# Introduction

Between 1968 and 1985, thousands of female workers engaged in workplace protest in various public sector and private sector industries across England. This wave of activism occurred in a period often associated with heightened tension in both gender and class relations. The 1970s has been described as the 'zenith' of trade union militancy, when over half the labour force was unionised and working days lost to strikes reached record high levels.[1] The women's liberation movement (WLM) also emerged in this period, which produced a shift in public debates about gender roles and relations in the home and the workplace. Certain industrial disputes involving women – such as the 1968 Ford sewing machinists' strike, the 1976–78 Grunwick dispute or the campaign to unionise night cleaners – are frequently cited as evidence of social, political and cultural change in attitudes towards women's employment.[2] Yet the motivations, experiences and political identities of women who actually engaged in such action have been largely neglected by historians. This book seeks to address this space through an analysis of four industrial disputes that were instigated by, and primarily involved, working-class women. In doing so, it makes several important contributions to labour, women's and working-class history.

The book offers new insights into working-class women's experiences of paid work and workplace protest in post-war England. My investigation focuses on the voices and experiences of women who fought for equal pay, skill recognition and the right to work between 1968 and 1985. Drawing on a combination of oral history and archival research, it explores why working-class women engaged in such action when they did, and it analyses the impact of workplace protest on women's political identity. In doing so, the book contributes a fresh understanding of the relationship between feminism, workplace activism and trade unionism during the years 1968–85.

Industrial action was important during this period because it represented a new assertiveness among female workers who contested unequal gender hierarchies and demanded a greater say in how their work was organised. This is not to suggest that female workers had been unwilling to challenge gender inequality in the workplace until this particular historical moment; case studies of women's workplace militancy from earlier periods illustrate how female workers challenged the social and political roles ascribed to women in English workplaces from the nineteenth century to the interwar period.[3] However, it is significant that the disputes analysed here occurred in a period that coincided with women's increased presence in the labour force, greater access to higher education and professional careers, equality legislation and a surge in feminist activism. This specific context influenced how women's workplace protest was represented at the time. What follows seeks to understand how post-war changes in female employment, trade unionism and feminism were experienced by working-class women who sought to improve their workplace conditions by participating in collective action.

**Women and paid work**

Women's increased labour force participation was one of the most significant social changes in post-war England. Between 1948 and 1980, the total number of female workers in Britain grew from 6.7 million to 9.2 million. Women as a proportion of the total labour force had only grown from 27 per cent in 1881 to 33 per cent in 1948, before rapidly increasing to 41.7 per cent in the short period between 1948 and 1980.[4] The general trends in post-war female employment have been well established: the growth of the bi-modal work pattern meant that there were more married women who returned to work after having children.[5] Many in this group returned to work in part-time jobs, as part-time female employment increased fivefold from 750,000 to nearly 4.1 million between 1951 and 1981.[6]

The growth of women's part-time work was arguably the most important trend in women's paid work during the post-war period. It was important because the majority of part-time jobs were low paid, low status and perceived to be low skilled. It is commonly argued that married women preferred part-time work because of childcare responsibilities and the potential of part-time work to 'liberate' lives dominated by domestic labour.[7] However, recent research by Laura Paterson suggests that part-time work offered a limited range of jobs and opportunities for career advancement, which meant such jobs are better understood as a

temporary expedient during a particular stage in women's lives that enabled them to combine the two roles of mother and worker in a context of extremely limited affordable pre-school childcare.[8] The key point here is that women's propensity to work part-time meant they presented themselves in the labour market on different terms to male workers. The majority of women were still expected to assume responsibility for domestic labour, which reinforced the male breadwinner model and meant work was understood as being less important for women.[9]

Further changes in women's experiences of paid work included the removal of marriage bars in teaching (1944) and the civil service (1946), and greater access to further education after the 1963 Robbins Report meant more women entered the professions and pursued careers that had previously excluded them.[10] The 1970 Equal Pay Act and 1975 Sex Discrimination Act represented a greater commitment of both Labour and Conservative governments to the pursuit of an 'equality agenda', which officially offered individuals a level playing field for equal access to jobs and wages, irrespective of sex.[11] However, inequality between male and female wages represented a significant historical continuity in post-war England. In 1980, five years after the passage of the Equal Pay Act, the average hourly pay of all working women (both full-time and part-time) was less than 66 per cent of the average male wage.[12] Women's low pay was connected to the gendered division of labour and women's propensity to work in part-time jobs that lacked status and career progression opportunities. In 1971, 84 per cent of women worked in occupations dominated by other women, whilst in 1980, 63 per cent of women worked in jobs that were performed only by women.[13]

Whilst these broad trends in female employment patterns have been well documented, historians have only recently started to understand how such changes influenced women's everyday experiences of paid work, as well as their relationships with their families, the state and individual sense of self.[14] This book is the first to explore the relationship between paid work and working-class women's political identities. Arthur McIvor has emphasised the value of personal testimony sources for uncovering the meaning workers ascribed to their employment in the past.[15] Previous oral history projects have suggested that paid work had less meaning for women's identity than men's. Elizabeth Roberts, who carried out oral history interviews in 1970, concluded that although there was greater social approval of women working outside the home after the Second World War, the majority of women continued to be primarily defined by their familial role.[16] This argument was echoed in Angela Davis' study of motherhood in post-war England, and is often accepted in other

social and political histories.[17] Davis suggests that whilst women's work was 'reconceptualised' after the Second World War, and paid employment could offer some women an opportunity to gain independence, 'it remained true that only a small minority of educated, professional women considered their role as worker to be as, or more, important than that of mother'.[18] Yet there remains a space here to consider the subtle ways these roles and identities interacted with each other. It seems plausible that women did not consciously privilege one role above the other; their social and political identity was temporally shaped by both at different moments in their lives.

