

**THE PERFORMANCE OF PLACE AND COMEDY
EXPLORED THROUGH POSTDRAMATIC AND
POPULAR FORMS WITH REFERENCE TO THE
STAGING OF 'A GOOD NEET AHT'**

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Abstract

The journey begins with a mapping of the terrain of praxis in a discussion of autoethnography, popular performance and the postdramatic. A parallel discussion on place and class draws on the tradition of Cultural Studies. These provide the framework for the analysis of the performance of *A Good Neet Aht* which is also supported by audience response surveys. The results show a strong sense of place can be engendered through performance. Moreover, this particular sense of place is imbued with class identity and its cultural associations, specifically, comedy. What emerges is a new performance form of contemporary relevance of collaborative meaning making involving place, performer and audience. This self-reflective journey has at its centre the locale of the former mining village of Sharlston in West Yorkshire where I spent most of my childhood. Therefore, the methodological approach to this exploration of place and comedy utilises autoethnography. This autoethnographical method was chosen as it situates the researcher at the centre of the research recognising that the cultural milieu the researcher operates in can affect outcomes. The research process involved creating a performance drawing on the influence of northern comedians and their material as intertextual elements amidst an autobiographical investigation of the performance of identity as it is shaped by place. The performance consists of autobiographical material relating to family members; my experience of being seen by others as 'a northerner'; archive film material of northern comics; and the performance of stand-up. The methodology has involved documenting the whole performance and the thesis refers to selected video clips as part of the analysis. Within the text there are hyperlinks to scenes from recordings of performances and exploratory studio sessions. These scenes can also be found on an accompanying DVD to this thesis.

Curtain up: The journey begins



Image 1: Les [Dawson](#) (REX, 2012)

‘There was a time in the formative years of the Music Hall when certain humourists would walk on to a podium wearing a red nose and blowing raspberries at the audience in a feeble effort to glean a titter. They were, of course, on reflection, third rate, inferior performers ultimately destined for the attic of obscurity. Tonight, I hope to enhance my claim as a versatile, nay, intellectual performer.’ (Green, 2017, p. 5)

1. Beginnings: mapping out the journey

'It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever' (Alan Plater in Wales, 2006, p. ix)

Autoethnography: beginnings

I was born in 1963 in the front bedroom of 14 Laflands Lane, Ryhill – a small village on the western side of the West/South Yorkshire boundary. Although officially in West Yorkshire and, therefore, under the local government auspices of Wakefield, Ryhill is in fact closer to Barnsley in the south. I lived here until six years old at which time the family moved to Sharlston, five miles north and deeper into West Yorkshire. This is where the journey begins.

What follows is an account of a journey through place, memory and identity that was captured in an eighty-minute performance piece *A Good Neet Aht* (AGNA). The journey continues but here are some important sites or foundations that have been visited along the way.

1.1 Aims and objectives

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the question: can place be performed? In pursuit of this aim the objectives will include a practical element consisting of: a studio-based exploration of place using an autoethnographic model; the creation of a contemporary performance of place through a re-examination and staging of popular performance material and strategies; and a final written analysis of the practical element.

The study has its roots in an initial interest in stand-up comedy and whether or not the inception and performance of stand-up comedy was contingent on place. The genesis of this idea came from a conference paper I delivered in 2009 at De Montfort University's *Playing For Laughs* conference. The paper entitled *There was this black Yorkshireman: the black comic experience in the North* (Green, 2008) examined the context of the work of black comedian Charlie Williams. Williams was from Royston, South Yorkshire, some three miles from Ryhill; and was a friend of my father's. The

exploration of the link between stand-up comedy and place was approached through a practice as research methodology and it soon became clear that the focus was shifting to place and performance (see Chapter 2: Methodology). The practice element was designed to combine the various strands of this research outlined below: that is, to place them in the crucible of performance, a living/live process. In terms of place and performance it evokes WH Auden's observation that 'in grasping the character of a society, as in judging the character of an individual, no documents, statistics, "objective" measurements can ever compete with the single intuitive glance' (in Hoggart, 2009, p. xvi). The performance I have made is understood as that 'single intuitive glance'. The glance, here, is thrown towards the North of England.

The research brings together several strands of study in the field of performance. At the core of this study lies a practical exploration of performance and place.

1.2 Autoethnography

Definitions of autoethnography shift slightly depending on the core discipline within which the researcher is operating. Highlighted here are the most pertinent definitions for this study. Tessa Muncey posits that 'because autoethnography has such a wide array of textual practice, it is impossible and undesirable to arrive at a single definition'. She selects four definitions that concur with her own practice. They are:

1. An autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural.
2. An ethnography that includes the researcher's vulnerable self, emotions, body and spirit and produces evocative stories that create the effect of reality; and one that seeks fusion between social science and literature. It also questions the notion of a coherent, individual self.
3. A self-narrative that critiques the situations of self with others in social contexts.
4. The poetic essay...an imaginative construction whose truth lies not in its facticity but in its evocative potentiality (2010, pp. 29-32).

John Freeman suggests that 'autoethnography is a way of researching and writing that seeks to connect the personal to the cultural, placing the self at all times within a social context'. Importantly, for this study, he continues 'the self is constructed by the social milieu and bound up with its surrounding culture'(2010, p. 181). By its very nature, therefore, autoethnography becomes an interactive research tool involving other people, their culture and the host society. The practical element of this study engages with the 'evocative potentiality' of autoethnography in constructing a 'poetic essay' for the stage, connecting 'the personal to the cultural' in pursuit of an exploration of performing place. Moreover, the practical exploration of place here questions the 'coherent, individual self' and the ambiguities that are inherent in a 'sense of place' (see below) and any resulting identity.

This particular study into the relationship with place, comedy and performance necessarily emphasises the performance-based aspects of a particular culture. It therefore follows that performative qualities of autoethnography, which can lead to 'a deeper critical understanding with others of the ways in which our lives intersect with larger sociocultural pains and privileges' (Spry, 2011, p. 51) provide a suitable vehicle for the exploration of the above relationship. Mike Pearson, echoing Muncey's 'evocative potentiality', sees the advantage of such performances as stimulating and eliciting 'other stories, and stories about stories. It catalyses personal reflection and the desire on the part of the listener not only to reveal and insert her own memories, but also to revisit communal experiences' (2006, p. 22)

Employing autoethnography as a research paradigm has been criticised as self-indulgent and even narcissistic. Ethnographer Ashleigh Sanduliak suggests there is also a tension between this method and traditional or more established models of academic research. For example, autoethnography is difficult to measure using tried and tested methods of measuring qualitative research (Sanduliak, 2016, p. 369). Ethnomusicologist Simone Kruger (2008, pp. 66-67) highlights the differing approaches in the 'soft' sciences towards validity and reliability of research. Where traditional research methods seek to establish whether the research results can be reproduced (reliability) and provide an accurate measure of the research outcomes (validity), autoethnography, predicated as it is on the individual researcher's orientation to and within the cultural milieu under examination, provides a study of a

particular place at a particular time, that is, individual experience within specific social constructs. Thus, proven rules or outcomes are not helpful here. Indeed, such strictures would militate against any 'evocative potentiality' which arises from the empirical knowledge and personal experience gained by the researcher in their cultural and social context.

The use of autoethnography in the study and practice of performance provides a fecund environment for the exploration of cultural phenomena. The autoethnographical self has the potential to embody 'knowledge and fellow feeling' (Kruger, 2008, p. 75). In this study related to place and performance, the aesthetics and style of the performance work are directly related to the cultural context under examination. For example, the popular performance forms associated with a particular milieu are employed as a reflexive tool.

1.3 Place

In *Place: a short introduction*, Tim Cresswell traces the development of ideas and usage of the term 'place' in human geography. In tracing the genealogy of the study, Cresswell maps the approaches of Regional Geography and Humanistic Geography. The former attempted 'to describe a place/region in great detail, starting with the bedrock, soil type and climate and ending with "culture"' (2004, p. 16). The latter was influenced by phenomenology and existentialism and regarded 'place' 'as an idea, concept and way of being-in-the-world' (2004, p. 20). The political geographer John Agnew (in Cresswell, 2004, p. 7) provides three useful aspects in considering place: 'Location' – fixed objective co-ordinates on the Earth's surface; 'Locale' – a concrete form or the material setting for social relations; 'Sense of place' – the subjective emotional attachment people have to place locale.

Sally Mackey explores the performative possibilities of notions of space. She teases out the differences between place and space defining the latter as:

- the physical dimensions and dynamics of places
- amorphous, untenanted, non-tangible areas that are generalised as 'space' (e.g. the space on a website; spaces of desert...)

- external, global networks that interact with place (the spaces of the internet; the spaces of global finance...)
- a descriptive term for an area of thought and action (e.g. safe spaces; creative spaces)

She continues with a preferred alternative description that echoes Agnew's 'sense of place':

[P]lace is space (or site) animated through operations and actions and made personal. Place is geographically located ... inhabited briefly or over a longer period, constructed through a range of operations, actions and behaviours and, through these, a psychological relationship is developed with place. This latter may not necessarily be a positive relationship although frequently place is associated with 'attachment'...' (Mackey, 2014, *Place Theory*)

Both the approaches of Regional and Humanistic Geography are useful in exploring the link between performance and place. The following chapters explore the journey from an initial engagement with the Regional that then moves through the Humanistic to develop a 'sense of place' and the corresponding 'operations, actions and behaviours' that may lead to performance. The autoethnographic approach to my research means that these 'operations, actions and behaviours' are drawn from autobiographical sources.

In addition to Regional and Humanistic Geography, the work of Radical Human Geography provides an analytical framework for exploring the link between place and performance. Reflecting social theory and cultural studies, there has been a rejection of 'place as concept' and a move towards viewing places as social constructs with inherent power relationships. Creswell describes the approach: 'Class, gender, and race have so often been treated as if they happened on the head of a pin. Well they don't – they happen in space and place...place does not have meanings that are natural and obvious but ones that are created by some people with more power than others to define what is and isn't appropriate' (2004, p. 27).

The 'operations, actions and behaviours' and the ensuing 'psychological relationship' that develops are explored in *Thinking Northern: Textures of Identity in the North of England* (Pordzik, 2007). The text presents a collection of essays utilising the approach of 'the new cultural geography' to explore spaces and places for 'specific cultural meanings that construct, maintain and circulate myths of a unified national or regional culture and their histories, or whose visible ironies deconstruct those myths' (Pordzik, 2007). The introduction notes that the idea of the North 'is still a fragmented vision' and the book's aim is to 'provide a reality check. What is out there?' (Ehland, 2007, p. 20). The practice element of this study explores one of these 'fragments' using the autoethnographical lens; it examines the 'myths' and their contribution to a specific imagined community, that is, the community in which I grew up. The process began by exploring internal and external constructs of the North and then scrutinising these constructs using autoethnography, that is, examining my relationship with these constructs and their inherent ambiguities.

1.4 Performance: the postdramatic and the popular

The inclusion of these two performance strands springs from the autoethnographic approach. Both have been part of my environment at different stages. Growing up in a working-class community the popular forms most prevalent were comedy and singing. Music was seemingly ever-present both in the home and on social occasions. Comedy in the form of stand-up manifested itself in such TV programmes as *The Comedians* and *The Wheeltappers and Shunters Social Club* as well as much anticipated annual events such as *The Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show*. Representations of the North were particularly foregrounded in the first two shows mentioned. The first episode of *The Comedians* aired in 1971 and featured eight acts, six of which were northern comedians (Smith, 1998). *Wheeltappers* was set in a typical northern working men's club fronted by two northern comedians in Bernard Manning and Colin Crompton. The postdramatic elements of the study, discussed below, arise from my current engagement with contemporary performance as a lecturer in Theatre Arts.

1.4.1 Postdramatic

The practical element of this work is flanked by the twin supports of postdramatic and popular performance modes. From an autoethnographical view the former references a contemporary self, whilst the latter emerges from memory of and from place.

Hans-Thies Lehmann provides an authoritative study of what he has termed postdramatic theatre in a publication of the same name. It is a form that challenges the hegemony of the dramatic text as the central concern over elements such as music, dance, design etc. It interrogates the act of performance and in doing so challenges the role of the performer and, importantly, the role of the audience. It foregrounds the act of performance over representation or mimesis where 'the theatrical means beyond language are positioned equally alongside the text and are systematically thinkable without it' (2006, p. 55).

1.4.1.1 A contested landscape

Chris Baugh identifies the usefulness of the term postdramatic in describing a wide range of contemporary performance that has 'been created from the perceptual elements and materials of theatre...which serve their own artistic purposes, not primarily those of the structuring device of pre-existing dramatic texts' (2005, p. 212). However, Marvin Carlson notes that the popularity of the theory as a tool for analysing and labelling contemporary performance has meant that 'a coherent and consistent definition of the term has become quite impossible' (2015, p. 578). Indeed, some of the practitioners considered to be postdramatic, he argues, do not adhere to Lehmann's central concern of the postdramatic being the 'total rejection of the mimetic in search of the solely performative' (p. 583). So, it is against this contested landscape that the practical element of this study will be considered.

1.4.1.2 Panorama of the postdramatic

Lehmann identifies three aspects of the 'panorama of the postdramatic'. They are a theatre of ceremony, a theatre of voices in space and a theatre of landscape. Within this he suggests that there are certain traits which postdramatic theatre may possess: parataxis; non-hierarchy; simultaneity; play with density of signs; plethora; musicalisation; scenography, visual dramaturgy; warmth and coldness; physicality;

concrete theatre; irruption of the real; and event/situation. The traits Lehmann identifies can be organised under the categories of stage, performer and context; a categorisation that will prove useful in the analysis of the practical element of this research. The boundaries of these categories, however, are porous and so there is a tendency for some of the traits to occupy more than one category. For the purposes of this investigation, space does not allow for a full analysis of Lehmann's propositions in relation to the practical work. In the spirit of Carlson, those elements more pertinent to this work will be used in the discussion in Chapter 4.

1.4.2 Popular performance

Any discussion of popular performance and relevant definitions encompasses the terms popular theatre and popular drama. Hitherto these two phrases would appear to have dominated the discourse. David Mayer suggests that a definition of popular theatre may prove difficult as the limits set by any definition will be challenged by the constant process of 'extending and disproving former irrelevances' (Mayer & Richards, 1977, p. 257). Joel Schechter implies that a contributory factor here may also be that '[p]opular theatre rarely ends up in print'. He continues to describe how work is passed on from performer to performer, from generation to generation and that 'their art lives in their bodies and voices, in their memories and stage acts, and those of the people that know them; their repertoire reposes in the people'. Moreover he describes popular theatre being viewed as a 'democratic, proletarian, and politically progressive theatre'(2003, p. 3). In terms of content Brooks McNamara tells us that '[s]ubtlety and conventional good taste are usually secondary to action, fantasy and physicality' and is often little more than a 'scenario of framework for improvisation, comic business, and spectacular effects' (2003). The practical work of this study works with the notion of performance resting in people and, whilst acknowledging the class nature of this performance, scrutinises the content of such work through metatheatricity.

Some of the definitions for popular theatre have focussed on Applied Theatre models. Tim Prentki and Jan Selman define popular theatre as theatre created with, by and for communities that addresses specific concerns. Indeed it is a theatre where both process and performance have primacy as they are employed in the process of realising positive change (2000, pp. 8-9). The writer and director John McGrath was also interested in engendering change. McGrath aimed to create a counter culture

based on that of the working-class to challenge the dominant bourgeois hegemony. As such, McGrath identified what he considered to be the constituent parts of working-class culture. They included directness, comedy, music, emotion, variety, effect, immediacy, localism ('characters and events with a local feel') and localism ('sense of identity with the performer') (1996, pp. 54-59).¹ These ideas appear in McGrath's book *A Good Night Out: Popular Theatre: Audience, class and form* from which I have taken the title for my piece. I first came across McGrath's work as an undergraduate in the early 1980s. Given the social, political and economic context of that time, his work spoke to me as a young man from a mining community.² It still speaks to me now.

Oliver Double describes popular performance as 'sitting on one side of the Great Divide that separates high versus low, legitimate versus illegitimate, formal versus informal, literary versus improvised, publicly subsidised versus purely commercial, aesthetic versus entertaining, improving versus frivolous' (Ainsworth, Double, & Peacock, 2017, p. 2). Placing popular performance on the 'low' side Double advances four key features:

1. It involves *direct connection between performer and audience*, eschewing any notion of the fourth wall.
2. It embraces *skill and novelty*.
3. It *is rooted in the present moment*, directly acknowledging the performance situation and engaging with topical events.
4. It involves an *interlacing of performer and role*, which might, for example, involve the performer playing him- or herself. (2017, p. 8)

Arguably, the roots of popular performance as envisaged by Double has its roots in the Regency/Georgian theatres of Grimaldi and the British pantomime (Stott, 2009), the growth of the music hall in Victorian Britain, as well as the variety circuit of the twentieth century. In terms of stand-up explored in the practical work, its antecedents can be traced back to George Formby Snr. of music hall, through variety artists such as George Formby Jnr., Frank Randle, Rob Wilton and Les Dawson to contemporary

¹ McGrath lists 'localism' twice, each with different definition as indicated here.

² This is discussed in greater detail in later chapters.

artists such as Jason Manford and Peter Kay. A discussion on the place of stand-up in the practice can be found in Chapter 4.

1.5 Structure

1.5.1 Chapter 2: Planning the journey's route: Methodology

This chapter sets out the methodological approach of the research. It navigates a way through the autoethnographical nature of the research discussing the development of the performer's identity on stage and during the process. This is followed with examples of the studio-based research and some of the challenges encountered. In particular it reflects on the unconscious bias in my interpretation of geographical maps. This leads to a discussion on the performativity of maps and the political origins of this performativity. The chapter also considers the reading of stand-up comedy in the light of performance semioticians Patrice Pavis and Tadeuz Kowzan and the extension of this work to stand-up undertaken by Louise Peacock (2011). Part of this includes a case study on Les Dawson searching for links between comedy and place and identifying Northern tropes. The chapter closes with an overview of the iterations of *AGNA* and the construction of an audience questionnaire.

1.5.2 Chapter 3: Surveying the landscape for the journey ahead: place, class, performance

This chapter will discuss notions of place specifically in relation to the North of England. It will include an examination of class set against a reading of Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy*. The discussion will also address the problems of analysis involved in popular performance and comedy in particular. There is also a discussion on place and performance and how this work differs from previous studies. The underpinning approach to the work is from an autoethnographical perspective, focussing in particular on the work of Tami Spry (2011). This approach necessitates an engagement with Cultural Studies employing Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (2009) as an analytical comparative lens.

1.5.3 Chapter 4: The journey into performance: key concepts in the analysis of performing place and comedy

The focus for this chapter is on the analysis of the practical work. The work is examined under four headings. Autoethnography considers the development of the performative-I and the ambiguous nature of personas on performance. In the section of postdramatic theatre *A Good Neet Aht* is compared to the work of contemporary theatre-maker Michael Pinchbeck.³ Popular performance explores the potential tensions in using autobiographical material alongside that which is fictional drawing on documentary and site-specific performance. Finally, place considers the construction of a sense of place on stage.

1.5.4 Chapter 5: An audience of travelling companions: The iterations of *A Good Neet Aht* and audience response

Chapter 5 reflects on the various iterations of *AGNA* before analysing responses gathered from audience questionnaires. The questions explore the performance of place and the relevance of class to this exploration. In the context of this audience reaction the work is then measured against John McGrath's suggestions for a working-class theatre in *A Good Night Out*.

1.5.5 Chapter 6: Arrivals and Departures: Conclusion

This final chapter reflects on the role of memory in evoking a sense of place and how performance and identity may contribute to this. It then considers how the postdramatic and the popular may mirror and complement each other, thus moving us towards a different way of thinking about the performance of place. Moreover, the chapter also suggests future directions this work could take. Finally, the contemporary relevance and impact of the work is considered.

³ Information on Michael Pinchbeck's work can be found at www.michaelpinchbeck.co.uk

1.6 Gaps in knowledge and original contribution

1.6.1 Northern stereotypes and stand-up comedy

Two of the main threads running through this research are stand-up comedy and place with specific reference to the North of England. Dave Russell in *Looking North: Northern England and the National Imagination* (2004) suggests that there is rather more research needed in the field of stereotypical images of the North. Similarly, an editorial in *Comedy Studies* notes that '[d]espite being a huge cultural phenomenon, relatively little academic attention has been paid to analysing stand-up comedy performance' (Lockyer, Mills, & Peacock, 2011, pp. 99-100).

1.6.2 Original contribution

The original contribution this work makes is fourfold. Firstly, the performance in and of itself is unique. It is a story that has never been told on stage and could not be produced or replicated by anyone else. Secondly, there is a conscious fusing of the postdramatic and popular performance. As such the practice seeks to explore and suggest a new form emerging from two differing traditions in which narratives of autoethnography and place interrogate form. Thirdly, as discussed briefly above, popular performance has, in the past, been used and discussed in terms of its usefulness. Tim Prentki (2000) and John McGrath (1996) use the form as a vehicle for Applied Theatre and Political Theatre respectively. Oliver Double (2017) discusses the form in its own right, freeing it from its associative or supportive roles. This work bridges the gap between the Prentki/McGrath and Double paradigms where popular performance is used as an entertainment form but also as a lens for examining performative expressions of place. Finally, the work is pertinent to the current socio-political context. Whilst researching this a referendum was held on Britain's future in the European Union (EU). By a small margin there was a vote to leave. The vote has exposed the fracture lines within our society. These faults or fractures have lain ignored for decades. Many of the former industrial areas of the North voted to leave, rightly or wrongly blaming the EU for their problems and their sense of being abandoned and forgotten. This piece is about one of those forgotten communities. These contributions are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6: Conclusion.

Entr'acte 1: 1, Clifton Road, Sharlston

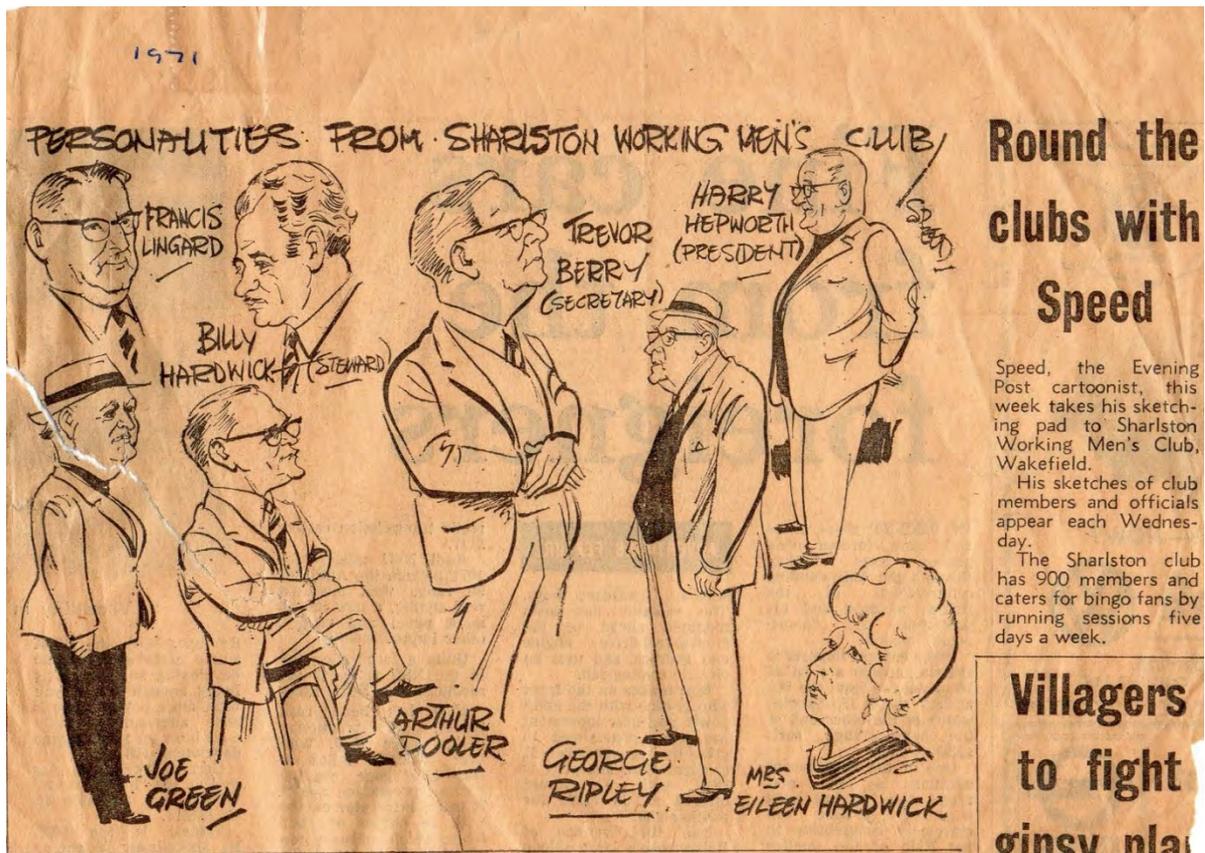


Image 2: [Wakefield Express](#) clipping (Speed, 1971)

'Clifton Road - Uncle Joe, Auntie Evelyn and our Ken. Joe loved singing and what a voice! Beautiful tenor! He wasn't very tall but he was very round. Ruddy faced with a pencil moustache and he always wore a trilby. He was also a bag of nerves. When he came to visit he'd walk in, sit down - right on the edge of the seat - for about 30 seconds. Then he'd stand-up, take off his coat, roll up his sleeves, go in the kitchen, make everyone a cup of tea whether they wanted one or not, drink his in double quick time, collect all the cups up whether you'd finished or not, and then do the washing up - without taking his trilby off - then he'd put on his coat and go!

I always kept an eye out for him on his way to the pub - especially if the fair was on - 'Hello, Uncle Joe', 'Eyup Philip old cock. Here, tek this. Go and get a ride and some candy floss.' Thanks, Uncle Joe!' (Green, 2017, pp. 13-14)

2. Planning the journey's route: Methodology

This chapter explores the central analytical tools of the thesis. It begins with a discussion on autoethnography and its impact on the creative process and performance. This is the groundwork for a potentially new form bridging the gap between the popular and the postdramatic. From this exploratory form there emerges a nascent ambiguity in the personas presented on stage through the development of the performative-I. There is also a discussion on maps as performance arising from the challenges encountered during the initial exploratory sessions, a spatial bias revealing itself in the staging of geography. Popular performance and stand-up and their influence on the praxis are also discussed. In particular there is a case study of Les Dawson used in an examination of the reading of stand-up comedy. The chapter finishes with an outline of the iterations of *A Good Neet Aht* and the method of audience response capture.

2.1 Autoethnography

The central analytical tool of this study is performative autoethnography. Its usefulness is twofold. It engages with the actualities of performance and places the researcher at the centre of the study. Therefore, it facilitates the principal aim of this study: my experience of place and its performative possibilities. Tami Spry suggests 'the purpose of performative autoethnography is to better understand who we are in relation to others in culture' (2011, p. 51). In the context of this current study 'in culture' could be extended to include 'in culture and place'. The method has implications for sections of the written element of this current work. If the method 'is a *critically reflective narrative* [Spry's emphasis] representing the researcher's personal and political intersections/engagements/negotiations with others in culture/history/society' (p. 53) which draws heavily on autobiographical material, it will be necessary to refer to the first person.

2.1.1 Autoethnography and place

Andy Medhurst, placing autobiography at the centre of an understanding of Cultural Studies, describes 'that fraught business of trying to understand the ways in which

questions of cultural involvement intersect with lived material circumstance', adding 'the key issue here is not where you are from, but that you acknowledge you're from somewhere.' (2000, p. 28). The acknowledgment of that 'somewhere' is central to this thesis. Moreover, the foregrounding of the researcher as the researched in the autoethnographical frame necessitates an engagement with identity and several 'I's that appear in the process. It is an approach which has also allowed me to challenge my own preconceptions and prejudices. I started the process by short, ethnographic written pieces⁴ and exploring their capacity for performance.

2.1.2 Performative-I

Tami Spry describes the performative-I as 'the positionality of the researcher in performative autoethnography and is based in a negotiation between self/other/culture/language, a system of relation between body/I/we/word' (2011, p. 30). The performative- I manifests itself in two stages. Firstly, the performative-I disposition. This is a prerequisite to the start of any autoethnographical performance work. It is an openness to exploring practically 'a triad of identity, experience, and social relations' (p. 57) by 'living in the body of the question rather than answering it' (p. 65) and as such the truth is not being represented but questioned, probed and provoked. Secondly, the performative-I persona. The performative-I persona is 'the person, the subject, the "you", created in the autoethnographic text' (p. 159). This persona is twice removed from the person that is the performer; one remove through writing and a second through performance (p. 173). Thus, the performative-I, in interrogating the truth and filtering the persona presented to an audience, manifests the ambiguities offered by Tessa Muncey's questioning of the 'coherent, individual self' highlighted in the previous chapter.

Muncey tells us that we have multiple layers of consciousness and that, as autoethnographers, we must be prepared to peel back these layers as part of a successful research methodology. She refers to this as the 'vulnerable self'(2010, p. 30). The vulnerable self reveals itself in Spry's work in her concept of 'practised vulnerability'. Practised vulnerability is 'a methodology of moving out of one's comfort zone of familiarity, a strategic surrendering into a space of risk, of uncomfortability, of uncertainty'. It encourages self-reflection and prepares for

⁴ The pieces not used in performances appear in these chapters as the autoethnographical excerpts

performance. This, in turn, enables the performer to embody the performative-I persona (2011, p. 67). The process of practised vulnerability begins in the studio, where a safe creative space facilitates exploration for those not versed in autoethnographical practice and/or those unused to performing. Thus, there are two vulnerabilities to be considered; the one concerning the exploration of personal stories and one concerning the act of walking out in front of an audience. However, Spry does not consider practised vulnerability a negative experience. It is not a question of being exposed, embarrassed or open to ridicule. Practiced vulnerability is an opening up of the self to the creative process, being vulnerable to the possibilities of discovery offered by the creative process; discoveries of self, culture and society.

2.1.3 Performative-I persona and dialogical performance

The filmed practical exploration sessions are evidence of my journey through the performative-I disposition and the creation of a performative-I persona. Observing the sessions as a whole suggests there are several performance-I personas. These are due to the temporal shifts that take place as different elements of my experience are examined. Different contexts and age shift my perception of place and, therefore, different personas emerge.

The performative-I persona and the performative-I disposition are developed through what Spry calls 'dialogical performance' (pp. 185-188). Dialogical performance occurs during the process as the autoethnographer interrogates and dissects their own experiences, they are in dialogue with the text they are creating and the developing performative-I persona. This dialogue continues in performance but is joined by the dialogue between audience and performer. It is, Spry tells us, 'the interpretation of the complex interaction between performer (self), text (other), and sociocultural context; it is what allows/invites/motivates an audience to engage the performance, to communicate with the persona, to exist in the world of the story'. It has, therefore, a pedagogical role 'where audience members can feel, see, and experience a story that encourages them to generate meaning of related experiences in their own lives' (p. 188).

2.2 Geographical space in the studio and the reading of maps

The laboratory for the practice as research element was the drama studio. Initial sessions were loosely improvised but as the process developed they became more structured and were based on pre-prepared written material. Early on in the development of the piece I attempted to explore the sense of belonging that may be engendered from geographical location. Mike Pearson refers to memory as ‘a practice, or as a network of relationships between various loci rather than as an act of retrieval from a single store’ (2006, p. 9). The arc of travel through this process encountered several loci: Charlston, Normanton, Wakefield, Leicester, London, Southampton, Nottingham and Somerset/Wiltshire. The process became about exploring the relationships of these places to identify a nexus or meeting point with the researcher at its centre.

One such exercise (working title *Northern Nexus*) mapped out the historical and cultural connections that had, in some way, shaped or affected my identity (see Image 3). The session can be seen [here](#). My birthplace was marked and the journey of family members to that spot indicated by coloured tape. A second colour was then used to link that place with the birthplaces of northern comedians.



Image 3: Marking out the space

What is striking looking at the work is the staging. I used the microphone stand as the marker for birthplace. However, I was unhappy with the stagecraft of the piece. I had placed the microphone stand centre stage left, not one of the strongest positions in terms of audience focus and holding attention. The diagram below (Image 4)

suggests the most effective areas of the stage for commanding focus and attention, 1 being the strongest and 9 the weakest.



Image 4: Stage geography (Converse, 1995, p. 35)

Working from this diagram I had placed the performer in box 6. Moreover, if we take the notion that stage right is stronger than stage left (Converse, 1995, pp. 35-37) this problematises further the staging choice made.

As an experienced practitioner and educator what had led me to make such a fundamental error? Jerry Brotton suggests that from an early age ‘we make sense of ourselves in relation to the wider physical world by processing information spatially’, a process that psychologists refer to as ‘cognitive mapping’ (2013, p. 4). The answer is deeply rooted in cultural perceptions. I will attempt the very beginnings of an analysis of these cultural perceptions in the space available here.

I had viewed the stage as a map of England. I had presented it as a map of England is often presented, that is, with the South at the ‘bottom’ and the North at the ‘top’. This meant that the South was the downstage, nearest the audience, and the North was upstage with East and West occupying stage left and stage right respectively. I had placed myself on the periphery of the performance area. Arguably this was an accurate reflection of the economic relationship between North and South (see Jewell, 1994) but that was not the area of exploration. To unpick my decision I turned to the performativity of maps.

Schechner suggests that maps, viewed ‘as’ performance, not only represent geographical locations but ‘also enact power relationships’. The most familiar example of difference would be the Mercator Projection and the Peters Projection of

the world map (Schechner, 2002, pp. 41-42). So, what were the power relationships at play in my staging decisions?

There is a dynamic that exists between the production of my stage map and the geographical perception of a mapped England. Such a perception of the North in the popular imagination is an important contribution to exploring my choices of staging. Google is the dominant search engine on the internet so much so that it has become a verb 'to google'. It is not unreasonable to suggest that Google plays an important role in reflecting and shaping the popular imagination and perception. Therefore, it becomes a marker for assessing what is readily available in terms of information and images of, in this case, the mapping and representation of England. It gives us a flavour and feel of what is out there shaping imagination and perception – how different relationships are being enacted in this mapping.

The maps below represent a random selection of some of the images that appear under a 'maps of England for children' search. Image 5 shows England in relation to the other countries in the British Isles. The only city identified is London in the South East. Image 6 identifies regions and, once more, London is identified. Interestingly the countries of Scotland and Wales are given equal billing with the English regions! Although far from a scientific study I would suggest that the primacy of the South East is established early.



[Image 5: Britannica kids map](#) (Kids)



Image 6: [Aviation Ancestry map](#) (Unknown, 2010)



Image 7: [British towns and villages network](#) (Villages, 2013)

Image 7 shows a more recognisable 'working' map of England and its road system. The briefest of glances at the yellow and red arterial road network represented here draws the eye to London and the South East.

So, the staging of *Northern Nexus* conformed to the power relationships enacted in the presentation of mapped Englands. The South and South East took primacy on stage as that is the 'right' way to do it.

I ran the staging through once more. This time I placed myself downstage centre (Image 4). This places the North firmly at the centre of the study. London is placed away to far stage right, almost in the wings, whilst the North West and its comedians look downstage to the boy from Charlston. The audience is challenged to re-imagine their England and their place in it.

2.3 Popular performance and the comic-I

Although I have suggested that the performance-I persona is twice removed from the performer a third remove is evident in the piece. As popular performance methods are explored there is the emergence of a comic-I. The comic-I appears in the storytelling mode of delivery in certain sections and the exploration of traditional tropes of northern stand-up.



