1980s did see something of a spike in cultural interest in 'class'.[43] This certainly drew interest from the sense that 'class' was changing, and from politicians like Thatcher making high-profile statements about the death of class. But it doubtless stoked the perception that Brits were uniquely interested in class snobberies.

Indeed, in a 1985 book, literary theorist P.N. Furbank started out with the claim that 'people in Britain at the moment talk too much about "class"'. This was clearly something which affected him personally, for Furbank wrote that he found it 'an uneasy, enervating, somehow murky topic'.[44] His concern was with class as *discourse*, with talking and writing about class rather than with the experience of living in a structurally unequal society. It was this – a current of obsession with constructing, defining and commenting on the snobberies and habits of different layers of society – which was seen by many as a central part of British culture in the 1980s. It is, therefore, perhaps unsurprising to find a majority of people in 1982 – 63 per cent – agreeing that people were either very or quite 'aware of social differences in Britain today', while only 32 per cent said that people were 'not very' or 'not at all' aware.[45]

Opinion poll evidence suggested that few people thought that Britain was a fair society: what you had and what sort of family you were born into played a major role in determining your eventual

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position in society. In 1982, 51 per cent of people said that 'a person's social class affects their

opportunities in Britain today' a *lot,* and a further 35 per cent said it affected people's opportunities a

little. Only ten per cent said class affected people's opportunities 'not at all' – down from 15 per cent

in 1980.[46] In 1989, 79 per cent of those polled by Gallup said they agreed with the statement that in

Britain today 'the rich get richer and the poor get poorer'.[47] And polls suggested that across the 1980s

there was a rise in the numbers of people perceiving Britain as divided into 'haves' and 'have nots', as

a series of Gallup polls revealed.

Some people think of British society as divided into two groups, the haves and the have-nots,

while others say it's incorrect to think of Britain that way.' Do you agree?[48]

	Oct. 1984	Feb. 1986	Mar 1988	June 1990	July 1992
Yes	63	67	73	72	70
Don't think that way	33	27	23	23	21
DK	5	6	4	5	8

Nor did people seem to think that the Conservative Party was on the side of everyone. In 1987, 60 per

cent of respondents to a Gallup poll said that the Conservatives were 'good for one class' versus only

34 per cent who thought they were good for 'all classes'.[49]

      Britain seemed to be a nation which la   ly 'class

conscious'; but this probably meant 'class consciousness' in the sense of elaborate parsing of social

signals and snobbishness. It was also a country which a majority of people described in opinion polls

as unfair: as rigged in favour of those born into more privileged positions. Discourses of growing

'classlessness' circulated alongside their opposite; humorous depictions of social snobbery sat

alongside fervent pleas for the British to stop talking and thinking so much about 'class'. Polling

seemed to reveal 'some intriguing contradictions': people appeared 'to believe that social class and

class consciousness are still important facts of life in Britain, but at the same time they suggest that

class does not really affect their own lives or attitudes', as one journalist wrote in 1982. He went on to

point out that there were, in addition, gaps between assigned social class by interviewers (ABC1 /

C2DE) and self-assigned social class, commenting, 'pollsters, in their self-confident way, call this

"social inconsistency"' – but it might perhaps be better to take people at their own word'.[50] It is to

their own words that we will now turn.

'Class' in interviews and Mass Observation testimonies in 'new times'

Two bodies of sources can give us insights into how people spoke and wrote about 'class' in

Thatcher's Britain. The first is the '100 Families' project, a set of oral histories collected by Paul

Thompson between 1985 and 1988; the second is a set of responses to a Mass Observation (MO)

directive from 1990.[51] In the '100 Families' project, Thompson set out to examine intergenerational

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rela   lecting the new interest of oral historians in the 1980s in popular memory.[52] A team
of sociologists conducted 170 long, relatively unstructured interviews with a stratified sample of three
generations of people from across England and Wales, asking detailed questions about interviewees'
and their parents' attitudes to subjects like 'class,' thus giving insights into how a wide range of
people talked about 'class' in the mid-late 1980s.[53] Mass Observation was originally begun in 1937 to
produce an 'anthropology of ourselves.' It died out in the 1950s, but was revived in 1981 at the
University of Sussex (where the original materials were archived in 1970), and a new panel of
Observers recruited.[54] They were sent directives to write free-form responses to, including in 1990 a
directive on 'social divisions.' This gave a series of questions and prompts, asking which divisions,
'class, race, gender, religion, 'culture' etc.' seemed 't

-use of social scientific material from before the
Second World War but have been slower to re-use postwar material; as this begins to change, with
work from Savage, Selina Todd, Jon Lawrence and others, the potential of these sources is becoming
clear.[55] Responses to questions about 'class' from a range of respondents in the '100 Families' and
Mass Observation groups, in fact, give a rich and suggestive set of insights into how cultural
discourses of 'class' were reflected, refracted, and reused by individuals.

Of course, in both cases, historians need to be attentive to the process of production and the
limitations of the sources. Though the '100 Families' interviews were selected to be as representative
a sample as possible, nevertheless, when the sample is broken down into smaller groups by
occupation, age, region or gender, those groups are too small to be 'representative'. But then, as
James Hinton has suggested, quoting Mass Observation founder Tom Harrison, 'At this degree of
intimacy … the word "typical" is no longer suitable. No one is privately typical of anyone else.'
Hinton goes on to comment: '[i]ndividual subjectivity is always more complex than generalizations
about the life of the group… the more one knows about any particula   l, the less they can be
used to illustrate some more general experience or theme'.[56] It is in unpicking the broader cultural
t   ls used, interpreted, and combined them that these interviews give us
insights into discourses of 'class' in the Thatcher decade. The dialogic nature of the sources is also
very important: the interviewees were responding to a highly educated social scientist's questioning.
Their responses were part of a process of self-presentation to a particular audience. This is not a
'problem' in interpreting the responses but rather one of the distinctive and interesting things about
social science and oral history sources from this period. As Jon Lawrence has suggested, it should be
made *part of* the analysis.[57] The issues with using the MO directive responses are in many ways the
same. But in this case, we also need to take into account the fact that, as Mike Savage put it, the
sample is 'unrepresentative in being predominantly well-educated, female, elderly, and middle

class'.[58] It was also self-selecting: it was likely to be made up of people who agreed with the loose 'social movement' MO represented: illuminating and preserving the thoughts of 'ordinary' people. For this reason, the MO responses shed light not so much on the general popula

lly socially-engaged people in the late twentieth-century.