This book argues that paid employment was crucial to shaping working-class women's daily experience and understanding of their position within wider social relations throughout their life course. Selina Todd warns that it is important not to over-emphasise the significance of paid work to working-class identity – pointing out that work was a means to an end, rather than a source of satisfaction, and something that people sought to make the best of.[19] For Todd, the majority of working-class individuals knew they had to work for a living, but frequently imagined escaping from this reality; thus it is more suitable to view class struggle as centring on evading work, rather than identifying with it.[20] The women interviewed in this book had not always enjoyed their work, and drew on many other aspects of their lives to fashion their identity and self-understanding. However, their experiences of paid work were a crucial component to their sense of who they were, and why they engaged in workplace activism in the past. Indeed, it was the fact that they had sacrificed leisure time and other more enjoyable elements of their lives to provide for their families that generated anger when work was taken away from them, or undermined in relation to skill and wages.

A final point to be made here is that it is important to recognise that the workforce was racialised as migration from Asia and the Caribbean changed the character of the female labour force. Black women workers suffered triple oppression through gender, class and racial discrimination. Whilst Chapter 1 considers the experience of black and Asian workers in more detail, a limitation with this study is the attention to race. Race was a key issue I originally wanted to explore in my case studies; however, only white women came forward to be interviewed. As a result, the experiences presented in this book are those of white working-class women, and it has not been possible to explore in detail the experiences of women who faced racial discrimination. This means it has not yet been possible to deploy a fully intersectional approach that explains how these interlocking systems of gender, class and racial oppression worked in practice.

## Women and trade unionism

Each chapter also contributes fresh insights into women's experiences of trade unionism between 1968 and 1985 – a period that has been associated with a significant transition in the relationship between women and the labour movement. In 1914, there were 437,000 female trade unionists, a number that rose to 1,342,000 in 1920 following the First World War. Female membership levels declined to 731,000 in 1933, which was symptomatic of high levels of unemployment throughout the 1930s, before increasing to 1,716,000 in 1943 due to the influx of women into the labour market during the Second World War.[21]

Women's lower levels of trade union membership than men's have been explained by the unskilled, part-time and irregular nature of their work and the adversarial attitudes of male trade unionists wanting to maintain their breadwinner wage.[22] Sarah Boston argues that female workers had to fight to become equal members within trade unions before they could fight against their employers.[23] Her authoritative account of women's trade unionism demonstrates how male union officials persistently perceived women workers as inferior throughout the twentieth century. This is supported by Anne Phillips and Barbara Taylor, who argued that skill was an 'ideological category' rather than an economic fact, meaning that women's work was undervalued simply because it was performed by women.[24] Cathy Hunt's history of the National Federation of Women Workers shows how women had to develop their own separate organisations to recruit and organise female workers and raise public awareness of their needs and interests.[25] Whilst these overviews of women's trade unionism emphasise gender antagonism, case studies from earlier periods importantly demonstrate how women organised informally, in spite of the divergence of interests between rank-and-file female workers and male trade union leaders and officials. Studies of female chain-makers in Cradley Heath, the Bryant and May matchstick 'girls', female jute workers in Dundee and food factory workers in Bermondsey, as well as various accounts of women's militancy within interwar 'new' industries, show that gender antagonism within trade unions could inhibit, but did not prevent, women from asserting their rights and seeking to improve their conditions in the past.[26] Female workers were not apathetic, and were more likely to draw on their own cultural resources, without the formal support of trade unions, to influence how their work was organised.

After the Second World War, the number of female trade unionists rose from 1,638,000 in 1945 to 2,743,000 in 1970. The 1970s repre-

sented a period of substantial growth as female membership increased to 3,902,000 by 1979. Female union density rose from 32.1 per cent to 39.4 per cent.[27] The growth in women's trade unionism was accompanied by a greater commitment from trade unions to represent the specific interests of female workers. This involved the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and other unions publicly supporting issues like equal pay, maternity protection, childcare provision and better training opportunities. Campaign groups like the Working Women's Charter sought to amplify the female workers' voice within the labour movement, whilst feminist sociologists and economists increasingly drew attention to gender inequality within trade unions. These historical patterns of women's trade unionism have sometimes been understood in terms of the 'feminisation' of British trade unions, yet there is an absence of ordinary female workers' voices from this narrative.[28]

Disputes involving women are often drawn on as examples of female workers becoming more active within trade unions, without a full understanding of what the participants believed they were doing and what they now think they did. A better understanding of women's workplace protest from this period is important because it was perceived to be occurring more frequently than in previous periods, and received wider attention from feminist and trade union activists who claimed it represented a transition in working-class women's political consciousness.[29] In 1981, feminist sociologist Anna Pollert wrote of the 1970s,

> Women began to take on their employers in unexpected areas. … Most of the new wave of women workers' struggles were not 'spectacular'. Many were small, and because they did not 'grind the country to a halt' could be conveniently ignored by the mass media. Many of the disputes were long drawn out; many ended in defeat because they were isolated and failed to draw support from other trade unionists. … Yet because they never reached the headlines it should not be assumed they were outside [class] struggle, or that they lived untroubled, uncomplicated lives – content with their lot…. To ignore these would be to take the Hollywood epic view of history, where great battles eclipse the subtle movements behind the scenes: the various shades of consciousness, the motives behind action.[30]

Pollert's concern to understand 'the subtle movements behind the scenes' of women's workplace activism remains unresolved and connects to Josie McLellan's call to move away from Whiggish historical narratives of women progressing towards some endpoint of 'normality' after years of change.[31] Focusing on women's reconstructed experiences of trade un-

ionism through oral history, this book moves beyond accounts that have focused on women's relationship with the labour movement at an institutional level. It aims to draw attention to the values and beliefs of women underlying these broader changes, for whom trade unionism represented a vehicle to try and assert greater control within their workplace.