Image 8: the spotlight lab

In the initial improvisatory sessions, I started with a spotlight and a microphone as indicators of popular performance and, in particular, stand-up comedy. It is worth noting at this point that some efforts were made at performing stand-up in these conditions. These experiments were less than satisfactory mainly because of the lack of an audience. If stand-up is predicated on fostering a sense of belonging it

follows that this would be impossible in an empty auditorium. The following section engages with the research informing the practical exploration of stand-up comedy and the search for a comic-I.

2.3.1 Reading stand-up

To present northern stand-up tropes in performance it was first necessary to understand how stand-up worked. The final piece includes material from Les Dawson, Bernard Manning, Charlie Williams, Mike Harding and Johnnie Casson. The effective use of the material required an appreciation of stand-up in performance. If performance *per se* is difficult to analyse due to its ephemeral nature then stand-up comedy is the apogee of this ephemerality. Performance happens in the present tense and in comedy this is intensified by direct communication with the audience and the personality of the performer.

Autoethography: early destinations en route: Les Dawson

I saw Les Dawson live once. I was about thirteen or fourteen years old. We had a German exchange student staying at our house. The great challenge with exchange students is keeping them occupied and trying to give them an 'authentic' experience of another culture. My family's answer to this was to take him to the great British seaside and let him experience something we rarely did – a summer season variety show. So off we went to Blackpool to see Les Dawson.

Except we didn't go to Blackpool. Recently sorting through my dad's old papers, I found a programme for 'Holiday Showtime' at the Floral Hall, Scarborough, 1976. The cover was pink with yellow shooting stars and black and white headshots of Les Dawson, Kenneth McKellar and Bobby Bennett amongst others. I can't remember much of the show. Perhaps I remember Kenneth McKellar and my mum whispering 'Now he does have a nice voice!' as she did every time he was on television. I do, however, remember Les Dawson. Specifically, I remember Cissie and Ada, two northern housewives played by Les Dawson (Ada) and Roy Barraclough (Cissie) in drag. Ada is working-class and Cissie is lower-middle class and the routines exploited the differences. Two jokes in particular stay with me to this day. Ada bemoaning

her problems 'down there' and floating the possibility of having a hysterical rectum and this exchange:

Cissie: Well, my Ernest has just been in to see about getting a vasectomy.

Ada: I thought he'd just got rid of a Volvo.

I laughed a lot. I always did when I watched Les Dawson. I don't think I was able to articulate it as a teenager but I think the laughter was also tinged with a vicarious pride. He was one of ours, he was one of us - he was from the North.⁵

Notwithstanding the fact that some of his material is used or 'cited' in the opening scene of *A Good Neet Aht*, Les Dawson is included as a vehicle for analysis both from an autoethnographical viewpoint, for his standing as a comedian and for his northern roots. Stewart Lee suggests that there is a binary model through which we view any comedian prior to 1979 – that of working-class lumpen versus Oxbridge satirist. He maintains, however, that there were many excellent acts that did not fit this model; acts that 'were guilty of few, if any, of the ideological crimes now retrospectively ascribed' to that pre-1979 era. Some of these acts he tells us are difficult to pigeon-hole and Les Dawson with his 'variety-circuit shtick' is one of these acts (2010, p. 4). The 'working-class-lumpen' trope will reappear in Chapter 4.

Most of the archive material available of Dawson in performance is in the form of studio-based shows for television. The routine chosen for analysis is a 1983 appearance on [The Good Old Days](#). Although made for television *The Good Old Days* was filmed in a theatre, Leeds City Varieties, in front of a live audience. Indeed, the audience is central to the programme's *raison d'être* which was to recreate the atmosphere of the Edwardian music hall. Typically, the acts would be a mixture of those performing material from the period and those, such as Dawson,

⁵ I cannot clearly recall what Egon, the exchange student, made of it all. I seem to remember him laughing appreciatively at Dawson's physicality, particularly Cissie and Ada and his bouts of gurning.

performing their own contemporary routines. This particular episode of the show is a celebration of its thirty years on television.

By the time this episode was broadcast Dawson had been a high-profile comic presence for around sixteen years since winning the TV talent contest *Opportunity Knocks* in 1967. The audience in the City Varieties would, therefore, have been very familiar with his style and his 'signature practices'. Susan Melrose describes signature practices as being 'singular or self-defining: but at the same time an aspect of them recurs, across a body of work, and between that work and its contextualizing framework/s; and they are repeatedly modulated within given disciplinary parameters' (Melrose). Quite simply then they are what make Les Dawson recognizable as Les Dawson. Physically these can be identified as his 'lugubrious face...stony, morose, cynical, plangent' (Medhurst, 2007, p. 82), a demeanour that was 'grumpy and gloomy...eyebrows knotted in a permanent frown' with a 'deep Mancunian growl' of a voice (Double, 1997, p. 129). The face often worked gurning in isolation from any verbal material to the delight of audiences. It had a plasticity enhanced by a very flexible jaw, the result of a boxing injury earlier in life. His material was also recognizable ranging from the infamous mother-in-law jokes to monologues full of overblown, purple prose usually punctured by a bathos-laden punchline. The transcript includes as many of these physical signature practices as the edited footage will allow.

In order to analyse Dawson's stand-up work the performance has been transcribed including a description of the context and the performer's physicality (see appendix). For ease of reference the act has been split into three sections. Section 1 is Dawson's entrance and opening monologue. Section 2 is Dawson at the piano discussing the history of the music hall and comedy. Section 3 is a series of identifiable 'gags' (a-g) and Section 4 is Dawson at the piano once again attempting to lead communal singing.

Louise Peacock (2011) provides a qualified guide to analysing the stand-up event using the work of performance semioticians Tadeusz Kowzan and Patrice Pavis. Semiotics is the study of signs that originated in the field of linguistics. Kowzan and Pavis have been pivotal in introducing it as a tool in the analysis of performance. Peacock suggests that these theories taken in isolation are not enough to enable the

effective analysis of stand-up comedy and advocates that they be used alongside humour theory and content analysis.

Kowzan breaks down the performance event into thirteen recognizable elements. They are produced below in tabular format.

Table 1: Kowzan performance elements (Peacock, 2011, p. 129)

1. Word	Spoken	Actor	Auditive signs	Time	Auditive signs (actor)
2. Tone	Text		Visual Signs		
3. Mime	Expression of the body		Visual signs	Space and Time	Visual signs (actor)
4. Gesture					
5. Movement					
6. Make-up	Actors' external appearance	Visual signs	Space	Visual signs (actor)	
7. Hair-style					
8. Costume					
9. Properties	Appearance of the stage	Outside the actor	Visual signs	Space and Time	Visual Signs (outside the actor)
10. Settings					
11. Lighting					
12. Music	Inarticulate sounds	Visual signs	Auditive signs	Time	Auditive Signs (outside the actor)
13. Sound					
Effects					

Elements 1 – 8 emphasise the centrality of the performer in reading performance whereas elements 9 – 13 are placed outside the performer. These latter four elements have been dealt with above to some extent in the contextualization of the mediated performance under examination. There follows an attempt to use the first eight elements as a method of analysing Dawson's performance. Following

Peacock's model the first five elements of Kowzan's system will be applied to section 3E of the routine.

2.3.1.1 Kowzan and analysis of the 'mother in law and the shark'

Table 2: Kowzan and analysis of the 'mother in law and the shark'

	Signs	Signification
1. Word	Direct address Familiar subject matter (signature practice)	Confidence, complicit with audience. Fulfills audience expectation - control
2. Tone	Northern accent Slow, measured delivery	Commonality of identity with audience. Sombre mood
3. Mime	Right hand on hip, left hand to hold bridge of nose, eyes closed, head bowed	'a difficult memory/I am upset'
4. Gesture	Hands in pockets Hands clasped across stomach	Relaxed informality Comfortable in surroundings
5. Movement	Occupies downstage centre and doesn't move from the spot	In control

Peacock (p. 131) notes the shortcomings of this system as an analytical tool for stand-up comedy not least that it is designed for the analysis of the realisation of a dramatic text. Moreover, there are elements of stand-up that are not taken account of - such as timing, the centrality of language and context. Some of the identified shortcomings depend on the perception of the user. For example, where Peacock notes that the table does not take account of vocal delivery (timings, pauses, variation in pace) I have included it in both 'word' and 'tone'. Patrice Pavis' later questionnaire provides a more detailed response to performance analysis. Here I have used Peacock's identification of the most pertinent headings: section 6 (substituting 'performer' for 'actor'); section 8 on the pace of the performance; section

11 on the hitherto tangentially considered role of the audience; and section 7 on the role of music. This last section may not be relevant to all stand-up but is particularly pertinent when considering Dawson in performance. The routine section under examination here is section 2 and, again, references Peacock’s earlier work as a model and uses her adaptations of the relevant headings.

2.3.1.2 Pavis and ‘blowing raspberries’

Table 3: Pavis and ‘blowing raspberries (Peacock, 2011, pp. 133-134)

6a. Physical description of the actors (bodily movements, facial expression, make-up); changes in their appearance	Straightens jacket by tugging at lapels; Deadpan; Disgruntled/resigned look at his presence; Leans on piano with other hand on hip; Hands clasped across stomach; Hands open towards audience to make a point; Smiles half laugh/corpse; Grimace; Bows slightly; Puts on red nose; Smile and raised eyebrows
c. Construction of character: actor/role relationship	Three levels on this short excerpt: The world-weary comedian; The pianist with pretensions (‘intellectual performer’) that are crushed; The professional at the top of his game
f. Voice: qualities, effects produced, relations to diction and song	Deep tones; Northern vowels; Measured, relaying information/knowledge; Half laugh/corpse; Blows raspberry
g. Status of the performer: past, professional situation	Long established stand-up comedian; Reputation for dour demeanour; Reputation for playing piano badly
. Function of music and sound effects	Adds variety to the set but ultimately punctures performers pomposity
8b. Rhythm	Measured – established vocally with underplayed physicality Pauses for laughter
11a – Theatre institution	Leeds City Varieties
11b – Expectations	<i>The Good Old Days</i> ; Humour; Poor musicianship; Bathos
11c – Presuppositions	‘Need to understand sub-code of stand-up; Performance’ (Peacock)
11d – Audience reaction	Laughter Simultaneous laughter and applause

In terms of signature practices the sections in the above table requiring closer attention are 6a – g. Les Dawson’s physicality is perhaps the most difficult area of

his performance to analyse from the point of semiotics. It is the most difficult precisely because Dawson is so economical with his physicality. The primacy of the spoken word in his work is such that there is little room or need for ostension as seen in the work of comics such as Lee Evans, Michael MacIntyre or Joan Rivers. If there is a point to be made it will be made verbally with the slightest hand gesture for emphasis or facial expression to underline. Any movement across the stage is done only when absolutely necessary, for example, in order to sit down at the piano.

His stance is relaxed but formal as befitting his evening dress and the context of *The Good Old Days*. This is dropped when he needs to emphasise a point or provide a physical full stop as a punchline. The ending of this section of the routine is a good example of the use of such physicality. The routine centres around Dawson in the role of 'intellectual' performer as opposed to the third rate, raspberry-blowing comedians found in the history of the music hall. As the 'intellectual performer' Dawson's physicality mirrors the deportment and line associated with a performer of this calibre. When his piano playing fails to deliver the implicit promise of concert pianist standard Dawson rises from his piano stool. Round shouldered, all pretence of deportment gone, he walks downstage, resigned, a disappointed and slightly irritated facial expression. He then reaches in to his pocket, pulls out a red nose that he unceremoniously plops onto his face and blows a large raspberry.

Similarly, the opening line of this section uses physical punctuation. The smiling Dawson addresses the audience with rhetorical question 'Yes, where would we be without a laugh?' and provides the answer, now deadpan, 'Here!' as he points down towards the stage and then leans on the piano. In each of the above examples the physicality serves two purposes. Firstly, and most obviously, it is a function of the comic content of the act. Secondly, it reinforces the stage persona of Dawson the world-weary comic who carries his troubles on stage, that is, it reinforces his signature practices. These moments also provide bathos for the comedy and the persona that runs throughout the act.

Dawson has a low growl of a voice that relies on subtle shifts in tenor. Again, the opening line of this section is relatively light in delivery 'Where would we be without a laugh?' and the vowel sound of 'laugh' is clearly recognisable as the shortened and flattened 'a' of Northern English. This references his job as a comedian and the

commonality of purpose he may share with the audience. This is then undercut by the monosyllabic growl 'Here!' What follows is Dawson the 'intellectual performer'. This is marked vocally with a slight deepening of tone as Dawson switches to the 'correct' way for a performer of his standing to speak, that is, with pretensions to Received Pronunciation but still clearly, however, underlined by a northern accent. The accent deliberately undercuts the 'intellectual performer' in referencing the received wisdom that northern working-class communities do not value those with aspirations to higher things, those who may be 'too full of themselves'. Roy Shaw (Secretary-General of the Arts Council of Great Britain 1975-83) invokes this attitude in recollecting his childhood trips to the theatre. When watching a pantomime he recalls Billy Dainty appearing in a tutu and performing a comic ballet routine. Ballet, maintains Shaw, was not for the likes of him, a working-class boy from Sheffield, and therefore was to be laughed at (Shaw, 1987). This is a characteristic also evident in Dawson's use of language.

The use of language is overly ornate and draws attention to itself. It is the hallmark of someone presenting themselves as intellectual; that is, playing the role of intellectual. It is delivered at the steady pace of someone who is aware of having an audience and will take the opportunity to exhibit their knowledge and sophistication. As a showcase for his impressive vocabulary, care is taken to pronounce the meticulously-arranged words completely and correctly. At work here is Dawson the stage persona and Dawson the professional comedian. The stage persona has pretensions to higher artistic accomplishments and the professional comedian is aware of the signature practice he is engaged in. This is also indicated in the pauses given for audience laughter. It displays a level of control that 'acts as an index pointing back to...professional status' (Peacock, 2011, p. 135).

Unlike Kowzan's thirteen points the Pavis questionnaire considers the context of the performance including the audience. *The Good Old Days* was a TV show that ran from 1953 to 1983. During its thirty years on screen the maximum number of TV stations at any one time was four (BBC1, BBC2, ITV and Channel 4). Its regular viewing figures were around ten million per episode.

The format resembled the popular entertainments of music hall from the Edwardian period with a variety of acts including singers, comedians and speciality acts. Each week the headline act would be a well-known singer or comedian.

The audience for the piece examined here would be familiar with both the format of the show and Les Dawson the comedian. They would be aware of the conventions of the format and any 'sub-code' of stand-up comedy which may include 'direct address; communication between audience and performer [and] comic content'. Peacock's observation on the response of the audience to Joan Rivers echoes that of Dawson's audience in following the three forms of laughing, silence and laughing whilst clapping: 'their willingness to play by the rules of stand-up comedy...evidences an acceptance of and admiration for the performer' (Peacock, 2011, p. 135).

At this point it is worth considering the difficulty of any analysis of stand-up comedy. The moment that encapsulates these difficulties is a slight corpse that Dawson has when describing himself as an intellectual performer (3:49). This moment illustrates how stand-up comedy works both synchronically and diachronically. Synchronically it is a moment where a comedian joins in with the laughter of the audience. The laughter is also fuelled by the knowledge that such a 'corpse' is breaking the rules or conventions that have been implicitly established for this performance. It also works within the material as a reflection by Dawson on the ludicrousness of his claim to be an intellectual performer.

Diachronically this moment recognizes the familiarity of the audience with Dawson and his career. They are used to the over blown language and they know what is coming next in terms of Dawson at the piano. The synchronic and diachronic combine to create a moment of 'spontaneous communitas' wherein at the same moment there exists a recognition of the professional at work and the unifying qualities inherent in the act of stand-up. This is, however, subject to the contingent nature of the act of stand-up – there is no magic formula, each performance is different with the performer navigating the vagaries of audience, space, time and material.

The above analysis exercise created an understanding of the components of performing stand-up and helped navigate the shifting personas presented in performance of *A Good Neet Aht*.

2.4 Destinations: Iterations of *A Good Neet Aht*

In order to test the efficacy of the practical work and explore the question at the heart of this study on the performance of place it was necessary to present the work in front of an audience. There have been eight performances of AGNA across three years:

Performance 1: February 2017, Nottingham College

Performance 2: November, 2017, Wakefield College

Performance 3: February, 2018, Nottingham College.

Performance 4: October, 2018, Leeds Beckett University

Performance 5: November, 2018, Bilborough 6th Form College, Nottingham

Performance 6: February, 2019, The Sharlston Rovers Club (formerly Sharlston Working Men's Club), West Yorkshire

Performance 7: February, 2019, Crooks Social Club, Sheffield

Performance 8: August, 2019, University of Salford

These performances will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4 in conjunction with audience response collected at performances 6 and 7.

To gauge audience response to the possibility of performing place required the collection and analysis of data. The analysis of the audience response can be found in Chapter 4. This section, however, will examine the rationale behind the design of the questionnaire.

Performances 1 and 2 took place in the earlier stages of research focusing on the link between comedians and the North. Initially conceived as a work in progress, Performance 1 was intended to examine attitudes to the North, both general and personal. To this end a questionnaire was devised drawing on Dave Russell's table of northern attributes⁶ (2004, p. 37). The resulting document was cumbersome and difficult for respondents to follow which, in turn, presented difficulties in analysing the responses.

As the focus of the research changed so did the approach to gathering audience response. I chose to design the questionnaire using the Likert Scale where respondents are provided with statements that they either agree or disagree with. Popular in the social sciences, the Likert Scale uses a forced-choice format which, it is argued, encourages respondents to take the questions seriously as opposed to the check-all-that-apply-format (Vogt, 2014, pp. 28-29). The questionnaire devised had five responses: strongly agree – agree – neither --- disagree – strongly disagree. Given the autobiographical nature of much of the material the statements were designed to gauge the respondents' perceptions of place, how place might shape identity and vice versa, and its performance (see below). As class features prominently in this research respondents were also asked to self-identify in terms of which class they belonged to. The statements were:

1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived.
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever
3. Your perception of place depends on your class
4. Place is defined by the people that live there
5. If you're working-class you have a stronger sense of place

Statements 1 and 2 probed the notion that place can play a central role in shaping identity. Statement 1 refers to the show and, therefore, there is an implicit link to the performance of place. Statements 3, 4 and 5 explore the link between class and place. The place examined in performance is a mining village in West Yorkshire with

⁶ This table is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

a predominantly working-class demographic. Therefore, these three statements were designed to explore the role of class in the shaping of perception of place.

Entr'acte 2: 36, Clifton Road, Charlston



Image 9: George [Green](#)
(Chalkley, 2006, p. 131)

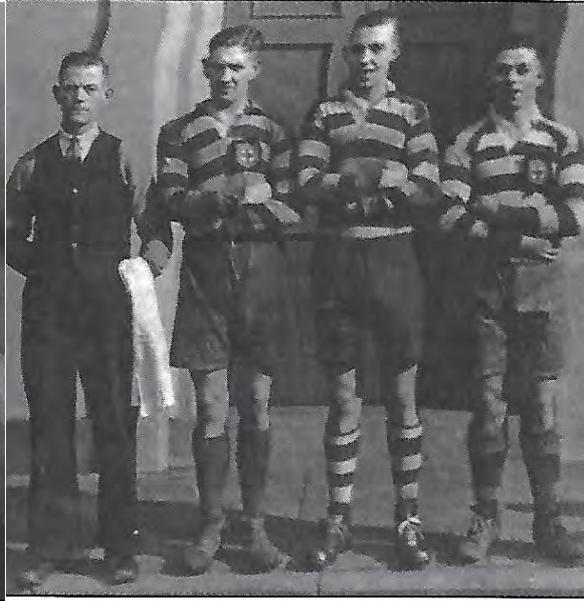


Image 10: George Green (R) Yorkshire ARL
(Chalkley, 2006, p. 68)

'Clifton Road. Uncle George and Auntie Doreen. George Green. Big character. Became known as Mr Charlston. He was a Parish Councillor; Metropolitan District Councillor; Chair of the local NUM branch at the pit. He played amateur rugby league for Charlston Rovers and Yorkshire and professional rugby league for Halifax, following in his dad's footsteps who played for Wakefield Trinity. At election time I'd sit in the back of my dad's car as him and George went campaigning – driving round with a loud speaker tied to the top of the car spreading the message! My uncle George used to do most of it "Vote for George Green on Thursday. Vote Green. Vote Labour! Come on now, let's be having you!" (Green, 2017, p. 11)

3. Surveying the landscape for the journey ahead: place, class, performance

Autoethnography: temporal and spatial journeys

If you walk from the southern end of Grime Lane in the ex-mining village of Sharlston after roughly two hundred yards the detached and semi-detached houses to your left stop and give way to open fields. The view west is towards Huddersfield. On the horizon, pricking the sky, you can see the Emley Moor television mast, all 330 metres of it. In nearby Shelley there is a churchyard with gravestones of various Greens dating as far back as 1605. It took my ancestors nearly 150 years to make the 15-mile journey to where you are standing, from back breaking agricultural work to the cramped confines of the colliery.

We have no control over our place of birth but it can often be invoked as others we come into contact with attempt to establish a sense of who we are. The following chapter traces a line from living in and being of the North of England through to popular performance forms by way of place, identity and class. As such it presents us with the backdrop for the practical element of this study. It provides a palette that helped explore particular tropes and images on stage. The following discussion highlights points along the route of the journey that will enhance our appreciation of the final destination, that is, the performance of place and comedy.

3.1 Place and Class: occupancy into identity

The autoethnographical nature of this research dictates that any exploration of place and its performative possibilities includes that place with which I am associated; in this case the North of England. More specifically, using Agnew's (Cresswell, 2004) consideration of place, the 'location' 53° 40' 11.9" N, 1° 24' 48.47" W where the carboniferous limestone and millstone grit of the Pennines give way to the mudstone and sandstone of the coal measures of the Yorkshire Coalfield. At these co-

ordinates lies the 'locale' of the village of Sharlston in West Yorkshire. This is the 'sense of place' at the core of this research. Sharlston in particular and the North in general are the places performed in *A Good Neet Aht*.

3.1.1 Class

Sharlston exists in its current form as a result of the opening of Sharlston Colliery in the late 1860s. It was built on coal and the majority of people earned their living, directly or indirectly, from the mining industry. Therefore, class has featured prominently in my engagement with this location and the development of a sense of place.

Class is a contentious issue not least because of the precarious task of assigning definitions. There are three basic theories regarding the class nature of British society. Firstly, society is based on a hierarchical structure reliant on deference. Secondly, it constitutes a dichotomy or binary of the have and have-nots or the toilers and the spoilers. Thirdly, it is organised on a triadic model of lower class, middle class and upper class. Some authors have suggested that these three models are mutually exclusive (Cannadine, 1998) whilst others pose implicitly a more nuanced view of all three co-existing or being different expressions of the same power relationship (Bromley, 2000; Hoggart, 2009; Todd, 2014).

This study will take the notion of class being a combination of the three models which have each been used at various stages to describe the power relations in society. At its most basic level it will consider class as 'a relationship defined by unequal power, rather than a way of life or an unchanging culture' (Todd, 2014, p. 7). This power relationship manifests itself economically, that is, those without power are economically disadvantaged. Thus, there may be similarities between these communities, in broad terms they can be described as working-class. However, it is also the case that these communities cannot be subscribed to a unified vision of 'a' class as 'it has too many regional, ethnic and gender variations' (Bromley, 2000, p. 54).

The composition of this class is also a problematical task of categorisation. Selina Todd describes the 'traditional' working-class quite simply as 'those who work with their hands' that has historically been 'largely composed of manual workers and their

families – miners, dockers and steelworkers, and also domestic servants – and lower grade clerical workers like typists, secretaries, office boys and messengers.’ In the post-war period from 1945 onwards they were joined by large numbers of ‘non-manual workers – nurses, technicians and higher-grade clerical workers – who chose to identify themselves as working-class by virtue of their family background and because they believed that working for a living meant they had more in common with other wage-earners than with employers or political leaders’ (2014, pp. 1-2). Richard Hoggart covers similar ground but also makes some notable exceptions when he states:

[I]n occupation they are usually labourers, skilled or unskilled, or craftsmen and perhaps apprentice-trained. This loose boundary includes, therefore, men who do what used to be called ‘navvying’ and other outdoor manual work, commercial and public transport workers, men and girls [sic] on routine jobs in factories, as well as skilled tradesmen, from plumbers to those who perform the more difficult tasks in heavy industries. Foremen are included, but office clerks and employees in large shops, though they may live in these areas, are on the whole better regarded as members of the lower middle-classes’ (2009, p. 10).

Self-perception also seems to be an important indicator of class belonging. This self-perception does not happen in a vacuum but reflects the socio-cultural milieu we inhabit. This includes the representations of class that are played back to us through such things as performance encompassing stand-up comedy and, historically, the music hall. Several authors quote various polls conducted in the last thirty years that show most Britons consider themselves working-class (Bromley, 2000; O. Jones, 2012; Munt, 2000; Todd, 2014). However, this contradicts the official narrative. In 1998 the National Office for Statistics changed the criteria for determining class. The previous system, in use since 1911, consisted of six categories, four of which were working-class. The new system contained seven categories of which only three were working-class (Bromley, 2000, p. 55). More recently the BBC in conjunction with academics carried out *The Great British Class Survey*. This identified seven categories of which four were working-class.

The above illustrates the shifting nature of class categorisation and some of the contradictory tendencies of self-categorisation. The autobiographical element of this study takes us from the latter years of the nineteenth century, that is, from the opening of Sharlston colliery and the arrival of my ancestors, to the present. During this period there have arguably been two important watersheds for the working-class. The first was the Second World War and its aftermath when a growing economic influence saw them increasingly central to political debate and British culture (Todd, 2014). The second is 1979 and the election of Margaret Thatcher's Conservative administration marked the beginning of an all-out assault on the pillars of working-class Britain (O. Jones, 2012, p. 10). This social, economic and political background is the site of the autoethnographical discourse of this current study.

There is a narrative that equates the North with the working-class. They become interchangeable, one being shorthand for the other. Some authors have attributed this to the radical history of the North which can be traced through events such as the founding conference of the Independent Labour Party in Bradford; the establishment of the cooperative movement in Rochdale; the first Trades Union Congress in Manchester; Marx and Engels writing sections of *The Communist Manifesto* in Manchester; the miners' strikes of the early 1970s and the year-long dispute in 1984-85. It is a firmly anti-establishment narrative (Hannan, 2009; Maconie, 2007). There is, however, a different interpretation of this radical lineage. Dave Russell has argued that the conflation of regional identity with this radical history can, paradoxically, lend itself to conservative rather than radical forces. The displacement of class antagonisms by regional identity, the 'radical, colonised North' versus the 'oppressive South', takes place as 'various modes of northerness' are used by the middle and upper classes 'in their attempts to manage the field of class relationships' (2004, p. 279), examples of this may include Tory politicians such as Marcus Fox (Batley), Rhodes Boyson (Manchester) and William Hague (Wentworth, South Yorkshire).

3.1.2 Hoggart and *The Uses of Literacy*

Of particular relevance to this study is Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy*. Published in 1957 it is considered to be the founding work for the discipline of Cultural Studies. The book is presented in two parts; the first part being Hoggart's

reflections and observations of the working-class community where he grew up in Hunslet, Leeds, and the second part assessing the impact of American popular culture on British working-class culture. Its importance lies in the fact that it is the first study of the working-class to be written from within. It is a work that has had its detractors over the years. Andy Medhurst (2000) provides a summary of these criticisms that have accused the book of being backward-looking, apolitical, insular, sexist and slushy; it is 'under-theorised' if not 'anti-theory'. Paul Jones in his comparison of Hoggart and Raymond Williams, accuses the former of a 'defensive populist nostalgia' (1994, p. 408). This criticism is pertinent to the practical aspect of this study and will be used to analyse specific sections of the performance text. For Medhurst the book is unavoidable despite its flaws because it vividly illustrates the process of deracination:

'Hoggart's account of the cultural cusp still resonates, and it is precisely his deployment of emotionality and autobiography (those softest of targets for theorists committed to systems-building and apparatus-chasing) which ensure that this resonance persists.' (2000, p. 25)

Notwithstanding its subject and context, it is this 'emotionality and autobiography' that makes *The Uses of Literacy* an important text for this study. Hoggart is at the centre of his work; he is writing about lived experience, there are no second-hand accounts. In this respect there are echoes of autoethnographical practice; writing about what has been lived, what has been experienced, what has been felt. Hoggart's 'emotionality and autobiography' engender the 'evocative potentiality' (Muncey, 2010) of the autoethnographic found in *A Good Neet Aht*. Moreover, the performance occupies a place on the 'cultural cusp' and reflects the resulting ambiguities of class, belonging and identity.

3.2 Place and identity: remembering and revisiting/reimagining

Autoethnography: nostalgia and Memory Lane

I have been absent from this place since leaving home as an eighteen-year-old. Therefore, much of the sense of place that remains is based on memory. Whilst on a visit to Sharlston in the summer of 2016, I mentioned to an old

school friend the performance piece I was working on. I enquired about the suitability of performing it in the village. 'Why not?' was his answer, 'Everybody loves a bit of nostalgia!' I was taken aback. I had not considered the piece nostalgic.

Nostalgia had negative connotations, it was 'the buried pain of all those longing for an unrecoverable past' (Sullivan, 2010) or 'a condition of mourning or yearning for the past...when things were better, or more certain, or simpler' (Halligan & Southerton, 2011). However, sociologist and academic Vanessa May suggests that in these standard depictions, nostalgia is presented as 'an uncreative form of conservatism...that when looked at from the perspective of belonging, mobilizing the past can enliven the present' (2017, p. 402). So, memory and remembering becomes a positive device by which to examine the present and, perhaps, envision the future (Heddon, 2008; Muncey, 2010; Pearson, 2006). Here in my current work memory is set against wider experience of being from the North and what this has meant in the intervening out-of-place years. The following sections set out the backdrop for the autoethnographical research and establishes an environment for remembering; an environment where the dividing line between Muncey's evocative potentiality and Jone's defensive populist nostalgia is explored and negotiated.

3.2.1 The North: setting the stage

In the opening to his 2000 essay *Constructing 'The North': space and a sense of place*, Stuart Rawnsley makes a bold statement about the singular nature of the region:

The North of England evokes a greater sense of identity than any other 'region' of the country. At the same time, it provokes the most derision and rejection from those whose identity has been constructed and shaped elsewhere. The reason for this is that the North is much more than a tract of land. It is a reified landscape which encapsulates various rhetorical interpretations of the past and the present, of classes and cultures, and of geographical and topological features of a large area of England. No other region has such an intensified 'sense of place'. (p. 3)

The 'derision and rejection from those whose identity has been constructed and shaped elsewhere' is informative here as, arguably, certain powerful constructs of the North have also been constructed 'elsewhere'. The contextualisation of discourses on the North in terms of Englishness find such starting points as the 1924 speech by the Conservative politician Stanley Baldwin that suggested a rural Englishness firmly rooted in the past (Medhurst, 2007, p. 40). Its evocation of the village smithy at work, of farm implements being sharpened; the sights, sounds and smells of the countryside, are in sharp contrast to the industrial landscapes of the North. Baldwin's England can also be found in travel books throughout the twentieth century. For example, McKenney and Bransten's *Here's England* published in 1951, marketed for American tourists, suggests that 'the three south-eastern British counties – Kent, Sussex and Surrey – are, for Americans brought up on either calendars or on Chaucer, the classic England of our dreams.' (p. 47). Further, the book provides a map of England that fails to record any town or city in Lancashire or industrial Yorkshire. When the North is mentioned it is the heritage North of castles, ruined abbeys and dales of dry-stone walls. There are notable exceptions. JB Priestley's *English Journey* (1934) discusses the North in terms of 'other world-ness': Huddersfield is 'as wild and cold as Greenland'; the Dales are 'Tibetan' in their 'height and emptiness'; Halifax is Siberian and 'Bolton challenges you to live there'. For Priestley the industrial North is 'half derelict, and its people, living on in the queer and ugly places, are shabby, bewildered, unhappy' (Rawnsley, 2000, p. 17).

Rawnsley argues that such constructions present us with a binary that he terms 'Deep England' and 'Deep North' - they cannot be understood other than in opposition to each other. This theme is also taken up by Dave Russell in *Looking North: Northern England and the national imagination* (2004). He draws our attention to a phrase used by writers in the early part of the twentieth century to describe the industrial North - 'Black England' (p. 57). 'Deep North' and 'Black England' give us a sense of other which, at times, has been used to great effect – consider Margaret Thatcher's description of striking miners as 'the enemy within' ⁷(regardless of the fact that one of the most

⁷ See *The Enemy Within: the secret war against the miners* (Milne, 2004)

militant areas was in the Kent coalfield' the bedrock of the strike was seen as Arthur Scargill's native Yorkshire coalfield).

The precise setting of Agnew's 'locale' in relation to the North is problematical. For example, the majority of the essays discussed in *Thinking Northern: textures of identity in the north of England* (Ehland, 2007) tend to concern themselves with very specific locales such as Salford, Manchester, the Lake District and New Brighton or elements that shape the topography such as canals. Indeed, the very act of defining and locating the North presents its challenges. Katie Wales illustrates this in *Northern English; a cultural and social history* (2006). Taking a linguistic perspective contrasting dialect maps to show 'traditional' and 'modern' dialect areas, she reveals surprises on each. The former has the whole of Lancashire and most of Yorkshire in a 'Central' region and not in the North at all. The latter has Cumbria as 'Central North'. Here, then, linguistic entities begin to misshape geographical perceptions.

In setting out the parameters for her discussion, Wales explores these geographical perceptions. Whilst there is no 'North' or, for that matter, 'South' indicated on a map of England, 'most English people have some idea of their own, if there is no common agreement' (p. 9). For Wales the orientation of the perceiver is vitally important. She cites the divide in which southerners might identify with the use of such phrases as 'North of Watford Gap' or the more recent 'north of Notting Hill' (p. 10). Of course, these perceptions are not exclusive to the South. Hailing from Darlington, Wales' own demarcation point for the South is Doncaster on the A1; Tony Harrison, the Leeds-born poet, if he is travelling South, considers Retford in Nottinghamshire as where 'the rot sets in'; W.H. Auden, returning home northwards, considers Crewe to be where 'my world begins' (p. 11). My own demarcation point were the now demolished cooling towers that sat by the M1 at Sheffield. The above examples give a sense of the flexible nature of the southern boundaries of the North as well as echoing the unique sense of place experienced by individuals explored in the practical work of this thesis. The northern boundary seems to have no such problem being where England finishes and Scotland begins ... or vice versa! Wales also draws our attention to the contestable nature of what actually constitutes the North. Official and unofficial documents and organisations use terms of demarcation that are conflicting. For example, the Central Statistical Office refers to 'the North', 'the

North West' and 'Yorkshire and Humberside' – there is no 'North East' (p. 12). The area Wales finally identifies as the area of her particular study is the 'six county north' that is Northumberland, Durham, Yorkshire, Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire – the old county names are used for historical and convenient linguistic reasons (p. 13).