The first important theme that emerges from an examination of these sources is the ambiguity that marked many responses to questions about an individual's own 'class identity'. In the '100 Families' study, there were twenty-two 'baby boomers' born in Britain between 1945 and 1959 who were asked about their class. Three said they were 'middle-class'; one said 'upper-lower or lower-middle'; one said 'working/middle'; one said 'upper-working'; and eleven said they were 'working-class'. One did not comment on class, and four interviewees did not use traditional class language: two refused to class themselves, one said 'just me,' and one said 'I'm just ordinary. I'm poor.'[59] Most were familiar with 'class' terms. But of the eleven people who said they were 'working-class,' four indicated that they did not feel this strongly, suggesting that a claim to be 'working-class' in an interview does not always mean a strongly-felt identification. Elaine Nelson (b. 1954, area supervisor for a cleaning contract company, living in Yorkshire and Humberside) described her neighborhood as 'working-class,' but when asked explicitly whether she thought of *herself* as belonging to a class, said, '[n]o, not really. Well, we're working class, aren't we, but not consciously, I don't think – *Oh, we're working class.*'[60] Later sociological studies have also found pervasive ambivalence about 'class' identities; Mike Savage, Gaynor Bagnall and Brian Longhurst suggested from interviews in Greater Manchester between 1997 and 1999 that 'ambivalence' marked 71 per cent of responses to questions about 'class,' and argued that sociologists 'should not,' therefore, 'assume that there is any necessary significance in how respondents define their class identity in surveys.'[61] Not only politicians and journalists but also some historians have in recent years suggested otherwise, however.[62] It therefore bears repeating that survey evidence about simple self-ascription of 'class' should be treated with caution.

Statements about 'class' were also highly situational. Miner's wife Margaret Beckwith (b. 1942, living in the north east) refused to 'class' herself but also implied that she and her husband voted Labour because they were 'working-class,' explaining, 'I'm talking about other people who don't have to work as hard for their money or anything. But I don't think they're any better than me […] They might have more money than me, a better house than me, but that's all.' The label 'working-class' seemed appropriate in a discussion of politics, but when asked about her own 'class' identity, Beckwith felt it was more important to stress that she had a socially egalitarian outlook and did not think that anyone was 'better than me.'[63] Different responses to questions about 'class' could be elicited in discussions about politics and about everyday life. What made sense to an interviewee could seem contradictory to an interviewer (Beckwith's interviewer seemed somewhat confused by her answers). As Jon Lawrence has stressed, 'class' talk was often used to make claims about

'ordinariness' or about particular gender identities, and as Amy Whipple's analysis of letters sent to Enoch Powell in the aftermath of his 'rivers of blood' speech in 1968 suggested, claims to a particular 'class' identity or 'ordinary' identity could also be deeply bound up with racial identity.[64] 'Class' talk did not necessarily reveal a stable, deeply-felt 'class' identity; more complex claims about gender or race could be at play.

There were two interviewees from among the '100 Families' baby boomers who gave more certain and confident responses to questions about their own 'class': Robert Brotherstone, who said, 'I always regarded meself as working class', and Kathleen Murray.[65] Murray (b. 1948) was a school cleaner, seconded to work for her trade union four days a week; Brotherstone (b. 1957) was a lorry driver. Both were East Enders, with networks of family in the area. These two exceptions suggest that where 'working-class' was a powerful identity, not marked by hesitance or ambivalence, it was likely to be linked to a community with a strong self-identity. In the case of Brotherstone, there was also a masculine pride in working for a living. This fits with Jon Lawrence's re-study of the *Affluent worker* interviews, conducted in Luton in 1963, which suggested that gender was often important in 'class' talk; men wanted to lay claim to a certain masculine identity (as a worker, a provider, an individual), which could be indicated through claiming to be 'working-class.'[66] For Murray, a sense of having had to fight against feelings of inferiority to white-colla   led in her as a child, and the experience of trade unionism, were key. Where such factors were attenuated (and this was increasingly the case in postwar Britain, with slum clearance, suburbanization, and from 1979 the decline of trade unionism), people's sense of 'belonging' to and pride in the 'working class' was likely to be less sure.

The second important theme which emerged from answers to questions about class was the importance of 'ordinariness.'[67] For some, the language of 'working classness' could be mobilized to claim 'ordinariness:' when Mrs J. Morris (b. 1951, a shorthand secretary and typist in the north west) was asked what 'class' she belonged to, she said, 'I suppose we're just ordinary – basically, we're working class.'[68] But for others, it was 'middle classness' which could be invoked to suggest 'ordinariness:' when Doreen Angus (b. 1940, working as a cook with managerial responsibilities and married to a telephone technician in eastern Engla   lass,' the following exchange ensued:

> *What class or social group would you say you belong to yourself?*
> Middle class.
> *And what sort of people live in your neighbourhood?*
> Middle class.
> *Do you think Roy [interviewee's husband] thinks of himself as a member of a class?*
> Mmm, just middle class, just ordinary.[69]

'Ordinariness,' again, emerged as a prominent theme in Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst's study of

Manchester in the late 1990s, as well as in Savage's re-study of the *Affluent worker* interviews, which found that 'ordinariness' was 'a means of refusing both a stigmatized, pathologized identity […] at the same time as it refuses a privileged position.'[70] In several of the '100 Families' interviews, claims to be 'working-class' or 'middle-class' seemed to function similarly to claim membership of an 'ordinary' majority.