### Workplace protest and second-wave feminism

Each case study also provides new insights into the relationship between women's workplace protest, feminism and the WLM. The first historical accounts of the WLM were written by women who actively engaged with women's liberation and focused on the public face of the movement: the demands, campaigns, national conferences and subsequent fragmentation.[32] Early analyses emphasised the practical effects of women's activism during this period through the development of women's aid and rape crisis centres across Britain, as well as the ideological impact through increased public awareness that 'the personal is political'. Jeffrey Weeks asserted that the WLM 'cast a spell which impacted on the lives of women for over a generation'.[33] More recently, there has been a greater focus on the local and personal impact of the movement on individual participants. Sue Bruley emphasises the novelty of consciousness-raising groups as a process 'by which women sought to understand their oppression, redefine themselves and create new feminist identities'.[34] Sarah Browne has also used oral history to write the first history of the WLM in Scotland from the perspective of grass roots activists. Browne concludes that women's activism in this period, especially around the issues of abortion and violence against women, transformed the way Scottish society both 'discussed and understood the role of women'.[35] The WLM is thus understood to have had a significant effect on women's experience and sense of self.

The WLM was an important part of the story of women's workplace protest in England during the 1970s. Industrial disputes organised by female workers represented sites of convergence between working-class women seeking to alter the relations of power within their workplace and WLM activists hoping to extend the social composition of the movement by raising the consciousness of working-class women. Feminist support was crucial for raising the public profile of women's workplace protest and could provide essential moral and financial backing for women who were not supported by their union. In 1989, Sheila Rowbotham wrote that historians in the future would need to 'explain the experiential encounter between feminism and the labour movement and the transformation in

consciousness that has taken place among working-class women'.[36] This claim represented a starting point for my investigation – to examine the nature of the relationship between female strikers and WLM activists from the perspective of female workers.

It must be stressed that by focusing on the relationship between WLM activists and female workers, I do not imply that feminism could only arise, or be pursued, by identifying with the WLM. As Selina Todd points out, the relationship between class and feminism was never without tension, and many working-class women disagreed with some middle-class feminists' belief that male behaviour was the primary cause of women's exploitation.[37] My oral history interviews explore this tension further by asking women to explain in their own words what they felt about feminism, and the extent to which they felt their activism had been influenced by the women's movement, as well as other aspects of their everyday experience. Lynn Abrams has illustrated the value of looking beyond the women's movement and its precursors to take account of the impact of wider cultural and social change on women's sense of self in post-war Britain.[38] The 'sexual revolution', the demise of religion, full employment and greater education and professional opportunities offered women new means of constructing a lifestyle and belief system that was different to that of their mothers.[39] Abrams' oral history respondents often framed their life stories around a liberationist practice, but with little relation to liberationist movements or ideology. The interviews in this book not only provide new insights into the relationship between female workers and WLM activists but offer new understandings of how class affected women's changing sense of self in post-war England.

Research on earlier periods illustrates how women became 'politicised' or practised 'rough forms of feminism', without identifying themselves as feminists.[40] As Annemarie Hughes points out, feminism and women's activism are not coterminous.[41] Focusing on institutions and (in)formal movements can disguise the diversity of ideas, aims and successes of women, and obscure other forms of feminism practised in everyday life by women who did not necessarily identify themselves as feminists. By concentrating on women's workplace protests, the present analysis addresses a form of activism that can be situated in a space between formal and informal politics. The women interviewed in the case studies that follow were all trade union members who interacted with feminist activists who visited their factories, joined them on picket lines and wrote about them. As a result, on the one hand, the book explores what this relationship meant to the women involved. On the other hand, I have also explored the women's broader experiences and everyday re-

sponses to unequal gender relations in the workplace. I have made every effort to listen to and respect my respondents' own understanding of feminism. The book thus offers fresh insights into both the relationship between feminist activism and workplace protest during the 1970s and the influence of working-class women's broader everyday experiences of gender antagonism on their sense of self and political identity.

### Workplace protest and political identity: remembering the 1970s in post-industrial England

An important aim of the book is to understand why women engaged in workplace activism when they did, and what the impact of this was on their political attitudes, understandings and sense of self in the subsequent period. Glimpses of personal testimony found in letters, strike bulletins and newspaper interviews provide clues to the political identity and subjectivity of women engaged in disputes *at the time*, whilst my own oral history interviews offer an insight into the meaning that participants ascribed to their past experience in relation to their identity and subjectivities *at the time of the interview*.

The disputes considered in this book occurred in a period associated with political crisis and economic decline. Images of strikes, inflation, power cuts, oil price rises, hung parliaments and minority government permeate popular histories of the 1970s. Britain was perceived to have become ungovernable. The period is thus commonly characterised as the moment when the post-war settlement, consensus and economic growth crashed to an end before being rescued by Thatcherism. Historians have increasingly questioned this simplistic narrative and have started to draw greater attention to the range of opportunities and political possibilities that existed during this decade.[42] It is crucial to recognise that the women involved in the disputes considered in this book grew up in a context of growing economic and social security associated with full employment and the development of the welfare state. David Edgerton recently argued that social democracy and the welfare state were at their peak during the 1970s.[43] Income and wealth inequality were at their lowest levels in the twentieth century. Organised labour was stronger by comparison to earlier and later periods. All of this contributed to a sense that a shift in power had occurred between the elite and workers in society. As Robinson *et al.* suggest, 'Two decades of full employment, plus the discourses around the people's war and welfare state had given people a fuller sense of citizenship and entitlement.'[44] Greater security and prosperity accompanied by cultural shifts in education, youth culture and consumerism encouraged

the decline of deference and the emergence of new social movements organised around a variety of new 'post-material' values.[45]