Russell sets out his exploration of the cultural construction of the 'the North' with the prefixes Discovering; Writing; Speaking; Staging; Screening; Singing; Playing. Firstly, however, he engages with 'Defining the North'. Whilst asserting that 'regions are dynamic, shifting entities' (2004, p. 14) Russell encounters similar difficulties in defining the North as Wales. Whereas Wales makes comprehensive use of maps to explore the North geographically and linguistically, Russell provides us with a composite allowing us to compare and contrast the contested boundaries. In contrast to Wales' 'six-county North', Russell's chosen definition for this work is the 'seven-county North' the crucial factor being the addition of Cheshire. In the 'gloriously messy and enjoyable business' of defining the North, he admits that Cheshire is the most problematical of those included, but the least problematical for inclusion out of the 'border counties' of Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire (pp. 16-17). The area identified as 'the North' is large. Indeed, it constitutes 30% of England's land mass and, since the 1861 census, consistently around 30% of its population. Of particular significance to the current thesis, the most populous counties are Lancashire and Yorkshire (West Riding) and as such they play 'a large role in the nation's mental map of the North' (p. 18). Crucially these areas were the heartland of developments in the Industrial Revolution, which gave this particular part of the region a larger working-class population than other areas of the country. By 1921 the region accounted for 50% of England's coal face workers; 75% of those working in steel works and rolling mills, and 90% of those working in textiles (p. 22). The centrality of the Industrial Revolution in shaping the physicality and perceptions of the North is highlighted by several commentators (Hannan, 2009; Hewitt, 2000; Morley, 2013; Rawnsley, 2000). With the onset of the Industrial Revolution Wales sees these images of the North as compounding the topographical alienation of the region and its people with '[t]he iconography of the North [becoming] associated with mine, mill and factory, with poverty and working-class, and hence naturalised' (p. 27).

Wales goes as far as to suggest that the North is viewed by some as so conspicuously 'other' to the extent that it is somehow not English, that it has no contribution to make to the identity of the country as a whole. Wales does, however, point towards an 'interplay [between] salience and stereotyping, a conjoining of negative and positive, the pejorative and the complimentary' (p. 31). This is a theme explored by Russell identifying moments of national crises when this binary is most pronounced. The Black North is no longer the 'other' but becomes the backbone of the national character provided by the salt of the earth folk living there (p. 33). These are binaries that are explored in the practical element of this study. The three opening scenes of *A Good Neet Aht* address the othering of the North and my experience of it.

3.2.2 The North: journeys through a place of laughter or a place to be laughed at

In the late nineteenth century music halls were ubiquitous in population centres throughout the country. Venues could be found in small pubs to 3,000 seat 'variety palaces'. The preponderance of venues meant that entertainers were constantly touring. Whilst still acknowledging the centrality of London, this meant that there was no particular region or city where residence was seen as crucial for a successful career. Northern comics, therefore, tended to stay in the North. The 1880s and '90s saw the music hall develop into the much more respectable Variety. Images of the North presented on these stages catered for the region's audiences and, indeed, northern artists who looked for 'metropolitan success' often achieved this as 'Scotsmen, Irishmen and even Cockneys' (Russell, 2004, p. 150). The 1890s saw a surge in popularity for Cockney costermonger acts and in 1900 the Scot, Harry Lauder, made his debut on the London stage. These 'local voices' were the harbingers to the wave of northern comic singers that came to national prominence during the period 1902-14. They included the Lancastrians George Formby Senior, Morny Cash and Tom Foy, and the Yorkshiremen Jack Pleasants, Chas Whittle and Whit Cunliffe (Russell, 2004, p. 157). From the 1920s and 1930s onwards the variety stage produced a list of familiar names, from George Formby to Les Dawson, that were to help keep the North firmly to the fore in the provision of popular culture.

On the 'legitimate' (Ainsworth et al, 2017, p. 2) theatre stage the areas of the North most commonly experienced were Lancashire and Yorkshire. The characters that peopled these staged-Norths were in the main two-dimensional and in conjunction with situations and narratives presented a 'distinctive version of the region ...that has been surprisingly consistent over a long period'. Challenges and adaptations were made in the face of social and economic conditions to subject matter, language and form, for example, in Shealagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey*, but in general 'the North on stage had been largely either a site of rich comedy or a place for the exploration of harsh social realities' (Russell, 2004, p. 156). Russell highlights the North's history in producing comedians and comic actors and its resulting association with humour. However, whilst being seen as 'a place of laughter' may result in 'a most pleasing and positive public image' there is also danger that it will become 'a comic place' (p. 163), that is, a place to laugh *at*.

3.2.3 A comedy map and some stereotypes

Andy Medhurst maps these places of laughter in a comedic England: 'The Capital of Comedy England might well be Blackpool, and Manchester, Wigan, South Yorkshire, Birmingham, Tyneside and the East End of London would all be significant centres of power' (2007, pp. 47-48). This is a less prosaic manifestation of Jeff Nuttall's earlier description of comedic England in his biography of Lancashire comic Frank Randle. Implicit in this description is a power relationship between North and South with the latter being dominant. Likening England to a body with London and the South East as its head, he continues:

And the tripe, the guts, the root body functions are in the Industrial North ... The nation's digestive system and anal tract is coiled across the Pennines and dredges down across the desolate plain of West Lancashire to the Irish Sea ... Here, where the sea is brown with the effluvia of the whole conurbation, lies Blackpool, the jewel of the North, a gaudy gem set on the nation's arse (1978, pp. 5-6)

In terms of stereotypical images of the North, Russell suggests external representation or, more specifically, 'representations...constructed from the centre', were in evidence from around the twelfth century and internal, northern-generated images from around

the sixteenth century if not earlier (2004, p. 33). Melvyn Bragg suggests that such images were in evidence even earlier in the 10th and 11th centuries (Bragg, 2016). Russell provides a useful table of externally generated stereotypes alongside internal readings of the same images (2004, p. 37).

Russell points out that such definitions of regional character potentially become 'a cliché that [offers] easy comic potential for outsiders while denuding internal versions of any real power' (p. 36). He also points to the North being viewed as masculine in contrast to the South as feminine. However, it is also noted that within the region itself there are counterpoints. For example, Lancashire is seen as 'matriarchal' and 'softer, friendlier and less financially orientated than its eastern neighbour [Yorkshire]' (p. 38). The comic potential of such constructs of regional character have not been overlooked by insiders. Various comics have made great play in the construction and playing of their, at times singular, comic Norths.

Table 4: Russell's images of the North (2004, p. 37)

External (especially southern) images of the North	Northern self-image	Northern images of the South
<i>Character</i>		
Truculent/carrying chip on shoulder	Independent	Subservient
Rude/lacking in social graces	Blunt/straight talking	Evasive/duplicitous
Hardworking	Hardworking/physically tough	Effete/wasteful/absorbing efforts and energy of the rest of the country
Over-competitive/ungentlemanly	Competitive	Dilettante/lacking spirit
Philistine/unpolished, albeit highly musical	Practical/productive	Snobbish/wasteful/superficial
Mean	Careful with money	Wasteful
Homely	Friendly/hospitable	Unfriendly/unsociable
Parochial	Proud of roots and identity	Cosmopolitan/rootless
Working-class	Meritocratic/egalitarian	Nepotistic/elitist
Prejudiced/biased	Knowledgeable/holding strong views	Evasive/equivocal
Humorous if crude	Humorous/witty	Quick witted but overly fond of double entendre
A breed apart	A breed apart	A breed apart
<i>Landscape and geography</i>		
Relentlessly urban/bleak/site of much open, often wild countryside	Varied in nature	Soft countryside/London an exciting place offering much opportunity, but too dominant and too marked by extremes of wealth
Wet/cold/bracing	Harsh but better than often claimed	Warm/pleasant
Industrial	Industrial but economically more varied than usually appreciated	Financial/place of consumption rather than production

3.2.4 Uses of the North and comic identities: three case studies comedy and place

Simon Featherstone contrasts the use of regional identities employed by Gracie Fields and Frank Randle (2009, pp. 92-100). Fields enjoyed national success at both cinema and theatre box successfully negotiating the tensions between regional and national identity, as well as the influence of American popular culture. She maintained a persona of the ordinary girl; a no-frills mill worker from Rochdale. Her ability to present a 'nationalisable Northernness' is illustrated in the pains taken to craft a public image. For example, her record company hosted a lunch at the London Trocadero to celebrate her record sales, with waitresses dressed in shawls and clogs serving fish and chips, hot pot, beer and tea. In contrast, Wigan-born Frank Randle provided a bellicose celebration of the cultural and regional oppositions that Fields mediated. Based in Blackpool, his stalking grounds were in the North stretching across that northern industrial belt that reaches from Lancashire to West Yorkshire. It was a career that showed an acute understanding of the people he played to. He was, indeed, the audience 'or, at least, a manifestation of its mythological signifiers; his culture in microcosm' and exhibited a contempt for 'hypocrisy, cant and humbug' (C. Lee, 1998, pp. 33-34).

Following Fields and Randle, Les Dawson crafted a comic performance persona that exploited northern stereotypes. Les Dawson was one of the best known and best loved English comedians of the mid to late twentieth century. He was born in 1931 in Collyhurst, a working-class district of Manchester. Collyhurst and its people, like similar areas of Manchester he would live in, provided a backdrop for much of Dawson's work.

In his autobiography *A Clown Too Many* (1985) Dawson makes great play of his humble beginnings. In the prologue he presents a romantic picture of a 'salt of the earth' neighbourhood. His setting of the scene is Lowryesque. He tells us of 'gaslit hovels, dirt and poverty... cobbled streets and lumbering trams; bleak women in clogs and shawls, filing in silence towards the brooding mills'. It is a place where no one speaks ill of their neighbour and the fabled back door was always open for anyone to pop in.

He continues in the first chapter along the same lines describing 'grimy hunched warehouses...narrow tenements gazing eyeless on to litter-pitted streets...soot-grimed walls...winding cobbled streets...drain-blocked alleyways' (p. 17). Living in the two up two down his parents shared with grandparents and uncle is described as 'a constant fight for cleanliness' (p. 18). We get the first glimpses of the people he experienced in that community when we learn that he used to hide under the table on Saturday nights in order to listen to the stories being told and songs being sung.

Throughout the autobiography there are a series of vignettes interspersed between chapters that Dawson calls 'Images'. They all recall Dawson waiting to meet members of the royal family after his appearances in the Royal Variety Performance. In each one he contrasts his current situation and company with a story from his childhood which more often than not draws on the harsh conditions of the working-class at that time. A typical entry reads:

Her Majesty came slowly down the line of waiting artistes and I stood nervously aware of my inadequacy before her regal presence.... What her majesty would not see was a frightened boy of twelve being forced to look at his grandfather lying in his coffin, with black-draped relatives drinking noisily round his remains. She would not see the sobbing lad of fourteen at the funeral of his friend Billy, who had died from spinal meningitis (p. 83)

Perhaps it is not surprising that on his return from London after a false start to his career he reflects:

London had excited me, but I knew that for all time, my heart would be in the north. The people, most of whom had experienced hardship, were more tolerant than the average southern dweller; they had a greater depth to their character than their London counterpart, and the north was changing. Gone now the 'flat cap' image of a northern male...there was an air of sophistication in Manchester (p. 85)

Dawson's North permeates his novel *A Card for the Clubs* (1974) which charts the rise and fall, in his own words, of club comedian Joe King. Written in between engagements whilst Dawson was on tour we can assume that he used his journeys

and destinations as source material. Early in the novel the North is evoked in the type of language and phraseology that would become familiar to the British public:

...the raw dampness of Gawkesworth fondled me with clammy fingers. The pallid street lamps threw pools of invalid illumination on the litter strewn cobbles: serving to escort the hunched buildings towards the Doncaster by-pass. The scene was descriptive of the many Northern mining towns that abound in South Yorkshire; little wonder then that these people knew small culture or could understand little beyond the dreary norm of their lives. (p. 10)

Leeds is 'a big provincial nothing', Stockton is a 'harsh industrial town' and Jarrow is 'dismal' looking like a 'knacker's yard with lights'. The people inhabiting these places fare little better under King's scrutiny and are 'bull-throated alcoholics', 'grim-faced' or 'horny handed cretins'. The novel is not autobiographical and would not seem to echo Dawson's personal view of the people he met on his travels. Louis Barfe has noted that, unlike his fellow comedians, when Dawson was performing in a club he would sit drinking and talking with the audience only taking to the stage when he was introduced (2012, p. 49). This behaviour would suggest that he didn't share Joe King's jaundiced view of his public but suggests he is closer to Randle's relationship with his audience.

The North and the working-class, then, permeate Dawson's work. Through his comic persona on stage elements of Russell's northern stereotypes are mediated. The appendix to this work includes a transcript of a Les Dawson television appearance on *The Good Old Days* on which the following observations are based. He is **truculent** in that he presents as sullen rather than aggressive or nonconforming. He carries the weight of the world on his shoulders. Nothing ever seems to live up to his expectations of what is possible from life - this is the chip on the shoulder. In terms of self-image he displays **independence** in as much as he keeps trying to better himself and other people with his oft repeated claim to be an 'intellectual performer'

His **rudeness** such as it is comes from his comments about others – these include his wife, mother in law, audience and named members of the production team. His trademark eagerness to impress with the use of such language may suggest that he lacks social graces. The audience expectation is that, as a working-class northerner,

he should not be talking like this. The **bluntness** of the self-image appears in two forms. Firstly, his pithy comments about others, as mentioned above. Secondly others' put downs of himself.

His appearance would suggest he is **hard working/physically tough**, that lived-in face combined with the gravelly voice. He, however, spends much of the act trying to convince people otherwise. Here he is attempting to play against type but inadvertently reinforcing it. Similarly, he plays against the **ungentlemanly image**. In terms of self-image this could be read as **competitive** given the fact he is trying to make a living in show business.

His attempts at cultivating a literary persona suggest a struggle to escape **philistinism** as does his failed attempt at becoming an 'intellectual performer' resorting to a red nose and a raspberry. His reversion to the methods of 'third rate, inferior performers' does, at least, suggest he will continue to make a living and prove **practical/productive**.

The **homely – friendly/hospitable** binary is evident in his exhortations for people to join him in a sing-a-long, recreating the community of yesteryear. His act in general is 'homely' and inclusive. This is also evidenced in his references to family members and neighbours (mother in law, wife, man next door) and the first name terms he is on with the producer of the show. This could also suggest a **parochialness** and a begrudging **pride in his roots**. No matter how much he professes to be different he is the same as his audience.

For the external image a northern accent equals being **working-class**. The **meritocratic/egalitarian** self-image is used to play against - all his attempts to better himself seem thwarted and the people he works with and for do not seem to appreciate him or his talents for what they are.

The external image of **prejudiced/biased** is reflected in comments on the audience and venue. Its opposite in self-image is **knowledgeable/holding strong views**. He would certainly have us believe that he is knowledgeable as he references the stars and the solar system.

In his chapter *Staging the North* Russell suggests that 'a substantial body of northern comedians and a smaller but significant body of plays have heavily influenced the ways in which the region has been imagined' (2004, p. 147). Whilst the main focus of the chapter is on the 'legitimate' stage Russell also examines the contribution made by music hall and other elements of popular culture. As a nationally-recognised figure, Les Dawson was synonymous with the North and follows in the music hall footsteps of Frank Randle and Gracie Fields. This tradition is embodied in the opening scenes of *A Good Neet Aht* which 'cites' Dawson by using material taken from one of his routines.

3.3 Popular performance: Reading stand-up to determine the route

An editorial in the *Journal of Comedy Studies* entitled *Analysing Stand-up Comedy* describes comedy as 'a complex and pervasive form of expression that permeates everyday life and mediated discourses' (Lockyer et al., 2011, pp. 99-100). In the same issue Louise Peacock notes the difficulties inherent in analysing any type of performance event, whether it be theatre or stand-up comedy. She draws attention to the 'polysemic nature of performance' and that it can work 'synchronically' and 'diachronically' (p. 126); that is, performance can have several interpretations that can occur in one instance simultaneously or that can accrue over time. Whilst these issues of analysis have been comprehensively addressed by academics concerned with performance in the theatre, the same cannot be said for stand-up comedy. In general terms the literature available tends to fall in to two categories: the numerous 'how to' books on the subject such as Jay Sankey's *Zen and The Art of Stand-Up Comedy* (1998) and those that focus on content, that is, the joke. Examples of the latter include Jim Holt's *Stop Me if You've heard This Before: a history and Philosophy of Jokes* (2008) and *The Naked Jape: uncovering the hidden world of jokes* (2006) by Jimmy Carr and Lucy Greeves. A 'sub-genre' of the study of the joke is that of the study of the content of the joke. The *Journal of Comedy Studies* is a more than useful source for this discussion. The titles of the following articles illustrate the point: *Take my mother-in-law: 'old bags', comedy and the sociocultural construction of the older woman* (Shade, 2010); *No other excuse: Race, class and gender in British Music Hall*

comedic performance 1914-1949 (Huxley & James, 2012); and *Near the knuckle? It nearly took my arm off! British comedy and the new offensiveness* (Hunt, 2010).

Sankey defines stand-up comedy as ‘a particular kind of performance, often given while standing on a stage in front of a microphone, during which the performer tells a scripted series of fictitious accounts in such a way as to suggest that they are unscripted, in an attempt to make an audience laugh’ or more succinctly as ‘telling believable lies to make people laugh’ (1998, p. 5). Similarly Oliver Double gives us ‘a single performer standing in front of an audience, talking to them with the specific intention of making them laugh’ (1997, p. 4). However, in his second publication on the subject of stand-up Double revisits and reassesses this earlier definition. His ‘single performer’ is now joined by the double act, comic poets, circus clowns, storytellers and performers of character monologues. He goes on to identify three things that define stand-up comedy other than the fact it has to be funny:⁸

Personality

It puts a person on display in front of an audience, whether that person is an exaggerated comic character or a version of the performer’s own self.

Direct communication

It involves direct communication between performer and audience. It’s an intense relationship, with energy flowing back and forth between stage and auditorium. It’s like a conversation made up of jokes, laughter and sometimes less pleasant responses.

Present tense

It happens in the present tense, in the here and now. It acknowledges the performance situation. The stand-up comedian is duty-bound to incorporate events in the venue into the act. Failure to respond to a heckler, a dropped glass or the ringing of a mobile phone is a sign of weakness which will result in the audience losing faith in the performer’s ability.

⁸ This definition mirrors Double’s later definition of popular performance mentioned in Chapter 1

(2014, pp. 18-19)

The difficulties of analysing comedy are evident in Douglas J Glick's article *Some performative techniques of stand-up comedy: An exercise in the textuality of temporalization* (2007). He sets out to explore 'the verbal art of stand-up comedy' using 'Bakhtin's work on voicing in narrative chronotopes' (p. 291). He chooses a section from an Eddie Izzard live performance and begins to analyse the text as spoken by the performer. He asserts that '[g]iven the essentially empty and thus 'imaginary' stage, it is primarily language that is used to bring into shared existence the kinds of knowledges that are key to an understanding of the performance's humour.' (p. 294). However, having identified the centrality of language to the act there is a lengthy footnote explaining how he will include 'relevant gestures'. This highlights the problematical nature of analysing the comic act using one approach and, further, the difficulty in backgrounding the pivotal role of performance. Indeed Andy Medhurst observes that 'the longer I looked at popular comedy, the importance of performance loomed ever larger' in that '[p]erformative skill can weave spells from even the smaller units of 'text', mining comic gold from the tiniest of territories, so that an unexceptional single word, or even part of a word, can become a memorable comic moment if the performance is bold, crafty and precise enough' (2007, p. 3).

Double observes '[it's] difficult to describe a moment of stand-up because so much is going on, more than any formal system of transcription could take in, no matter how scientific or precise' (2014, p. 213). However, Louise Peacock makes an important contribution to developing an analytical tool in her article *Joan Rivers – Reading the Meaning* (2011), by noting that '[e]verything about the stand-up comedian can be read' (p. 3). As stated in the above methodology, Peacock begins to construct a model for analysing stand-up comedy in performance drawing on the work of performance semioticians Patrice Pavis and Tadeusz Kowzan. Both Kowzan and Pavis provided lists of signifiers as an aid to decoding performance.

3.3.1 Development and affect

Whilst the analysis of stand-up may present problems there is more confidence in discussions on the role or ramifications of stand-up. It has been described as 'a communal activity' (Mills, 2011, p. 2) and as an act where '[s]haring jokes is a means

of reinforcing a sense of commonality and communality, and is a means of testing shared attitudes'(Matte & McFadyen, 2011, p. 4). Historically there has been a special element to this communality. Oliver Double traces the development of stand-up from the music hall through Variety and the rise of the Working Men's Club (1997). Double admits that his 'image of the average club comic was a fat, dinner-jacketed buffoon spewing out wrinkled stereotypes and prehistoric mother-in-law gags' and that, on commencing his research, 'in many ways it was far worse than I imagined' (p. 92). He then goes on to describe a typical night in a Working Men's Club with comedians taking their place in a line-up that includes singers, bands and games of bingo.⁹ The description is similar to that of John McGrath in his search for 'the language of working-class entertainment' (1996, p. 22). His list includes Ernie the MC on the Wurlitzer; an up-and-coming comedian/crooner or young woman singing pop songs; a band; a comic, vocalist or ventriloquist; bingo; and wrestling (pp. 24-25). Double suggests that this context directly affected the content and form of the comedians performing in such venues. Comedy requires 'attention and thought' (1997, p. 108) and these audiences were not there primarily to listen to a comedian. Simply being heard was often a difficult task for any performer and so tried and tested material became a safety net. There was little scope for extended monologues or musings on a theme, so short, sharp punches became the order of the day. Stand-up was 'whittled down to the basics of a person standing behind a microphone, telling packaged gags one after the other' (p. 103). There is a reciprocal relationship therefore between the performance that is produced and the context of its production. McGrath describes this relationship as bearing 'all the marks of the suffering of the urban industrial working-class of the north of England...that have been part of its life since the Industrial Revolution' (1996, p. 25).

Andy Medhurst takes an arguably more nuanced approach tracing the ancestry of popular comedy back to the music hall of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. He argues that the prevalent issue amongst academics studying the

⁹ His description of the bingo caller holding near celebrity status echoes the comedian Peter Kay's experience of working at the Gala Bingo in Bolton (Kay, 2006, pp. 193-198).

Victorian music hall is politics. This has led to the assertion that the nature of the form was essentially conservative and therefore, in terms of its content, encouraged people to know their place. However, Medhurst suggests that this is a predominantly middle-class approach to a working-class product. Whilst acknowledging that some aspects of music hall were reactionary, for example the word 'jingoism' comes from a music hall song about the Crimean War, Medhurst suggests that 'conservative doesn't equal reactionary'. If music hall, like all popular comedy, is 'an invitation to belong, to acknowledge and celebrate like-mindedness, to say "yes, life's like that, let's laugh at it" then what is wrong with this type of consolation in the context of appalling living and working conditions and, moreover, "life's like that" is not the same as "life is wonderful"' (2007, p. 65). Music hall was also considered near the knuckle in contrast to the dominant trend of middle-class decency and, as such, articulated a set of alternative values. In this respect Medhurst finds echoes of Bakhtin's ideas on the carnivalesque as 'carnival was not a spectacle to be consumed by an audience, but actively participated in by an entire community'. In a contemporary context 'the level of involvement demanded by most stand-ups and the recirculation of dialogue and mannerisms amongst devotees of popular television and film comedy calls into serious question any idea that their consumption is 'passive"' (p. 68). Further, Medhurst poses that this carnivalesque comedy gives a 'utopian glimpse of something better, some sort of rearranged world where the pleasure of the many unseats the clampdowns of the few' (p. 70). Extrapolation of this analysis places the music hall, its descendant the Working Men's Club and significant sites in the North in the realms of Foucault's notions of heterotopias. Ralph Pordzik defines heterotopias 'as culturally and socially related spaces in which local sites mix with wider political patterns or modes of life and ideological positions are placed or determined in a way which makes them irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another' (2007, p. 326). As such they become spaces that exist despite of and resistant to the prevailing hegemony. However, both concepts of carnival and heterotopias share the fundamental weakness of being susceptible to the strictures placed on them by that very hegemony (see Stallybrass, 2007).

3.3.2 Comedy and the North: a family tree

The Industrial Revolution is the starting point for Tony Hannan's *On Behalf of the Committee: A History of Northern Comedy*. Hannan's logic follows the observation

that the Industrial Revolution saw the growth of both the industrial centres and, consequently, populations of the North. This growth was accompanied by the formation of a new class – the proletariat or the working-class. These seismic changes were to shape outer perceptions and images of the North as well as the construction of identities from within the North. The book is a comprehensive and affectionate journalistic compendium of performers, some of which have the slightest of links to the North. The parameters for the study are broad, taking in those who were ‘born or spent his or her childhood...in the nirvana that lies uppermost of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire and a field or two below Hadrian’s Wall’ (2009, p. xv). These are loose parameters – geographically Billy Merson and Arthur Lucan fall beyond them coming from Nottingham and Boston, Lincolnshire respectively; temporally Frankie Howerd loosely fits the definition of a Northern comedian born in York but moving to London at two years old; and there are those born in the North but educated elsewhere in the formative years of their childhood: Michael Palin (Sheffield – Shrewsbury), Eric Idle (South Shields – Midlands), Roy Kinnear (Wigan – Edinburgh). The inclusion of Kinnear is emblematic of Hannan’s reach in this review. Similar artists such as Arthur Lowe, Derek Nimmo, Norman Rossington and Thora Hurd were primarily actors who were often found in comic pieces rather than being outright comedians.

Hannan moves towards drawing out the regionally specific in northern comedy. However, the points he makes are presented as givens and are not evidenced to at any great length. So southern humour is described as ‘gag-driven, witty, flamboyant, cocky, competitive, aggressive, and overtly political’ full of ‘testosterone and masculinity’ and northern humour has a more ‘feminine emphasis on character and minutiae of everyday domestic life’ (2009, p. xiii). Moreover, there is a distinction made across the North – Yorkshire comics indulge in ‘no-nonsense miserablism’ whereas Lancashire comics take a ‘more whimsical and optimistic view of life’. These characteristics are located in the economics of the sub-regions – the taciturn Yorkshireman is involved in the solitary, inward looking livelihoods such as farming or mining; the more communal looking Lancastrian in the shipyard or the mill (2009, p. xv).

Having linked the production of performance to place Hannan continues 'if location is important then class has historically been an even greater defining feature of British comedy' (2009, pp. xx-xxi).

So, *A Good Neet Aht* explores the performance of place through class using the popular forms associated with the North of England. This, combined with the use of the postdramatic and the autoethographical, allows us to consider what happens when we are 'out of place'. The following chapter is an exploration of how this landscape of place, class and performance evolved in practice.

Entr'acte 3: Rob Wilton, Liverpool



Image 11: [Stand-up No.1](#)



Image 12: Rob Wilton (Pathe, 1932)

'Coming here on the bus I was sat behind these two old ladies. One of them says "Agnes I've not seen you for years! How you doing?"

She said "I'm wonderful. Do you know I'm getting married again on Saturday for the fourth time? Fourth time and still a virgin!"

Her pal said "You're never!"

She said "I am. You remember my first husband he was a gynaecologist and he just liked to study it.

Then I married a psychologist and he just liked to talk about it he did.

And my third husband, he was a stamp collector...

...and I do miss him.'" (Green, 2017, pp. 12-13)

4. The journey into performance: key concepts in the analysis of performing place and comedy

In terms of this exercise in exploring the performance of place and, in particular, the geographical locations contained within *A Good Neet Aht*, I am Auden's 'single intuitive glance' (in Hoggart, 2009, p. xvi), in as much as the autobiographical nature of much of the material and the people referenced in that material, provide a fissure through which to view this particular section of a society inhabiting a particular place. The following chapter will analyse the practical work in both its written forms, that is, the dramatic text and in performance, the performance text. This chapter surveys several performances of *A Good Neet Aht*, a journey taken through a two-year period. There are four sections that address the major elements of the study. Section one addresses the autoethnographical roots of the piece discussing the advantages and disadvantages inherent in the use of memory as a source of material. Further, it considers the development of the performative-I and personas that are presented on stage. It draws on the field of Cultural Studies with particular reference to Richard Hoggart's influential work *The Uses of Literacy*. Section two gives an overview of postdramatic theatre. It then compares and contrasts *A Good Neet Aht* to Michael Pinchbeck's *The Post Show Party Show* in an examination of postdramatic treatment of autobiographical material. This also links with the autoethnographical nature of the research as Michael Pinchbeck is a contemporary academic, writer and performer based in the East Midlands. Section three surveys the use of popular performance in *A Good Neet Aht*, how it is used and the effect it has on revealing personas. There is also a discussion on how it sits against the archival and autobiographical material; that is, how does the fictive justify its place against the real or the actual? Finally, section four looks at place, its construction on stage and the material that grows from it. It is possible to analyse the whole of the practical work under any of the above sections. There are, then, no definitive lines drawn between them. They overlap and blur boundaries; they vie with each other for attention; they complement each other and their absence is felt when one element is omitted. They ebb and flow, mirroring the polysemic nature of the performance. Scenes have been chosen that best illustrate the particular element being discussed.

This does not preclude them from discussion under different scenes but the parameters of space necessitate a selective approach to the material.

4.1 Autoethnography

4.1.1 Memory and recollecting the journey

If one of the major elements of the autoethnographic is that it is the 'articulation of a personal story' (Spry, 2011, p. 147) then memory plays a primary role in the recollections that inform this story (Muncey, 2010, pp. 56, 102-105). Raphael Samuel refers to memory as 'an active shaping force' that operates as a 'way of shaping knowledge' (2012, p. xxiii) and it is this idea that runs as a thread throughout the performance piece. The piece contains scenes that are directly drawn from my experience of growing up in the North, but they are tempered by the recognition that memory is subjective in as much as 'recollection begins with an attitude around which memory is reconstructed. Therefore, attitudes may change over time, affecting the memory' (Muncey, 2010, p. 105). This is underscored in the piece in the recollection of a photograph of a junior school rugby team. The photograph is described in detail. The final image of the piece is a projection of the photograph which highlights the inaccuracy of the earlier description. This is discussed in more detail below.

4.1.2 Memory and place

The use of memory is closely linked to 'chorography' - described by Mike Pearson as the description and mapping of regions or districts taking into account 'community, custom and law as much as physical geographical characteristics' (2006, p. 9). In this respect there are similarities between my work and Pearson's *Bubbling Tom* (2000). Pearson invokes the academic and author Gregory Ulmer in describing how chorography relates to his work. Chorography, says Ulmer, has 'a valuable resonance for a rhetoric of invention concerned with the history of "place" in relation to memory'. It requires a creativity that will lead to new ways of working [as a writer and researcher in Ulmer's context], new constructs and texts growing out of the specific locality and memory of the author. This *mystory* emerges from a weaving of the personal, the popular and the expert blurring the 'boundar[ies] between critical

and creative writing, autobiography and cultural history, one text and the next' (2006, pp. 9-10).

The initial intention in producing this practical element was to begin an exploration of the North to find out what it has meant and means to me and, through that understanding, what it might mean to others, that is, how we might read 'northernness'. However, as the creative process developed it began to investigate the notion that performance and place may be linked.

This performed piece, then, began to explore three elements of the research: a sense of place; place and identity; and place and performance. These are the three strands that run throughout the piece and informed the development of a stage persona.

4.1.3 The performative-I: a journey towards identity

The researcher is central to any autoethnographical enquiry. In a performance context the identity of the researcher-as-performer acquires an enhanced centrality.

As already discussed in chapter 2, Tami Spry identifies two 'I's in the autoethnographical performance process. The performative-I disposition is active during the writing phase of autoethnographical performance. It is a critical disposition that necessitates self-analysis in terms of relationships and connections with others and the cultural context. These relationships and connections also mean that the autoethnographer becomes a co-performer as each party or element has an equitable role in the creation of meaning through performance (2011, p. 57). In the act of performing, the performative-I disposition transfers to the performative-I persona, that is, 'the person, the subject, the "you", created in the autoethnographic text.' (p. 159). This performative-I persona originates in the written text and then, as the written text becomes part of the performance text, is developed further in performance.

The performative-I persona is not a fixed entity but is malleable, ambiguous even, changing as differing contexts are explored in performance. It is a heterogeneous entity in a constant state of negotiation. It reflects Muncey's assertion on memory and recollection being constructed from an attitude and, therefore, being subject to change as attitudes change. This self as shifting persona is different to the self as

performer or 'the self that is seeking to embody the persona in the text through performance' (Spry, 2011, pp. 175-175). The contention of this study is that these 'selves' are predicated on place or, more specifically, the positioning of the researcher is key in relation to the performance of place. The dialectic or negotiation taking place is between audience, performance site, performance material and the shifting personas encountered. Their initial manifestations within the piece begin to emerge in Scene 2: *The North Will Rise Again*.

4.1.4 An emerging performative-I persona: *The North Will Rise Again* as embarkation point

Scene 2 of *A Good Neet Aht* includes the poem [*The North Will Rise Again*](#) (Permain, 1982, pp. 49-52). The following section is an autoethnographical piece of writing that explains both the personal and wider significance of the poem. It includes the main themes of this study as it touches upon place, identity and class. However, it also marks, unconsciously, the sense of the beginning of a journey and the blurring of boundaries and distinctions that emerge as the ambiguities of identity in the performance of *A Good Neet Aht*.

Autoethnography: The North Will Rise Again

I first came across this poem by Andy Permain in the mid-1980s approaching the end of my time as an undergraduate. Higher Education had been a pivotal experience for me. It did what Higher Education should do: enabled me to encounter a host of new people, experiences and ways of thinking. My undergraduate years were 1982 to 1985. It was a time of great political unrest. There had been a series of industrial disputes as the Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher sought to subjugate individual trade unions one after the other (Benyon, 1985; Milne, 2004). The final set piece battle was with the National Union of Mineworkers. Increasingly I was becoming a latter day 'angry young man'¹⁰ raging at the injustices of the world around him.¹⁰

¹⁰ The phrase was used to describe the wave of working-class and middle-class writers, mostly male, that were writing in the late 1950s. Much of their work displayed their disappointment and dissatisfaction with post-WW2 Britain. The most well-known example of this work is John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* (1956).

The '84-'85 miners' strike brought much hardship to the village that I grew up in. It sat in the Yorkshire coalfield, one of the epicentres of the dispute and NUM president Arthur Scargill's home powerbase. Many of the boys that I had been to school with were now working in the mining industry. Both my grandfathers had been miners and now I had uncles and cousins that worked at the coalface. One of those uncles had been the NUM president at the local pit. So, it felt like it was personal. Regardless of the personalities involved on a national level, regardless of the decisions and tactics on the NUM's part leading up to the strike, in the village and the wider community, the miners had to be supported. No one crosses a picket line; that was sacrosanct.

And there I was in Leicester. In the heart of what became known amongst striking communities as 'Scab Land.'¹¹ In the whole of the Leicester coalfield there were only thirty miners on strike. They became known as the 'Dirty Thirty' (Bell, 2009). A short journey up the M1 and you were in Mansfield, home of the breakaway, (indirectly¹²) government-sponsored Union of Democratic Mineworkers. This context engendered a sense of dislocation. Driving home from Leicester to Wakefield it was a common sight to see side roads and bridges full of coaches and minibuses. They were filled with police brought in from all over the country to watch, steward and herd, often with force, those that Margaret Thatcher considered the 'enemy within' (Milne, 2004). I went on marches, signed petitions and went to benefit gigs but I was removed from it all – literally, 90 miles away, and metaphorically, studying for a degree in an arts-based subject. This sense of removal was a microcosm of what was to happen over several years. Paradoxically, the more removed I became, the more fiercely protective I became of my regional roots, family and 'home'.

So, the poem came at a time of struggle, the visible struggle in the coalfields and the personal, internal struggle for identity, belonging, and a sense of self.

¹¹ The strongest areas in terms of the support for the strike were Yorkshire, Wales, Scotland and Kent. In the Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire coalfields a majority of miners chose to cross picket lines and go to work. A scab is someone who chooses to break a strike and go to work. I lived in the Yorkshire coalfield.

¹² This is documented in Huw Benyon's *Digging Deeper* (1985), Seamus Milne's *The Enemy Within: the secret war against the miners* (2014) and Beth Steel's play *Wonderland* (2014).

Perhaps these feelings were no different to any young person living away from home for the first time but they were feelings heightened by the context. The poem gave expression to some of the things I was feeling. It seemed to sum up the frustration and anger but also played to the romantic notions of the North and the working-class I unconsciously held. With hindsight I was as much the poem's target as anyone else.