'Ordinary' seemed often to denote belonging to a large group of 'normal' people in the middle of society. Elaine Nelson said that her neighborhood was 'working-class,' but drew the boundaries of that class widely: '[w]e have teachers on this side and two policemen on this side and a health visitor next door but one.' She suggested that 'you haven't really got a working class and a middle class now, have you?' There were 'people that don't work at all' at the bottom, and people on a 'fantastic' salary at the top, and in the middle, 'anyone who has to work for a living is working class really, to some degree.'[71] Many others agreed that there was a wealthy, powerful elite above, and a 'non-working-class' below, and that anyone in the middle was probably 'ordinary' or, as Gerald Handley (b. 1950, a joinery manager in a firm making windows, doors and staircases in the south east) suggested, perhaps 'working/middle class.'[72]

Several interviewees suggested that the increase in educational opportunities and white-collar occupations in postwar Britain had blurred the importance of white-collar status as a marker of the 'middle class.'[73] As cleaner and trade unionist Kathleen Murray pointed out, 'when I was a teenager […] working class was basically what they called manual workers, and not white collar workers. As the working class are believing in education more, the white collar structures [are] coming into it.'[74] Barbara Hirbert (born 1946 and living in the north west), who had done administrative work in a range of organizations, from a building society to local government, was unwilling to place herself at the bottom of society, so thought she must be 'middle-class;' but she mused, 'middle class at one time, didn't that used to be your doctors and professional people?'[75] These interviewees perceived an increasing break-down in the divide between blue and white-collar workers, as white-collar jobs expanded in postwar Britain. This seemed to blur yet further the sociologists' dividing lines between the 'working' and 'middle' classes. Simila ly, several interviewees suggested that 'class' divides were diminishing, though none thought that snobbishness or structures of inequality and privilege had disappeared entirely.[76] This led to an increasingly la   le' group in society.

Alongside 'ordinariness,' the other key theme which emerged in answers to questions about 'class' among this cohort was authenticity, or 'being yourself.' This was clear in answers to questions about whether it was possible to move class. Mrs Morris, like many of the respondents, thought immediately of the example of winning the pools, and suggested that while it might be *possible* to move classes, it would be 'very difficult to fit in:' 'I would like to live comfortably, but I'd still like to live in the environment that I wanted to live in, not because it was the done thing to do. But I think it must be hard […] people would be very envious but at the same time to move up, you're not in that

league at all.'[77] The life of a pools winner seemed almost unattractive, given that it might take you outside your own 'class' or 'community.' Many other interviewees emphasized above all that what was really important to them was that they would not want to 'change,' even if they did move classes.[78] Indeed, as Sam Friedman has suggested, the cost of social mobility, in terms of dislocation from one's identity and habitus, has generally been neglected by a society which has come to take 'meritocracy' and 'social mobility' as uncritically good – but such costs are often significant.[79]

When asked about whether they thought of people as belonging to social classes, many of the interviewees took this to refer to snobbishness, to looking up at or down on other people, to judging people by their 'class' rather than seeing them as 'individuals.' This was seen as a very negative trait. Lynn Bonilla (b. 1956, a clerical worker in the Post Office before becoming a mother, living in London), for example, said she did *not* think of people as belonging to 'classes:' '[i]f I get on with them, that's good enough for me.'[80] Bonilla said her mother did not think of herself as a member of a class, because it 'never bothered her, you know, the people next door having more than she had.'[81] Conversely, Jacqueline Robbins (b. 1959, living in the north west, a telephonist who had previously helped her husband manage his shop) said that her mother 'does tend to think along the lines that – the more money you've got, the better a person you are.'[82] 'Class' in this sense took place mostly in people's heads, and was an illegitimate way to view society: as Peter Coverley Jr. (b. 1950, a sound engineer living in the north west) said, 'classes do exist but in other people's minds […] the only time if ever affects you is what other people think you are.'[83] Snobbishness did have real effects in 1980s Britain, but almost all the '100 Families' interviewees denounced it as wrong.

Some of the interviewees from more typically 'middle-class' families struck other notes, however, when talking about 'classing' other people. This seemed to be more common in older generations. For example, Ann Tyler-Sadler (wife of George Sadler, b. 1929, head of infants in a primary school) said that she was 'middle class' because of her 'attitudes,' as well as background, schooling, her father's job (he was a diplomat), manners, speech and behaviour; 'it's how you regard yourself and your family, really. Where you went to school. I went to public school and I went to school in France. So I consider myself a cut above. That's it. I suppose. I don't care whether it's true or not, but that's how I think.' She spoke at length about guessing the class of the child
.[84] Similarly, Peter Coverley Jr. commented that his mother, the daughter of a headmaster, grew up in a family which saw itself as 'a pillar of the community', and which had instilled in her 'a certain attitude that even if she was prepared to deny any feelings of class that it would be there.' Coverley commented that his parents (both teachers) were 'lower middle class […] and certainly not well off at all,' but still had, in the 1950s and 1960s, a sense of their social position and duties to the poor: he perceived this philanthropic attitude as inflected by a 'naive snobbery,' as contradictory to the widespread aspiration to social egalitarianism even though it was relatively benign.[85] The instinct to 'class' people lingered on. A   -boomer, Mrs Schlarman, born in 1946, had a clerical job

after leaving grammar school a

ly a residential social worker, planning to do a social work degree. Schlarman said she tried to
think that she did not think of other people in terms of 'class,' 'but I'm sure you can't help it in some
ways, you know some people have less in material goods than you have […] however hard you try not
to, you do consider people a bit different, you know. But I don't think they're basically different.'[86]
Schlarman felt that she had absorbed while growing up the tendency to 'class' people; but it seems
significant that she too voiced the *aspiration* to a more socially egalitarian outlook.

For the baby-boomers, born in the immediate postwar decades, the normative experience was
to grow up to be better off than their parents; often their jobs were white collar rather than blue collar;
they had access to the resources of the welfare state from birth. These experiences seemed to lead
them to voice socially egalitarian attitudes; most denounced social snobbery and social divides; most
asserted the importance of authenticity, of not 'changing' in fundamentals; most wanted to claim
'ordinariness,' in contrast to visible elites (and sometimes to a workless 'underclass'). This was a
generation which rejected the class-bound society they thought had characterized pre-Second World
War Britain. And it was significant that these attitudes were visible even in the words of a
comfortably 'middle-class' woman like Mrs Schlarman.