Yet it is also crucial to recognise the context in which the women interviewed in this book remembered their workplace activism. Deindustrialisation from the 1950s destroyed large numbers of jobs for both men and women and began to polarise the job market, creating the need for in-work benefits to supplement in-work poverty.[46] Wage inequality and job insecurity accelerated from the 1980s onwards as the Thatcher government sought to reduce inflation by introducing high interest rates, cuts in public spending and higher indirect taxes. High interest rates benefited property owners but exacerbated problems in manufacturing, and mass unemployment followed. High levels of unemployment and the collapse of unionised industries eroded the strength of organised labour, which was further weakened by successive legislation restricting trade unions' ability to organise industrial action.[47] The economic and political context changed considerably from the late 1960s (when this book begins) to the early 1980s (when this book ends). The 2008 financial crisis and politics of austerity that followed further exacerbated economic inequality and political polarisation in twenty-first-century Britain. The context within which the women were interviewed for this book (2012–14) was thus very different to the period when their activism occurred and had significant effects on how women remembered and accounted for the personal effects of their activism.

An approach that privileges the subjective understandings, identities and motivations of workers engaging in industrial conflict is important to challenge popular narratives that characterise the 1970s as a period when unruly unions and working-class greed caused economic decline. As Jack Saunders recently pointed out, historians of the British labour movement have explained rising levels of workplace protest as a direct response to changing economic and political circumstances after the 1950s.[48] Such accounts often take for granted the values, ideas and collective cultures developed by workers themselves, which were also required for workers to unite and engage in collective action.[49] There has been even less consideration given to how these processes were shaped by gender. Strikes did not simply just happen. As industrial relations expert Richard Hyman explained in 1989,

> The very act of striking is a collective act and implies a certain amount of understanding and belief in the efficaciousness of mass action … strikes are occasionally spontaneous outbursts due to accidental circumstances or long periods of repression – but workers with no feeling of solidarity or common interest would be unlikely to strike.[50]

For Hyman, strikes would not occur were it not for workers behaving as agents with beliefs and values that led them to consciously interpret their employers' behaviour as unjust and perceive collective action as a legitimate and effective response. Therefore, 'only by exploring subjective dimensions – human consciousness and the interrelations of people's definitions and responses – it becomes possible to understand the regularities and patterns that exist within industrial relations'.[51] Hyman's approach to understanding the rationale behind workplace militancy remains valid and can be reconciled with more recent historical approaches to individual subjectivity. For example, after reading British soldiers' letters from the First World War, Michael Roper stressed the importance of focusing on individual subjectivity as a means of investigating the emotional significance of events and practices.[52] James Hinton advocates a similar approach to understanding the past in his analysis of Mass-Observation diaries from the Second World War. For Hinton, the point of examining the motivations, beliefs and values of individuals is not necessarily to offer more 'authentic' accounts of the past, but to 'locate individuals in their social context, and to understand how, in constructing their own selfhoods, they contributed to larger patterns of continuity and change'.[53]

So, it is important to look beyond broad economic change or the actions of large institutions when examining workplace protest during this period and to think about how the political identities and relationships of those who engaged in workplace activism were shaped by their everyday experiences. As Selina Todd argues, workers' growing assertiveness during this period can also be explained by their shared aspiration for greater control over the organisation of their lives, which included the way their work was organised and paid.[54] The following chapters will argue that female workers' demands for equal pay and protests against being treated as a secondary labour force were also shaped by their aspiration to have the value of their work recognised; to have their specific skills and role as economic providers accepted by patronising male employers and trade union officials; to be treated with dignity and respect, which they felt was undermined due to their sex.

**Sources and methods**

Contemporaneous accounts of women's work and trade unionism during this period suggest that women had a distinct, gendered experience of workplace protest because they were likely to work in different jobs, to be paid less and to have less influence within their trade union than their male workmates (especially if they worked part-time). The period has

also been associated with a transition in ideas about women's rights in the workplace evidenced by the passage of equality legislation and greater commitment from trade unions to integrate and represent the specific interests of their increased female membership.[55] Chapter 1 explains how instances of women's workplace protest were situated within these public debates at the time. It provides an overview of representations and public discourses surrounding women's workplace protest found in feminist literature, trade union publications and sociological studies. The rest of the book identifies the personal implications of these broader social and political changes for female workers who engaged in collective action through an analysis of four case studies of workplace disputes organised by women during this period.

The case studies present four different examples of women asserting their rights in the workplace. To start, Chapter 2 provides an original account of the Ford sewing machinists' fight for skill recognition in 1968. The 1968 Ford sewing machinists' strike is widely understood as a crucial turning point that led to the Equal Pay Act in 1970. However, this triumphant narrative of the strike as a victory has served to disguise the fact that the women at Ford perceived the outcome of the 1968 strike as a defeat and continued to fight for skill recognition until 1985, when their work was finally regraded after another nine-week strike. This chapter offers an account of the 1968 strike from the perspective of the women involved. Chapter 3 moves on to examine how the Equal Pay Act was interpreted and challenged by female workers once it was implemented in 1975. It provides a detailed consideration of the longest equal pay strike in British labour history, which took place at the Trico-Folberth windscreen wiper factory in Brentford, west London, during the summer of 1976. Following this, Chapter 4 focuses on the 1972 occupation of Sexton, Son & Everard Shoe Factory organised by female workers fighting to save their jobs in Fakenham, Norfolk. The occupation lasted eighteen weeks before the women involved established their own co-operative that traded with varied levels of success until it entered receivership in 1977. The Fakenham occupation moves the book on to a different track away from the equal pay debates, considered in the previous two chapters, towards working-class women's fight against factory closures and unemployment. Finally, Chapter 5 returns to Ford, in Dagenham, to analyse the 1984–85 sewing machinists' strike for skill recognition and improved grading – the original grievance of the 1968 strike. Ending in the same location where the book begins, the final case study illustrates the centrality and continued salience of the subjective value of women's work that runs throughout the period between 1968 and 1985.