In *The North Will Rise Again* there is a clever use of 'defensive populist nostalgia' in its dual use as both a regional identifier and critical tool. This term has been used to describe the approach of Richard Hoggart in *The Uses of Literacy* (Medhurst, 2000, p. 24), which is referred to as a book that is 'flawed, maligned and unavoidable'. It is a work, however, that still resonates (see Hanley, 2017; Medhurst, 2007) and has a useful contribution to make in this analysis.

4.1.4.1 Hoggart as a signpost to identity and stage personas

In the section *The Scholarship Boy* Hoggart identifies two manifestations of the 'declassed'. Firstly, he describes the scholarship boy, the boy who is taking an educational route to a different way of life to that of his parental home. As the boy's academic journey leads into adulthood he may suffer a sense of loss that is increased "precisely because they are emotionally uprooted from their class, often under the stimulus of a stronger critical intelligence or imagination, qualities which can lead them into an unusual self-consciousness before their own situation." (2009, p. 263). This loss is the result, then, of the individual being at a 'cultural cusp' (Medhurst, 2000, p. 25) mentioned in chapter 3, a liminal point existing between two worlds or "a friction point between two cultures" (Hoggart, 2009, p. 264).

Secondly, there is a group made up of 'those who in some ways ask questions of themselves and about their society'. These individuals did not take the grammar school route but never the less placed themselves at the 'friction point' by questioning the world around them. Hoggart evokes the journalist and author Arthur Koestler's phrase in describing them as 'thoughtful corporals' (Hoggart, 2009, p. 271).

Hoggart's reflections permeate the work of the Leeds-born journalist Anthony Clavane who suggests a third grouping that, could be argued, arises from the

previous two groups of the scholarship boys and the thoughtful corporals. Clavane identifies his literary heroes as Keith Waterhouse, Alan Bennett, Tony Harrison and David Storey. Whilst recognising their works he also idolises them as 'cultural pathfinders, the Leeds-based wing of the New Wave movement' (Clavane, 2011, p. 68). Together he refers to them as the 'Four Sons'. Clavane was to become friends with Storey's daughter at University. When they met some years later in the late 1980s, after University, he enquired after her father. Now living in the South, Storey's experience echoes Hoggart:

Like his fellow West Riding escapees, Storey had been part of a crack battalion of cultural pathfinders who had benefitted from the new inclusiveness – which, it turned out, had only been applicable to a small minority – and in the process, severed the bonds of their upbringing. They had gone beyond their old lives, escaped their provincial backwaters – and found that they didn't quite belong (p. 135)

My experience lies in the hinterland of Hoggart and Clavane's observations, struggling to identify entirely with the scholarship boy, the thoughtful corporals or the cultural pathfinders. More accurately I am probably a composite of all three. I was not a scholarship boy. In the Wakefield Metropolitan District my school year was the first one to go through the comprehensive system. Normally, a boy of my ability, that is, IQ as measured by examination, would have been expected to go to Normanton Grammar School but under the new system I would go to Crofton Comprehensive. Crofton had been the old Secondary Modern and so as a 'bright' twelve-year old I arrived in an institution where everyone in the years above had 'failed' their eleven plus.¹³ Attending Crofton had been a positive choice; it was something I wanted to do. The options placed before me were: firstly, take the eleven plus for the Grammar school - it was the penultimate intake. (However, my junior school had only been offered one place unlike schools in the surrounding area that had been offered four to five places. For this reason, my parents were against me sitting the exam as a point of principle); secondly, take the entrance exam for the fee-paying Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Wakefield; thirdly, go to Crofton with my friends. On reflection

¹³ The eleven plus was an exam all children took at the end of primary school. It was part of a selective education system. If you passed you were deemed 'bright' and went to grammar school. If you failed you went to a secondary school.

opting for the third choice had its drawbacks. My perception was that in the eyes of my fellow students I did not particularly fit the accepted paradigm of what an average school pupil should be like. I liked and did the 'wrong' things; I was perceived as clever, liked drama and preferred football to rugby league. It brought out some of the negative traits found in the Northern working-class communities I grew up in; anything artistic was deemed effeminate and there was a strong streak of anti-intellectualism. Unlike Hoggart's scholarship boy the 'uprooting' took place *in* the school rather than because of the school.

I did not take the grammar school route and the very process and performing of *AGNA* means I am questioning the world around me: the definition of a thoughtful corporal. Hoggart says that in his experience 'they are to be found frequently among minor clerks and similarly black-coated workers, and among elementary school teachers, especially in the big cities' (2009, p. 271). I have been a civil service Administrative Officer working in an Employment Service Benefit Office in East London; whilst there I was a Trade Union representative; I now work in a university drama department after many years of working in an inner-city Further Education College. These are my 'corporal traits' but I also play against the type having acquired post-graduate qualifications.

I make no grand declarations on being a cultural pathfinder. I cannot be directly compared to the authors previously mentioned. I have, however, made a living from the cultural industries either directly or indirectly. My undergraduate and postgraduate degrees are in performance and theatre and I now teach in those subjects after having worked as an actor. I make no claim to be unique. I am, perhaps, a composite – a cultural corporal on a scholarship.

The North Will Rise Again provides a focus for the emotional uprooting of those 'escaping' their class and background. It was simultaneously and paradoxically that friction point between two cultures identified by Hoggart, an expression of the anger felt by a young man whose community was under attack; and a romantic clinging to something that he may never have felt wholly part of. As used in performance the poem becomes intensely personal. It would be an impossible task for a performer to 'play' the above description of the poem. The elements I attempted to bring out were the clichéd images of the North, the defence and defiance of a place under attack

and a personal attachment. In the text I reflect on the opening sections or ‘a beginning’, but the words could easily apply to the performative-I persona displayed: in railing against the perceived injustices inflicted on the North and using clichéd images of the North in a bitterly ironic sense, the performative-I persona becomes ‘a bit tetchy, a bit angry, maybe even has a bit of a chip on its shoulder’. The very fact that I question the opening of the piece presents another persona, that of the reflective practitioner/performer. Already there is an ambiguity in terms of the identity of the performer, that is, which Phil Green are they listening to?

4.1.5 Dead ends: questions of identity and editing the text: Scene 7 *Northern enough*

In an early iteration of the piece, Scene 7 began with a clip from *The Wheeltappers' and Shunters' Social Club* (Ferguson, 1975) with comedian [Colin Crompton](#) playing a comic version of the archetypal club chairman making unintentionally comic announcements to the club. Ultimately this archive clip was edited out as the focus moved away from comedy towards place. Compton is dressed in checked jacket, shirt and tie topped with a flat cap. He also holds an ever-present cigarette, the second of life's pleasures next to drinking identified by Hoggart (2009, p. 78). His delivery is slow, reflecting the self-aggrandisement that has accompanied his position as the club Concert Secretary. The purpose of this clip was twofold. It emphasised some of the established tropes of the North and northerners in the national imagination but also provided a contrast with the following section based on an extract from Ian McMillan's *Neither Nowt Nor Summat: in search of the meaning of Yorkshire* (2015) which questions self-perceptions and is at odds with the ontological certainties inherent in Compton's characterisation. The book relates McMillan's journey around Yorkshire as he looks for its 'meaning'. It is a psychogeographical journey through dale and town, farm and mill; a *dérive* of the North. There is also the suggestion that for many a sense of belonging and place may not be fixed and, indeed, may not be of importance. McMillan's dream betrays his self-doubt about his 'Yorkshireness'; despite living in Barnsley all his life he wonders whether it has been diluted by having a Scottish father. This familiar doubt was explored in the creative process as documented in earlier chapters. Arguably my perspective emerges from the experience of being involved in the professional worlds of education and the cultural industries in the alleged context of an economically and artistically globalised

world. In my performance the quoting of [the dream](#) presents a performative-I persona that is questioning, doubtful, unsure - in contrast to the near-bellicose persona of the opening sections.

4.1.6 Travelling through Hoggart's Landscape with Figures: Scene 11 - *George Green/rugby league/Don Fox*; Scene 13 *Jack, Margaret and Joe*; Scene 17 *Edith and Johnny*; Scene 20 *Polly*; Scene 22 *Parties*.

These sections provide a spine through the piece and reflect Hoggart's *Landscape with Figures* (2009, pp. 16-56). They locate the family members geographically within the village and give a thumbnail sketch of their characters. These scenes add to the piece what Hoggart referred to as 'a sense of the personal, the concrete, the local [that] is embodied in the idea of, first, the family and, second, the neighbourhood' (p. 22). Each description is accompanied by music. These songs hold a personal connection for me to the characters as presented. These personas of relatives, along with the performative-I personas and the personas from the archive that were present in the home through the TV screen (from light entertainment and advertisements), provide an autobiographical frame for the performance.

The section on George Green links several aspects of the North. He was a miner, an elected officer of the local branch of the National Union of Mineworkers, a Labour Metropolitan Councillor and amateur and professional rugby league player. He was an important figure in my developing perceptions of place and belonging by embodying these various aspects. So much so that I believed to be northern and, certainly, to be working-class, meant you supported trade unions and voted Labour.

Rugby League encapsulates the dichotomy between North and South. Established in the northern counties after the Rugby Union refused to agree to compensating industrial workers who missed work to play in matches, it was seen as splitting along class lines (see chapter 4 in Collins, 2006). It also plays a pivotal role in the forming of an identity for Charlston, the place of my childhood and youth, the village having produced more than its fair share of professional players (see Chalkley, 2006). For my part, I played rugby at primary school there but then 'retired' at eleven years old when I went to comprehensive school and took up football.

[Jack, Margaret and Joe](#) (Scene 13) and [Polly](#) (Scene 20) encapsulate a love of music, performing and entertaining that pervaded the immediate community around me. The performing was often crudely practised and rarely discussed, but always executed with vigour. There were three identifiable strands to the musicality of this North: brass bands, the love of a beautiful voice (Mario Lanza being a particular favourite) and the communal singsong. It is a musicality noted by Russell (2004) and one that appears in the plays of Yorkshire playwright John Godber - particularly *Happy Jack* (1981) and *September in the Rain* (1984).¹⁴

Scene 22, [Parties](#), is a composite of memories rather than a recollection of a particular gathering. It comprises of the drawing together of all the family members that have been referenced up to this point. Theatrically, it is an example of the postdramatic deployment of music as text found throughout the piece. In a postdramatic context Lehmann points to 'an independent auditory semiotics' emerging that does not solely rely on music but also includes the 'cultural peculiarities' of the actor's speech and the rhythms established as the performance unfolds (2006, p. 91). The scene includes live reprises of the recorded songs heard earlier and rhythmically gathers pace to finish in a final crescendo into recorded music. In addition, there are cameos of the various people presented which involve the linguistic cultural texture of the Yorkshire accent.

4.1.7 On memory and questioning the direction of travel: Scene 15 *Photograph*

This scene brings together the strands of sporting identity, the contested nature of memory and contributes to the sense of shifting personas and identities. The picture is not seen but described and there is a recognition in the text that this is a memory, that is, how I recall the photograph. It serves to underpin much of the autoethnographical premise of the piece, which is based on memory and perception. However, its significance is not fully revealed on stage to the audience until the final image of the performance when we see that the photograph is not as described. The [Photograph](#) is a short but important scene in the piece. There is an attempt to avoid a saccharin nostalgia (see Chapter 2 on methodology) with the final image of the

¹⁴ Both these plays can be found in *John Godber: Plays 2* (2001). Godber is from the village of Upton approximately seven miles from Charlston.

photograph juxtaposed to the wearing of a red nose and blowing a raspberry, becoming one of Dawson's 'inferior, third-rate performers' described in Scene 3. Dawson's inferior performer is echoed in theatre practitioner John Wright's view that the use of a red nose has become hackneyed and is synonymous with 'naff' physical comedy. However, Wright also suggests that '[t]he only reason for using a traditional red nose is to amplify your expression of bafflement...we can't help looking at it, but we can't resist peaking beyond the nose to look at the rest of your face, and in to your eyes' (2006, p. 312). Throughout the autobiographical journey in *AGNA* the audience have been looking into my eyes as I search for a North and a sense of place through the sharing of stories. The final image of the picture leads to my bafflement; the memory of the photograph was inaccurate. The suggestion is, therefore, that other acts of recounting in the piece may also be inaccurate. Paradoxically this bafflement of 'lack of comprehension in the face behind the red nose tends to draw us closer' (Wright, 2006, p. 314). This image, then, provides a moment of potential objectivity for the audience to reflect as the piece ends.

In *Theatres of Memory* Samuel refers to the attraction and collection of old photographs arising through the desire to create a 'lost Eden' particularly amongst 'the geographically mobile and the sociologically orphaned, researching their roots' (2012, p. 356). This could be one reading of the rugby team photograph in the light of the speech preceding the reveal of the image (discussed below). Old photographs also have us 'grasping after shadows' as they tease us with the temporal inaccessibility of past events and people. Roland Barthes refers to the photograph as 'a message without a code' (1977, p. 17) in that it is a 'literal reality'; the reality has not been interpreted by an artist as a painting, drawing or sculpture. In this respect it denotes rather than connotes. To describe a photograph, he argues, is impossible. Language is a coded form which will interpret in its effort to describe and, thus 'signify something different to what is shown' (pp. 17-18). In Scene 15 *Photograph* the photograph is not seen by the audience but it is described:

There's a photograph from around 1974 of a primary school rugby league team. Fifteen boys, windswept hair, unkempt, twisted collars that would bring disapproving looks from their mums when the *Wakefield Express* was bought on Friday, standing and kneeling in the regulation two rows of sporting

photography (*he takes the position he is in in the photograph*). They are on a rugby pitch. Behind them you can see the rugby posts and, beyond the posts, looming in the background, are the muck stacks of the local colliery. On the left-hand side of the photo you can just see the pit winding gear at the pit head. Or at least that's how I remember it. (Green, 2017, p. 14)

The language here signifies class and geography. It places us in the North (*Wakefield Express*) amongst a working-class community (Rugby League, muck stacks, pit head). In the final scene, Scene 24 *On difference*, the photograph is revealed for the audience to see. It bears little resemblance to the above description other than the two rows of boys. Together Scenes 15 and 24 illustrate Barthes' 'photographic paradox...the co-existence of two messages, the one without a code...the other with a code' (p. 19). To return to Samuels, I would contend that in this instance it is the memory that is doing the 'grasping' in codifying and the photograph is the more accurate representation, giving a clearer vision of what was. Theatrically, it performs a distancing from the remembered self of the performer. The red nose and raspberry are an admission on the contested nature of memory that undermines the final self-reflection in Scene 24.

4.1.8 Identity, memory and the postdramatic irruption of the real: Scene 24 *On difference*

[On difference](#) pulls together various strands of the performance. It is a metatheatrical reflection on what has gone before and, as such, could easily appear in the upcoming section of this chapter dealing with the postdramatic. It is a representation of Hoggart's scholarship boy mentioned above and a synthesis of theoretical and practical aspects of the performance. It continues the self-deprecating vein of the performative-I persona established earlier. The concluding line 'In limbo, a betwixt and between, neither one nor the other, neither use nor ornament, or as my granddad used to say, neither arsehole nor water cress – no, I don't know what it means either' moves linguistically from the academic to the colloquial with a final suggestion of connections being lost. Visually I am is also 'betwixt and between' as I

deconstruct the previous image of the comedian from Scene 23: *Stand-up 2*, literally taking him off as I speak. It is one last invocation of the irruption of the real (see below).

The above examples illustrate the 'I's as identified in autoethnographical performance practice by Spry. The performative-I disposition, crucial to a critically analytical process reflecting on self, is still evident in performance. It is most obvious in the opening scenes, *Not Northern Enough*, *Photograph* and *On Difference*. These reflexive scenes also contribute to aspects of the performative-I persona. This reflexive element of the persona contrasts with the more celebratory and humorous traits that emerge in scenes such as those referencing family members and events. Moreover, these relatives become co-performers sharing a role in the creation of meaning through performance. They are joined by a third co-performer - that of Sharlston, the place itself (discussed below).

4.2 A Postdramatic *Good Neet Aht*

My current location, the East Midlands, and my occupation, university lecturer, has meant that I have seen and, at times, worked alongside some of the region's innovative companies and practitioners such as Michael Pinchbeck, Zoo Indigo and LaPelle's Factory. These companies can be seen as occupying a space under the umbrella term of postdramatic theatre. The following paragraphs will employ postdramatic theory for an analysis of the practical work alongside the work of Michael Pinchbeck and specifically his piece *The Post Show Party Show* in order to elucidate aspects of my own work which, I argue, meet some of the key terms of Lehmann's analysis.

As identified earlier in this thesis, Lehmann identifies three aspects of the 'panorama of the postdramatic'. They are a theatre of ceremony, a theatre of voices in space and a theatre of landscape. Within this he suggests that there are certain traits which postdramatic theatre possesses: parataxis/non-hierarchy; simultaneity; play with density of signs; plethora; musicalisation; scenography, visual dramaturgy; warmth and coldness; physicality; concrete theatre; irruption of the real; and event/situation. For the purposes of this investigation space does not allow for a full analysis of Lehmann's propositions against the two productions. The traits Lehmann identifies can be organised under the categories of 'stage', 'performer' and 'context'.

The boundaries of these categories, however, are porous and there is a tendency for traits to occupy more than one category. In this respect the postdramatic mirrors the shifting, ambiguous personas and identities revealed through the autoethnographic elements of *A Good Neet Aht*.

4.2.1 *The Post Show Party Show* and *A Good Neet Aht*: a comparison of fellow travellers

Before moving on into a further discussion on the postdramatic it will be useful to consider the briefest synopsis of each performance to add some context to the following discussion.

The Post Show Party Show recounts how Michael Pinchbeck's parents first met. They were both in an amateur production of *The Sound of Music* in Lincoln. Neither had spoken to the other during rehearsals, the male members of the company not having much to do other than sit in the dressing room and/or pub rewriting lyrics to the songs in the show to perform at the post show party. At the post show party, the company member leading the singing and playing guitar has a heart attack and is rushed to hospital. As people begin to drift away Pinchbeck senior asks the future Mrs Pinchbeck if she would like a lift home. Performing *The Post Show Party Show* are Michael Pinchbeck and both his parents. *A Good Neet Aht* is similarly autobiographical exploring the performance of place through perceptions of the North and the sense of belonging focussed on the village of Sharlston in West Yorkshire. The piece is performed solo with a little help from audience members in staging a made-for TV advert for Tetley's Mild.

Both shows consciously exploit the performance space as a site of performance in that there is no attempt at representation of some other location. The mechanics of performance are there for all to see.

The Post Show Party Show audience was presented with ten identical square wooden stools flanking the performance area. The floor space occupied by each stool was marked out in white gaffer tape against a black floor cloth. Situated around the stage were similar white squares which indicated where the stools were to be placed for scenes during the performance. Upstage centre was a lighting and sound

desk from where Pinchbeck's mother operated the show. To either side of the desk stood a microphone. The one prop used during the show was a Spanish or Classical guitar.



Image 13: The Post Show Party Show staging showing chair arrangement

The stage for *A Good Neet Aht* had a large projection screen upstage centre. Stage left was a costume rail with various items of costume. Downstage of this was a bench. Stage right - a table with books and various props. Next to the table - a camera and tripod used for live feeds. Upstage right - a dartboard and stand facing away from the audience. Downstage centre - a microphone and stand. Later versions of the piece also had a large TV screen stage right. Initially a practical necessity brought about by the limitations of venues, it also worked aesthetically as a signifier and evocation of the mode of transmission that enabled entertainment to be brought into the home and, thus, echoed the popular performance elements of the piece.



Image 14: A Good Neet Aht (Derby Theatre, November, 2019) staging

As the performances unfolded, the visual impact of these stage spaces underlined the Lehmann's postdramatic notion of the stage being 'a beginning and a point of

departure, not a site of transcription/copying' (2006, p. 32). They also allow for a playfulness in approach to time and place. In the programme notes for *The Post Show Party Show* Jochem Naafs (2009) draws our attention to both stage and audience being taken from the 'here and now' to the 'there and then' – we are watching a show in the present but are also asked to be witness to the 1970 production of *The Sound of Music*. In *A Good Neet Aht* the stage becomes a layered space echoing the simultaneity of the postdramatic. It is very consciously a performance space but has the landmarks of a village laid out across it using books¹⁵ and post-it notes.¹⁶ Moreover, the books are also signifiers of the creative process and the academic. These remain in place throughout the performance providing a hinterland to the scenes that unfold. As such we can be here (the stage), there (Sharlston), and elsewhere (e.g. the waiting room in The Actors' Centre in London). Encroaching into this space at intervals throughout the show is also the mediatised space in the form of projection and clips from archive comic performances. These different and yet simultaneous places also mirror the use of time in the piece. The use of 'bare stage with minimalist, pared down aesthetics' (Lehmann & Jürs-Munby, 2006, p. 10) in both pieces adopts 'an open and fragmenting perception in place of a unifying and closed perception' (p. 82).

Within the postdramatic paradigm Lehmann identifies two major axes of communication (p. 127). These are the 'intra-scenic axis'; and the 'theatron' or 'extra-scenic axis'. The former is the communication that takes place within the scene between performers. The latter takes place beyond the stage with the audience, hence Lehmann's specific use of the word 'theatron' to denote the place of the audience. These two communications are familiar to all theatre but in the postdramatic it is the extra-scenic that takes primacy; the channel between audience and stage is accentuated to the point where intra-scenic communication becomes negligible and '[t]heater is emphasized as a situation, not as a fiction' (p. 128). A

¹⁵ The selection of books is comprised of text used for research. For example, the Working Men's Club is marked by McGrath's *A Good Night Out* and the school with Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy*

¹⁶ In later performances the post-it notes were replaced by fluorescent stars. The initial post-its appeared in two guises. Firstly as part of the set with each scene title written on separate notes. This served as aide memoire and also exposed the bones of the performance to the audience. Secondly as notes of relatives' names that were written during the performance and used as markers. These two roles became combined with the fluorescent stars. The stars were reminiscent of the signs that appeared in the Working Men's Club windows announcing upcoming acts.

Good Neet Aht is presented as situation aesthetically and spatially as discussed below.

Lehmann's concept of musicalisation occurs in both these works. Musicalisation is described as 'an independent auditory semiotics' and encompasses not only the use of music but the vocal qualities of the performers which are 'musically overdetermined through ethnic and cultural peculiarities' (p. 91). *The Post Show Party Show* builds into its structure the songs from *The Sound of Music*; each song or company rewrite the precursor to a new scene. They either form the central plank of a scene, or background the action or dialogue taking place. In *A Good Neet Aht* music arguably provides the backbone of the piece. Arguably in that it was not an intentional aim when devising the piece, but something that emerged during the process. The music appears in four forms: as a motif for individual family members (these tunes are then brought together in one scene towards the end of the piece); as backgrounding using tunes associated in some way with the North, for example, in *Sharlston 1* the theme from the TV show *Last of the Summer Wine* is used; as a feature in the archive material used, including Morecambe and Wise's unsuccessful attempt at harmony, Frank Randle's dance floor clowning¹⁷ and the 'trad. Jazz' band from the opening of the TV show *The Comedians*; and live singing as part of the action of the scene with *Love Is All*.

The vocal qualities and tones that contribute to the musicalisation in the two works in question are quite different. In *The Post Show Party Show* the delivery of text is understated. Whilst not intoned, vocal colour is kept to a minimum. The majority of the text travels one way, that is, towards the audience, but when exchanges between father and son do take place it is with the measured deliberation and detachment of people very consciously performing.

Michael Scene Three

Tony Morning Hymn and Alleluia

Michael I wonder Tony now if you can take us back to where you were then.

T walks to where he was – M walks to mic and changes lighting to blue slowly

¹⁷ this scene appeared in the early iterations of the piece

- Tony** Well I was over here – but not here – here somewhere else – and you weren't there. And these people weren't watching. And it was dark and it was cold.
- Michael** How cold was it?
- Tony** It was colder than this
- Michael** Tell us what you see Tony?
- Tony** This is what I see. I can see you and you can see me. We can see each other. This is where I stood when I said this and this is where I was when I heard or saw it. This is where we were there. This is a map of the past on the stage of the present and at the moment we're a bit lost. The show is over.

(Pinchbeck, 2009, p. 3)

The above example is also indicative of the quality of 'narrations' both pieces use in that they preference 'the *presence* over representation, in as much as it is about the communication of *personal experience*' (Lehmann & Jars-Munby, 2006, p. 109) In terms of cultural markers each performer in *The Post Show Party Show* has the received pronunciation associated with the professional class rather than indicating region or locality. In *A Good Neet Aht* the delivery of text differs in that it eschews the above-mentioned detachment and is concerned with a more direct, personal engagement with audience members reflecting its other concern of popular performance linked to place. Moreover, as its subject matter would suggest, northern accents predominate. The use of the plural here is deliberate. There are various forms of northern accent emanating from the archive material and there are also differing versions of my own accent – the broader accent of my childhood and youth alongside the flattened-out accent that is still of the North of my contemporary self. The differing qualities of speech contributing to the musicalisation of the pieces also highlights their orientation in terms of Lehmann's 'warmth and coolness'. The suggestion is that the theatre, being the site of 'moving human fortunes', possessed a warmth that was challenged by early twentieth century modernists, Brecht's epic theatre and documentary theatre, but that the postdramatic has provided a 'qualitatively new step' that 'causes much perplexity' that is manifested in a certain 'coldness' (Lehmann & Jürs-Munby, 2006, p. 95). This is exemplified in *The Post Show Party Show* in the detached delivery of the text by the actors. Conversely in *A Good Neet Aht* there is a deliberate warmth. This arises from the use and influence

of popular performance forms such as stand-up and its evocation of the cultural milieu of working-class communities.

Scene 3 of *A Good Neet Aht* uses the introduction Les Dawson performed in his 1973 Royal Variety [appearance](#). As mentioned in Chapter 2 Les Dawson has a deep connection and association with the North. Using this material served to enhance the link between performance and place and to interrogate the representation of the North. There is no acknowledgement that this material is from Dawson. Rather the text is presented as another texture in the opening sequence of images. In this respect the work invokes the postdramatic concept of parataxis. That is, there is no narrative enabling immediate understanding for the audience but their 'perception has to remain open for connections, correspondences and clues at completely unexpected moments, perhaps casting what was said earlier in a completely new light' (Lehmann & Jürs-Munby, 2006, p. 87).

An abrupt change in lighting from a single spotlight to a brighter general cover introduces Scene 4: *Beginnings*. Accompanying this is a change in the energy dynamics of the performance which serves as a statement of intent framing the performance (see below 'So that's a beginning ...').

Whilst most of the performance to this point has been direct address the nature of the direct address changes here. The change is from a conscious reading or performance of text to a more conversational tone *about* the performance. This is what Lehmann refers to as the 'irruption of the real' (2006, pp. 99-104). Referring to the real as a 'co-player' Lehmann invokes an 'aesthetics of undecidability', that is, the audience are challenged to decide whether they are dealing with the real or the fictional. This concept of postdramatic theatre has been adopted by Ulrike Garde and Meg Mumford in formulating their ideas on 'productive insecurity', as applied to verbatim theatre, where 'such destabilisations of the authentic can be used to unfix stable [...] perceptions of strangers and the unfamiliar' (2013, p. 149). It is in this spirit that the 'irruption of the real' is invoked in this performance, in an attempt to 'unfix' perceptions of place and identity so that the audience may look afresh at their own identity, sense of place and the possibilities of performance.

Lehmann tells us that in postdramatic performance we are 'no longer the actor of a role but a performer offering his/her presence on stage for contemplation' (2006, p. 135). In both pieces the performers appear on stage as themselves and explicitly acknowledge the performance frame. From *The Post Show Party Show*:

Tony Good evening. Michael has asked me to say a few words about what we are doing here tonight. We are recreating a post-show party which took place in 1970. The show was *The Sound of Music* and this is the programme from the show...We will be singing the songs we wrote backstage which we sang at the post-show party... From time to time, we will re-enact the show too. That's why it's called the Post Show Party Show...We are backstage. We are offstage. We are standing in the wings of the story. We are inviting you to help us to pretend. We are inviting you to the post-show party. We welcome you to the Post Show Party Show. We are waiting to sing the songs we wrote backstage for the post show party. We are pretending to be characters in a musical. We are pretending to be each other. We are pretending to be ourselves.

(Pinchbeck, 2009, p. 1)

And from *A Good Neet Aht*:

So that's a beginning! A bit tetchy, a bit angry even but it gets us off the mark. I'm looking for something. I'm looking for a North. But it's a North that I don't know even exists. I can find it easily enough on a map; it's that bit that goes from the Scottish border to just below Lancashire and Yorkshire. But the North I'm looking for might only exist in my memory. So, I can't say it will be an accurate North, a contemporary North or a true North. It might be a sentimental North. It might even be an uncomfortable North. But it's my North.

(Green, 2017, p. 5)

The above examples both acknowledge the theatrical event and tell the audience what to expect. In this respect both pieces possess a metatheatricality; an awareness of and comment on the performance event as performed. In the first example there is also an explicit questioning of the act of performance by referring to

it as 'pretending' – even if you are playing yourself. This perhaps confronts one of the difficulties in defining the postdramatic and its insistence of the absence of mimesis. Both pieces are an irruption of the real in that they offer real life experiences of the people on stage, their 'realness' making it difficult if not impossible for anyone else to perform these shows. However, within the framing of the performance event there are choices made about which version of the self is presented on stage – we are presenting a construct to the audience, we are presenting a persona, we are 'pretending to be ourselves'.

Lehmann refers to the 'the authentic presence of the individual performers, who appear not as mere carriers of an intention external to them – whether this derives from the text or the director. They act out their own corporeal logic within a given framework: hidden impulses, energy dynamics and mechanics of body and motorics' (2006, p. 32). The 'authentic presence' or the primacy of the real is so much evident that these pieces could not be performed by anyone else. The body becomes the centre of attention. In *The Post Show Party Show* there is a repeated physical motif of the fall and final position of the dying man. This is performed by both Pinchbeck Junior and Senior and is the subject of discussion as they attempt to remember and reproduce it faithfully. The presence of death on stage reminds audience members familiar with Pinchbeck's earlier work *The Long & Winding Road* of an absence. This early piece is about the death of Pinchbeck's brother and so in *The Post Show Party Show* we have the young man's body of the writer, the ageing bodies of his parents but also the absence of a sibling, a family member. Similarly, in *A Good Neet Aht* the presence of the performer is foregrounded. It is a negotiated presence between the actuality of the performer, the mediatised presence of the bodies represented in the archive (present but absent), the representation of absent others such as family members and sporting and cultural figures and the presence of the audience (actuality) on stage. This negotiation resonates with Lehmann's assertion that postdramatic theatre is 'more shared experience than communicated experience...more manifestation than signification' (p. 85) turning the real into a 'co-player'. It is this shared experience that permeates *A Good Neet Aht* – shared experience of place, of family history and of class. In particular, place becomes co-player acting as containers of memories, stories and legends stimulating stories, and stories about stories (Pearson, 2006, p. 27).

The creative process and the performance of *A Good Neet Aht* negotiate the tension between the popular and the postdramatic in attempting to explore place through the autoethnographic lens. In the following section these tensions are explored with particular reference to stand-up comedy in *AGNA*.

4.3 Popular performance

As with the other aspects of this study the use of popular performance forms is informed by the autoethnographical approach to the research. The forms used in *A Good Neet Aht* include storytelling, song, dance, and stand-up. Their uses conform to Oliver Double's definition of popular performance forms:

It involves *direct connection between performer and audience*, eschewing any notion of the fourth wall.

It embraces *skill and novelty*. It is rooted in the *present moment*, directly acknowledging the performance situation and engaging with topical events.

It involves an *interlacing of performer and role*, which might, for example, involve the performer playing him- or herself. (Ainsworth et al., 2017, p. 8)

4.3.1 Fellow travellers: the Popular and the Postdramatic: Scene 1 *Opening*; Scene 3 *Les Dawson*; Scene 4 *Beginnings*

The intention of these opening scenes was to establish some of the key themes of the performance. The audience is presented with a montage of images and text that both reinforce and scrutinise stereotypes of the North. Moreover, they are presented using popular performance techniques; archive material of popular songs and comedy acts; and autobiographical material. Therefore, we have the four elements of the study present: autoethnography, place, popular performance and postdramatic theatre.

The initial image of appearing through a screen on which is projected a clip of a Morecambe and Wise sketch, provides a link between the live performance space and the recorded performance site of the projection screen. The screen is also a site for the representation of memory in its use of archive material. Moreover, the presence of the archive in the form of comic performance could also be considered as 'home' in that it is a place of familiarity, recognition and comfort. It becomes a site that reflects and represents place.

Comedian Eric Morecambe's use of costume is echoed intentionally, again, to establish the link between screen and stage but also the link between the archive material and myself. In several shows for television there would reach a point where Eric Morecambe would believe that the show had finished and would head for home. This would give his comic partner Ernie Wise the stage to himself and he was often joined by a star guest to continue with the show. Upstage, beyond the studio lights, the viewer would see Eric Morecambe enter stage right and begin to walk across the stage dressed in flat cap, brown raincoat and muffler. He would be carrying a brown paper carrier bag containing his belongings. My appearance on stage echoes this image of Morecambe in terms of flat cap, scarf, glasses¹⁸ and bag. However, elements of the costume here also begin to suggest an individual identity. For example, the scarf is a Leeds United scarf, 'my' team, and the jacket dates from my undergraduate years in Leicester and has, on the lapel, a Sharlston Colliery National Union of Mineworkers commemorative badge from the miners' strike of '84-'85. These last two details are small and not evident to the audience but help to establish spatial and temporal associations at a personal level. In the Stanislavskian sense of acting these real objects arguably help an actor access the truth in a portrayal of character leaving themselves behind (Margolies, 2016, pp. 29-33). The opposite applies in this case. These objects are part of my experience and have a resonance in terms of content and context of these opening sections. They are of my past and are present. They are of the stage but are real. They allow me to make connections in performance with the past and the present and the space of the stage and the geography of my experience.

¹⁸ This was by happy coincidence rather than design. I happen to wear glasses that have a similar heavy frame.

Both the flat cap and the production of the clogs from the bag are clichés of northern identity that are established at this early stage of the performance. It is worth noting that they are produced from an Asda or Morrison's bag – firms originating from Leeds and Wakefield respectively. Music is also used in this respect with *My Girl's a Yorkshire Girl* (C. a. L. Murphy, Dan, c1908) and *She's a Lassie from Lancashire* (C. L. Murphy, Dan. and Neat, John., 1907). These two pieces are juxtaposed to the text recounting an experience of being 'othered'. The third piece used is *It's Grim Up North* (KLF, 1991) which lyrically and musically begins to subvert the cosy, romantic images already presented with an incessant industrial techno beat and distorted vocals intoning the towns and cities of the North. This subversion paradoxically reinforces an alternative stereotype of the Northerner as a stoic, hardworking breed apart.

The clog dancing and accompanying music provide a layered backing for the autobiographical story in which the familiar and, perhaps, safe images of the North are disrupted by the regional prejudices that are related. There are different texts at play here – the clog dance of the northern working-class communities, the music hall tune played by a military band and the autobiographical material relating to the South of England and the theatre practitioner (someone growing 'too big for his boots' perhaps!). This is the first instance of the collision between Russell's 'black' England and 'deep' England, in this case Hampshire, representing the latter, versus the North, representing the former (2004). The opening ends with Scene 3 which employs material from Manchester stand-up, Les Dawson.