In at seven of the responses from the younger generation in the '100 Families' study, a
different note was struck. These young people commented explicitly on cultural divides between
different 'classes.' Elaine Horsnell (b. 1964, doing administration for a large soft drinks company,
living in the east of England) defined the 'working class' by aspirations, suggesting 'there's a group
of people who are quite happy to be 'working class' and are quite happy to live in council
accommodation and/or cheap rented accommodation and to them things like having a colour TV and
material goods are very important;' the 'lower middle class' (in which she placed herself) 'consider it
important to have their own home and are then quite happy to wait for the things to go in it.' The
'upper middle class' were comfortable homeowners, while the 'upper classes' 'don't have to worry
about money at all.'[87] Richard Dowden (b. 1960, a graphic designer in the west midla   ) said that
people 'definitely' belonged to classes: 'you can just tell it from the way a person dresses. It's very
obvious from symbolic things', Though it was 'difficult' to unpick 'class,' it came down to 'a lot of
[…] things like type of job and income, style of clothes and the newspaper you read and the food you
eat and the house you live in.'[88] These interviewees talked more openly than the older generation
about the subtle, symbolic dividing lines of 'class' in 1980s Britain. Nevertheless, many who
identified these 'class' distinctions voiced their disapproval, saying they disliked 'classing' people,
even though it was to some extent inevitable.[89] More of this cohort had parents who had experienced
upward social mobility themselves; they did 'white collar' jobs, owned their homes and lived a
relatively comfortably lifestyle, often with the help of a dual income. T

consumption, accent and home that distinguished different social groups in late 1980s Britain, and about the difficulties of achieving the aspiration to entirely dismiss judgments made on the basis of these lifestyle differences.

Among the older, more 'working-class' interviewees from the '100 Families' study, some also identified 'class' with certain values and standards, particularly with hard work and self-reliance. Kathleen Lunan (b. 1916, a seamstress and factory worker in the north west) said that 'the working class have been brought up to work and to believe that it was the right thing to do – to work and if you weren't a conscientious worker you were rubbish. So I've always worked […] and so I reckon I've earned my keep.'[90] Here, Lunan displayed a self-conscious pride in living up to the values she identified with her working-class upbringing. Others saw these as outdated attitudes, though: Geoffrey Turner (b. 1929, working in the pensions industry in the south east) said that for his father, 'real' work meant manual work, and commented, 'it would be very unkind to say that he was Alf Garnett, but you know, he thought sort of work had a virtue, you know, real work as he would call it' (Garnett was the old-fashioned, working-class bigot in *Till Death Us Do Part* (BBC1, 1965-1975).[91] And among the baby boom generation, several interviewees mentioned a lack of ambition or aspiration among their parents' generation, implying that this was a negative part of their 'working-class' heritage which they had moved away from. Rosemary Vincent (b. 1945, working in personnel for a college of further education, planning to do a diploma in management studies, living in the north west) explained that 'I was brought up to believe I was working class and I always would be, and anybody who has a title or a good job, was somebody that was far superior than I was;' but 'as you do grow up and you come to meet these people, they're all people, and I think too much emphasis is placed on somebody being superior to somebody else.'[92] These interviewees suggested that a sense of 'knowing your place' (at the bottom) had been instilled in them during childhood; but as they grew up, their beliefs had changed profoundly, and this deferential attitude was now seen as wrong and outdated.

Many of the Mass Observers in 1990 felt that the 'chosen' and 'given' aspects of class coexisted. There were still what John Major called in his 1999 autobiography 'subtle calibrations of scorn,' and still structured inequalities in British society.[93] How other people viewed you still mattered. As one Mass Observer wrote, 'alt   lass' is not used as extensively as it was at one time, social differences are not as great as they ever were but perhaps more subtle. Accents and dress are not so important but the sort of home you have is perhaps more indicative of your social status.'[94] 'Class' was, thus, *not* simply a matter of choice and agency. Comparing the responses of Mass Observers to directives on the subject of 'class' in 1948 and 'social divisions' in 1990, Mike Savage has argued that in 1948, many of those identifying as 'middle-class' saw themselves as such because they 'belonged […] through ties of birth, through having appropriate manners, and other social ties:' class identity was 'given.'[95] In 1990, by contrast, responses were longer and more autobiographical, showing, Savage argued, that 'class' was now 'presented as a matter of agency.'[96]

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But Mass Observers in 1990 generally displa   lass' was an identity but *also* a set of boxes into which other people placed you.

In addition, Savage suggested that Mass Observers in 1990 also drew far more on public narratives around class, particula ly 'social scientific ideas,' demonstrating greater permeation of sociological and market research categories into people's lives, and a greater tendency of the relatively well-educated Mass Observers to use 'class talk reflexively to show their sophistication – very different to the Mass Observers of 1948 who saw talking about class as a sign of vulgarity.'[97] But a closer look suggests that many were more skeptical of, or even hostile to, the class language and categories of sociology and market research than Savage suggested. Even in Savage's own sample, one Mass Observer recorded that her daughter (a   ) had said: 'the one thing which annoys me is terms like 'social class A B C1,''[98] while another wrote that: 'as I have a degree in sociology, I suppose I should have a clear picture of what the terms middle class and working class mean,' but bemoaned the 'differences of definition' found among academic sociologists.[99] Further examples of this can be drawn from among the more 'educated' and 'middle-class' interviewees from the '100 Families' study, like Martin Byrne (b. 1939, a chemist who had recently started his own management consultancy), who insisted that class 'doesn't really feature la

le-class identity based on technocratic abilities and facility with the language of class. It is evident that, as he has suggested, the social sciences and market research had left something of a 'footprint' on British society by the 1980s; many people were aware of 'class' terms and market research terms. But that footprint was not necessarily deep.