The case studies were chosen for the frequency with which they are cited as examples of women's workplace militancy in histories of women's trade unionism and feminism in post-war England, but without being the subject of a significant investigation from a historical perspective.[56] In terms of representativeness, the aim was not so much to establish broad conclusions about working-class women's behaviour – it could be argued that the women were atypical or extraordinary by engaging in such action in the first place. Instead, it focuses on the meaning of each dispute for the self-selecting sample of women who came forward to tell me stories about their past. Following James Hinton, individual case studies and life histories provide acute insights into more general historical processes because it is the choices made by individuals that drive those processes forward.[57] Similarly, Abrams argues that prioritising women's own voices and interpretations of the past is useful as a means of challenging established historical explanations of women's role in society, but also for offering an 'authentic story with meaning for those who narrated it'.[58] In the context of this book, I have focused on women's voices and local case studies to move beyond existing accounts that situate women's collective action in a general narrative about women's increased presence in the labour force and trade unions, as well as the emergence of second-wave feminism and equality legislation. The case studies and individual stories that follow offer new insights into how female workers interpreted the influence of these wider social and institutional changes on their own personal experience and sense of self.

Each case study draws on a combination of written sources and oral history. Written sources include national and local newspaper coverage of each dispute, WLM pamphlets and articles and trade union publications and correspondence. Written sources were used to establish the context and sequence of events surrounding each dispute. They also indicate how each dispute was publicly perceived, represented and judged at the time, and offer evidence of the social and cultural expectations that surrounded working-class women's behaviour during that period. Finally, the numerous interviews with female workers that appear in these sources, although obviously mediated, provide clues as to women's understandings, motivations and evaluations of their action at the time and are valuable as records of contemporary voices.[59] Oral history was used to reveal what could not be discovered elsewhere: personal experiences of paid work, trade unionism and workplace protest, and the manner in which individuals made sense of these past experiences as they constructed their political identities and sense of self in the present. The book draws on interviews with thirteen women contacted through advertisements

in local newspapers, libraries, supermarkets and internet community forums and also by word of mouth.[60]

Oral history provides a useful means of analysing individuals' experiences, motivations and the personal consequences of participating in collective action in the past. Maud Bracke argues that analysis of social and political movements based on the mobilisation of collective identities requires awareness of the individual's sense of self. She shows how feminist groups provoked political and legislative change in Italy, but also draws on oral history effectively to illustrate the movement's 'existential impact' on thousands of women who associated their experiences of feminist activism in the 1970s with a transition in their social attitudes, personal relationships, political outlook and self-understanding.[61] In Scotland, Sarah Browne examines personal testimony with WLM activists to develop a more 'in-depth understanding of who supported the movement and why'. She demonstrates the important effects of the personal experiences of individual members upon the main arguments and campaigns developed by the wider movement in Scotland.[62] Similarly, Celia Hughes uses oral history to illustrate the effects of cultural change in 1960s Britain on political activists' sense of self and identity on the radical left.[63] The point is that oral history represents a useful methodology for examining instances of collective action in the past because it reveals how social and political mobilisation was not just the product (as well as producer) of structural processes, but was also shaped by the personal lives and experiences of active participants and their understanding of the world around them.

Oral history has the capacity to offer similar insights into workers' militancy in the past. For example, Jim Phillips argues in his study of the 1984–85 miners' strike in Scotland that the privileging of high politics has obscured the broader economic, social and cultural dimensions of the strike from a historian's analysis.[64] Using a combination of quantitative data and oral history, Phillips illustrates how the strike was shaped by economic variables, as well as the 'moral economy' of workers involved.[65] Another example of oral history being used effectively to examine workplace militancy from this period is Sundari Anitha *et al.*'s study of the 1976–79 Grunwick dispute, primarily involving South Asian female workers. They argue that celebratory accounts of the strike as a pivotal moment in the labour movement's representation of minority workers often emphasised the 'exoticism' of the 'strikers in saris', without considering the working lives and experiences of the women involved.[66] Drawing on interviews with five participants, they argue that the particular migratory histories and socioeconomic backgrounds of the women were

crucial to explaining their decision to engage in collective action. Many of the women came from middle-class backgrounds in East Africa and were indignant at the poor conditions and low pay of factory work. At the same time, some of the women reported feeling ashamed at asking the public for money during the dispute, whilst others felt uncomfortable talking about particular aspects of the strike that violated 'gendered scripts of appropriate behaviour'.[67] Anitha *et al*. emphasise how these personal, social and cultural factors intersected with women's material experiences of paid work to shape South Asian women's narratives about the dispute.[68] These examples of existing studies illustrate the value of oral history as a methodology for understanding the everyday motivations and personal concerns of workers in a manner that challenges dominant narratives that associate 'unruly unions' with economic decline in postwar Britain.

Joan Sangster's study of a 1937 strike organised by female textile workers in Peterborough, Canada, highlights the value of using oral history to focus on women's subjective accounts of workplace militancy. She argues that oral historians must adopt an approach that reconciles the cultural construction of memory within a framework of social and economic relations and imperatives. She writes,

> Asking why and how women explain, rationalise and make sense of the past offers insight into the social and material framework within which they operated, the perceived choices and cultural patterns they faced, and the complex relationship between individual consciousness and culture.[69]

Sangster suggests that the strength of oral history lies in its ability to interrogate how individuals perceived and understood their past experiences, decisions and behaviour. The interview represents both a linguistic and a social event that elicits a construction of the past rooted in the perspective of the present, yet based on a historical and material reality.[70] The job for the oral historian is to identify how respondents' explanations for their past behaviour are shaped by their personal experiences of social and economic processes, but also the various cultural resources and shared stories they draw on to represent their experience in the interview.