4.3.2 Shifting personas: stand-up in *A Good Neet Aht*

Dave Russell notes when discussing the role of sport in shaping perceptions of the North that 'The North's celebration of sport represented another dimension of its tendency...to make a virtue of the demotic and to place popular culture at the heart of its cultural distinctiveness' (2004, pp. 260-261). It is this cultural distinctiveness that the piece seeks to explore. This cannot be done without addressing the North and its association with humour as, again, Russell highlights 'the overall strength of the northern comic tradition further heightened and exaggerated by journalistic convention and popular belief rendered the North a place that made the nation smile.' (2004, p. 157). The piece not only explores and references the 'smile' but also

attempts to highlight the uncomfortable aspects of belonging to that place and community, much of the material coming from ‘an enormous bulk of dated and dubious working-men’s club comics laughing at Pakistanis, poofs and their wives’ mothers’ (S. Lee, 2010, p. 3). For better or worse these comics and their routines are part of my cultural capital (see Friedman, 2015) and, therefore, form part of the autoethnographical landscape that this work inhabits.

4.3.2.1 On the real and the fictive: borrowing from the documentary form

As the piece seeks to interrogate the performance of place and, therefore, explores the real, there is, arguably, a tension between the real and the fictive. Here the real and the fictive refer to the testimony of experience and the adopting of a fictional character to tell fictional stories in the form of jokes, that is, the autobiography versus the stand-up. However, it is, perhaps, a tension only if taken at face value.

In *Get Real: documentary theatre past and present* Alison Forsyth and Chris Megson note that practitioners in this field have eschewed ‘reaching for a wholly objective representation of “truth” ‘and favour a more nuanced and challenging evocation of the “real”’. Further, they state that much contemporary documentary performance is, among other things, ‘concerned with emphasising its own discursive limitations’ (2009, pp. 2-3).

Janelle Reinelt makes the following claims for documentary theatre: ‘the value of the document is predicated on a realist epistemology, but the experience of documentary is on phenomenological engagement’; ‘the documentary is not in the object but in the relationship between the object, its mediators (artists, historians, authors) and its audiences’; and ‘the experience of the documentary is connected to reality but is not transparent, and is in fact constitutive of the reality it seeks.’ (Forsyth & Megson, 2009, p. 7in).

A Good Neet Aht is drawn from documentary material in terms of its first-hand testimony, literary sources and material from the digital archive. The latter includes much of the material used in the stand-up sections. It bears comparison with Reinelt’s claims in that the ‘realist epistemology’ is reflected in my real stories about real people; the ‘object’ is an amalgam of the place, Charlston, and myself as owner and performer or mediator of the stories, and the direct address nature of the performance accentuates the relationship between audience, object and mediator; its

lack of transparency is explicit in the recognition within the text of the flawed nature of memory. This recognition contributes to the construction of a reality but also questions it. The performance at once becomes a constitutive part of the reality whilst at the same time obfuscating that reality.

So stand-up within the piece functions in terms of it being a constitutive part of the real, that is, a part of the lived experience of the performer, that has been drawn from documentary sources. As such it is based on fact albeit mediated through a fictitious character. In this latter element it is not unlike documentary plays produced by such companies as Remould in the 1980s and 1990s. In Remould's documentary productions material was divided into types or archetypes; material pertaining to and gathered from apprentices, for example, would be delivered or assigned to the younger character in a group (see Dellar, 1992).

The real or actual and the fictive do not constitute a binary but rather a continuum that the piece moves along to and fro during performance. At times the fictionality is explicit, for example, when the audience can see me physically change into a character, and at others it is implicit as when the story of the second kiss flips from the real into the absurd. The blurring of these boundaries contributes to the metatheatricity of the piece. The audience is acknowledged as an audience and the performance invokes Pearson's 'stories about stories' or the 'the desire on the part of the listener not only to reveal and insert her own memories, but also to re-visit communal experiences' (2006, p. 16) as memories are invoked 'raking over enduring ones, stirring half-suppressed ones'. The use of the real and the fictional, therefore, underlines the process rather than undermines it.

4.3.2.2 From documentary to site-specific and the layering of place: haunting stand-up

A broad definition of site-specific performance would be performance that takes place in spaces or locations whose primary use is not for theatrical performance. Although *A Good Neet Aht* takes place within the confines of the theatre studio it is premised on a specific site.

Mike Pearson and Cliff McLucas, in their work with theatre company Brith Goff, developed the idea of the site being a host for performance. The performance then became, they suggested, a ghost that occupied the host for the duration of the

performance and, for the audience, beyond the performance (Pearson, 2012, p. 70). The idea has been extended further by Wrights and Sites collaborator Cathy Turner who has suggested that the haunting could be reversed, that is, the site can haunt the performance (Turner, 2004, pp. 374-375).

In *AGNA* the village of Charlston is mapped out onto the stage with significant landmarks signified by books and other objects such as a dartboard for the pit winding gear. Throughout the piece this map is added to with the location of family members' homes. The stage, therefore, has become a meta-site on which the performance takes place. Charlston becomes the host, the 'active component in the creation of performative meaning' (Pearson, 2012, p. 70) and the stories that are told and the experiences that are related become the ghosts.

The physical presence of the village is not in question. With a good map or satnav a traveller can find it quite easily. However, the stories that are told in the piece may not be as reliable. That is, they are real in the sense that they happened to me, but the retelling and recounting is prey to all the inconsistencies of attempting to recount an event as it happened with the passage of time. These recounts then are haunted by the fictive. The stand-up sections are ghosts that arise out of the site or host or, to put it another way, the fictive arises from the real. To follow the logic of Reinalt's documentary definition, the fictive then becomes a constitutive part of the reality. Host and ghost become indivisible, the one haunting the other and vice versa. The line between the fictive and the real becomes blurred. This is tacitly acknowledged in the Second Kiss scene where the real story gives way to an absurd fictive account.

4.3.2.3 Haunting stand-up: the functional and the uncomfortable

Autoethnography: uncomfortable Norths

Charlston was a very 'white' village, predominantly white working-class. The first non-white faces at the school appeared in the early eighties when a Sikh family bought one of the village shops. Like many other communities of this type the village mocked and ridiculed anything it didn't know or was ignorant of. The 'other' was to be laughed at. I remember the playground jokes at the expense of 'chinkies', 'pakis', 'sambos' and other racist epithets. There were also jokes about 'poofs' and 'lezzers'. If you were a young person questioning their sexuality it was a difficult, even hostile environment to grow up in.

Comedy scholar, Sophie Quirk, in her book *Why Stand-Up Matters: How Comedians Manipulate and Influence* (2015), examines the social and political impact of stand-up comedy. Her approach goes beyond the material and what happens on stage to take in the environment the performance takes place in. She identifies three ways in which comedians are able to manipulate their audiences. They are: 'the functional set of manipulations...management of expectation, atmosphere and perception'; 'that which causes us to permit ideas which we would normally consider taboo to be discussed, or to be treated in a manner which we would generally consider uncomfortable'; and the 'influence over individuals [which] could last beyond the immediate contact at the gig...having an impact that endures' (2015, p. 35).

They provide a useful vehicle for examining how the stand-up in *AGNA* operates. Functional matters relate to elements such as the layout of the venue, where tables and/or seats are placed. The atmosphere is also influenced by the availability of alcohol. As comedian David Bailey, cited by Quirk, notes 'No alcohol for the audience would make it very hard for the comics...it's very difficult to get any kind of atmosphere going. English reserve takes over and what you get is people politely listening but not relaxed enough to really laugh' (Quirk, 2015, p. 75).

Dealing with the uncomfortable relies on the comedian's skill in structuring, packaging and presenting the material (Quirk, 2015, p. 94). This includes establishing a sense of community or homogeneity in the room to foster a sense of shared laughter and experience rather than personal, individualized responses. At the same time the comedian is introducing the audience to the comic persona being presented on stage; they begin to tune in to a particular way of seeing the world (Quirk, 2015, pp. 107-108). *AGNA's* structuring and establishing homogeneity in the room are discussed below.

The functional challenges faced by the stand-up scenes in *AGNA* are different in nature to those facing a comedian in a venue. *AGNA* is a theatre piece which, in its early iterations, was performed in conventional theatre/performance spaces: there is a clearly defined performance space and the audience sits in uniform rows in the dark. These elements suggest, consciously or subconsciously, a culturally determined code of behaviour. The atmosphere generated does not rely on the

presence of alcohol. However, during the development stage of the piece I experienced first-hand the concerns expressed by David Bailey.

As part of the research and development for *AGNA* I decided to 'road test' the early versions of the stand-up scenes. I was invited to perform the more challenging of the two at an event for the premier of a short comic film. I had no control over timing, venue or schedule. It took place on a Sunday afternoon in a small studio theatre with no bar. The audience was a disparate collection of friends and associates of the film maker; some were there alone and others in groups such as a feminist theatre company. The elements of manipulation were absent; I performed the misogynistic boor lamenting his lowly place in the politically correct comedy world to total silence. The routine also lacked the crucial context of *AGNA*. At the above event I was 'doing' stand-up whereas in the context of the final piece the framing of the scenes tell the audience I am 'performing' stand-up.

In terms of presence on stage the comics in *Stand-up 1* and *Stand-up 2* are more recognisable as characters and are a remove away from the performative-I persona. The physicality and delivery for *Stand-up 1* are influenced by Rob Wilton and, to a lesser extent, 1970s stand-up Ken Goodwin. *Stand-Up 2* takes its main influence both physically and in delivery from Bernard Manning. They are not 'impressions of' but are 'informed by'. Making an appearance in the latter stages of the piece the stand-up scenes differ from what has gone before. The performer-audience relationship is already well established and permissions have been worked for the appearance of the comics. The audience can see the transformation happening through a change of costume. More accurately this is a costume addition in that shirts and suit are put on over the exiting costume; literally and metaphorically a layer is added to the performative-I persona. In this sense the stand-ups are viewed against the postdramatic landscape. As such the polysemic nature of these scenes is foregrounded. They are read as comedy but also as a comment on contemporary comedy and a reflection of the 'uncomfortable' mentioned in the opening scenes; they are in effect cited both as a cultural product of place and in reference to an uncomfortable North.

The key to the successful presentation of the stand-up scenes in *AGNA* lies in the framing and presenting of the material. The first image that the audience sees is an

archive clip of an early Morecambe and Wise show providing an immediate link with stand-up comedy. The relationship between the audience and the single performer is then established with the convention of direct address that runs throughout. A series of short stories and observations determine permissions for audience laughter; the framework is in place. The first stand-up scene is a gentle introduction to the northern stand-up comic. It is framed by a costume change to the music of the 1970s light-entertainment programme *The Comedians*, a sign is held up 'Applause' and the act begins behind the microphone lit by a single spotlight. The material for this section comes from Johnnie Casson (Halifax) with the final 'What's what' routine from Mike Harding (Manchester). The aim is to provide a suggestion of a benign stand-up echoing the tradition represented by Morecambe and Wise projected on screen at the opening of the show. It also contrasts with the harsher tones in *Stand-up 2*. In the first stand-up scene we are in the comfortable North, the slightly cheeky North of the British seaside postcard.

By way of exposition, in the opening scenes of the piece the audience is told that the North they will be presented with may be 'a sentimental North, it might even be an uncomfortable North'. *Stand-Up 2* is consciously framed as an act. It is built around the premise of stand-up possessing 'an imperative of unification' and being a 'celebration of community' mentioned above. It is also the uncomfortable North. The material is misogynistic, racist and foul-mouthed. In the early 1990s a work colleague lent me a video that he said I just had to watch. It was my introduction to Roy 'Chubby' Brown. At the end of the live show there was a 'bonus' video. It consisted of Brown walking through the area where he lives talking about his work. What was notable was his assertion that his humour was all about love and his interest in family – all said without a trace of irony given the bruising nature of his material; these sentiments are echoed in his autobiography in the final chapter 'Love Conquers Everything' (Brown, 2006, p. 345). The framing of this piece is, therefore, built around my recollections of Brown's musings and an awareness of Bernard Manning's Embassy Club. The set is 'top and tailed' with the song *Love Is All* and the comedian firmly contextualises his work before the final chorus is delivered. The jokes are predominantly Bernard Manning material with one adapted from Charlie Williams. The Williams' joke has been altered to replace Enoch Powell with Nigel Farage and 'a Pakistani' with 'a Romanian'; the comic is our contemporary even if his

practices are from the past. This joke encapsulates the problematical nature of this section. The section is designed to be an uncomfortable North, one that challenges any romantic notions that may have appeared earlier in the piece. However, it could not be a full-on assault on the audience. This would have risked losing or alienating them entirely. Therefore, the stand-up adds a context to his delivery as he reflects on the state of contemporary stand-up and critiques what he perceives as its middle-class practitioners.

The positioning of the scene within the piece is important. Coming towards the end of the piece the performer/audience relationship is well established. As such a comic licence has been achieved but the framing of the scene is important. Once more the audience sees the comic being 'dressed' and about to appear before them. This scene, then, is framed ironically, giving the audience permission to laugh at what they might usually find uncomfortable. There is, however, one section of the scene that tests this permission. In a section entitled 'Suspending values and moving moral boundaries', Quirk acknowledges Henri Bergson's observation that 'the comic demands something like a momentary anaesthesia of the heart' (2015, p. 46). The section in question involves Nigel Farage, Boris Johnson and a Romanian hanging from a cliff edge. The joke is normally met by an uneasy silence with a few nervous laughs and some sharp intakes of breath – at this point the acceptance of the audience is tested and the anaesthetic of the heart is in danger of wearing off, that is, the permissions developed in building a relationship with the audience during the piece are pushed to the limits. To reassure the audience that we are still in a safe place there is a one-line missive at Farage's¹⁹ expense. There is no overt criticism of any of the material used but the framing invites the audience to view it in a critical light.

The stand-up comedy of the North is a fictive representation of the place and its people adding to the mythology surrounding the region and its culture. The fictive springs from the real (the stereotype contains 'sufficient observable reality' (Russell, 2004, p. 36)) and, in doing so becomes a lived experience; the stereotype is reflected in culture, for example, the humorous northerner as stand-up, which then becomes part of our lived experience influencing our reading of the world. As lived experience

¹⁹ Nigel Farage is a politician associated with the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and the Brexit Party noted for his anti-immigration rhetoric.

it necessarily becomes part of the real. *A Good Neet Aht* at once presents the myth becoming real and frames it in such a way that the audience can supply criticisms of their own. I would argue that the laughter that accompanies this bears witness to Andy Medhurst's observation that 'the politics of comedy are rarely free of ambiguity' (2007, p. 91).

4.4 Place: personal and cultural journeys

Chapter 1 of this study referenced the political geographer John Agnew's suggestion that there are three useful aspects in considering place: 'Location' – fixed objective co-ordinates on the Earth's surface; 'Locale' – a concrete form or the material setting for social relations; 'Sense of place' – the subjective emotional attachment people have to place locale (Cresswell, 2004).

The 'location' considered in this performance is 53° 40' 11.9" N, 1° 24' 48.47" W where the carboniferous limestone and millstone grit of the Pennines give way to mudstone and sandstone of the coal measures of the Yorkshire Coalfield. At these co-ordinates lies the 'locale' of the village of Charlston in West Yorkshire. This is the 'sense of place' explored at the core of this performance.

Geographer Marco Antonsich, in his article *Meanings Of Place and Aspects of the Self*, discussing a sense of place, identifies its synonyms as rootedness, insideness or topophilia. It is, he continues, 'a field of care, a locus of emotional attachment, where the subject experiences events meaningful to her/his life' (2010, p. 120). This sense of place can have three manifestations: 'place identity', that is, the product of experiences, feelings, attitudes, and values, which are not only unconscious, but also conscious; 'place attachment', being an emotional, affective bond between people and place; and 'place dependence', satisfying an individual's specific goals and desired activities ... from sociability to services and aesthetic enjoyment. Together they offer an engagement with place that is cognitive, affective and conative (instinctive) which, as Antonsich suggests, give us a 'unique personal attachment'.

Sociologist Lars Meier also makes a useful contribution to the discussion with the term 'emotional geography' which is predicated on personal identities and experiences, often involving memory and class. 'Memory', he tells us, 'is not only central to the self, but [it is] also a social activity' and 'this is because it can be a

collective matter, an expression and binding force of a social group identity.’ Importantly, ‘these memories are spatially bound by places and landscapes, which are in effect, ‘storehouses’ of social and personal memories, and are bound up with the processes of emotional attachment’ (2016, p. 471). The ‘storehouse’ raided for this particular study is the former mining village of Sharlston, and a ‘sense of place’ imbued by class. There is, therefore, at once, both a very personal and social sense of place.

4.4.1 Constructing a sense of place: Scene 5 *Mapping Sharlston*; Scene 6 *The First Kiss*

[Mapping Sharlston](#) is the physical manifestation of place on stage. Simonedes, as invoked by Samuel, suggested that ‘space rather than time provided the significant markers’ for the memory and, indeed, this mapping fulfils the role of ‘the visual [providing] us with our stock figures, our subliminal points of reference, our unspoken point of address’ (Samuel, 2012, p. 27). Here Sharlston the village acts as a physical mnemonic on stage on which the stories, reminiscences and reflections on the North and experiences of place unfold.

By transforming the stage space into a specific geographical location, the intention was to situate place at the forefront of the spectator’s mind with buildings, streets, homes and significant communal locations represented. This mapping of the space remains throughout so stories and accounts of events geographically situated elsewhere take place on the map of Sharlston. Sharlston is ever present geographically and temporally, as invoked by Samuel above. Temporally it is ever-present in terms of both the time span of the actual event of performance and the span of the years covered in the content.

This echoes the choric model as used by Pearson in which places and memory are used as sites of performance. The stage becomes Sharlston upon which other sites are projected - such as, Normanton Park; the waiting room at the Actors’ Centre, London; Wakefield Cathedral; and the North Yorkshire Moors. These sites then become sites of performance. The stage becomes place and acts, again, as a mnemonic throughout the piece providing ‘subliminal points of reference, our unspoken point of address’ (Samuel, 2012, p. 27).

[The First Kiss](#) scene was an initial, tentative attempt to explore directly the link between comic performance and place. It was also working towards finding a comic voice as a performer or, as it were, finding a comic self: the comic-I. It is at this point where popular performance takes primacy in the piece. The direct connection between performer and audience is a constant throughout the piece but is complemented here by Double's further prerequisites for popular performance. Firstly, skill and novelty: the section requires the skill of the story-teller, including the comic timing for the successful delivery of the climax and *dénouement* of the two parts of the story (*The First Kiss* and [The Second Kiss](#)), enhanced by the novelty of the uniqueness or personal nature of the story. Secondly, it is rooted in the present moment in that what is being related and the method of telling are central. Up to this point, sections have been framed in terms of references that extend beyond the theatrical moment, for example, issues of place and identity, or that consciously engage with metatheatricality. *The First Kiss* is concerned with the telling of the tale, the performance, in short, its *raison d'être* is to entertain. Thirdly, there is the interlacing of the performer and the role. There is a qualitative change here from the postdramatic performer consciously 'offering [his] presence on stage for contemplation' to the playing of a comic-I that lifts us into a world of fantasy and humour. We are asked to invest in the story and the teller of that story; the irruption of the real begins to recede into a fantastical story as we are told in *The Second Kiss* of lips being caught in dental braces and pieces of scalp hanging from watch straps.

Initial forays into stand-up had been reworkings of existing material presented by consciously crafted characterisation. Here the material is autobiographical in the first instance but then veers into the absurd and make believe. The observational style and storytelling nature of the piece is more reminiscent of the storytelling 'folk' comedians of the 1970s such as Mike Harding, rather than the stand-up model of a series of well-defined units of jokes with punchlines. However, it does echo the self-deprecating humour found in the trope of the 'soft' or 'daft' lad firmly established in the nation's imagination by George Formby Senior (Russell, 2004, pp. 157-158). Its development can be traced via George Formby Junior and Rob Wilton to Les Dawson and now contemporary comedians such as Peter Kay.

4.4.2 Popular culture and place or Landscape with drinking figures (after Hoggart): Scene 8 *John Smith's*; Scene 14 *Webster's Pennine Bitter*; Scene 19 *Ready when you are, Bob*.

Hoggart tells us that in working-class communities 'such things as cigarettes and beer, it is felt, are part of life; without them, life would not be life; there are rarely any other major interests to make these pleasures less relevant and worth forgoing' (2009, p. 43). There is, apparently, a finely graded scale of consumption. Heading the list is the widower who may consume more than most as he has an empty home to return to with little comforts. Then there follows the married man with no children. Drinking for him is acceptable as it is not seen as taking food out of children's mouths. Finally, the married man with a family; he may drink within reason but it must not affect his role as a 'provider' (p. 78). Charlston, population slightly higher than 2,000, had five pubs and clubs. In their various ways they reflected the life and work of the community and played a central role in the organisation of leisure activities. For example, the Miners' Welfare Club and the Working Men's Club provided live entertainment, as well as reflecting the class nature of the village including its major industry; and The Charlston Hotel was the home of Charlston Rovers, the village rugby team (the changing rooms were in an old stable which included a large stone trough or 'bath'). These institutions also provided markers by which to measure out the year. Each one would provide a day trip to some seaside resort, usually on the east coast but occasionally a much-anticipated trip to Blackpool. Once on the coach each child would be given a small envelope containing loose change to put towards 'a nice treat' once the destination had been reached. On Boxing Day it seemed that the whole village was out and on the move. Large groups would make their way around the village as they travelled to each of the pubs and clubs in an example of Hoggart's special occasions when everybody and anybody would indulge.

Throughout the years, popular entertainment has reflected this aspect of working-class culture from Frank Randle's beer swilling 'Old Hiker' to the content of television adverts. These three scenes (8, 14, and 19) are based on the latter. These beer adverts were selected because they are, quite simply to the fore in terms of my memory and represent a triptych of: North – Male – Beer. Before restrictions on the advertising of alcohol were introduced in 1989, beer adverts were common on

commercial television. As with most effective advertising the tag lines stick in the public imagination. These three adverts all had tag lines or parts of the script that appealed in some way or other to myself and family/friends and they all referenced images North. This was no accident given the regional nature of much television production at the time and that the ads are all produced by northern brewers. However, it is instructive as to the creation or perpetuation of an image from an internal source – the North being reflected back on itself.

Chronologically the [Webster's' Pennine Bitter](#) ad was the first, dating from the early 1970s. It features a sporting icon of the North, Yorkshire and England fast bowler Freddie Trueman, set against a recognisable northern landscape. Moreover, it uses that great signifier of northerness, a brass band. I share a memory with the audience of singing to the tune with my sister. The words 'Webster's' Pennine Bitter' fit perfectly with the *Cornet Carillon* although I'm not certain if the words were ours or part of the advert. Indeed, I think of the advert in black and white but I'm unsure whether this is because it was filmed in black and white or that it predated my family getting a colour television.

The John Smiths advert dates from the late 1970s. It appealed because of the double edged northerness it employed: that is, a boastful, chauvinistic perception of the North and Yorkshire in particular being better than elsewhere underscored by a 'blokey' appreciation of the why the North really matters – its beer.

The [Tetley Mild](#) advert from the early 1980s is the only one of the three to feature a female albeit by mention rather than sight. An absent darts team member, Bob, is being addressed and his wife is encouraged to let him attend. The advert is notable for its use of professional northerner Brian Glover as the voice over for the tag line 'Tetley Mild. Ready when you are, Bob.' At school, my circle of friends used the phrase whenever the slightest opportunity arose. We enjoyed the comic nature of the texts and performances as well as affirming our regional identities. Arguably beer and its consumption has played its part in the forging of the northern comic persona. The three adverts also represent a gendered North. Indeed, the performance as a whole reflects this viewing of the North through male eyes. The popular performance forms examined in *AGNA* were forged and adapted in venues which sold beer and were, often, male only membership.

4.4.3 Being 'othered': place and identity: Scene 9 *Sharlston 1* and Scene 18 *Sharlston 2*

To varying extents throughout this piece Hoggart's musings on 'Them and Us' are evoked. 'Most groups', Hoggart suggests, 'gain some of their strength from their exclusiveness, from a sense of people outside who are not "Us"' (2009, p. 57). In this case the 'us' is the working-class community of Sharlston. 'Them' Hoggart defines as the 'people at the top', the ones that tell you what to do: bosses, public officials, local authority employees, teachers and magistrates, for example. The identity of 'Us' can also be imposed or bestowed as well as generated by self-recognition; in this respect it is an aspect of 'othering'. [Sharlston 1](#) and [Sharlston 2](#) sit alongside the opening section in defining the North as something 'other' or perhaps more precisely, my perception and experience of being from the North. Whilst the opening section is an externally imposed 'othering' these two sections are internally imposed, that is, by others from the North. The two scenes are named after the village as stories become attached to place or locale and reputations grow exponentially. In the neighbouring towns and villages around Wakefield, Sharlston had a reputation of being 'rough'. Listening to stories about past family members it seemed that the Greens had contributed to the story making: my uncles had not been averse to starting fights in their youth and a great grandma had spent two weeks in Armley jail, Leeds, for assaulting a policeman. More recently, predating the events in *Sharlston 1* and *Sharlston 2*, young men from the village took delight in throwing pint glasses onto the crowded dance floor of a Wakefield nightclub *à la* Begbie in *Trainspotting* (Boyle, 1996; Welsh, 1993). To be viewed in the light of the latter is uncomfortable. One is an example of the uncomfortable North mentioned at the beginning of the performance and the other is the material of family folklore that has influenced some of the autobiographical sections of the piece. *Sharlston 1* is also backgrounded with cosy BBC northerness, the theme tune from *Last of the Summer Wine/First of the Summer Wine* (Hazelhurst, 1973).

This chapter traces the journey through *A Good Neet Aht*. It is a journey that begins with a screen on which is projected archive footage of Morecambe and Wise. A performer appears stepping through the screen on to the stage. There follows a series of seemingly unconnected scenes culminating in the performer addressing the audience directly and informing them of the nature and content of the piece. From

this moment there is a gradual segue into the popular before finishing where it began with the postdramatic. In between there are several texts that are negotiated, crafted and shaped; an intertextuality emerges identified by Mike Pearson as 'weaving together history, geography, genealogy, memoir and autobiography and including poetry, forensic data, quotations, lies, jokes, improvised asides, secrets and personal reflections' (2006, p. 26). The next chapter discusses the audiences' reaction to my weaving.

Entr'acte 4: Bernard Manning, Manchester



Image 15: Bernard Manning (Hamp, 1983)



Image 16: [Stand-up No.2](#)

'Fella walks into a pub with a crocodile. The landlord says, "Get it out!" He says, "It does tricks," he says "Tricks you barmy bastard?! Get it out!" He says "You're gonna have a thrombosis the way that you're going on. Calm down" he says. "You live longer" he says, "you've not seen the trick yet." He opens the crocodile's mouth like that, puts his dick in its mouth like that, got a bit of wood out of his back pocket and bang! Right on the head and the crocodile went "By Jesus you've got some bottle to do owt like that!" He says "I told you it was good. Anybody in this pub like to try it for 50 quid?" This little old woman says, "I'll try it" she says "but don't hit me on the fucking head as hard as you did that crocodile!" (Green, 2017, p. 21)

5. An audience of travelling companions: The iterations of *A Good Neet Aht* and audience response in the context of the popular and the postdramatic

This chapter examines the iterations of *A Good Neet Aht* and audience response collected from two performances. Audience response is then applied to an analysis of the work using John McGrath's suggestions for elements of working-class performance. The context for the chapter is the intersection of popular performance and the postdramatic. The readings of the performances should be viewed with Lehmann's event/situation in mind, that is, theatre as 'social situation' (2006, pp. 104-107). Ultimately, the performances were the testing ground for the performance of place and comedy.

5.1 Performances

5.1.1 Performance 1: February 2017, Nottingham College and Performance 2: November, 2017, Wakefield College

These two performances took place in educational institutions in front of audiences of performing arts/theatre students and those primarily involved in the arts. From an autoethnographical perspective these audiences represent my latter experiences of the postdramatic in an academic context. At this point the focus of the research was the exploration into why or how the North of England has produced so many comedians. The practical work here was engaged with an autoethnographical exploration into my attachments and perceptions of the North.

The first performance took place in front of an invited audience of approximately 40 people comprising of current and former students and colleagues. I had been exploring material on a scene by scene basis, that is, working with an idea as it occurred; I had not considered the piece as one complete whole. This performance, therefore, was initially conceived as a sharing of work in progress. However, in preparation for the performance it began to take on a shape and identity of its own. The logistics of the working method presented challenges – the work was done in the

few periods available in between working full-time. As such the first full run of the piece was this first performance.

During the creative process and exploration of material I had been conscious of Muncey's (2010) vulnerable self, the peeling back of multiple layers of consciousness, and Spry's (2011) practised vulnerability, the strategic surrendering into a space of risk, of uncomfortability, of uncertainty, as mentioned in earlier chapters. As the material developed I became more comfortable with the mode of presentation and sharing personal stories and insights. In performance this changed and the vulnerable came to the fore once more. The autobiographical nature of the material meant there were times when I felt exposed, for example, in the scene where I talk about an uncle with special needs caused by oxygen starvation during birth. However, there was a sense, as a performer, that the audience felt this and, thus, it helped develop a bond between performer and audience, stage and auditorium. It also meant there was an extra demand on the emotional energy expended during a performance that ran for eighty minutes. This represents a blending of the direct connection with the audience of popular performance and the postdramatic emphasis on the extra-scenic axis of communication where theatre as situation takes primacy over theatre as fiction.

The Wakefield performance was organised through a contact in the Performing Arts Department at Wakefield College. The prospect was a sobering one. The first performance in Nottingham had been in front of a 'home' audience, most being people who knew me. There was always the possibility that it had been well received as it was 'Phil telling his stories and amusing anecdotes'. The Wakefield performance would be in front of approximately one hundred and fifty students that I had no relationship with whatsoever, it would be the first time they had seen or heard of me. The piece was also about the places where they lived. Again, it was very well received. I had anticipated the running time being shorter. The lack of familiarity between audience and performer would mean the laughter, if any, would be more muted, especially in the more autobiographical stories. However, the running time for this performance was one hour and forty minutes as the audience responded positively in terms of laughter. As a consequence of this the improvised sections including the audience participation were longer.

5.1.2 Performance 3: February, 2018, Nottingham College

At this point the nature of the research question had changed to ‘Can place be performed?’ and the piece had undergone some edits and rewrites. Not all of these were due to the change in focus but were, rather, about the efficacy of the piece in performance. The original iteration contained several examples from the archive of northern comedians: **Morecambe and Wise**, a routine from their early career filmed in black and white for television; [Frank Randle](#), an excerpt from the film *Somewhere in Camp* (1942) including a comic dance routine. This was dubbed over with the comic **Billy Dainty** recalling one of Randle’s court appearances for dangerous driving; [Charlie Williams](#), a clip from the television series *The Comedians* (1975) of a Williams’ joke and his interaction with the audience; **Colin Crompton**, a clip from the *Wheeltappers and Shunters* (1975) of Compton in his WMC club secretary persona; **Norman Evans’** *Over the Garden Wall* routine filmed for television in the 1950s.

Only the Morecambe & Wise and Norman Evans clips remained in this version. The reasons for the omission of the others was threefold. Firstly, I needed to reduce the running time, hopefully to approximately 60 minutes. Secondly, the sound quality on some of the archive was poor and audiences had difficulty hearing what was said. Thirdly, they added little to the dynamic of the piece as a whole and felt like padding, indeed some of them were used to accompany costume changes.

An open invite to this performance meant the audience represented a wider cross section of the public than the previous Nottingham performance. On stage the piece seemed to hold together more effectively. However, the aim of reducing the running time was not achieved, the show still running at 80 minutes. Of particular note was the re-emergence of the vulnerable self during performance. This was the first time I had performed the piece since my father’s death the previous Christmas. *Scene 11: George Green and Rugby League/Don Fox* includes a section about a wall collapsing on him as a boy. In this performance the scene ambushed me emotionally and foregrounded the vulnerable self of the autoethnographer. Moreover, it is an example of the postdramatic irruption of the real where the real becomes a co-player in the making of the event.

5.1.3 Performance 4: October, 2018, Leeds Beckett University

The audience here consisted of twenty to thirty Level 4 Performing Arts students and staff. The piece was very well received. A post-show Q&A session mainly addressed issues of identity in relation to place. Hitherto performances had been in front of the different 'home' audiences of Nottingham (with personal connections) and Wakefield (with geographical connections). This performance was perhaps the most geographically diverse in terms of audience. It was a good test as to the reach of the material. In discussion a South African student commented on how she could identify with the sense of place and being out of place even without understanding many of the cultural references. I also received some unsolicited feedback via email attesting to the piece's wider regional reach:

Just wanted to say thank you so much for coming in last Monday and performing! The performance was amazing! It was fast paced and yet easy to follow all at the same time. The humour was great! And I loved the fact that it was relatable. I am actually from London myself and even though it was a piece about the lost North I felt I could connect as what I took from it was a sense of a loss of home. After leaving it behind.

(Yr1 Student, 2018)

5.1.4 Performance 5: November, 2018, Bilborough 6th Form College, Nottingham

A rushed performance. We only had one hour for the get-in including a five-minute walk to unload the van. This meant we were severely limited in terms of time. As the audience were coming in we were still doing sound checks. In addition, when I attempted to switch the camera on and start the show it didn't work. With no time to alter lighting and sound queues I had to improvise my way through the relevant scenes.

The next two performances were held in clubs in West and South Yorkshire. These were the testing grounds for the piece and where the questionnaire was used. The

layout of the venues were variations of a typical club (see images below) and each presented different challenges.

5.1.5 Performance 6: February, 2019, The Sharlston Rovers Club (formerly Sharlston Working Men's Club), West Yorkshire and Performance 7 February, 2019, Crookes Social Club, Sheffield

These performances are considered together as they took place in venues with strong associations with popular performances and as centres of working-class entertainment. They should be considered as events in the postdramatic sense in that the experience goes beyond the parameters of the performance. The milieu of the venues; the interaction of people using the space; the unpredictability of the event all contribute to an aesthetics of undecidability – what is real, what is performance. In this sense the venues provide an intersection of the popular and the postdramatic. Further, the unpredictability surrounding the event mirrors that of popular performance and, particularly, stand-up in the direct connection between audience and performer being rooted in the present moment.

The club in Sharlston has a small stage and a dancefloor directly in front of it leaving a gap of approximately six metres to the seated area.



Image 17: Sharlston WMC stage



Image18: Sharlston WMC concert room from stage

To overcome this gap tables and chairs were placed on the dance floor. Image 19 below shows the stage and seating ready for performance.



Image 19: AGNA set on Sharlston stage

Between twenty and twenty-five people attended the performance. None chose to sit near the stage on the dance floor preferring to be seated on the raised area at tables

behind the rail visible in Image 18 and 19. The venue has two other rooms - a Sports Bar (the old tap room) and a Best Room. A rugby match had finished mid-afternoon and the Sports Bar had been full since the final whistle. Throughout the day as people used the space as a thoroughfare they would occasionally stop and watch for a few seconds, maybe laugh at a joke or give a thumbs-up sign. At one point the three-year-old son of one of the bar staff joined us. As he sat eating crisps he asked a stream of questions only interrupted by his requests for me to sing a song. For the performance some of the audience comprised of people coming through from the Sports Bar. Shortly before the performance started the Best Room was occupied by what sounded like a hen party. So, I was competing with the cheers and groans from the Sports Bar occupants watching Super League Rugby on television and the raucous laughter and singing from the Best Room. Customers also walked through the far end of the concert room to get to the toilets. Each toilet door carried the sign:

WARNING

Anyone caught taking
or selling **DRUGS** on
these premises will be
barred with immediate
effect and reported to
the authorities

Whilst not unique to this club, it does conjure up images of Oliver Double's assertion that Working Men's Clubs are difficult to play as '[p]eople wander about, streaming to the bar or the toilets, and the background chit-chat is constant. It seems that club audiences have always been like this' (1997, pp. 107-108). There are also echoes of John McGrath's description of a night out at a Manchester Social Club that 'bears all the hallmarks of the suffering of the urban industrial working-class of the north of England – the brutality, the violence, the drunkenness, the sexism' but are, nevertheless, 'people who in themselves have many excellent qualities' (1996, p. 25).