Several Observers found 'class' a difficult subject, commenting on the 'emotive connections,' the 'innuendo and misconception' that accompanied 'class' talk.[101] One (male, b. 1945, an actor and author) said he found the subject 'baffling', explaining that he identified as 'working-class,' but, as a gay activist in the 1980s

> had to endure with every other male volunteer the label of 'white middle-class male' which is used in sneering contempt by the more strident of feminist lesbians […] At what point in my life did I make the transition? Was it by going to college? […] Maybe as a published author, or even as an actor that made me middle-class. But I live in a bedist! I am unemployed for long periods of time! I don't go on holiday to yuppie places. I don't aspire to a comfortable lifestyle. I don't know what this kind of middle-class means!!!

Observers like these resisted 'class' language as a tool that others used to classify them. In the case of this man, he suggested that identity politics and living a bohemian artistic lifestyle placed him somewhat 'outside' the usual class categories.

Indeed, popular culture seemed to appear more often as a source in Mass Observers' discussions of 'class' than sociology. There were more references to popular culture than to sociological or market research categories, with mentions of the 'classic John Cleese sketch of 'I k   lace,'' Audrey Forbes-Hamilton in *To the Manor Born*, *Till Death Us Do Part*, and satirical drama *Brass*.[102] Class was something to be laughed at or satirized; in fact, distaste with 'class talk' was more prevalent than a confident, reflexive use of sociological class categories. As one Mass Observer (female, b. 1941) wrote, 'I a   I don't know why, perhaps it is because I know people with the 'little Englander' attitude who talk like Alf Garnett and I can't stand their company.'[103] Like P. N. Furbank, many found 'class' an 'uneasy, enervating, somehow murky topic.'[104] Many people still disliked talking about 'class' in the late 1980s and in 1990, because it was associated powerfully with snobbishness and hierarchy, two things which were widely criticized in late twentieth-century Britain. In fact, the Mass Observers, though they were not a representative sample, shared many of the traits of the '100 Families' sample, in particular the rejection of social snobbery and deference, and the aspirations to a 'classless,' socially egalitarian outlook, making comments such as: 'I t   ly the way people wish to identify themselves that makes for class […] I always respond to people as individuals, not as types'; or 'I hope I treat people as people regardless of their rank.'[105]

There was also evidence of an attachment among many Mass Observers to authenticity, to not 'changing.' This came out particularly in discussions of housing. The twentieth century saw private renting decline, council housing rise and then fall, and homeownership increase from 31 per cent of homes in 1931 to 67 per cent by 1991, given a major boost by the 'Right to Buy' from 1980.[106] From the interwar period to the 1960s, slum clearance dispersed many to suburbs and new towns.[107] Country houses were no longer aristocratic homes by the end of the century, but were National Trust properties held for the people as part of Britain's national heritage, or broken into flats or offices.[108] In the interwar period, homeownership was strongly associated with the middle classes.[109] The image of terraced, inner-city streets as the quintessential site of 'working-class' life became fixed in the popular imagination by a range of cultural productions in the 1950s and 1960s, from Richard Hoggart's *The uses of literacy* (1957), to *Coronation Street* (ITV 1960 onwards), to Roger Mayne's photographs of Southam Street, London, in the late 1950s.[110] This was disrupted by the spread of working-class homeownership, which led increasingly to what the *Affluent worker* study in the 1960s called 'normative convergence.'[111] This meant, as Ray Pahl described on the Isle of Sheppey in the early 1980s that many 'working-class' homeowners were behaving and consuming in far more 'middle-class' patterns.[112]

Yet suburbanization, homeownership and its accoutrements did *not* generally mean that people felt they had straightforwardly 'become middle-class.' One Mass Observer (female, b. 1946 into a family of 'ordinary working folk') said that as a child, 'we didn't own property which is

something I associate with being middle class.' But 'nowadays,' she commented, 'more people own their own houses and consider themselves working class as both have to be employed in most cases to pay for the mortgage.'[113] Another Observer (female, b. 1930) bought her council house in Middlesex, in the early 1980s and wrote in 1990 that '[s]adly,' some of those who had done the same 'changed overnight into "snobs". One such lady told me to remember that now I am "Upper Middle Class."' But this Mass Observer refused to accept the injunction, writing, '[w]hatever is that? How can I change my personality overnight?'[114] These Observers suggested that homeownership was no longer the preserve of the 'middle classes.' But they resisted the idea that homeownership straightforwardly made 'working-class' people 'middle-class,' and denounced such pretention in favour of authenticity.

The decades from the 1940s to the 1970s were the golden age of social mobility, though, as John Goldthorpe showed, this came about largely because there was an expansion of white collar, professional and managerial jobs, making more 'room at the top.'[115] Ben Jones has suggested that 'some children from working class families might find themselves doing non-manual work without this having an appreciable effect on their sense of working class identity.'[116] But often things were more complicated than Jones suggested. The widespread attachment to authenticity, to 'not changing,' meant retaining pride in one's roots and background. But not 'trying to be something you're not' meant acknowledging your circumstances had changed. These two things could sit sometimes uneasily alongside one another. Thus '100 Families' interviewee Sian Hubbard (b. 1967, studying politics at Swansea University) commented on the reactions of her parents to their upward social mobility (her father was a lecturer): 'Mum sees herself as being working class. She just refuses to accept that she isn't […] I think dad sort of reluctantly accepts that because he went to University and because he's a lecturer he's considered to be middle class. But I don't think they're happy with that at all.'[117] Many would probably have agreed with John Prescott, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party and a former ship's steward, when he said on BBC Radio 4's *Today* program in 1996 that he was 'middle-class' because 'my roots, my background and the way I act is working class, but *it would be hypocritical* to say I'm anything else than middle class now.'[118]

Conclusion

Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst argued that their Manchester interviews in 1997-99 suggested that by the end of the twentieth century there was a 'lack of a clear difference between middle-class and working-class self-identities,' with both terms used to claim membership of a central mass of 'ordinary people.'[119] This view of society seemed to be shared by many of the '100 Families' interviewees, who wanted to see themselves as 'ordinary,' and who took 'seeing people as members of a class' to mean snobbishness or deference. 'Class' was frequently taken to mean pretentiousness and/or inferiority – and this was a highly negative meaning. Many asserted that they themselves had, or at least aspired to, a 'classless,' socially egalitarian outlook, and were neither snobbish nor