The concept of 'composure' is essential to understanding how individuals narrate their past. It is now widely understood that people relate the stories they tell about themselves to popular and public narratives about particular historical events. In the words of Penny Summerfield, the oral historian must examine not only 'the voice that speaks for itself, but also the voices that speak to it'.[71] Summerfield illustrates how her fe-

male respondents drew on popular discourses surrounding the impact of the Second World War (heroic or stoic) on gender roles as they sought to 'compose' coherent memories of their personal experiences of war. Anna Green argued that Summerfield moved too far from interpreting the significance of individual memory by trying to situate women's testimony in pre-existing cultural frameworks. She concluded that oral historians needed to avoid 'culturally deterministic' understandings of individual memories and reassert the 'capacity of the conscious self to contest and critique cultural scripts and discourses'.[72]

Graham Smith advocates a balanced approach to understanding the process of remembering that champions neither the influence of cultural discourses nor the boundless agency of individuals and their memory. Instead, he suggests that oral historians must focus on how memory is the product of both cultural context and individual experience of social processes.[73] Celia Hughes' study of British activists on the radical left provides a good example of this approach. She reflects how her interviewees constructed their identities in relation to the national and international context of expanding social and political boundaries in the 1950s and 1960s, but also emphasises the local and familial context 'which fostered certain ways of seeing, feeling and being' for her interviewees.[74]

In the context of this book, it was not always easy to identify coherent public narratives available to my respondents to draw on when constructing accounts of their collective action. There was no obvious 'third man in the room', an expression coined by Rebecca Clifford that refers to the shared public memories and meta-narratives surrounding 1960s activism that influenced her interviewees' testimony about their experiences of 1968 in Italy.[75] Although each dispute received public attention at the time, and has since been recognised within histories of women, trade unions and feminism, my respondents were often unaware of and detached from these public narratives, with the exception of the Dagenham sewing machinists. Very often the women I interviewed seemed surprised that I had taken an interest in their past. Many expressed views such as 'I haven't thought much about it for a while' or 'I didn't think it was important until this came up'. The public recognition of the oral history interview itself made many women rethink the significance of the dispute within their own lives with comments like 'thinking about it now it was probably quite important' or 'looking back, you realise you have done something with your life'. This was similar to what Anitha *et al.* found when they interviewed women who participated in the Grunwick dispute.[76] They suggested that their interviews represented the first time their participants had reflected on the historical significance of their

agency because they were previously unaware or had not been part of the 'celebratory accounts of Grunwick as a turning point in British labour history subsequently constructed by the trade unions'.[77]

Summerfield's research on women's experiences of the Second World War also showed how composure was difficult for groups who experience 'cultural silences'.[78] She writes,

> Ordinary people who have memories that do not fit publicly available accounts have difficulty finding words and concepts with which to compose their memories whether in anecdotal snapshots or extended narratives. If individuals cannot draw on appropriate public accounts, they must seek to justify their deviation or fit their stories into alternative frameworks, or express memories in fragmentary accounts.[79]

The women interviewed in the following chapters faced some of these challenges as they rethought the significance of their action within the moment of the oral history interview. It was not that there was necessarily a 'cultural silence' surrounding women's workplace activism at the time of the interview – the disputes analysed here have been citied in academic studies, have been memorialised through public events and in the case of Dagenham have been woven into a feature film. Instead, my interviewees' ambivalent relationship with public narratives surrounding their activism recalled Lynn Abrams' reminder that individuals do not always situate their stories in a context that is familiar to historians; whilst I became interested in placing the women's stories in relation to historical narratives about women's employment and trade union trends, my interviewees were more likely to position their experience in relation to their personal, family or local history.[80] Selina Todd has recently emphasised the influence of personal knowledge, constructed from interaction with family, friends, the workplace and state officials, on self-understanding. Todd argues that material circumstances were as influential as public and expert knowledge in shaping individuals' understanding of their place in the world.[81] In what follows, I seek to identify both the wider public narratives and personal contexts that respondents drew on when constructing their testimony.

I aimed to gather life stories from my interviewees to gain an understanding of the personal meaning of each dispute and to examine how each respondent felt it had affected their sense of self. Following Charlotte Linde, people compose their sense of self through the stories they tell about their past: 'In order to exist in the social world with a comfortable sense of being a good, socially proper and stable person, an individual needs to have a coherent, acceptable and constantly revised life story.'[82]

The individual revises their life story to align their past experience with their sense of who they are in the present, and with how they would like to be perceived by other people. The life story can be distinguished from a 'life history' which represents a chronologically told narrative of an individual's past based on transitions between recognisable life stages and events such as childhood, education and marriage.[83] Focusing on a life story is different to a life history because it is less about the details of an individual's life course, and more about how an individual reinterprets their past. The process of retelling and reinterpreting one's life story offers a means of achieving a stable and composed sense of self in the present. Linde suggests that individuals develop coherence systems that emphasise the causality and continuity between their past experiences in a manner that makes sense to themselves, as well as their audience.[84] Lynn Abrams' research on the post-war female self illustrates how some of her respondents framed their life stories around a coherence system that drew on a feminist emancipation narrative that told a continuous story about equality of opportunity, choice and freedom to determine their own lives as individual women, without identifying themselves with feminist politics.[85]

I devised semi-structured schedules to guide life stories from respondents prior to every interview. The aim was to establish where they situated their activism within their wider experiences. Each respondent was asked about their childhood, family and early experiences of work and trade unionism; the details of their practical involvement in the dispute; and the extent to which they felt this had influenced their political attitudes. Whilst I aimed to gain life stories from each respondent, this was sometimes inhibited by two factors. First, all my interviewees knew that I had contacted them because I was researching workplace militancy. The majority of respondents appeared to have prepared themselves prior to the interview to talk about the details and their experience of each dispute specifically – a 'memory frame' that was narrower than the framework I wished to encourage. The implications of this were that respondents were sometimes unprepared, or reluctant to talk about their families or wider experiences of work in other jobs, which were not necessarily seen as relevant or part of the story that they were aiming to tell about themselves. Secondly, the women from Dagenham and some of the Brentford women were only willing to be interviewed together as a group. This possibly demonstrated a lack of confidence in their own stories and may also have prevented individuals from sharing certain information in front of each other, yet also presented its own opportunities.