The Crookes Social Club is a large venue in north-west Sheffield. It has a history as a popular venue for live music playing host to many top bands over the years. Outside a plaque proudly commemorates the club being the site of the first professional gig for rock band Def Leppard. Images 20 and 21 give an indication of the size of the auditorium and stage.



Image 20: Crookes Social Club concert room



Image 21: AGNA set on Crookes stage

The performance was due to start at 7.30pm. During the afternoon we were informed that we would have to leave the hall at 5.30pm as there was a regular Zumba class scheduled but it would finish in good time to set the space for the arrival

of the audience. At 7.15pm we were still waiting, with audience members, in the foyer for the Zumba class to finish. Moreover, we were unable to access the bar area that was being used for a Weight Watchers session. As the audience began to arrive I was still sat in the foyer. At this point the steward appeared and asked why people were not in the bar. When told about Weight Watchers he answered 'Get in there. It's my fucking club!'. The whole scene was reminiscent of Peter Kay's *Phoenix Nights*²⁰ – popular performance venue echoing mediatised representations of popular performance venues and blurring the boundaries between the real and performance. There were approximately thirty-six people in the audience.

5.1.6 Performance 8, August, 2019, Digital Performance Lab, Media City, University of Salford

This performance was part of MA in Contemporary Performance Practice end-of-course Festival at the University of Salford. The audience numbered approximately fifteen to twenty and, although few in number, the piece was well received. For the schedule to accommodate the piece it had to be edited from eighty minutes to sixty minutes. The scenes providing thumbnail sketches of family members provide the backbone of the piece without which the penultimate party would not make sense. Similarly, scenes involving descriptions or perspectives on place, in particular Sharlston, were vital in providing context. There are, however, scenes that can be considered as freestanding or unattached. These include the poem *The North Will Rise Again*; the three beers adverts; and the two stand-up scenes. The edit removed the poem, the beer adverts and *Stand-Up No.1*. In rehearsal this altered the dynamic of the piece drastically. The absence of *Stand-up No.1* was particularly striking as it removed a persona from the piece that contrasted with the autobiographical elements. Ultimately this scene was reinstated.

The experience of performing the piece in this new format suggested that changes in register were lacking. For example, not only does the poem provide a context and commentary that informs the reception of what follows, it is also different in form to the predominant prose. In addition, the omission of the beer adverts accentuated

²⁰ Peter Kay is a stand-up comedian and writer. *Phoenix Nights* was a comedy series about a social club in North West of England.

their role in the longer version. Echoing their origin, they act as breaks in the action or, rather, as diversions *en route*. In this respect they add to the postdramatic plethora and the disruption of any development of narrative (Lehmann & Jürs-Munby, 2006, p. 90). Moreover, each staging of the advertisements includes the use of a live feed creating electronic images on stage which, according to Lehmann, liberate and 'give pleasure to the gaze' (2006, p. 170)

5.2 Audience response

In this section the responses to the audience questionnaire are analysed. The numbers participating in the questionnaire are such that responses to this data provide inferences and suggestions rather than authoritative conclusions. Given that some statements on the questionnaire place an emphasis on class I have provided a breakdown of the class composition of the audiences surveyed. The responses from the two venues are presented separately in order to identify any significant divergence between the two sets of results, that is, a venue based in the village referenced in the piece and a venue based in a large city in South Yorkshire. Both venues are similar to those discussed in John McGrath's *A Good Night Out* and this text will be used in the latter stages of this chapter to reflect on the performances of *A Good Neet Aht* and the implications for the performance of place and comedy.

The analysis of the data from the questionnaires revealed flaws in the statements that required a response. For example, whereas statement 1 was clearly asking for a response to the performance, statement 2 asked participants to engage in the philosophical nature of belonging and place and, therefore, lacked the directness and clarity needed given the context of venue and performance. Similarly statement 3 allowed respondents to consider their own experience whereas statements 4 and 5 were, again, more philosophical in nature.

The table below shows the results of the self-identification of class. Some of the responses to this question extended the notion of performance as social situation into the written responses, especially in terms of comedy. For example, two respondents from Sharlston answered ‘Upper’ (Appendix 3B pp. 255 & 259) and yet another answered, ‘working class working towards upper working class!!’ (Appendix 3B p. 267). Moreover, another Sharlston respondent inserted ‘It’s grim up north!’ after every ‘Any other comments’ and for class identity wrote ‘Dregsville’ (Appendix 3B pp. 256-257). It could be argued that these responses are typical of the ‘them and us’ attitude observed by Hoggart, an ‘ironically vigorous protest’ (2009, p. 62) aimed at debunking art or deflating the pretensions of one of their own.

Table 5: self-identification of class belonging

Self-identification of class belonging			
	Sheffield	Sharlston	Total
Working-Class (WC)	7	12	19
Working/Middle Class (WC/MC)	4	1	5
Middle Class (MC)	18	2	20
Upper/Upper Middle Class (U/UM)	1	0	1
None (NK)	4	4	8

5.2.1 The performer’s identity has been shaped by the places he has lived

Table 6: Response to statement 1

1 Strongly Agree		2 Agree		3 Neither		4 Disagree		5 Strongly Disagree		No Answer	
Sharlston	14	Sharlston	3	Sharlston	0	Sharlston	0	Sharlston	0	Sharlston	0
Sheffield	27	Sheffield	7	Sheffield	0	Sheffield	0	Sheffield	0	Sheffield	0
Total	41	Total	10	Total	0	Total	0	Total	0	Total	0

All responses to the statement were in agreement. There were few additional comments. However, one respondent stated that ‘they really got a feel for it’ (Appendix 3A, p. 218). ‘It’ expressing their response to the evocation of place. If the audience are in agreement that identity is shaped by place it would suggest that the presentation of the locale, that is, the concrete form or the material setting for social relations, elicits a subjective emotional attachment or, in other words a sense of place.

‘Very nuanced performance that dealt with issues of place and identity sensitively, yet directly’ (Appendix 3A, p.188)

5.2.2 It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever

Table 7: Response to statement 2

1 Strongly Agree		2 Agree		3 Neither		4 Disagree		5 Strongly disagree		No Answer	
Sharlston	10	Sharlston	6	Sharlston	1	Sharlston	1	Sharlston	0	Sharlston	0
Sheffield	12	Sheffield	18	Sheffield	2	Sheffield	4	Sheffield	0	Sheffield	0
Total	22	Total	24	Total	3	Total	5	Total	0	Total	0

The majority of respondents agreed with this statement. Implicit within it is that place shapes our identities. Some respondents were ambivalent to the statement or disagreed with it. The additional comments suggest that these reactions were influenced by the word ‘consequences’. It was seen as a pejorative and, as such, stressing the negative influence of place. However, some responses suggested the statement may have a correlation with Meier’s emotional geography (2016).

Agree with the statement but don’t like the negative connotations assumed by using the word consequences’ (Appendix 3A, p. 204)

‘The word consequence, to me, implies a negative issue?’ (Appendix 3A, p. 220)

‘Agree to a point. Our hearts remain where we grew up and remain in our memories’ (Appendix 3A, p. 208)

5.2.3 Your perception of place depends on your class

Table 8: Response to statement 3

1 Strongly Agree		2 Agree		3 Neither		4 Disagree		5 Strongly disagree		No Answer	
Sharlston	7	Sharlston	2	Sharlston	3	Sharlston	2	Sharlston	2	Sharlston	0
Sheffield	4	Sheffield	19	Sheffield	9	Sheffield	3	Sheffield	1	Sheffield	0
Total	11	Total	21	Total	12	Total	5	Total	3	Total	0

Although the majority agreed with this statement a significant number either disagreed or held no view. Where people commented on this there was a tendency to highlight the role of the individual in shaping perception rather than any particular class identity. At least one answer identified a North/South divide stating ‘I think it’s more of a North/South thing. More of an identity in the North – no one is strongly identified with Northampton for example’ (Appendix 3A, p. 226)

‘Very difficult to answer as I only really know my story’ (Appendix 3A, p. 180)

‘Wherever you grow up you get used to certain cultural norms and values that can influence your views on other areas where social standing might be different’ (Appendix 3A, p. 202)

‘Everything is dependent on how we approach it (Appendix 3A, p. 222)

5.2.4 Place is defined by the people that live there

Table 9: Response to statement 4

1 Strongly Agree		2 Agree		3 Neither		4 Disagree		5 Strongly disagree		No Answer	
Sharlston	10	Sharlston	6	Sharlston	1	Sharlston	1	Sharlston	0	Sharlston	1
Sheffield	8	Sheffield	18	Sheffield	5	Sheffield	3	Sheffield	1	Sheffield	0
Total	18	Total	24	Total	6	Total	4	Total	1	Total	1

There was broad agreement with this statement although even those in agreement felt the need to qualify their response with a written comment. Most notably there was a strand of opinion that placed an emphasis on place being defined by external forces such as the media and the state or government. This reflects the experiences presented in the piece: the identification of place with the people that live there and the ‘othering’ imposed by external forces.

‘Strangers define people by the place they live’ (Appendix 3A, p. 208)

‘Place and people form a whole, can’t be separated’ (Appendix 3A, p. 223)

5.2.5 If you’re working-class you have a stronger sense of place

Table 10: Response to statement 5

1 Strongly Agree		2 Agree		3 Neither		4 Disagree		5 Strongly disagree		No Answer	
Sharlston	6	Sharlston	5	Sharlston	4	Sharlston	3	Sharlston	1	Sharlston	0
Sheffield	4	Sheffield	12	Sheffield	8	Sheffield	6	Sheffield	3	Sheffield	1
Total	10	Total	17	Total	12	Total	9	Total	4	Total	1

This was the most contentious statement with just over half agreeing. As with previous questions there were doubts about the class nature of the statement and preferring to place the focus on the individual. Some comments suggested that the truth, as they saw it, behind the statement was based on the fact that working-class communities were less geographically mobile and therefore were liable to stay in one particular place.

‘Possibly. Maybe if you’re working class in some instances you have less opportunity to move’ (Appendix 3A, p. 236)

‘But working-class people are less likely to move. University and middle class jobs bring migration’ (Appendix 3A, p. 173)

‘How to measure it? Someone of any class can have a strong connection to place’ (Appendix 3A, p. 181)

‘Not necessarily stronger, but certainly a different experience’ (Appendix 3A, p. 189)

‘Completely subjective and based on the individual. Not sweeping generalisations about class.’ (Appendix 3A, p. 205)

‘A sense of place/community often emerges through a common struggle or fight – this is more common amongst working-class communities’ (Appendix 3A, p. 225)

‘A pride that feels misplaced or confusing sometimes but a pride you can’t ignore’ (Appendix 3A, p. 230)

5.3 ‘Irreverent background noise and shit beer’:²¹ From *A Good Night Out* to *A Good Neet Aht*

The former Working Men’s Club in Charlston and the Crookes Social Club in Sheffield bear similarities to the Chorlton-cum-Hardy club described in McGrath’s *A Good Night Out* in that they are social spaces serving working-class communities. As the practice as research element of an academic project I was aware that the work did not have to be a polished performance and that what was important was the interrogation of an idea or question. However, the autoethnographical method of the research necessitated an engagement with the popular performance forms that were predominant in my community. It followed that if I were to perform place, any resulting piece should be accessible to the community that inhabits that place. Therefore, mindful of McGrath’s assertion that, due to exposure to TV, radio and cinema, working-class audiences were expectant of a ‘high standard of success in achieving effect’ (1996, p. 57), I decided it was important to address the production values of the piece.

McGrath makes some generalisations about working-class performance which are applicable to *A Good Neet Aht*. It is a useful analytical tool as it highlights the tensions between the popular and the postdramatic that influence the piece and

²¹ Comment from questionnaire at Charlston. Full comment was ‘Loved where it was held – irreverent background noise and shit beer’

reflect the autobiographical journey. I have included audience comments taken from the questionnaire to emphasise the connection between the piece and McGrath's ideas.

5.3.1 Directness

'A working-class audience likes to know exactly what you are trying to say to it. A middle-class audience prefers obliqueness and innuendo' (McGrath, 1996, p. 54). There is a directness in *AGNA* expressed in its metatheatricity. It says exactly what it is trying to do but also expresses doubts about the process, for example, 'I'm looking for a North but I don't even know if it exists' (p. 5). However, there is also an obliqueness expressed in the ambiguity of the presentation of the various personas on stage. There is an uncertainty as to who we are seeing at any particular time as spatial and temporal shifts occur.

'Very nuanced performance that dealt with issues of place and identity sensitively but directly' (Appendix 3A, p. 188)

'Definitely agree that place can be performed' (Appendix 3A, p. 185)

5.3.2 Comedy

'Working-class audiences like laughs; middle-class audiences in the theatre tend to think laughter makes the play less serious' (McGrath, 1996, p. 54). Comedy is a central concern of *AGNA*. It is used as an element in the story-telling but it is also used or 'cited' in the use of the stand-up sections to throw a critical gaze on the type of humour that is associated with the North and its working-class communities. This critical gaze is enhanced by the framing of the stand-up sections as discussed in the previous chapter; it is a framing enabled by a structure influenced by the postdramatic.

'Really enjoyable performance. Funny and thoughtful.' (Appendix 3A, p. 184)

5.3.3 Music

'Working-class audiences like music in shows, live and lively, popular, tuneful and well played' (McGrath, 1996, p. 55). Music features heavily in *AGNA*. Most of the music is recorded and comes from the popular tradition. It has two main functions.

Firstly, to establish context and comment on stereotypes and the North, for example, *My Girls a Yorkshire Girl* and *She's a Lassie from Lancashire*. Secondly, to denote character – each family member mentioned has a specific tune played during the relevant scenes. These tunes are then reprised in the penultimate scene. The scene *Stand-up 2* includes live singing.

5.3.4 Emotion

'[A] working-class audience is more open to emotion on stage than a middle-class audience who get embarrassed by it' (McGrath, 1996, p. 56). The emotion in *AGNA* is present in the evocations of past experiences and family members but it resists the self-indulgence of sentimentality. The emotion is not included for the sake of emotion but is there to interrogate a point, that is, a connection with place. The final scene in the play is a personal reflection on place, belonging and class expressed through personal feelings and experiences.

'As a "foreigner" [Swiss] I married into a "Yorkshire" family, where men don't kiss other men, where Rugby is a man's game and you should never order lager or a half pint! I love it because they are anything but! They are sophisticated, kind, have empathy and care, they really care!' (Appendix 3B, p. 265)

'I loved the nostalgia, I'm 21. Yet I still felt a sense of nostalgia' (Appendix 3A, p. 211)

5.3.5 Variety

'They seem to be able to switch from a singer to a comedian, to a juggler to a band, to a chorus number' (McGrath, 1996, p. 56). *AGNA* lacks variety in the number of different performers there are on stage; there is only the one. However, there is variety in content, style and presentation. It moves between story-telling, stand-up and recounting using physicality, music, dancing and singing.

'..your different characters were a really good touch' (Appendix 3A, p. 228)

'Brilliant work. You have a great voice. You really were amazing in the comedic bits' (Appendix 3A, p. 230)

5.3.6 Effect

‘[W]orking class audiences demand more moment-by-moment effect from their entertainers’ (McGrath, 1996, p. 57). As mentioned above the production values were an important consideration in the devising of the piece. McGrath suggests that working-class audiences appreciate hard work. Running at approximately eighty minutes audiences recognise the work involved for a solo performer.

‘Brilliant presentation. Everything jelled. God knows how you remembered it all. Sound effects spot on’ (Appendix 3A, p. 223)

‘Brilliant use of technology on stage.’ (Appendix 3A, p. 211)

‘Unbelievable performance. Well done. Cracking night.’ (Appendix 3A, p. 179)

5.3.7 Immediacy

‘[W]orking-class entertainment ... is in subject matter much closer to the audience’s lives and experiences’ (McGrath, 1996, p. 57). In terms of the Charlston audience this statement is self-evident. However, other audiences have recognised the themes of the piece and appreciated the relevance to their own experiences. This also applies to Localism: ‘the best response from working-class audiences come from characters and events with a local feel’ (1996, p. 58).

‘really enjoyed the show- seemed to reflect the way my parents describe growing up in Stoke and people from their past.’ (Appendix 3A, p. 217)

‘I struggle with living a ‘middle class’ lifestyle with no money and a working class family’ (Appendix 3A, p. 230)

5.3.8 Localism

‘[A] sense of identity with the performer ... a sense that he or she cares enough about being in that place with that audience and actually knows something about them’ (McGrath, 1996, p. 58). As with the two previous points the piece seems to speak to audiences wherever it is performed. The autobiographical nature of the material is relatable and the method of delivery centred around direct address establishes a rapport with audiences from the opening scenes.

'I really, really enjoyed this evening. I'm displaced Welsh so my sense of place is massive' (Appendix 3A, p. 232)

'Made me think of my own connection to place. What makes us, shapes us.'
(Appendix 3A, p. 212)

'Really enjoyed it! So funny ... even if I am a southerner!' (Appendix 3A, p. 210)

Chapters 4 and 5 have engaged with the main pillars of this research, that is; place, comedy; the postdramatic; and autoethnography, in relation to performances of *A Good Neet Aht*. The audience responses were elicited through the confluence of the postdramatic and the popular. They are further evidence of the comic and the nostalgic combining for affect. They suggest that the seriousness of academia (postdramatic) and the non-seriousness of the popular (comedy) can be blended to produce a sense of place. Moreover, when the comic and the nostalgic work in parallel with and are foregrounded by postdramatic devices such as irruption of the real, simultaneity, musicalisation and event/situation, the audience are encouraged to reflect on their own stories and their own sense of place.

Entr'acte 5: remembering the way



Image 22: Wakefield Express rugby team (Unknown, c1974)

'There's a photograph from around 1974 of a primary school rugby league team. Fifteen boys, windswept hair, unkempt, twisted collars that would bring disapproving looks from their mums when the paper was bought, standing and kneeling in the regulation two rows of sporting photography (*he takes the position he is in in the photograph*). They are on a rugby pitch with the posts behind them and looming in the background are the muck stacks of the local colliery, on the edge of the shot the pit winding gear is visible. Or at least, that's how I remember it.' (Green, 2017, p. 14)

6. Arrivals and Departures: Conclusion

The preceding chapters of this thesis have charted the various stages of a journey travelled. Chapter 1 set out the aims and objectives of the research and provided an introduction to some of the major research themes and the intended methodology. Chapter 2 explored the autoethnographical nature of the methodology and my identity as performer/researcher during this process. It also considered the unconscious bias associated with geographical representations on stage. Moreover, it examined the reading of stand-up comedy as performance through a case study of a Les Dawson routine. Chapter 3 surveyed the main areas for discussion and analysis impacting on the research. In particular it looked at the North as the site of the social milieu and surrounding culture affecting this research. Chapter 4 considered the practical work in performance and the impact of the postdramatic and popular forms on the performance of place and comedy. This also included a comparison of *A Good Night Out* to the work of the contemporary postdramatic theatre maker Michael Pinchbeck. Chapter 5 reflects on audience response to the performances. Reflecting the themes of class and popular performance these responses are then considered alongside John McGrath's tendencies for working-class performance forms.

This final chapter evokes the autoethnographical character of the research presenting as a poetic essay reflecting on the research and the performance of place and comedy. It contemplates memory, place and identity before considering the contemporary relevance of the practical research. It then briefly contemplates areas for future study that were encountered during the process. Finally, it reviews how the popular and the postdramatic have combined to create a performance form for our times.

6.1 A landscape of doubts

I am surely not alone in taking intimate lovers back to the places I once lived, as if that will somehow explain who I am. And in some senses, of course, it might, because there on the hill remains the rural school I attended, with its single class-room. But the grass field we used to play in at break is now tarmac.

And the adjoining house where the teacher lived is now an office. And the shop where I bought my playtime snack has closed and become a house. And it is not the same place at all. But the same as when? Surely, day by day, as I lived in it, the place changed? The place I take you to is not, nor has it ever been, fixed in time. And neither, of course, have I. So where is this place of my origin then, and which me are you supposed to be finding? (Heddon, 2008, p. 96)

At the beginning of this research some six or seven years ago I returned to the village of Charlston after a long absence. I took a walk round and noticed several changes. There were the expected ones. For example, new housing estates built on old waste land; the odd farmer's field sold on to a builder; and new ownership leading to the renaming of shops. There were also surprising ones. These surprises were concerned with sites of personal significance. The village green used to be more like a piece of common land. Its colour palette ranged from dark green to mud brown and sun-bleached beige. Horses were often tethered there and the evidence of human activity existed in the remains of holes and mounds dug and constructed long ago. The ground was uneven with boggy areas helpfully dotted with patches of rushes for identification; walk here and you'll get wet feet. In other areas we had managed, by sheer attrition, to wear down the ground and eke out a space for a cricket or football pitch, dribbling round or bowling over large tufts of coarse grass. In the summer months the grass grew to chest height and there were large patches of nettles and 'gypsy bread' (cow parsley). One of the local farmers would cut the grass and, given dry weather, various dens and grass walls would appear along its length. Slightly further afield was Charlston Common with its 'dam' or, more realistically, a large pond with a wall at one end. It was a landscape of gorse, bracken and fern in turns boggy and hilly, bearing the markings of ancient coal-workings. The hills provided look out points for games and 'Blackpool Hills', the highest point, some daredevil drops for the brave cyclist. You navigated your way over the ground by well-worn but rough paths that could be impassable in wet weather. From here you could see the land sweep away eastwards across fields towards Featherstone and beyond to the cooling towers of Ferrybridge power station.

It is all quite different now. The village green looks like a village green of the chocolate box variety. It is a uniform lush green. Its contours are smooth and flat,

apparently a result of remedial work carried out to rectify the flooding caused by mining subsidence and the 'Yorkshire fault'. There is no evidence of human activity, no worn patches of goal mouths or batsmen's creases, no grazing horses. The common is unrecognizable. The scrubland and bracken-covered hills have disappeared under a forest. The whole area is now wooded. Blackpool Hills as a feature has gone and to stand on them is to stand among trees. And as I walk these places I wonder if they are a metaphor for memory. In the act of remembering, on the one hand, do we flatten things out and lose the detail and the nuance of shade and colour and on the other is our view obstructed so that we only see glimpses of the recognisable? I have attempted to guard against or hold up to scrutiny the lazy stereotype or the half memory. What is remembered and how it is remembered are what are important here. They are my memories and experiences that are informing this work. It becomes a personal journey through place that others may find a resonance in, and indeed, what has been forgotten may be more significant to them. Either way what occurs are 'other stories, and stories about stories' the catalisation of 'personal reflection and the desire on the part of the listener not only to reveal and insert her own memories, but also to revisit communal experiences' (Pearson, 2006, p. 22). This is borne out in the audience response to the performances from the Beckett University student who identified with the 'loss of home' even though she was from the south to the Sheffield audience member considering their own connection to place and 'What makes us, shapes us.' These responses reflect the emotional geography of Lars Meier. Emotional geography is based on memories and shared experiences of place and, of particular significance for this study, is often informed by class. Moreover, these memories are a social activity, 'an expression and binding force of a social group identity' (2016, p. 471). Thus remembering and revisiting communal experiences becomes a collective endeavour, a collective remembering and sharing (Pearson, 2006, p. 22).

Diedre Heddon tells us that 'places, like bodies located in them, are embedded within and produced by historical, cultural and political vectors' (2008, p. 121). I have been a small part of creating and being a product of these vectors. In terms of this work I am Auden's 'single intuitive glance'. I am the result of that process of space into place and occupancy into identity (Pearson, 2006, p. 14). As the geological qualities of the location (i.e. coal), attracted people, so the locale was established and out of

this, an identity and a sense of place emerge. This is not a space-identity continuum but rather a cycle, a cycle to which this work adds performance and moves towards new ways of thinking about performance, place and identity.

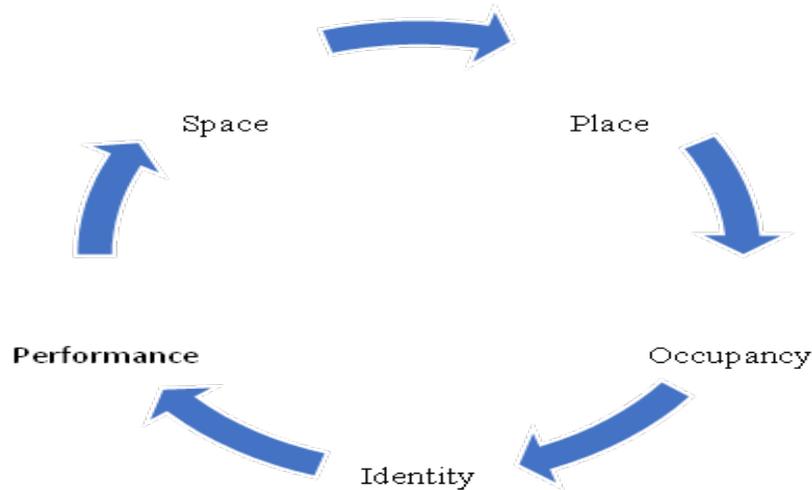


Image 23: Performance-Place-Identity

6.2 Contemporary relevance

As I worked on the performance material for *A Good Neet Aht* I wondered whether or not I was merely creating an historical document, a museum piece with little contemporary relevance displaying a defensive populist nostalgia. However, international and national events beyond the world of academia and the arts intervened and *A Good Neet Aht* began to reaffirm its contemporary resonance. On 26th June, 2016, Britain voted to leave the European Union. The morning after the vote I remember seeing a bemused and bewildered young man from Manchester being interviewed (or harangued) on TV. He said he had voted to leave because he did not think his vote mattered, no one listened to people like him. A few months later I saw a performance of *The Red Shed* (2016) by Mark Thomas. It celebrates the 50th anniversary of the home of Wakefield Labour Club. Sharlton sits in the metropolitan district of Wakefield and so Wakefield also happens to be my home town. In performance Thomas evokes a memory of the last day of the miners' strike. In recognition of his campaigning work he has been invited to a pit village to watch the miners march back to work, banners and heads held high. He recalls the march passing a school. There are children and teachers in the playground. As the miners

pass the children begin to sing *Solidarity Forever* and one of the teachers cries. The only thing is he is not sure if this memory is accurate. He has told the story so many times over the intervening years, embellishing the parts that people find amusing and not replacing bits of the truth that may have ‘dropped off’. So, he sets off to find the village, the school and the children. He is successful but, significantly, the now grown-up children have no memory of the day – it was thirty years ago and they were five years old. He goes on to say: ‘But I cannot help feeling we have allowed them to forget. That we have let their history slip through our fingers, a time when their class believed that they could change the world for the better, for everyone through unity and community.’ (2016, p. 71). Thomas also recounts meeting a local councillor²² on the day of the referendum who echoes the young man in Manchester when he tells him:

I been out early and they’re queuing round the block for the polling station. And that is bad news. I’ll tell you why. 1985 Labour leadership walked away from us.²³ They left us. Labour always thought Scotland and Wales and the north were theirs, and all they had to do was sort out middle England. People round here have had their vote count for nothing for years. It has meant nothing. Well now they know their vote counts again and someone is going to get a kicking. (p. 71)

On 19th December, 2016, Donald Trump was elected as President of the United States. A few days later I attended a Billy Bragg and Joe Henry gig. Joe Henry is an American artist which added to the already charged atmosphere.²⁴ Most of the songs were from their album *Shine A Light*, a collection of songs from the American railroad. What is striking about these songs is that they are often about ‘hobos’. Not

²² The councillor is Steve Tulley, ex-National Union of Mineworkers and Labour Party, representing South Elmsall and South Kirkby. My mum and dad ran a youth club in South Elmsall in the late 1950s/early 1960s. South Kirkby was where my dad’s brother, Gladstone, lived with my Auntie Phyl and my cousins, Derrick, Lynda and Paul. These family members do not appear in *A Good Neet Aht* as, quite simply, they were not living in Charlston.

²³ 1985 saw the end of the year-long miner’s strike.

²⁴ Billy Bragg is a well-known singer/songwriter and political activist of the Left and, therefore, critical of Donald Trump.

the romantic idea of knights of the road and boxcar with wanderlust coursing through their veins but economically enforced travellers – they are looking for work. The songs are important because every time they are sung the stories of the marginalized and poor are rescued from forgetfulness, accidental or otherwise, each rendition becomes an act of solidarity. I then saw a documentary on the playwright Alan Bennett. He was discussing his reasons for writing *The Lady in the Van*. He said, quite simply, that the poor do not often get their stories told, do not get their voices heard. My mind kept going back to the young man in Manchester. Sharlston, like the village visited by Thomas, is a former mining village in a region that voted in favour of Brexit.²⁵ It is a place that has been ‘walked away’ from, part of a ‘forgotten Britain’ (Reed, 2014). *A Good Neet Aht* is a vehicle for foregrounding the forgotten. However, in reality, this theme was already present. Andy Permain’s *The North Will Rise Again* dates from the mid-1980s and conjures up images of decimated industries and threatened communities. The poem follows the opening scene where the North might be acceptable only to someone that has been ‘bred into it’. In effect the above events crystallised the relevance of the work.

6.3 Unexplored backroads and future directions of travel

During the process there were discoveries of avenues of research that warrant further exploration in the future.

6.3.1 The Pyschogeographic Stage

Hitherto British psychogeography has almost solely concentrated on London through major works from such authors as Iain Sinclair and Peter Ackroyd (see Coverley, 2010). *A Good Neet Aht* may be the first steps towards a psychogeography of the regions. The influence of pyschogeography can be seen in the rehearsal studio, theatre space and beyond. The early stages of this work included visits to Sharlston as described above. Those early visits were in the spirit of the *flâneur*, a reconnaissance to see what was there. The changes in landscape I encountered turned the meanderings into a purposeful *dérive*. It became a process of reclaiming a place. What was once a used and lived in space felt emptier. It looked and felt like a controlled space as the rough and ready ground was now well ‘coiffured’ and the

²⁵ Brexit is a compound word used as shorthand for the British exit from the European Union.

ramshackle, working barns were £300,000 conversions. The time spent there became a personal reclaiming of public spaces and memories.

In the performance of *A Good Neet Aht* the audience become engaged in a *dérive*, an exploration of space through theatrical means. They are metaphorically wandering through a locale with no map or phone with GPS. From one scene to the next they move through 'varied ambiances', each section of the text having its own emotional resonances (Coverley, 2010, p. 93). Whereas the *dérive* as practiced by the Situationists had the revolutionary aim of refashioning and reshaping the city (p. 96) here the *dérive* is more in the spirit of contemporary psychogeographers such as Iain Sinclair and Will Self as we seek to reconnect and understand our surroundings. So, the parataxis of the postdramatic, that sense of a series of seemingly unrelated images and/or texts that meaning cannot be immediately drawn from, combines with an emotional engagement with the environment to produce the psychogeographical stage.

6.3.2 The Vernacular Stage

Ian Brodie, in his book *A Vulgar Art: a new approach to stand-up comedy* (2016), maintains that

the discipline of folklore, which has at its focus and object proper the communications that take place in small, intimate, informal groups, brings the appropriate perspective to the study of stand-up comedy through its examination of the mutually mediating relationship between a group's identity and the expressive forms of that group

and 'intrinsic to the role of both "storyteller" and stand-up is the notion of performance'. He continues, 'both are vernacular art forms, requiring fluency with locally situated knowledges that are particular to the culture in which they operate.' (pp. 7-8). Brodie suggests there is a tension between the folk and the popular. The former takes place within a small group whereas the latter, with the use of technology, can be transmitted to mass audiences. However, he points out that this is not a binary opposition but part of a folk/popular continuum (pp. 37-38). Moreover,

the telling of stories and jokes unfold in a similar fashion. The audience or listeners are aware of how the joke or story should develop and are able to use that knowledge to appreciate or 'get' how it actually unfolds. This, Brodie tells us, 'is a folk idea, something not necessarily believed but widely known to the group in which the joke is performed' (p. 26). The stand-up sections performed in *A Good Neet Aht* work in this manner. They are familiar figures to the audience even if they are recognised as tropes; tropes that arise from images of the North constructed in the national imagination (see Russell). Moreover, much of the material is taken from the routines of northern stand-up comedians such as Les Dawson, Bernard Manning, Johnnie Casson, Charlie Williams and Mike Harding. Although this research has focussed on the work of Les Dawson the others in this list can be scrutinised against Russell's table of external and internal images of the North discussed in Chapter 3. They all employ to a greater or lesser extent 'something not necessarily believed but widely known'. The stand-up is, then, in a folkloric sense, very much imbued with a sense of place.

6.4 Autoethnography, popular performance and the postdramatic: travelling towards new ways of thinking

We see and learn from the ways our families live and get their livings; a world of work and of place, and of beliefs so deeply dissolved into everyday actions that we don't even know that they are beliefs, subject to change and challenge

(Raymond Williams in Pearson, 2006, p. 6)

The above quote from Williams is at the heart of the autoethnographical approach to this work. Implicit within it is the link between place and identity. Heddon identifies work that explores the autobiographical in terms of space as 'autotopography' (2008, p. 89). The work she cites as examples are Mike Pearson's *Bubbling Tom* and Phil Smith's *The Crab Walks*. These two works are site-specific: Pearson's takes place in and around the village of Hibaldstow, his birthplace, and Smith's takes place along a stretch of the Devon coast linked to his childhood. Sites, therefore, are central to both pieces. Although *A Good Neet Aht* is centred on a specific locus and explores a sense of place I would contend that it is autoethnographical rather than autotopographical. Most obviously it is performed in a theatre or, rather, a site other

than the actual settings of the stories, and, as such, could be performed anywhere; the performance is not linked to one site. Moreover, site does not have primacy but is explored as part of a journey through the sociocultural concerns. These sociocultural concerns grow from the social milieu and its surrounding culture which John Freeman tells us is at the heart of autoethnography, it being where the self is constructed (2010, p. 181).

As the exploration sessions progressed it became increasingly difficult to tease out the difference between popular performance and postdramatic. However, in performance the tensions between the popular and the postdramatic began to emerge. In particular *A Good Neet Aht* has themes and sub-themes of belonging, community and uses conventions such as storytelling and stand-up as comedic vehicles, all of which play against the 'coldness' of the postdramatic. It displays the characteristics of the stand-up comedian as defined by Double cited earlier in chapters: Personality - since '[i]t puts a person on display in front of an audience, whether that person is an exaggerated comic character or a version of the performer's own self'; Direct communication - as '[i]t involves direct communication between performer and audience' in 'an intense relationship, with energy flowing back and forth between stage and auditorium'; Present tense - as '[i]t happens in the here and now', acknowledging 'the performance situation. The stand-up comedian is duty-bound to incorporate events in the venue into the act' (2014, p 19-20). However, I would contend that there is a hybrid form that has grown out of this process. As used in *A Good Neet Aht* and evidenced in the previous chapter it is a form that works for diverse audiences and venues. The following section takes Double's characteristics of popular performance as a guide teasing out the similarities between the postdramatic, the popular and the autoethnographical and identifying the resulting hybrid emerging in *A Good Neet Aht*.