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deferential. 'K   lace' was not seen as acceptable. This did not mean that there was a widespread lack of concern about inequality in la

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class' affected a person's 'opportunities in Britain today' either 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot.'[120] In a 1992 survey of Basildon, 60 per cent of respondents thought class had a strong influence on life chances.[121] Concerns about structures of inequality in society were more often couched, however, in the Mass Observers' testimonies, not in the language of 'class' but rather using terms like 'privilege,' 'elites' or the 'old school tie' network.[122]

From one perspective it is possible to argue that Thatcher was correct in her assessment that most people did not think of British society in terms of 'class' by the late 1980s. But in her dismissal of inequality as a problem for society, she differed from the majority of British people. The work of Mike Savage and Jon Lawrence on the *Affluent worker* interviews of the 1960s, and on other social scientific surveys of 'class' before the 1980s, suggests that the focus in the late 1980s on ordinariness and authenticity, and the widespread ambivalence about 'class,' were not brought about principally by a decade of 'Thatcherism;' both have traced longer continuities in popula   lass.'[123] As the left-wing thinkers associated with *Marxism Today*'s 'new times' project emphasized in the late 1980s, Thatcher was not the architect of all the changes associated with the 1980s, though, they thought, Thatcherism 'had a much stronger sense of the epochal changes than the Left.'[124] Thatcher encouraged and played on existing sentiments when she sidelined 'class' in her rhetoric. She did not create them. Tony Blair, perhaps because much of New Labour's imagery was shaped by research using focus groups, often echoed in the 1990s the sentiments expressed by the men and women studied in this article, capturing some of the complexity of attitudes to 'class' in late twentieth century Britain, as when he suggested in a speech in 1999 that what he called the 'new middle class' 'will include millions of people *who see themselves as working class* but whose ambitions are far broader than those of their parents and their grandparents.'[125] The 'New Times' theorists of *Marxism Today* identified real a

lizing – as Alex Campsie argues, this may well have been because of their privileged, metropolitan position, as well as the commercial desire to make a dramatic splash. In fact, the trends they identified had not progressed as completely or as far as they implied; the place of 'class' in British society and culture in this period remained complex and often contradictory.

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[1] Reprinted in Urry, 'The End of Organised Capitalism'.

[2] Hall, 'The Great Moving Right Show'; see also Hall, 'Thatcherism -- a New Stage?'; Hall and Jacques, *The Politics of* Thatcherism; Hall, 'No Light at the End of the Tunnel'.

[3] Hall and Jacques, 'Introduction', 11.

[4] See Roper, 'Slipping out of View'. The latter could be said of Cannadine, *Class in Britain.*

[5] See Lawrence and Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, 'Margaret Thatcher and the Decline of Class Politics'.

[6] Thatcher, Granada TV *World in Action* special, 31 January 1975, Margaret Thatcher Foundation website, http://www.margaretthatcher.org/speeches/displaydocument.asp?docid=102450 [subsequent references will be given in the form MTF 102450]; see also, e.g., Thatcher, "My Kind of Tory Party," *Daily Telegraph,* 30 Jan. 1975, MTF 102600. Zweig, *The New Acquisitive Society*, 26.

[7] Thatcher, speech to Parliamentary Press Gallery, 26 Jan. 1977, Thatcher CD ROM, document 77_013.

[8] Thatcher, speech to Conservative Central Council, 17 March 1988, MTF 107200.

[9] Conservative Party Election Broadcast, 7 June 1983, MTF 105382; see also Haigron, 'Targeting "Essex Man" and "C2 Wives".

[10] Kinnock, Untitled, in *Fabian Society* ed., 'Labour's Choice'.

[11] Philip Gould, "Communications review commissioned by the Campaigns and Communications Director of the Labour Party," 22 Dec. 1985, in the papers of Philip Gould, People's Museum, Manchester.

[12] Neil Kinnock, speech at Stoke-on-Trent, 12 Sept. 1983; Neil Kinnock, *The Times*, 18 July 1983; both quoted in Westla   */www.britishpoliticalspeech.org/speech-archive.htm?speech=193*; see Geoffrey Smith, "The Labour Party Conference," *The Times*, 30 Sept. 1987.

[14] Gould, *The Unfinished Revolution,* 3-4.

[15] Blair, *A Journey*, 8.

[16] Giddens, *The Third Way*, 35 ff.; Giddens, *Beyond Left and Right*; Beck, *Risk Society*; Beck 'Beyond Class and Nation'.

[17] Särlvik and Crewe, *Decade of Dealignment*; see also Crewe, Särlvik, and Alt, 'Partisan De-Alignment in Britain'; Dunleavy, 'The Political Implications of Sectoral Cleavages'; Dunleavy, 'The Urban Basis of Political Alignment'.

[18] For the former, see, eg. Gold   ldthorpe, Llewellyn, and Payne, *Social Mobility and Class Structure*; Erikson and Goldthorpe, *The Constant Flux*. See for commentary, Devine and Savage, 'The Cultural Turn, Sociology and Class Analysis'.

[19] Pakulski and Waters, *The Death of Class*, 4.

[20] Rodgers, *Age of Fracture*.

[21] Skeggs, *Formations of Class and Gender*.

[22] See Stedman Jones, 'Why Is the Labour Party in a Mess?'; Lawrence, *Speaking for the People*; Lawrence and Taylor, eds., *Party, State and Society*; Fielding, 'Looking for the "New Political History".

[23] See Cruddas, 'After New Labour', 25, 27; Jones, *Chavs*, 98.

[24] See Jones, *The Working Class in Mid Twentieth-Century England*, 28; Todd, *The People*, 338.

[25] Thatcher, speech to Parliamentary Press Gallery, 26 Jan. 1977, Thatcher CD ROM, document 77_013.

[26] Mandler, *The English National Character*, 210-13, 222-3.

[27] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

[28] Mandler, *The English National Character*, 196, 205, 207-8.