It would be reasonable to assume that the fact I was a male researcher, born twenty-eight years after my youngest respondent and fifty-eight years after the oldest, will have influenced my interviewees' testimony. It is difficult to judge the precise effects of this without being able to compare my interviews with those of a female researcher. Hilary Young argues that her subject position as a young, educated and liberated woman affected her older male respondents' testimony in her research on Scottish masculinities.[86] She suggests that they perceived her 'as someone who approved of changed gender roles' and composed their testimony accordingly, by either giving examples from their past that conformed with contemporary discourses surrounding the 'new man' or asserting a macho image they felt had been undermined and challenged by women like herself. Young felt that a male interviewee may have elicited a different narrative from the same respondents.[87] In the context of this book, not one respondent commented directly on my gender. Although a female interviewer may have elicited different responses, the key point here is that I have adopted a feminist aim throughout my interviews to recognise and privilege women's own definitions, understandings and interpretations of their experiences.[88]

Although group interviews were not my initial methodological preference, they actually produced an interesting and invaluable opportunity to consider the interaction between individual and collective memory. Graham Smith explains the value of group interviews. First, he suggests they can confer identity and affirm individual competence. Group members cue each other's memories and construct a collective memory that goes beyond the individual recollection of one person.[89] Yet, it is not just the collective accumulation of details about past events that is valuable. Smith also emphasises the value of the interaction between the individual and group memory as individuals construct common identities through talking about lived experience.[90] He points out that remembering represents an everyday pastime that often involves the interchange and comparison of memories between individuals. For Smith, the group interview presents an opportunity to 'chart the terrains of transactive memory', recognise the memories individuals share and take for granted and investigate an individual's capacity to critically engage with inherited ideologies.[91] In the context of this book, three group interviews have been used to examine how participants made sense of their personal experience by collectively reconstructing and interpreting the meaning of each strike. This involved the creation of common accounts, as well as oppositional narratives that challenged pre-existing assumptions about the meaning of each dispute.

A focus on individual case studies – and the accounts of individual women – permits a greater appreciation of the impact of local context and everyday practices on women's subjective motivations to engage in collective action. I have focused on case studies and relied on women's testimony as a primary source to, following the words of Claire Langhamer, 'effect an analysis embedded in everyday practices'.[92] 'Recovering' these women's stories and presenting them together in a collective portrait enables one to identify some shared experiences and understandings, but also allows an appreciation of the differences among individual women's attitudes and the manner in which they made sense of the past.

## Notes

1 S. Todd, *The People: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class, 1910–2010* (London: John Murray, 2014), p. 284; For histories of industrial relations in this period, see J. McIlroy, N. Fishman and A. Campbell (eds), *British Trade Unions and Industrial Politics: The High Tide of Trade Unionism, 1945–1979* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1999); C. Wrigley, *British Trade Unions Since 1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 40–56; H. Fraser, *A History of British Trade Unionism, 1700–1998* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1999), pp. 225–229.

2 H. L. Smith, 'The Women's Movement, Politics and Citizenship, 1960s–2000' in I. Z. Bargielowska, *Women in Twentieth Century Britain* (Harlow: Pearson, 2001), p. 283; G. Holloway, *Women and Work in Britain Since 1840* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 208; D. Bouchier, *The Feminist Challenge: The Movement for Women's Liberation in Britain and the United States* (New York, NY: Schocken Books, 1984), pp. 56–57. A. Coote and B. Campbell, *Sweet Freedom: Struggle for Women's Liberation* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), pp. 9–10; S. Rowbotham, *The Past is Before Us* (London: Pandora Press, 1989), pp. 165–166; L. Segal, 'Jam Today: Feminist Impacts and Transformations in the 1970s' and P. Thane, 'Women and the 1970s: Towards Liberation?' in L. Black, H. Pemberton and P. Thane (eds), *Reassessing 1970s Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), p. 154 and p. 171; S. Boston, *Women Workers and the Trade Unions*, 2nd edn (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1989), p. 279.

3 For examples see Boston, *Women Workers*; S. Lewenhak, *Women and Trade Unions: An Outline History of Women in the British Trade Union Movement* (London: Benn, 1977); S. Todd, *Young Women, Work and Family, 1918–1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

4 See J. Lewis, *Women in Britain Since 1945* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 1992), p. 66. The shortcomings with women's employment statistics are well known. Figures for part-time work in Britain have only been available since 1961 and census enumerators often missed casual work, or work performed part-time by married women. Jane Lewis suggests that although the precise degree of growth in married women's employment is unclear, there was an observable shift in the manner with which married women became formally attached to the labour market after the Second World War.