6.4.1 Direct connection between performer and audience, eschewing any notion of the fourth wall.

Double states that 'much of what stand-up comedians do is about sharing feelings and experiences with the audience, to create a sense of community' (2014, p. 205). Although the accent is on stand-up here I would contend that this underpins the relationship throughout *A Good Neet Aht*. Lehmann reminds us that all theatre

operates on two axes of communication: the intra-scenic and the orthogonal (2006, p. 127). The latter takes place with the audience. Lehmann refers to the orthogonal as the theatron axis, invoking the Greek phrase for the allotted space for the spectators. The theatron axis is privileged over the intra-scenic axis in postdramatic theatre through the use of the monologue so much so that 'it has to be possible in principle to make the first dimension [intra-scenic] almost disappear in order to reinforce the second dimension [theatron axis] and to raise it to a new quality of theatre' (2006, p. 127). This quality is also characterised in Spry's notion of dialogical performance which seeks social, personal and historical connections between people and acts as 'a catalyst for audience members to reflect upon their lives with others', engaging them in 'collaborative meaning-making' (2011, pp. 125-126). Therefore, a line can be traced from Double's 'sense of community' to Lehmann's 'contemplation over interpretation' (2006, p. 80) and on to Spry's 'collaborative meaning-making'. This relationship is established at the very beginning of *A Good Neet Aht* in the opening sections. The first words spoken are directly to the audience setting the convention for the whole piece. Moreover, the words are spoken using a microphone and amplification. This has a pragmatic use, in ensuring the words are heard above music and clog dancing, but also helps to establish through vocal tone an intimacy with the audience.

6.4.2 Rooted in the present moment, directly acknowledging the performance situation and engaging with topical events.

The postdramatic has been referred to as a 'social situation' as the communication on the theatron axis turns the art work towards the audience 'making them aware of their own presence' and facilitating a realisation 'that what s/he experiences depends not just on him/herself but also on others' (Lehmann & Jürs-Munby, 2006, pp. 106-107). This social situation is developed with the use of the irruption of the real which seeks to disrupt 'the unreflected certainty and security in which [the audience] experience being spectators as an unproblematical social behaviour' (p. 104). This shifts from scene to scene in the practical work produced for this thesis. The irruption of the real occurs as the audience are regularly reminded of the presence of the performer as person as references are made to past experiences and feelings. Moreover, the entirety of the piece is played on the theatron axis - either framed as performance or breaking the performance frame to address the audience

directly, at times asking direct questions and at others asking them on stage to help in the realisation of an image. The acknowledgement of the performance situation runs throughout the piece from the creation of the village of Charlston on stage through the conscious replication of television advertisements to the final scene searching for an ending. The parataxis involved in the construction of the piece, that is, creating a structure where meaning is not immediately discernible from the elements presented, increases the sense of being in the present and necessitates constant vigilance from the audience, with no clear narrative they have to be alive to the content of each individual scene. Within the tradition of popular performance a harbinger of this contemporary notion of parataxis can be found in the structure of the bills of performance from the early music halls. Variety shows lacked the presenters or master of ceremonies that we are familiar with on later televised versions. Instead before each act appeared a number would be displayed on stage which audience members would have to reference in their programme to see which act was about to enter the stage (Double, 2012, p. 11). This would have created a disconnected, episodic experience for the audience, similar to the experience of the postdramatic parataxis. As with *AGNA* the absence of a narrative structure or through line of action requires a concentration of attention and an openness to the possibilities of the performance situation. This results in a rootedness in the present moment as the audience become alive to 'what happens next?'

6.4.3 An *interlacing of performer and role*, which might, for example, involve the performer playing him- or herself.

If the first task of popular performance in the form of variety theatre was to the 'unashamed pursuit of delight' then performers needed to develop an attractive or interesting personality. They needed to create 'the onstage self – to work out an individual style, to develop the self, to trust the personality' (Double, 2012, pp. 95-125). In terms of stand-up Double identifies a continuum with character comedians at one end moving through exaggerated personas to 'exactly as I am' with the acceptance that this latter type will offer a persona or version of themselves to the audience (2014, pp. 121-137). In earlier chapters I have referred to my work on this persona as the development of a comic-I. Lehmann describes the postdramatic actor as 'no longer the actor of a role but a performer offering his/her presence on stage' (2006, p. 135). This is, perhaps, a midpoint between personality whose aim is

to delight and the more sombre ambitions of the performative-I persona in autoethnographic performance. Spry describes the performative-I persona as being 'in flux, heterogeneous, always in progress of negotiating a self/other/context/language relation' (2011, p. 174). To borrow from Spry, by way of the performative-I persona I negotiate an understanding of my position in the space in relation to the place/occupancy/identity paradigm. My opening line in Scene 1 of *AGNA* immediately suggests an interlacing of performer and role 'I was working for a theatre company on the South coast' (p. 1) and is reinforced in Scene 3 with 'I'm looking for something' (p. 5). The constant use of the first person suggests to the audience that they may be experiencing the 'exactly as I am'. However, the version of 'I' or the persona that is presented or evoked changes as scenes move through different autobiographical spatial and temporal shifts. For example, the irate, exasperated persona of *Scene 1: Opening* and *Scene 2: The North Will Rise Again* arising from experiences in my twenties living in the South of England differ from the awkwardly comic teenager of *Scene 6: The First Kiss* and the more reflective contemporary self of *Scene 15: Photograph* and *Scene 24: On Difference*.

6.4.4 Embraces *skill* and *novelty*

There is a playfulness about both that is celebrated in this work. For example, *Scene 5: Mapping Charlston* is done with books used for this research, front covers and titles projected on screen through a live feed as they are lifted from pile. So *The Uses of Literacy* becomes the school; *Promised Land: a northern love story* is the church; *Rugby League back o' t' wall: the history of Charlston Rovers ARLFC* represents the village rugby pitch; and *The North (and almost everything in it)* is my family home. Skill and novelty are also on display in the *Scene 8: John Smith's*, *Scene 14: Webster's Pennine Bitter* and *Scene 19: Ready When You Are, Bob*. These scenes recreate television advertisements for different beers with differing uses of camera and live feed. The technical aspects of the scenes, that is, the positioning and focussing of the camera, are set up in front of the audience whilst I am introducing the scene and setting the context.

The practical work is, then, moving gently towards a fusion of forms. It is a reading of the popular, in particular comedy, through the lens of the postdramatic predicated on the sociocultural matrices explored in autoethnography. It is a form that embraces

both the university campus drama studio and the club concert room. A theatre of 'evocative potential', an accessible but challenging theatrical poetic essay (cf Pelias in Muncey, 2010, p. 31).

It is a poetic essay for the forgotten. Andy Medhurst makes some informative observations on the success of Roy 'Chubby' Brown, a comedian with a large fanbase in 'forgotten' communities. Medhurst analyses Brown's act partly through the lens of ontological security, using a definition from *The Consequences of Modernity* by Anthony Giddens that describes it as 'the confidence that most human beings have in the continuity and constancy of their self-identity, and the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments'. For Giddens the postmodern world is a direct threat to this continuity and constancy. In contrast, Medhurst points out that 'popular comedy is a practice founded on embedding, on a knowable locality, on the recognition of shared and familiar reference points' (2007, pp. 195-196). Brown's 'iconography of everyday life' provides the familiarity and constancy that his audience, either consciously or unconsciously, crave. *A Good Neet Aht* recognises that link between the 'social and material environments', that is, locus and a sense of place, and their links to performance. In *A History of the World in Twelve Maps* Jerry Brotton explains how, historically, the viewing of maps was likened to theatre. Invoking the Greek *theatron* as 'a place for viewing spectacle', maps were seen as presenting the viewer with places and experiences they otherwise would have been ignorant of (2013, p. 10). Brotton also suggests that through a process of 'cognitive mapping' we 'acquire, order and recall information about our spatial environment' which helps us 'distinguish and define' ourselves in relation to the rest of the world (2013, p. 4). *AGNA* employs the mapping of the village of Charlston. Charlston then becomes for the audience a place of spectacle; a place where, historically, I began to develop a sense of self in specific social and cultural circumstances. This process and this place are performed in *AGNA*.

Much of the material used in this performance is autobiographical. Autobiography says, 'I exist'. It also says 'we exist' as it includes people met and known. But the 'I' and the 'we' speak from within bigger identities. In this respect *A Good Neet Aht* echoes the emotional geography of Lars Meier and takes the chorography of Gregory

Ulmer where the interlacing of the personal and the popular and the softening of the boundaries between 'critical and creative writing, autobiography and cultural history, one text and the next' (Pearson, 2006, pp. 9-10) contributes to the *mystory* and turns it into *ourstory*. From an autoethnographical perspective this *ourstory* springs from the triad of identity, experience and social relations which generate meaning for an audience related to experiences in their own lives (Pearson, 2006, p. 188).

The mode of presentation, that is, popular performance as comedy, of these collective experiences originates from the social group identity and, as used in *AGNA*, underlines that identity. The skills and material of popular performance are passed on from performer to performer, from generation to generation and 'their art lives in their bodies and voices, in their memories and stage acts, and those of the people that know them; their repertoire reposes in the people' (Schechter, 2003, p. 3). In *A Good Neet Aht* there is a clear thread linking the performance traditions, in particular comedy, to myself as the performer and, by association to the place and its people. I emerge from and merge with archive material of Morecambe and Wise and Norman Evans on screen; I embody this tradition as I perform its material; all this is done in the context of place and my associations with it.

In putting Charlston centre stage, place as a 'co-performer', and exploiting the 'evocative potentialities' of autoethnography, its stories now become our stories. By taking ownership of our stories and sharing them with others we can challenge the power relationships posed by Tim Creswell in the introduction to this thesis when he states 'place does not have meanings that are natural and obvious but ones that are created by some people with more power than others to define what is and isn't appropriate' (2004, p. 27) *A Good Neet Aht* shows there is potential for our narratives to shift to incorporate the forgotten and challenge the meanings that are created by those with power in all its forms. In doing so we might just be able to learn more about what unites us rather than what divides us.

A Good Neet Aht represents a new beginning, a guidebook to the performance of place and comedy. The journey that started with a consideration of the roots of a particular northern comedy, engaged with place in an autoethnographic context and connected with audiences from differing backgrounds and geographies has provided

a model for the discussion of identity and the forgotten. The sense of community offered by comedy and presented with the postdramatic contemplation over interpretation leads to a collaborative meaning making. It is a collaboration of place, performer and audience. The performance becomes a social situation engaging with the memory as social activity of emotional geography. As such this research is at the forefront of the performance of place and comedy; the social activity of remembering collectively, allowing stories to be told, a guarding against forgetting. It is a union of styles in the postdramatic and the popular; performer and audience; place and identity; and remembering and community.

Curtain: new beginning?



[Image 24: 'And now I'm looking for an ending ...'](#)

APPENDIX 1

SCRIPT: *A GOOD NEET AH*

A GOOD NEET AHT

Scene 1: Opening

A spotlight. In the middle there is a mic and mic stand. In the darkness we are aware of a table and chair (SR), on the table there are various items. Stage left there is a costume rail. There is a screen upstage centre for projections. Playing now is an old black and white clip of a Morecambe and Wise routine.

As the house lights dim the performer enters. He is wearing glasses, a flat cap, coat and scarf and is carrying a plastic bag. There are echoes of Eric Morecambe in his appearance. He watches the projection for a while. He then walks to the mic stand and takes a pair of clogs out of the bag and places them carefully US of the mic. He walks US and takes off coat, scarf and hat. Projection fades. We hear the song 'My Lass Is a Yorkshire Lass'.

The performer walks towards the mic. He begins to put on the clogs. The music changes to an instrumental version of the same song – he begins to clog dance. As he dances he relates the following story:

PG: I was working for this theatre company on the south coast and we were doing this reminiscence piece for the elderly.

We'd chat to the audience as they came in and this one day I'm chatting to these two elderly sisters.

One's really nice but the other one is grumpy and just stares out of the window.

It turns out that they'd lived in this village all their lives and I said 'Do your family still live round here?'

'Oh, no' says the nice one 'they've all moved away, especially the younger ones'

Now given that we're in the New Forest and move any further south we're in France, I say 'have any of them moved northwards?'

The silent one turns to me 'Goodness gracious! Who would want to live in the north of England?'

'Well' I say 'that's where I'm from and it's not that bad'

'yes' she says 'I suppose it's alright if you've been bred into it'

Throughout the story the dancing has become more frenetic, more frustrated. It ends with a final stomp on which the music cuts.

Blackout.

Preset back light. Music is now 'It's Grim Up North' as he gets changed.

Scene 2: The North will rise again

Spot up. Music cuts as he moves into a poem follows:

PG: The wind blows cold across Ilkley Moor

As the black pudding factory is closes its doors

Shirt sleeves rolled down and cloth caps pulled low

As the rhubarb plants and the dole queues grow

It's getting harder to find the price of new clogs

And peat's unobtainable since they put a nature reserve in the local bogs

You might not know it from watching Coronation Street

But the heart of the North keeps missing a beat.

Out beyond the suburbs and the stockbroker belt

North of Watford where the snows never melt

Where a woman's a woman and a man breeds whippets

Where ale's always been real and cricket's still cricket

The mill might still be satanic and dark

But they've turned it into a multi-storey car park

And the cobbled streets are covered in grass

It's terribly quaint but watch out for the broken glass.

You can still see washing on lines on the street

Rows of starched collars and the odd nylon sheet

And housewives in hairnets still natter over fences

In that lovely homely way – no airs or pretences

How's your Hilda's insides has she had em tekken out
I don't think our Albert ever got over his gout
And am so glad Doris is marrying even though he's a Jew
She might be only sixteen but it's the decent thing to do.

The men folk are down the allotments cultivating onions
Marvellous for the hotpot not so good for the bunions
At twelve o'clock it's home again for a dinner of fresh tripe and mint sauce
Made of toothpaste the one with the red and white stripe
Afternoons are spent with the pigeons in the loft
In winter they're up there naked just to show they're not soft
Then it's down the pub for dominoes and a pint
Piss it all out in the ginnel then it's home for tea with the wife.

Friday night is family night for mother and her brood
Fish and chips for fourteen the original fast food
Served up with bread and dripping and bottles of milk stout
And milk of magnesia for grandma in case she has one of her bouts
After tea we sit round the fire and make our own entertainment
We used to have a telly but we couldn't keep up the payments
So the ferret goes down dad's trousers and Arthur plays the spoons
We take the comb out of the pawn shop and granddad gives us one of his
tunes
Uncle Bert plays bass with his braces and keeps time with his hand
He's an accomplished musician – plays Beethoven on a rubber band.

But times are getting hard in Tetley bitter land
The aspidistras are wilting and cannibalisms been banned
Even the Oxfam shops are on permanent sale
There's talk of a Tizer drought on an unprecedented scale
And stocks of kit-e-cat are running dangerously low

We'll soon be filling our sarnies with soot flavoured snow
There's an epidemic of whooping cough heading west from Cleethorpes
And a plague of daddy longlegs has been spotted heading north.

But why am I telling you this? I'm sure you've heard the tale
You've seen *boys from the black stuff* and your cousin knows Alexei Sayle
You went for an interview once at Manchester University
And you were terribly shocked at the state of the inner city
You're researching for a new documentary for broadcast on Channel 4
About the re-emergence of rickets amongst Britain's new poor
And your great great grandfather was born in Heckmondwyke
So you know from first-hand experience what the North's really like.

Well we're extremely grateful for your well-meant concern
And all the opportunities you gave us the chance to earn
A hundred Oxbridge places a year or our very own Saturday night chat show
And we weren't to worry about our accents – terribly ethnic you know
While we kept the muck while you kept the brass
You were always generous to the working class
You called us quaint or revolutionary or loyal
And you admired our respect for all things royal.

I hate to have to break this to you but it's time for us to split
Thanks for all your help but to be endearingly blunt you can stuff it
You've always encouraged us to show some self-reliance
Well you can keep your southern comfort and your sdp-lib alliance
And your soft-focus sepia prints of northern moors and dales
We'll even let you keep the northern half a Wales
We'll survive on our stockpiles of mushy peas and suet
We've applied to join the third world. I hope they'll let us do it.

So it's UDI for Yorkshire
Self-government for Barnoldswick
The North will rise again
An autonomous banana republic.

Blackout. Music: reprise 'Grim up north'

Music fades. Spot up.

Scene 3: Les Dawson

PG: In 1645 Prince Rupert's mercenaries smashed Cromwell's flank at Naseby and in 1871 the Franco-Prussian War ground to a halt at the siege of Metz and in 1903 from the Kyles of Bute came the first reports of an outbreak of sporrán rash. None of this of course has anything to do with the act but it shows how your mind wanders when you're worried.

Last time I did this show in Derby the audience were with me all the way. Luckily I managed to shake them off at Spondon.

There was a time in the formative years of the Music Hall when certain humourists would walk on to a podium wearing a red nose and blowing raspberries at the audience in a feeble effort to glean a titter. They were, of course, on reflection third rate, inferior performers ultimately destined for the attic of obscurity. Tonight I hope to enhance my claim as a versatile, nay, intellectual performer.

Snap to gen. cover

Scene 4: Beginnings

PG: So that's a beginning! It's a start. A bit tetchy, a bit angry in places, may even have a bit of a chip on its shoulder but it gets us off the mark. You see, I'm looking for something. I'm looking for a North. But it's a North that I don't even know whether it exists. I can find it on a map, that's easy. But I'm looking for a lived in North an experienced North. But it might only exist in here (*taps head*) So it might be a sentimental North. It might even be an uncomfortable North. I can't promise it's going to be an accurate North, a true North or even a contemporary North. But it's my North.

Scene 5: Mapping Sharlston

Lays out the village as he talks using books seen on table as live feed – Hoggart's 'The Uses of Literacy'; McMillan's 'Neither Nowt Nor Summat'; Morely's 'The North and Almost Everything In It' etc

PG: I shall start with what I know. My one bit of north. Imagine out there in the car park is the Pennines, all carboniferous limestone and millstone grit, and tumbles down eastwards towards Halifax and Huddersfield where it meets the siltstone and sandstone of the lower levels of the Yorkshire coal measures. It trundles on towards Wakefield and the upper Yorkshire coal measures. About 5 miles further on and we reach this place. 53 degrees, 40 minutes and 11.9 seconds North of the equator and 1 degree 24 minutes and 48.47 seconds west of the Greenwich meridian is the village of Sharlston. Population just under 2,000 (*he begins to mark out the space as though it were a map of the village*). There's been a settlement here for over 500 hundred years but it went from a collection of cottages to a village with the discovery of coal. The colliery was here (*he marks it out using a dartboard*) opened in 1865. The school is here. This end of the main road is the church and, at the other end, perhaps more importantly is the fish and chip shop.

The Sharlston Hotel here. The Working Men's Club here. In between these two is the rugby pitch. The Villa club here. And my house here (*he lays down a rather large book*) – that's not to scale by the way! Then we've got the church (cricket pitch behind it).

Weeland Road running right through the middle – Wakefield, Leeds, the Pennines, Manchester and Liverpool that way; Featherstone, Pontefract, Castleford, Hull and the North Sea that way.

About a mile and a half in this direction is a place called Normanton. It's an unremarkable place. A has been that never was. It set off to get somewhere and never arrived. But it holds a special place in my heart not just because my mum was born there but it's also where I had my first kiss!

Music: First Cut is the Deepest

Scene 6: The first kiss

PG: The first kiss was in Normanton Park. I was 15 she was 13. My best mate and her best mate were going out and thought it would be a good idea if we met. It was November. It was freezing. *(sits on bench)* We were sat on a bench chatting awkwardly. The frost was glowing orange under the street lamps. She was wearing a see-through plastic jacket, pink. Very fashionable at the time. When she put her hood up she looked like a giant durex. 'Let's go for a walk' she said. We stood up *(he does)* and she grabbed me and plonked her mouth right on top of mine. I wasn't sure what was happening. It was nice but the edge was taken off it. You see she had a bit of a cold and it was all a bit, well, phlegmy.

Music ends

The second kiss came a few months later. Under 16s night at Mecca's Tiffany's Ballroom in Wakefield. So there I am stood at the bus stop. I've got a black leather jacket on and underneath that a black woollen polo neck sweater...in June. I'm wearing a pair of black spray on corduroys – not exactly spray on but a little too tight for comfort ... and decency ... things moved when I walked. And I had the cords tucked into cowboy boots – light tan with a Cuban heel! And it's all topped off with a haircut that looked like I was wearing a helmet...fringe and split ends...looks like you glowing round your ears...frizzy hair.

So I gets into Tiffany's and they're all there dancing to Donna Summer. *Music: I Feel Love* And I'm standing against the wall watching...cos me backs killing with these bloody Cuban heels and I daren't dance in case something pops out!

It's warm and muggy, close so you can't breathe. There's condensation running down walls. Under me leather and wool I'm sweating like a good 'un. Wool rash round me neck. I take my jacket off. I can hear me mum sayin "you'll not feel benefit!" Then it happens... Woosh ...UV lights come on.....black polo neck...hair brought up on Vosene...sweet Jesus! I look like a well-used blackboard rubber! A domino with acne. Sweat's pouring off me now. What's not black and white's bright red. Beetroot.

Then someone grabs my hand. "I like you" she says and grabs me hand and next thing I know we're running upstairs to the balcony. Long blonde hair, the bluest of

blue eyes and a complexion to die for. She spins me round and THOCK! She clamps herself to me. Everything goes in to slow-motion. The music seems a million miles away. These are the moments to die for. Every hormone that ever produced on my 15 years on this planet seems to be condensed into this one now, this one present.

Eventually she comes up for air. I try and break away but I can't. My watch is caught in her hair. One them stretchy straps. It's awkward. We both know it's happened but don't want to acknowledge it. So we re-engage...THOCK! But then I get this searing pain in my top lip...I'm snagged on her braces!

So we make it down stairs and across the dance floor, conjoined. Cuban heels slipping on sweaty floor. We get to the cloakroom and a bouncer parts us...all he had was a shoe horn and a dairy lea cheese slice from his lunch box. She runs off with her mates and I'm left there – swollen lip, blood running down my chin, hair stuck to me, wool rash, a bit of her scalp hanging from me watch.

At school the next day I'm suffering, the wound on my lip is weeping and it's the size of a football. I'm walking down the corridor and she sees me. I try and speak but I can't. 'I don't love you anymore' she says, 'I love someone else now'. That's difficult to take when you can see a bit of your own flesh hanging from her front teeth.

Backlight

Music – My Girls a Yorkshire Girl

Gen cover

Scene 7: Northern enough

PG: I want to share a dream with you. From Barnsley poet Ian McMillan's 'Neither nowt Nor Summat'. He's describing a recurring dream the root of which is that his dad is Scottish:

I'm ambling down Wombwell High Street, two miles from Darfield, on a dramatically foggy morning; I've been to the butcher's and I'm carrying a pork pie like a servant of the royal family might carry a golden and symbolic gift at a ceremony. Suddenly, as is the way in dreams, I'm surrounded by a menacing group of people in ragged clothes who, as though they are the chorus of a musical, are singing, 'Not Yorkshire Enough!

Not Yorkshire Enough! Tha might think tha'r Yorkshire, but tha'r Not Yorkshire Enough!', like a crowd at a Conference North game. I'm disconcerted in my dream. I hold up my pork pie as a badge of Yorkshireness. 'It's a Potter's un, tha knows!' I say in what southerners call my Fruity Yorkshire Brogue. I take a huge bite from the pie to show how very Yorkshire I am. Yet the crowd are not impressed; they advance towards me, their eyes shining with a terrible light, shouting, 'Not Yorkshire Enough! Not Yorkshire Enough!' The words make my head ring like a ship's bell and pie-detritus escapes from my mouth, twisting and turning in the air like smoke, because this is a dream ...

I've got a great granddad from Wiltshire, a granddad from Somerset and a Grandma from Ireland – the south not even the north! Not northern enough! Not northern enough. Tha' might think thy are but thas not northern enough!

Music– Tetley Bitter theme

Scene 8: John Smiths

PG: *(pours a beer – shares with audience)* Tetley Bitter. My Uncle Ron, who lived in Sreethouse, just the other side of the clothes rail, would never go any further than Skegness on his holidays because he said Tetleys didn't travel that well.

First few weeks at University I remember a group of us sat in this girl's room. You're still getting to know people, find out about each other and all that. So we're sat in this room. Fi, lovely girl. We were different creatures. She'd been through various international schools as her dad was some sort of diplomat and they had a house in Hampstead. So we're talking about what we miss from home and I say 'Actually I miss a nice pint of Tetley's' Fi looks at me and says 'What? You drink pints of tea!'

You were never short of a place to find a pint! And as kids and teenagers I remember quoting and laughing at beer ads.

Begins to set the scene and moves the camera in to place.

The scene. A hill top somewhere on the North York moors. Four men. Three of them are sat down and the fourth stands behind them. The three seated are rugged handsome types, hair blown back with the wind in their faces. The one standing

seems older. He's looking in the opposite direction. On his head there is a bobble hat and on his back a rucksack. Under the hat you somehow have the feeling that he is bald. He speaks:

Bye what a beautiful sight

Others: Aye

You don't find much like that outside Yorkshire

Others: No

No. It's all flat and boring.

Others: Aye

I could sit here and drink it in all day

Others: Couldn't you just

DIY zoom – approaches camera with picture of John Smith's pub

Backlight.

Music – Last of the Summer Wine

Gen cover

Scene 9: Sharlston 1

PG: I'd gone for an audition in London for something or other. I walked in to the waiting area and one other person was sat there. I sat down next to him. I recognised him. He was Paul Wyatt. I recognised him. I'd seen him in a play when he was a student at Wakefield College. More recently he'd been on TV as a young Compo in *First of the Summer Wine*. 'Alright?' I said, 'You're from Wakefield aren't you?' He looked surprised. 'Yeah...yeah I am' he said, 'how do you know?' he said. 'I saw you in a play at Wakefield College' I said. 'Oh' he said, 'are you from Wakefield?' 'Yeah, I said, 'well, just outside' I said, 'Sharlston'. 'Oh!' he said, 'Sharlston?' 'Yeah' I said, 'do you know it?' 'Yeah' he said, 'I've been through it on the bus but I wouldn't get off to have a look.' (*He moves away, down the bench*).

Lights and music fade.

Music – Seventy Six Trombones

Gen cover

Scene 10: George Green and rugby league/Don Fox

Music – 76 Trombones

PG: Clifton Road. Uncle George and Auntie Doreen. George Green. Big character. Became known as Mr Charlston. Parish Councillor. Metropolitan District Councillor. Chair of the local NUM branch at the pit. Played amateur rugby league for Great Britain and professional rugby league, like his father before him, for Wakefield and Halifax. At election time I'd sit in the back of my dad's car as him and George went campaigning – driving round with a loud speaker tied to the top of the car spreading the message! My uncle George used to do most of it 'Vote for George Green on Thursday. Vote Green. Vote Labour! Come on now let's be having you! Come on Henry in number 24. It won't be raining on Thursday, get yourself out!' And to talk to anything or anyone, just to amuse himself. Even when the street was empty. 'Come on, Rover. Vote Labour and I'll githee a biscuit. Vote Labour and a lamp post for every dog' When we got to what were considered the posher bits he'd hand over to my dad – 'Your turn round here Derrick' – *(with little discernable accent)* 'Vote George Green! Your Labour candidate. Vote Labour! Vote George Green!' What a team.

Rugby League is arguably the lifeblood of Charlston. Over the years this small village has produced around 150 professional players. In 1946 Charlston rovers were giant killers beating professional Workington town 12 – 7. All but three points scored by George Green! The Rugby League Challenge Cup final awards the Lance Todd Trophy to the man of the match – three of those winners have come from Charlston. There are 25 players who have been inducted into the Rugby League hall of fame – 2 are from Charlston. And the all-time points record holder is Neil Fox from – Charlston.

Locally the rugby pitch is known as back o' t' wall – it was set back from the road behind a wall that stood over 6 feet tall. Now it's about two feet and topped with railings. It fell down in the 1930s. A young boy was walking along the top of it and it gave way under him badly breaking his shin bone – to this day you can still see the scars from knee to foot on my dad's leg.

The summer of 1968. It was a wet one. Ken Loach is in a very damp Barnsley filming *Kes* and the Rugby League Challenge cup final is Leeds v Wakefield Trinity. The biggest day in the rugby league calendar. Most of West Yorkshire is packed into Wembley. The weather is atrocious huge pools of water lie on the surface of the pitch. It's a close game as they slog it out, in the dying minutes Leeds score a try and convert the kick to make it 11 - 7. It looks like they've won. Surely the ref will blow. Wakefield restart the game. A raking kick towards the Leeds left flank. A Leeds player tries to stop the ball with his foot but it skids off the surface, under his foot and behind him. A Wakefield player, Kenny Hirst, runs on to the ball and kicks it, scooping it into the air and towards the Leeds posts. It's all happening in seconds. The ball lands and Leeds players dive for it but it stops dead in the waterlogged pitch. Kenny Hirst kicks it again on the run and it's a straight sprint between him and two Leeds players as to who gets there first. He dives on it just as it's about to go out of play. 11 – 10!! All that needs is for Don Fox to convert the kick and the cup belongs to Wakefield!

The original commentary takes over and the actor recreates the movement of Don Fox until he's just about to kick the ball then BLACKOUT. Commentary continues as he sets up for the next scene and x fade into The Comedians theme tune 'When You're Smiling'

Spot

Scene 11: Stand Up 1

Holds up 'Applause' sign

PG: Oooh! That's lovely, that is. What a smashing audience. What a lovely welcome. I do like a nice warm hand on my opening.

Let's have a look at you. Not that I can see much with these eyes. Hey my they're getting worse I'm telling you. I keep running into pubs. I've got an appointment next week to see the optometrist. Well, I had a bit of an accident – I got hit in the eye with a firework and detached my rectum.

Coming here on the bus I was sat behind these two old ladies. One of them says 'Agnes I've not seen you for years! How you doing?'

She said 'I'm wonderful. Do you know I'm getting married again on Saturday for the fourth time? Fourth time and still a virgin!'

Her pal said 'you're never.'

She said 'I am. You remember my first husband he was a gynaecologist and he just liked to study it. Then I married a psychologist and he just liked to talk about it he did. And my third husband he was a stamp collector and I do miss him.'

But I've never been lucky with the ladies. I could sew castanets on my pants and I still wouldn't click.

I've only been out with a tall girl once and I had to jack it in.

What's what routine.

Well, I've got to leave you know. But just remember, wherever you go in life...there you are.

And if you're ever in xxxx never buy Rolex watch off a man that's out of breath.

Goodnight!

Backlight

Music - Delilah

Gen cover

Scene 12: Jack, Margaret and Joe

PG: Jubilee Road. Uncle Jack, Auntie Margaret, our Julie and our Joanne. Jack Green – a presence. A born entertainer and he loved. The life and soul of any pub or party he went to. If ever you wanted to know where he was you just followed the laughter. And Margaret loved to sing...but couldn't...spectacularly! And she was all arms. In fact, when she got up to sing people used to move their pints.

Music – Be My love

Clifton Road - Uncle Joe, Auntie Evelyn and our Ken. Joe loved singing and what a voice! Beautiful tenor! He wasn't very tall but he was very round. Ruddy faced with

a pencil moustache and he always wore a trilby. He was also a bag of nerves. When he came to visit he's walk in sit down, right on the edge of the seat, for about 30 seconds. Then he'd stand up, take off his coat, roll up his sleeves, go in the kitchen, make everyone a cup of tea whether they wanted on or not and then do the washing up – without taking his trilby off – then he'd put on his coat and go!

I always kept an eye out for him on his way to the pub – especially if the fair was on – 'Hello, Uncle Joe' 'Eyup Philip old cock. Here, tek, this. Go and get a ride and some candy floss.' Thanks, Uncle Joe'

Music fades.

Cross fade to table

Music: Cornet Carillon

Scene 13: Webster's Pennine Bitter

PG: It's black and white but I'm not sure if that is our telly or the actual film. Fred Trueman is walking up the side of a hill. It's windy. Long grass is swaying either side of him. In the back ground, at the bottom of the hill sweeping away from him we can see blurred rows of houses, they look like council houses. He eventually reaches his destination – a pub at the top of the hill. Cut to close up profile shot of Fred drinking a pint. The glass moves away from his mouth, he breathes out – a flame coming from his mouth. Voice over – Webster's Pennine bitter, Drives out the northern thirst!

Blackout

Centre spot

Scene 14: Photograph

PG: There's a photograph from around 1974 of a primary school rugby league team. Fifteen boys, windswept hair, unkempt, twisted collars that would bring disapproving looks from their mums when the paper was bought, standing and kneeling in the regulation two rows of sporting photography (*he takes the position he is in in the photograph*). They are on a rugby pitch with the posts behind them and looming in the background are the muck stacks of the local colliery, on the edge of the shot the pit winding gear is visible. Or at least that's how I remember it.

Lights up

Scene 15: Online Norths

PG: I made the mistake of going on line to see if I could find the north there. I ended up doing these quizzes. It started out alright with things like 'How northern are you? Tick off all the places you've been and food you've eaten'

You ticked off 86 out of 156 on this list!

Reet pet, you're pretty Northern. You can't get off a bus without saying thank you to the driver and you'll never understand why Southerners complain about the rain so much. You may not have tried every Northern delicacy, but that just means there are more delicious foods for you to discover.

But it quickly went downhill

Are You a Northern Bastard or Southern Fairy?

YOU ARE A SOUTHERN FAIRY

Alwight, guvnor? For you are a Southern Fairy. Thank God you didn't turn out to be one of those northern gits, eh? Too many of them around for anyone's liking. Celebrate down your local bar with a cool pint of lager. That costs £5.00.

If you are in fact a northerner and are reading this, then you have achieved quite something. The only explanation is a lack of work down t'pit and over-exposure to colour television.

And then the final insult! 'Can we tell where you're from? Answer these twenty questions' – London!!!

Sound: 'Poor lad!' 'Yorkshire, Yorkshire, Yorkshire!'

Music – Umbrella Man

Scene 16: Edith and Johnny

PG: Northfield Road. Auntie Edith, Uncle Harold and our Alan and our Corina. Auntie Edith's about 5 foot nothing tall and about the same round. A formidable lady. She had a little Yorkshire terrier called Noddy that she used to carry everywhere tucked under her coat. Auntie Edith could cry at a TV advert. I was the youngest of all the cousins the baby of the family. It wasn't unusual for her to cry when she saw me, I seemed to remind her of other family members who were dead! For many years it was my Uncle Bill that I looked like (he died in 1958 before I was born) and then once my uncle George died I looked like him (just for the record I look nothing like either of them!)

Also on Northfield Road was my Uncle Johnny. Uncle Johnny had a difficult birth, these are the days before the NHS, and he was deprived of oxygen. He suffered brain damage and as an adult had the mental capacities of an 8 year-old. He still managed to hold down a job down at the pit. He was looked after by my Auntie Edith and her best mate Doreen, Auntie Doreen. He took great comfort and pride in me having his name as a second name and always gave me my full title Philip John! (or Phillip as he pronounced it!)

Music ends

Backlight

Music- Psycho Killer

Scene 17: Sharlston 2

PG: It was in the summer of 1981. End of a warm day, early evening, walking through a deserted pedestrian precinct by Wakefield Cathedral. I was with a mate, David Holmes, nickname Sherlock.

We notice two people sat up by the Cathedral playing guitars. There was no one else around so all you could hear was this music. As we got nearer we recognised one of them, he was the older brother of another mate of mine – his name was Michael Holmes – no relation to the David Holmes, Sherlock that I was with. We sat with them, we listened and chatted. There was no-one else around. It was like we had the whole city centre to ourselves.

Then from nowhere, two squad cars appeared, one from each end of the precinct. It was like a scene from 'The Sweeney'! They pulled up a short distance from us, four police officers got out and walked swiftly over to us. They asked us what we were doing:

'Playing guitars'

'Listening to them playing guitars'

'You got anything you shouldn't have in your pockets' one of them asked the two guitarists, 'I think we'll have a look. Stand up, feet wide apart, arms out to your sides' they began to search them.