[29] 'The British character, perceptions of its nature', MORI poll commissioned by National Motivation Week, in the papers of Neil Kinnock, Churchill Archives Centre, Cambridge, KNNK 2/1/100 (CAC). MORI poll, field   -March 1988, 1,902 adults (over 18) in 175 constituency sampling points in Great Britain.

[30] Roodhouse, ''Fish-and-Chip In   'Observing the Sovereign;
Bernhard Fulda, 'The Market Place of Political Opinions: Public Opinion Polling and Its Publics in
Transnational Perspective, 1930-1950,' paper given at CRASSH, Cambridge, 2011; Beers, 'Whose
Opinion?'.
[31] See Gallup, *The Sophisticated Poll Watcher's Guide*; Worcester, *British Public Opinion*.
[32] Crick, 'The English and the British'.
[33] See on this subject: Aughey, 'Englishness as Class'; Schopflin, 'Englishness: Citizenship, Ethnicity
and Class'.
[34] See Russell, *Looking North*.
[35] See Mandler, *History and national life*, 93 ff.
[36] Mandler, *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home*, 401.
[37] Delap, *Knowing Their Place*, 234.
[38] Alex Hamilton, 'Driving them up the fast lane', *Guardian*, 28 Dec. 1981, p. 9.
[39] Colin Watson, 'Placing persons', *Guardian*, 13 Dec. 1979.
[40] Cooper, *Class*.
[41] Bradley, *The English Middle Classes Are Alive and Kicking*.
[42] See, eg. Lewis and Maude, *The English Middle Classes*; Cannadine, *Class*; James, *The Middle
Class*.
[43] See also Deverson and Lindsay, *Voices from the Middle Class*; Hutber, *The Decline and Fall of the
Middle Class*.
[44] Furbank, *Unholy Pleasure*, 3, 123.
[45] *Gallup Political Index*, 261, May 1982.
[46] *Gallup Political Index*, 261, May 1982.
[47] *Gallup Political Index*, 368, April 1991.
[48] *Gallup Political Index*, 383, July 1992.
[49] *Gallup Political Index*, 366, Oct. 1987.
[50] Oliver Pritchett 'A touch or two of class', May 1982, in the papers of Neil Kinnock, L216 b 76 26
(3).
[51] The sample here includes eighteen responses to the summer 1990 directive on "social divisions,"
digitized by the "Observing the 80s" project at the University of Sussex:
http://blogs.sussex.ac.u
Sussex.
[52] See: Popular History Group, 'Popular Memory: Theory, Politics, Method'.
[53] Transcribed, digitized and anonymized by the UK Data Service as "Families, Social Mobility and
Ageing, an In   1 A   -1988, SN 4938, UK Data Service, Qualidata (UKDS).
Eighty-seven respondents came from a "middle generation" of men and women aged between thirty
and fifty-five; this "middle generation" was stratified by occupation to give a representative sample of
the UK population as a whole; in most families, one or two others, from an older or younger
generation, were also interviewed. There was a team of seven interviewers, led by Catherine Itzin and
Michele Abendstern. See: Thompson, Itzin, and Abendstern, *I Don't Feel Old*; Thompson, 'Family
Myth, Models, and Denials'.
[54] On the history of MO, see: Jeffery, *Mass-Observation*; Moran, 'Mass-Observation, Market
Research, and the Birth of the Focus Group'; Hubble, *Mass Observation and Everyday Life*; Hinton,
The Mass Observers.
[55] Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain*; Todd, 'Affluence, Class and Crown Street'; Todd,
The People; Lawrence, 'Social-Science Encounters and the Negotiation of Difference'.
[56] Hinton, *Nine Wartime Lives*, 17.
[57] Lawrence, 'Social-Science Encounters and the Negotiation of Difference'.
[58] Savage, 'Changing Social Class Identities in Post-War Britain', para. 5.1.
[59] "100 Families," interviewee 101, Henry Offord; 150, Michael Wall; 121, Jacqueline Robbins; 102,
Janet O'Farrell.
[60] "100 Families," interviewee 099, Elaine Nelson. See also: 152, Terrence Walter; 038, Peter

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Coverley; 012, Lynn Bonilla; 066 Barbara Hirbert.

[61] Savage, Bagnall, and Longhurst, 'Ordinary, Ambivalent and Defensive', 875. Of all the respondents, 33 per cent were unwilling to identify themselves with a class, 46 per cent saw themselves as middle class, and 21 per cent as working class. See also Bradley, *Gender and Power in the Workplace*, 146.

[62] See Jones, *The Working Class in Mid Twentieth-Century England*, 28; Todd, *The People*, 338; Jones, *Chavs*, 33.

[63] "100 Families," interviewee 009, Margaret Beckwith.

[64] Lawrence, 'Social-Science Encounters and the Negotiation of Difference' passim; Amy Whipple, 'Revisiting the "Rivers of Blood" Controversy'.

[65] "100 Families," interviewee 018, Robert Brotherstone; 095, Kathleen Murray.

[66] Lawrence, 'Social-Science Encounters and the Negotiation of Difference' esp. 16 ff.

[67] See, e.g., "100 Families," interviewee 102, Janet O Farrell; 101, Henry Offord.

[68] "100 Families," interviewee 093, Mrs J. Morris.

[69] "100 Families," interviewee 001, Doreen Angus.

[70] Savage, 'Working-Class Identities in the 1960s'.

[71] "100 Families," interviewee 099, Elaine Nelson.

[72] "100 Families," interviewee 063, Gerald Handley. See also: 152, Terrence Walter; 147, Rosemary Vincent; 038, Peter Coverley Jr.

[73] "100 Families," interviewee 095, Kathleen Murray; 093, Mrs J. Morris; 066, Barbara Hirbert.

[74] "100 Families," interviewee 095, Kathleen Murray.

[75] "100 Families," interviewee 066, Barbara Hirbert.

[76] "100 Families," interviewee 060, Margret Hallum; 079, Mr Knight; 095, Kathleen Murray.

[77] "100 Families," interviewee 093, Mrs J. Morris.