'What's your name, son?'

'Michael. Michael Holmes'

'Ha, ha! Do they call you Sherlock?'

'No, why? Do they call you Plod?'

It was quiet. Tense. I stayed seated. One of the officers came up to me, stood right in front of me, almost toe to toe. A wiry little man with a pencil thin moustache sat on his top lip. He looked down at me:

'Don't I know you?'

'No, I don't think so'

'Are you sure?'

'Yeah'

'What's your name?'

'Philip Green'

He studied me.

'Where are you from, Philip?' (he spat my name back at me)

'Sharlston'

'Sharlston!? Are you sure you've not been up in front of us before?'

Lights for advert. Begins to set up for the ad.

Scene 18: Ready when you are bob!

PG: You've really let us down here, Bob. We're getting whitewashed. Norman! His a good lad but he hasn't got that big match temperament. Well at least they sell Tetley mild here though. It's nearly as good as the local. Pauline, try and get him down here for the next match. I mean, just think of that lovely cup stood up on mantelpiece.

Tetley mild. Ready when you are, Bob!

Music: My Brother Sylvest

Scene 19: Polly

PG: Hammer Lane. Auntie Polly and Uncle Alf. Not an Auntie but my dad's cousin – Auntie Margaret's mum! A woman with a gravelly voice and a love of Guinness and a good sing song. Affectionately referred to as Dunlopillow because of her ample bosom. There's been many a family get together where she's thrown an arm round me while belting out a song – in between sneaking me a bottle of Guinness – 'Don't tell your mum and dad!'

Scene 20: Parties

PG: Every now and again we'd have these big family parties. It was usually my job to fetch and carry – drinks, food that sort of thing – make sure everyone was catered for. Running from room to room, up and down the hall way, washing glasses, struggling to open exploding seven pint tins of Watney's red barrel. So I'd be in one room and me Auntie Polly (Dunlopillow) would say 'Ere Philip love go and gerrus a Guinness will love? Oh you are a good lad' then just as I was about to set off she's grab me and hold me in a half nelson and she'd start singing:

That's my brother, Sylveste (WHAT'S HE GOT?)

A row of forty medals on his chest (BIG CHEST!)

I'd manage to wriggle free but I'd only get a couple of yards before I had to duck as my Uncle Jack rose to Polly's challenge, flinging out his arms:

'I saw the light on the night that I passed by your window

I saw the flickering shadows of love on her blind

She was a woman...'

Moving into the hallway I'd have to squeeze past my uncle Joe who belting out a song to no one in particular but just because he can his trilby still perched on the back of his head. More often than not it was Mario Lanza:

'Be my love, for no one else can end this yearning
This need that you and you alone create
Just fill my arms the way you've filled my dreams'

I think I've made it to the kitchen but my Auntie Edith appears out of nowhere. She's on her third sherry of the night (Harvey's Bristol Cream) and there's no stopping her:

'Toodle - luma
Toodle - luma
Toodle - oh lay
Any umbrellas, any umbrellas
To mend today?'

'Oh look at our Phil, doesn't he look like our Bill?'

I'm in the kitchen now and my Uncle George has spotted me, he breaks into song, it's one that he used to sing to me as a baby apparently and it's stuck:

'Seventy-six trombones led the big parade
With a hundred and ten cornets close at hand.
They were followed by rows and rows
of the finest virtuosos,
the dream of ev'ry famous band.'

And then you can hear it. Jack has won his duel with Polly! It starts as a steady rumble at the far end of the house. Growing in volume in moves closer and closer. It's a wall of sound. A Tsunami of song. The whole house is ringing and singing in joyous unison!:

'My, my, my Delilah

Why, why, why, Delilah...'

Blackout.

'Over the Garden Wall'

Mirror ball. Spot. Music.

Scene 21: Stand Up 2

PG: *Sung;*

Yesterday I knew the game to play

I thought I knew the way

Life was meant to be

Now there's you

My foolish games are through

Now at last I have found just what makes this old world turn around

Love is all I have to give

Love is all as long as I can give

So take it all

And I'll always be there when you call my name

I know now that love is all....

Love is all I have to give so that's what you're getting tonight. Cos let's face it that's what keeps the world going round and gets us out of bed in a morning. So let's have a lovely time together

Couple of clean ones to start off with.

Fella walks into a shoe shop and bought himself a pair of tortoise shell shoes – it took him four hours to walk out the shop

Fella in prison complains his cell's too cold – the warder says I'll put you another bar on.

Now there's nothing blue about that. Nice and clean, I've not offended anyone – have I said bollocks yet or anything like that?

I'm a bit blue, a bit crude and a bit rude. If you don't like it ... fuck off. Don't wait until the end to say how offended you were – fuck off now. And if you're a student you can fuck off anyway. Go get a job. Lazy bastards.

Little old fella 95 years of age sat in the pub. This woman said don't I know you he said I don't know. She says weren't you a strong man in a circus years ago? He says 'Aye I was.' She says 'you was strong. I saw you one night bend a 14 inch bar of iron over your prick.' 'Aye' he says 'I can't do it now he says my wrists are gone.'

Nowt wrong with that one comedy of the working man and woman. Comedy of the street. They can't stop us laughing can they? Only thing we've got left.

Fella dashes in the house. He says 'Come on love, pack your bags I've won the lottery. Come on,' he says, 'pack your bags I've won the lottery.' She says 'What shall I pack, something light, something heavy? Where're we going?' He says 'Just pack em and fuck off!'

Comedy of the working people. We've been driven underground we have. Don't see us on telly eh?

Two cows in a field. One says to the other 'What do you think of that mad cows disease?' It says, 'It doesn't bother me I'm a fucking duck'

Nigel Farage walking with one his UKIP mates along this cliff tops when they come across this Romanian, hanging by his fingertips. Romanian lad shouted, 'Help me!' Nigel walked over and stamped on his fingers, and Romanian fell 400ft to the bottom. 'That's funny,' he said. 'You'd have thought he could have got down there on his own.'

Nigel – he'll never get fucking piles. God created him a perfect arsehole. Fuck me!

Fella walks in to a pub with a crocodile. The landlord says 'Get it out!' He says 'It does tricks,' he says 'Tricks you barmy bastard?! Get it out!' He says 'You're gonna have a thrombosis the way that you're going on. Calm down' he says. 'You live longer' he says 'you've not seen the trick yet.' He opens the crocodiles mouth like that, puts his dick in its mouth like that, got a bit a wood out of his back pocket and bang! Right on the head and the crocodile went 'By Jesus you've got some bottle to do owt like that!' He says 'I told you it was good. Anybody in this pub like to try it for 50 quid?' This little old woman says 'I'll try it' she says 'but don't hit me on the fucking head as hard as you did that crocodile!'

Been driven underground we have. Humour of the street – the new alternative comedy.

Michael fucking MacIntyre? I've shit better!

Jack fucking Whitehall? I've trod in funnier things!

Fella walked in to a chip shop he said 'Give 60p worth of fucking chips.' The fish fryer said 'you ignorant bastard. You don't order chips like that' he said, 'come round here and I'll show you how to order chips – now then may I have 60p worth of chips please?' He said 'Get fucked you wouldn't serve me.'

Little Jewish fella in the synagogue praying. 'Lord' he said 'Help me please! You're a Jew I'm a Jew, help me! I don't know which way to fucking turn' he says, 'I'm up to my neck in debt' he says, 'I owe every bastard. Please Lord let me win the lottery. I've got to win that lottery Lord! Everybody gets paid if I win the lottery'. Week went past – fuck all. He's there again next Saturday morning 'Lord' he says 'Are you fucking listening to me? Please I've got to win the lottery Lord. Let me win the lottery please'. Another week went past – not a fucking light. He's there again next Saturday morning. He's on his knees now. 'Lord' he says 'Help me! Please, you lousy bastard!' he says 'let me win the fucking lottery for fucks sake' he says 'I've come here three times now' he says 'I've got to win that fucking lottery' he says 'please!' And the clouds parted and a voice said 'Hymie, meet me half way – buy a fucking ticket!'

The comedy of the working man. They can't stop us laughing. Me and Chubby all the way.

I'll leave you with this one.

Fella went in to a brothel. He said 'I've only got a tenner'. She says 'There's nothing here for a tenner, son, not unless you have the penguin.' He says, 'What's that?' She says, 'Go to room number 7'. Dolly bird really delicious. He says 'I've come for the penguin. I've only got a tenner.' She says 'Give us your tenner'. He says 'What's this fucking penguin bit love?' She says 'Oh I daren't tell you. It's more than my job's worth'. She unzips his flies, drops his kecks round his ankles and his under pants. Walked away. Music started up and she stripped off slowly. Ooo and he got a right

fucking stalker! She walked back and she got hold of it and she went like that (with a song in my heart I behold your adorable face). And he's just about to shoot and she walks away. He said 'Where the fucking hell are you going?'

Music

Yes, it's all about love. That's why I do what I do. I do it for the love of my family – my wife, kids and my little grand kids. I do it for the people I grew up with and those I live alongside now. Love, community, belonging, that's what it's all about. I'm a rough man telling jokes for rough people from rough houses on rough estates but our hearts are full of love and care for the world.

Backlight

Spot on bench

Scene 22: On difference

PG: So now I'm looking for an ending. I suppose there ought to be a brass band in it somewhere. I walked out, walked off, walked away. Not because I wanted to escape or had any desire to leave but more out of a sense of adventure, a sense of what's next. And what I wanted to do seemed to lie elsewhere. Sometimes it felt like I was pushed. I remember having to move schools to do A levels. That meant a switch from non-uniformed comprehensive to a strict uniform code observing school that thought it was still a grammar school. So I started wearing a blazer and tie at 17! So it could be interesting getting off the bus and walking home when my old school bus arrived at the same time 'Oi! Greenie yer fuckin' puff!'

Then you move away, southwards, and others define you by the way you talk. It's the early eighties and I'm at poly. It's the miner's strike and I have lecturers asking me with very concerned and understanding looks 'How are things...at home?' And then there are others who tell me to stop speaking in that Barnsley drawl. Which really pisses me off cos I'm not from Barnsley, I'm from Wakefield and we speak differently.

So here I am. Middle aged(ish), middle class(ish) living in the midlands. It's not like I'm a fish out of water it's more like swimming between two streams never knowing

which one to join, which one feels right, which ones the most comfortable. Caught between two stools, neither one nor the other, betwixt and between, neither use nor ornament, or as my granddad used to say neither arsehole nor watercress – no, I don't know what it means either.

The photograph mentioned above appears on the screen. He walks into centre spot. Looks at photo. Looks at audience. Puts on red nose and blows raspberry.

Blackout

End.

APPENDIX 2

LES DAWSON, *THE GOOD OLD DAYS*, 1983

Les Dawson – The Good Old Days (1983)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dipgwBEx8FY>

(1:17)Enters to band playing 'Hold Your Hand Out You Naughty Boy'. The tune is upbeat, a brisk pace. Audience clapping in time to music. Curtains open to real backdrop. Dawson enters stage left. Holding white, dress-gloves in left hand. A slow confident pace. Takes four steps DS, pauses, bows SL. Two more steps DS, bows front. Three steps CS pauses, looks to balconies, gestures SR with white gloves and speaks under music (an aside that can't be heard). Smiles. Three more steps CS. Adjusts gloves and swaps to right hand. Holds left hand up to quieten the audience and smiles as he moves to stand at the piano. Expectant laughter.

Control yourselves.

Laughter

Gestures to pianist to begin. Left hand is resting on piano.

Backing of 'Greensleeves' played on piano.

Shifts weight on to right leg

Section 1 (1:36)

I wandered through a valley of timeless serenity (*chuckles*) **where heather-clad hills and wind-rippled meadows stretched in languor towards a forest of stately homes, wherein whose beckoning greenery** (*gestures with right hand*) **feathered choristers trilled on high in a cacophony of praise to the ultimate architect.** (*facial gesture- rising of jutting lower jaw- aimed at someone in balcony SL - laughter*) **Darting minnows in a chuckling brook** (*hands across stomach holing gloves – pauses- a glance at balcony SR- laughs at himself - laughter*) **escorted me to a an old Tudor cottage that knelt by the side of a spilling orchard. And the cottage had a garden of wondrous beauty to behold – strutting tulips and wild violets, highly scented honeysuckle and trailing jasmine** (*slight laughter- bends knees and makes 'picture the scene' gesture with hands – laughter*) **that jostled in a riot of confused colour towards shy willows that backed as if in supplication towards an herbaceous border** (*slips into 'down to earth' northern accent to provide contrast- laughter*) **wherein I spied an elderly lady in a faded velvet dress who stooped, stooped** (*elongated vowel sound accentuated with face a la Max Wall - laughter*), **tending to her rain bruised marigolds. I doffed my cap in a courtly fashion and I said 'Madam, pray tell me what is the secret of your wonderful garden?' and she looked at me with a face that was the colour of the autumn**

sky (*expectant laughter*) and she said very simply 'Horse muck!' (*lower jaw stuck out – northern accent for punchline – 15 seconds of laughter and applause*)

Section 2 (3:17)

Straightening jacket by lapels **Yes, where would we be without a laugh?** *Pointing downwards to stage* **Here!** *Looking rather disgruntled. Leans with one hand on piano and other on hip.*

Hands across stomach, fingers entwined **There was a time in the formative years of the Music Hall when certain humourists** *takes on mantle of the expert – it's all very serious* **would walk on to a podium wearing a red nose and blowing raspberries at the audience in a feeble effort to glean a titter** *there is a titter.* **They were, of course, on reflection third rate, inferior performers ultimately destined for the attic of obscurity. Tonight to enhance my claim as a versatile, nay, intellectual performer** *laughter* **I should like, if I may, to play** *begins to laugh at himself, the facade and the anticipation – the audience join in for you on the pianoforte an adaptation from Mozart entitled 'In An Eighteenth Century Drawing Room', providing of course that that person Skellern hasn't raped the instrument.* *Laughter 5 secs*

Sits at piano. Plays. He goes wrong. Grimaces and starts again.

Sorry about that!

Plays. Doesn't work. He persists. Laughter throughout. Gives in. Walks down stage, puts on red nose and blows raspberry.

Makes his way down to the apron taking off red nose, smiling and raising his eyebrows at the audience.

Laughter and applause 14 seconds

Section 3 (4:52)

A

I've often heard it said that when an artist stands at the end of this jetty *laughter 6 seconds he smiles and briefly laughs with them* **he looks at the audience and he knows he's in for a bad night** *laughter.* **I had a peep through the cut-price curtains** *laughter* **before I came on and I saw the brutality etched on some of the faces** *laughter* **and all I can say is 'Good evening. Welcome to the show and Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!** *Looks heavenwards in distress. Laughter 7 secs*

B (5:33)

I'd like to say what a great thrill it is to be on the Good Old days. The programme that is helpful to artists like piles to a show jumper *Laughter 11 secs. Puts hands*

in pockets and balloons out trousers, lower jaw stuck out. And it's wonderful to be in the Leeds City Varieties – this superb example of a gothic paint shed. laughter

C (5:50)

I don't know what it is but for some obscure reason scratches neck behind ear this place always reminds me of home laughter, smiles and nods. It's filthy and full of strangers laughter 7 secs. And the moment I arrived this morning they just couldn't do enough for me, they were marvelous, they just couldn't do enough, so they never bothered Laughter 7 secs.

D (6:13)

I said to Barney Cole, the producer, he used to be a stunt man with the Songs of Praise Laughter 6 secs, I said...I said 'Thanks for having me on the show,' I said, 'I'm very grateful', I said, 'Cos these days there's not a lot of work for comedians.' He said, 'There you go, Les, worrying about other people again.' Laughter 10 secs

E (6:43)

On top of all this we've had bad news about the wife's mother who went to Australia to visit her relatives. Apparently she went swimming off the beach, Bondi Beach, and she was attacked by a great white shark right hand on hip, left hand to face holding bridge of nose between forefinger and thumb as if upset – audience make sympathetic noises. The hospital in Sydney did all they could. They worked in relays throughout the night. But it was too late, the shark died. Laughter 14 secs. He laughs out loud with them

F (7:19)

Trying to compose himself and stop laughing And..and..to add to my trough of woe after many years of marital bliss my dear wife ran away with the fella next door more sympathetic noises from audience. Ooh! I do miss him! Laughter

G (7:32)

I was sat at the bottom of my garden a week ago, smoking a reflective cheroot laughter, thinking about this and that, mostly that lascivious look with bottom jaw jutting out, slaps his wrist, laughter 8 secs, looks up at box SL – double take with groan, I just happened to glance at the night sky and I marvelled at the myriad of stars glistening like pieces of quick silver thrown carelessly onto black velvet slight laughter. In awe I watched the waxen moon ride across the zenith of the heavens like an amber chariot towards the ebon void of infinite space, wherein the tethered bulks laughter of Jupiter and Mars hung forever festooned laughter in their orbital majesty laughter. And as I looked at all this I thought, 'I must put a roof on this lavatory!' Laughter and applause 18secs. Laughs with them. Makes his way US to piano. Sits.

Section 4 (8:35)

Let's get away from all these artifacts of the music Hall and do what people did in more sensible times when we sat round a piano and sang the songs of the day so will you join me?

Audience: Yes!

Will you really? *Oh! You Beautiful Doll.* Are you ready? Now don't be shy. Audience join in. *Playing goes awry fairly quickly. Laughter* That's it. **Keep together. Ta da!**

APPENDIX 3

QUESTIONNAIRES:

A Crookes Social Club, Sheffield

B Sports Club, Sharlston

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there	①	② ✓	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place	①	② ✓	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

Any other general comments:

Age: 51.

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Nottingham

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

A Good Neet Aht

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Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

① Strongly Agree ② Agree ③ Neither ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

① Strongly Agree ② Agree ③ Neither ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: 21

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
The South + no

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
Don't have a strong class identity. I don't know, middle?

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:
 Set by socio-economic circumstances of that place ie the perception shown in the play of Leeds / Wakefield vs. Sharnston

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:
 But working class people are less likely to move => university & middle class jobs bring migration

Any other general comments:

Age: 23

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 Nottingham & No

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
 Middle class (as fuck)
 => trousers for breakfast!

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

It was a great show & I definitely agree that a place can be performed
 Thanks

Age: 62

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 Leslie No.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? Middle Class.

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

- 1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Neither 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

- 1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Neither 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:
I really enjoyed the act.

Age: *25*
Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
ST. HELENS !!! (COME ON YOU SAINTS!).
NOPE I NOW LIVE IN SHEFFIELD.
What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? *MIDDLE CLASS*

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

Any other general comments:
 UNBELIEVABLE PERFORMANCE
 WELL DONE
 CRAKING NIGHT

Age: 75
 Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there? YES
 What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? MIDDLE

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments: Given the nature of this performance we see how the North has shaped the performer but there is very little reference to other places he lives.					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments: Very difficult to answer as I only really know my story					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

How to measure it? Someone of any class can have a strong connection to place.

Any other general comments:

Age: 56.

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 Midlands & yes ... but Derbyshire → Notts.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? Middle.

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

Any other general comments:

Age: 18

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Nottingham, yes

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
middle class

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

① Strongly Agree ② Agree ③ Neither ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

① Strongly Agree ② Agree ③ Neither ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: 23

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Southampton — sort of.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? Middle

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

Any other general comments:

Age: 24

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Cheshire

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
? middle

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments: <i>Very nuanced performance that dealt with issues of place and identity sensitively, yet directly</i>					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:
Not necessarily stronger, but certainly a different experience

Any other general comments:
Really enjoyable performance. Funny and thoughtful

Age: *22*

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Hull, but live in Sheffield

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? *Middle class*

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

For the advert parts, playing the adverts simultaneously might help some of the audience who haven't seen them before, but the show was really good!

Age: 24

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

Manchester (no, at uni in Sheffield)

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? Middle class-ish

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: 22

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 Brought up North Nottinghamshire (near Doncaster). Now live in Sheffield

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
 Lower middle -

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1
Strongly Agree

2
Agree

3
Neither

4
Disagree

5
Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1
Strongly Agree

2
Agree

3
Neither

4
Disagree

5
Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: 21

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

Newcastle, no

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

Middle

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: 23

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 Stoke Hammond, Buckinghamshire. → live in Sheffield.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? upper middle / upper.

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
------------	--	--	--	--	--

<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
--	-----------------------------	--------------------	----------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------------

Any other comments:

Also by the experiences one has. As well as the search for belonging and being part of a community. *Perf. skills*

<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
--	-----------------------------	--------------------	----------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------------

Any other comments:

The experiences shape us, but the decisions we make, also shapes us. *Perf. skills*

<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
---	-----------------------------	--------------------	----------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------------

Any other comments:

Really hard to answer, for one dealing with other social elements, class and hierarchy. *Perf. skills* unable to answer. need more life experience.

4. Place is defined by the people that live there Any other comments:	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place Any other comments:	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Any other general comments:

Age:

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: 40

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Leicestershire, no

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
working class

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
------------	--	--	--	--	--

1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
---	--	----------------------------------	------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--

Any other comments:

2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
---	--	----------------------------------	------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--

Any other comments:

3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
--	---	---	------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--

Any other comments:

Wherever you grow up you get used to certain cultural norms and values that can influence your views on other areas where social standing might be different.

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

① Strongly Agree ② Agree ③ Neither ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Agree but also thinks such as geography and culture which may not be controlled by people.

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

① Strongly Agree ② Agree ③ Neither ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

I suppose it depends where you grow up and what you value that influences your views. Somebody may not be working class but still has a draw towards their home.

Any other general comments:

Great show. Have such an understanding of upbringing and cultural values and from such a variety of viewpoints.

Age:

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Nottingham but live in Sheffield.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
Working class

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree

Agree with statement but don't like negative connotations assumed by using word consequences.

This is open to change in alignment with changes in perception / experience.

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Sociologically yes, but there are various elements that make up a "place" e.g. geography

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

completely subjective and based on the individual. Not sweeping generalisations about class.

Any other general comments:

Age: 27

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 Deptford, Lewisham, No.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
 working class

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:	<i>Reality of it.</i>				
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:
 People define people by the place they live.
 Strangers

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:
 Age -
 Very 'northern'

Age: 31

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 Rotherham - left at 18 - returned - left again - returned
 Again!

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p> <p>Any other comments:</p> <p><i>Agree to a point. Our hearts remain where we grew up & remain in our memories.</i></p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p> <p>Any other comments:</p> <p><i>I feel the people you meet in these places defines you.</i></p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

I have no words. other than Inspiring as always

Age: *37*

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

Rotherham .. and yes though have lived many other places.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

Working Class

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements	<i>Really enjoyed it! So funny - even if I am a southerner</i>				
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments: <i>It's conflicted him - it feels like place has almost conflicted him his identity as well as shaped it.</i>					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

because ~~no~~ often, working class families can't move out of a place, so they have a stronger sense of being from that place.

Any other general comments:

Brilliant use of technology on those, and I loved the nostalgia, I'm 21, yet I still get a sense of nostalgia!

Age: 21

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

Essex (Colchester) no, live in Manchester

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

working class (but went to

a Grammar school, so ~~can~~ around a bit of middle class people when growing up)

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

oops
bring
one

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

LOVED it !!!
 Made me think of my own
 connection to place - which makes
 w. deeper w. Marvelous !!!

Age: 40

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there? North Notts

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? Working... and proud.

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

① Strongly Agree ② Agree ③ Neither ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

① Strongly Agree ② Agree ③ Neither ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: 21

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Nottingham - No.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
in between working + middle

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p> <p>Any other comments:</p> <p>True for most people but people can reject their roots + reinvent themselves.</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>

Handwritten notes for statement 2:
 A circle around '2' with '2+5' written above it.
 A circle around '3' with a diagonal line through it.
 An arrow pointing from the '2' circle to the '3' circle.
 The text: "Can't decide so here."

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Neither 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Neither 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

- can't know this unless you've experienced growing up working class + alternatives?
- BUT ~~for~~ WC people I've met from Uni do seem to talk about home + place more

Any other general comments:

Really enjoyed the show - seemed to reflect the way my parents describe growing up in Stoke + people from their past

Age: 22

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

Stoke-on-Trent now living in Sheffield.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

Somehow inbetween WC + middle class?

(not sure how this is defined anymore).

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements

1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived

1
Strongly Agree

2
Agree

3
Neither

4
Disagree

5
Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Smashing, really got a feel for it. Especially the Rugby League effort

2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever

1
Strongly Agree

2
Agree

3
Neither

4
Disagree

5
Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

3. Your perception of place depends on your class

1
Strongly Agree

2
Agree

3
Neither

4
Disagree

5
Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: 23

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 Hull/Beverley, no

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? Working/lower middle

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments: <i>The word consequence, to me, implies a negative issue?</i>					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments: <i>Individual understanding</i>					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

I think place is subjective to an individual not a class system.

Any other general comments:

Age: 26

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there? Nottingham, yes

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? working - middle

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:	<i>to a large extent but subsequent experiences also shape us</i>				
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:	<i>everything is dependent on how we approach it'</i>				

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments: *Place & people form a whole, can't be separated*

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments: *Why should that be?*

Any other general comments:

Bulliant presentation. Every thing jelled. God knows how you remembered it all. Sound effects spot on.

Age: *old!*

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there? *early years in Nottingham, rest in Rotherham.*

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? *Middle, I guess.*

would be great to have a camera beaming on to floor as you gradually build up 'your village'.

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:	<i>Depends on how specific you want to be.</i>				
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:	<i>I think it depends on your knowledge of the place rather than your class</i>				

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

A sense of ^{place/}community ^{often} emerges through a common struggle or fight - this is more common amongst working class communities

Any other general comments:

Age: 16

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 Nottingham (Neither north nor south!)

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
 Middle-class

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p> <p>Any other comments:</p> <p><i>It would be super interesting to perhaps mention North's a post-North life to see how that has shaped your identity</i></p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p> <p>Any other comments:</p> <p><i>→ kind of dependent on how much you hold on to where you're from.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p> <p><i>what's place?</i></p> <p>Any other comments:</p> <p><i>I think it's more of a North/South thing. More of an identity in the North - No one is strongly identified with Northampton for example.</i></p>	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

① Strongly Agree ② Agree ③ **Neither** ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments: I think other people have seen strong perceptions of class. I also think media & the gov speak this - louder voice than the people that live there.

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

① Strongly Agree ② **Agree** ③ Neither ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments: ↓ North/South thing
Similar to what I said on previous page.

Any other general comments:

It was amazing and you different characters were a really good touch.
- Interesting topics of North/South - working class - middle class etc - some of us are a bit stuck/ant
beton

Age: 22

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Northampton - Now live in Manchester.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? ← interesting question →
Dads fem = working class / Mums fem = middle class
parents = diff ways of living. Overall - middle class.

Really Well Done.

A Good Neet Aht
First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements	Brilliant Phil - and that's from a funny Wigan lass. Bravo.				
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:	But bit of a diloted northern accent perhaps?				
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:	Identify with this a lot.				
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:	I think inevitably. But what does place mean? Place in society? Place, geographically?				

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Neither 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments: governmental decisions? Thatcher?

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Neither 4 Disagree 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments: A pride that feels misplaced or confusing sometimes but a pride you can't ignore.

Any other general comments:

Brilliant work. You have a great voice.
 You really ~~shone~~ were amazing in the comedic bits.

Age: 22

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there? Wigan
 I live in Manc City Centre

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? Working. I struggle with living a 'middle class' lifestyle with no money and a working class family.

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:
 I'm not sure because I only know my opinion.

Any other general comments:

10/10 sterling job.

Age: 23

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 Lincoln, no

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? Middle

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p> <p>Any other comments: <i>Perhaps most of all by his birth-place & where he lived as a child.</i></p>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 2 Agree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 3 Neither</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p> <p>Any other comments: <i>But it is a bit of a sweeping statement!</i></p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree</p>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 3 Neither</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p> <p>Any other comments: <i>No, it depends on how receptive you are & how open to being affected by your surroundings Sensitivity & receptiveness.</i></p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 2 Agree</p>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> 3 Neither</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree</p>

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Any other comments: *and by the physical geography, economic status*

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

I really, really enjoyed this evening. I'm displaced Welsh so my sense of place is massive.

Age: *old (?)*

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Shrewsbury - no.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
middle / neither arsehole nor

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments: <i>A difficult question to answer as people may all perceive place differently</i>					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

① Strongly Agree ② Agree ③ Neither ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:
Geographical location, climate & other factors are also relevant

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

① Strongly Agree ② Agree ③ Neither ④ Disagree ⑤ Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:
Possibly. Maybe if you're working class in some instances you have less opportunities to move.

Any other general comments:
An excellent performance. Thoroughly enjoyed it for the second time

Age: 51
Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Nottingham + I still live there
What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
middle class (ish)

B Sharlston

Chat

A Good Neet Aht						
First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.						
Many thanks, Phil						
Statements						
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived		<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:						
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever		<input type="radio"/> 1	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:						
3. Your perception of place depends on your class		<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:						

4. Place is defined by the people that live there	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

Any other general comments:

Age: 59 years.

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 NORFOLK. NOW LIVE IN YORKSHIRE.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

Sha1

A Good Neet Aht					
First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.					
Many thanks, Phil					
Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 5
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1

Strongly Agree

2

Agree

3

Neither

4

Disagree

5

Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1

Strongly Agree

2

Agree

3

Neither

4

Disagree

5

Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age:

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

A Good Neet Aht					
<p>First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.</p> <p>Many thanks, Phil</p>					
Statements					
<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree

4. Place is defined by the people that live there	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

Any other general comments:

Do more Shows!!!

Age: 25

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

I was brought up in Switzerland and kind of still live there!?

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

whatever class. because i kind of dont care.
 Not meant in a bad way; if you want to know why
 lets sit together and talk about it. I would enjoy!

Thx Phil
 xxx

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there Any other comments:	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place Any other comments:	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Any other general comments:

Age:

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

A Good Neet Aht First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go. Many thanks, Phil					
Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Very good find X.

Age: *51*

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
London suburbs. - No.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? *Middle class*

A Good Neet Aht					
<p>First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.</p> <p>Many thanks, Phil</p>					
Statements					
<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: 55

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
The North / NO.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
MIDDLE.

Loved the flow.

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived Any other comments:	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever Any other comments:	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
3. Your perception of place depends on your class Any other comments:	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree

4. Place is defined by the people that live there	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

Any other general comments:

Age: 60

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 Sharston, W. Yorks.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? LOWER MIDDLE / WORKING

Shal

A Good Neet Aht						
First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.						
Many thanks, Phil						
Statements						
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived		<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:						
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever		<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:						
3. Your perception of place depends on your class		<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 5
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:						

<p>4. Place is defined by the people that live there</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>Any other comments:</p>					
<p>5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>Any other comments:</p>					

Any other general comments:

Age: 72

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? WORKING CLASS

Sha 1

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived Any other comments:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever Any other comments:	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
3. Your perception of place depends on your class Any other comments:	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: 50+

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

THE NORTH.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

WORKING CLASS

A Good Neet Aht						
First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.						
Many thanks, Phil						
Statements						
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived		<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:						
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever		<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:						
3. Your perception of place depends on your class		<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:						

4. Place is defined by the people that live there	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

Any other general comments:

a fine and representation of the feeling of the local, spoken word. Mayhaps. it was robust.

Age: 21?

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

Yes

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? Upper.

OKA!

HA

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:	<p>IT'S GRIM UP NORTH!</p>				
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:	<p>IT'S GRIM UP NORTH!</p>				
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:	<p>IT'S GRIM UP NORTH!</p>				

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

ITS GRIM UP NORTH !

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

ITS GRIM UP NORTH !

Any other general comments:

YOU KNOW WHO THIS IS I'LL TELL YOU TO SPEAK ABOUT YOUR BRILLIANT PERFORMANCE

Age:

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there? YOUNG SOA

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? DRUGSVILLE

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments: <i>True.</i>					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	① Strongly Agree	② Agree	③ Neither	④ Disagree	⑤ Strongly Disagree
Any other comments: <i>Very good.</i>					

<p>4. Place is defined by the people that live there</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p>① Strongly Agree</p>	<p>② Agree</p>	<p>③ Neither</p>	<p>④ Disagree</p>	<p>⑤ Strongly Disagree</p>

Any other general comments:

Age: 18

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there? CAS kid

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? UPPER

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 2 Agree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 3 Neither</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree</p>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 3 Neither</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree</p>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 3 Neither</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree</p>

<p>4. Place is defined by the people that live there</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>Any other comments:</p>					
<p>5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place</p>	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>Any other comments:</p>					

Any other general comments:

Age: 51

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 : South / No

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
 Working class

A Good Neet Aht					
First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.					
Many thanks, Phil					
Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree ✓	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither ✓	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree ✓	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree ✓	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree ✓	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

Any other general comments:

Age:

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Sth Kirby — NO.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
WORKING CLASS

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p>1 Strongly Agree</p>	<p>2 Agree</p>	<p>3 Neither</p>	<p>4 Disagree</p>	<p>5 Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p>1 Strongly Agree</p>	<p>2 Agree</p>	<p>3 Neither</p>	<p>4 Disagree</p>	<p>5 Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<p>1 Strongly Agree</p>	<p>2 Agree</p>	<p>3 Neither</p>	<p>4 Disagree</p>	<p>5 Strongly Disagree</p>

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

as a foreigner I married into a "Yorkshire" family where men don't like other men where Rugby is a man's game and you should never order lagers or a half pint! I love it because they are anything but! They are ~~half-~~ self-centred, kind, have empathy and care, they really care!

Age: 64

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

Holland and Switzerland

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?

Working class

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

too Dep a question

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: 54

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 YORKSHIRE !! Tingley Married into Shankston
 26 yrs still a foreigner.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
 working class working towards upper working class !!

Dev
Sha 1

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
<p>1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived</p> <p>Any other comments: CAN SEE THROUGH THE PERFORMANCE HE HAD A GREAT FAMILY THAT WERE CERTAINLY A BIG INFLUENCE.</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever</p> <p>Any other comments: CONSEQUENCES ?</p>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
<p>3. Your perception of place depends on your class</p> <p>Any other comments:</p>	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments: GREAT PERFORMANCE.

Age: 54

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
 CHARLSTON, YES, & PROUD TO BE.

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? WORKING CLASS

A Good Neet Aht
 First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
 Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments: <i>As well as people, shared experiences, memories + identity of others</i>					
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever	<input type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments: <i>how we chose to live with consequences, then help us to create our identity.</i>					
3. Your perception of place depends on your class	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 Strongly Agree	<input type="radio"/> 2 Agree	<input type="radio"/> 3 Neither	<input type="radio"/> 4 Disagree	<input type="radio"/> 5 Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

4. Place is defined by the people that live there

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:
Perception of place is held by the individual, not the place itself.

5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place

1 Strongly Agree
 2 Agree
 3 Neither
 4 Disagree
 5 Strongly Disagree

Any other comments:

Any other general comments:

Age: *55*

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?
Wakefield / No

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from?
Working class.

A Good Neet Aht

First of all, a huge thank you for coming to see the show. I've been trying to find out if place can be performed. To help me with this I'd really appreciate it if you could respond to the five statements below. Feel free to add any other comments as you go.

Many thanks,
Phil

Statements					
1. The performer's identity has been shaped by the places he has lived Any other comments:	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
2. It is a universal truth that we have no control over our place of birth but we live with the consequences forever Any other comments:	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
3. Your perception of place depends on your class Any other comments:	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree

4. Place is defined by the people that live there	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					
5. If you're working class you have a stronger sense of place	①	②	③	④	⑤
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Any other comments:					

Any other general comments:

loved where it was held - irrelevant background noise and shit beer!

Age: 57

Where were you brought up (geographically) and do you still live there?

South - Yep!

What class, if any, do you see yourself coming from? working class

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