[78] "100 Families," interviewee 001, Doreen Angus; 121, Jacqueline Robbins; 023, Sue Burton; 011, Derek Benjamin; 141 Steve Tillett.

[79] Friedman, 'The Price of the Ticket'.

[80] "100 Families," interviewee 012, Lynn Bonilla. See also: 101, Henry Offord; 066, Barbara Hirbert; 060 Margret Hallum.

[81] "100 Families," interviewee 012, Lynn Bonilla. See also: 101, Henry Offord; 150, Michael Wall.

[82] "100 Families," interviewee 121, Jacqueline Robbins. See also: 001, Doreen Angus; 023, Sue Burton.

[83] "100 Families," interviewee 038, Peter Coverley Jr.; see also: 079, Mr Knight; 121, Jacqueline Robbins; 099, Elaine Nelson; 095, Kathleen Murray; 147, Rosemary Vincent; 150, Michael Wall.

[84] "100 Families," interviewee 121, Ann Tyler-Sadler.

[85] "100 Families," interviewee 038, Peter Coverley Jr.

[86] "100 Families," interviewee 128, Mrs Schlarman.

[87] "100 Families," interviewee 068, Elaine Horsnell.

[88] "100 Families," interviewee 052, Richard Dowden. See also: 065, Cla   ley; 061, Samantha Hallum.

[89] "100 Families," interviewee 021, Helen Byrne. See also: 041, Robert Crewe; 070, Sian Hubbard.

[90] "100 Families," interviewee 086, Kathleen Lunan.

[91] "100 Families," interviewee 145, Geoffrey Turner. See also: 085, Hilda Lovejoy; 149, Margaret Hall.

[92] "100 Families," interviewee 147, Rosemary Vincent; see also: 141, Steve Tillett; 099, Elaine Nelson; 139, Deborah Temple.

[93] Major, *John Major*, xxii.

[94] MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, G226, female. See also: A 1473, female; R1719, male.

[95] Savage, 'Changing Social Class Identities in Post-War Britain' para 4.13.

[96] Ibid., para 5.4, 5.8; *Identities and Social Change*, 242.

[97] Savage, 'Changing Social Class Identities in Post-War Britain' para 5.5, 5.6.

[98] Ibid. para 5.3; MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, A2168, female.

[99] Savage, 'Changing Social Class Identities in Post-War Britain', para 5.5.

[100] "100 Families," interviewee 020, Martin Byrne; when pressed about his own class, Byrne said "I suppose it must be B, which is professional and middle-class." See also: 088, Juliet Merry.

[101] MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, A2168, female; A1706, female. See also: R1719, male; B1426, male.

[102] MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, R1719, male; the "I know my place" sketch was first shown on David Frost's satirical comedy show *The Frost Report* (BBC, 7 April 1966). MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, R470, male; *To the Manor Born* (BBC1, 1979-1981). MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, W632, female; and A18, male; *Till Death Us Do Part* (BBC1, 1965-1975); it was continued in *Till Death...* (ITV, 1981), and then in *In Sickness and in Health* (BBC, 1985-1992). MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, A883, male; *Brass* (ITV, 1983-4; Channel 4, 1990).

[103] MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, W632, female. See also L1002, female.

[104] Furbank, *Unholy Pleasure*, 123. See also Davie, *These the Companions*, 2-3.

[105] MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, B1106, male; C1191, female. See also: C1191, female; H1806, male; H260, female; A1646, female.

[106] Holmans, 'Housing', 487; see also Saunders, *A Nation of Home Owners*. On council housing, see Jones, *The Working Class in Mid Twentieth-Century England*, ch. 2, 'Place: the social geography of working class housing'.

[107] See Clapson, *Invincible Green Suburbs*.

[108] See Mandler, *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home*. The latter change was commented on, e.g., by MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, R1321, female.

[109] See "100 Families," interviewee 009, Margaret Beckwith; Vaughan, *Something in Linoleum*, 61.

[110] Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*; Dyer, ed. *Coronation Street*; Brooke, 'Revisiting Southam Street'; Alan Johnson grew up nearby and commented on Mayne's photography in his autobiography: Johnson, *This Boy*.

[111] Gold

-5, 251-3. See also the description in Gilbert, 'Growing Pains', 52.

[113] MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, G218, female; her foster father was an orthopedic cobbler and her foster mother a metallurgist in a factory.

[114] MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, H260, female.

[115] Goldthorpe, Llewellyn, and Payne, *Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain*. Manual workers as a proportion of the British workforce declined from 64.2 per cent in 1951 to 37.7 per cent in 1991; the proportion of the workforce in the higher and lower professions increased from 14.7 to 19.2 per cent, management and administration from 9.1 to 15.1 per cent, and clerical work from 14.8 to 15.4 per cent: see Gallie, 'The Labour Force', 288.

[116] Jones, *The Working Class in Mid Twentieth-Century England*, 199.

[117] "100 Families," interviewee 070, Sian Hubbard.

[118] Adonis and Pollard, *A Class Act*, 5 [emphasis added]; see also Prescott and Davies, *Prezza*.

[119] Savage, Bagnall, and Longhurst, 'Individualization and Cultural Distinction', 115.

[120] Brook, ed. *British Social Attitudes Cumulative Sourcebook*, section P1.

[121] Hayes and Hudson, *Basildon*, 22. See also Crewe, 'Values: The Crusade That Failed'.

[122] See, among the Mass Observers, MO directive on social divisions, spring 1990, H260, female; L1002, female; B1215, female; R470, male.

[123] Savage, 'Revisiting the Affluent Worker Study'; Lawrence, 'Social-Science Encounters and the Negotiation of Difference'; Lawrence, 'Class, 'Affluence' and the Study of Everyday Life'.

[124] Hall and Jacques, 'Introduction', 15.

[125] Jill Sherman, 'Blair pins Labour's future on the new Woking class,' *The Times*, 15 Jan. 1999 [emphasis added]. The reference to Woking evoked Gould's description of the 'new class' he had perceived growing up in Woking, in Surrey.

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