5 Holloway, *Women and Work*, p. 180 and pp. 196–201.
6 A. Myrdal and V. Klein, *Women's Two Roles: Home and Work* (Abingdon: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956).
7 A. McIvor, *Working Lives: Work in Britain Since 1945* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 99.
8 L. Paterson, 'Part-time Work and Working Motherhood, c. 1951–1981', paper presented at the North American Conference of British Studies, November 2017.
9 D. Wilson-Smith, 'A New Look at the Affluent Worker: The Good Working Mother in Post-War Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, vol. 17, no. 2 (2006), pp. 206–229.
10 Thane, 'Women and the 1970s', p. 179 and P. Summerfield, 'Women in Britain Since 1945: Companionate Marriage and the Double Burden' in P. Catterall and J. Obelkevich (eds), *Understanding Post-War British Society* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 64.
11 R. Crompton, *Women and Work in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 63–65.
12 Figure from J. West, 'Introduction' in J. West (ed.), *Women, Work and the Labour Market* (Routledge: London, 1982), p. 1; Jane Lewis also argued that the average hourly pay of all women did not improve between 1975 and 1980 in Lewis, *Women in Britain*, pp. 80–81.
13 Lewis, *Women in Britain*, p. 81.
14 C. Langhamer, 'Feelings, Women and Work in the Long 1950s', *Women's History Review* (Published online 18 February 2016), http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2015.1123025; H. McCarthy, 'Women, Marriage and Paid Work in Post-War Britain', *Women's History Review* (published online 17 February 2016), http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2015.1123023.
15 McIvor, *Working Lives*.
16 E. Roberts, *Women and Families: An Oral History 1940–1970* (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 1995), Chapter 7 and p. 235.
17 A. Davis, *Modern Motherhood: Women and Family in England, 1945–2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012).
18 *Ibid.*, p. 271.
19 S. Todd, 'Class, Experience and Britain's Twentieth Century', *Social History*, vol. 56, no. 4 (2014), pp. 489–508, at p. 506.
20 *Ibid.*, p. 506.
21 Figures from Todd, *Young Women*, p. 171.
22 Lewenhak, *Women and Trade Unions*, pp. 177–270.
23 Boston, *Women Workers*, p. 11.
24 B. Taylor and A. Phillips, 'Sex and Skill: Notes towards a Feminist Economics', *Feminist Review*, no. 6 (1980), pp. 79–88.
25 C. Hunt, *The National Federation of Women Workers, 1906–1921* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 161.
26 S. Blackburn, 'Working-Class Attitudes to Social Reform: Black Country Chain Makers and Anti-Sweating Legislation, 1880–1930', *International Review of Social History*, vol. 33, no. 1 (1988), pp. 42–69; S. Rose, 'Gender Antagonism and Class

Conflict: Exclusionary Strategies of Male Trade Unionists in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *Social History*, vol. 13, no. 2 (1988), pp. 113–131; E. Gordon, *Women and the Labour Movement in Scotland, 1850–1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991); L. Lee Downs, *Manufacturing Inequality: Gender Division in the French and British Metalworking Industries, 1914–1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); M. Glucksmann, *Women Assemble: Women Workers and New Industries in Inter-war Britain* (London: Routledge, 1990); Todd, *Young Women*, Chapter 6; L. Raw, *Striking a Light: The Bryant and May Matchwomen and Their Place in History* (London: Continuum, 2011); U. de la Mare, 'Necessity and Rage: The Factory Women's Strikes in Bermondsey, 1911', *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 66, no. 1 (2008), pp. 62–80.

27 Figures from C. Wrigley, 'Women in the Labour Market and in the Unions' in John McIlroy, Nina Fishman and Alan Campbell (eds), *British Trade Unions and Industrial Politics: The High Tide of Trade Unionism, 1945–1979* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1999), Table 2.1, p. 62.

28 S. Cunnison and J. Stageman, *Feminizing the Unions* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1993).

29 For example Rowbotham, *The Past is Before Us*, p. 233.

30 A. Pollert, *Girls, Wives, Factory Lives* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1981), pp. 13–14.

31 J. McLellan, 'The "Problem of Women" in Post-War Europe', *English Historical Review*, vol. 130, no. 545 (July 2015), pp. 934–944.

32 Rowbotham, *The Past is Before Us*; Coote and Campbell, *Sweet Freedom*; Segal, 'Feminist Impacts and Transformations'.

33 J. Weeks, *The World We Have Won* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), pp. 18–19.

34 S. Bruley, 'Consciousness-Raising in Clapham; Women's Liberation as "Lived Experience" in South London in the 1970s', *Women's History Review*, vol. 22, no. 5 (2013), pp. 717–738, at p. 719.

35 S. Browne, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Scotland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014). For local impact of WLM also see B. Lockyer, 'An Irregular Period: Participation in the Bradford Women's Liberation Movement', *Women's History Review*, vol. 22, no. 4 (2013), pp. 643–657.

36 Rowbotham, *The Past is Before Us*, pp. 166–167.

37 Todd, *The People*, p. 307.

38 L. Abrams, 'Liberating the Female Self: Epiphanies, Conflict and Coherence in the Life Stories of Post-War British Women', *Social History*, vol. 39, no. 1 (2014), pp. 14–35.

39 L. Abrams, 'Mothers and Daughters: Negotiating the Discourse on the "Good Woman" in 1950s and 1960s Britain' in N. Christie and M. Gauvreau (eds), *The Sixties and Beyond: Dechristianisation in North America and Western Europe, 1945–2000* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), pp. 60–80.

40 For example, C. Beaumont, *Housewives and Citizens: Domesticity and the Women's Movement in England, 1928–1964* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013); A. Hughes, *Gender and Political Identities in Scotland, 1919–1939* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010).

41 Hughes, *Gender and Political Identities*, p. 8.

42 Black *et al.*, *Reassessing 1970s Britain*; E. Robinson, C. Schofield, F. Sutcliffe-Braithwaite and N. Thomlinson, 'Telling Stories about Post-War Britain: Popular Individualism and the "Crisis" of the 1970s', *Twentieth Century British History*, vol. 28, no. 2 (2017), pp. 268–304.
43 D. Edgerton, *The Rise and Fall of the British Nation: A Twentieth Century History* (St Ives: Allen Lane, 2018), Chapter 16.
44 Robinson *et al.*, 'Telling Stories', p. 282.
45 F. Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, *Class, Politics, and the Decline of Deference in England, 1968–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), p. 203.
46 J. Thomlinson, 'De-industrialisation not Decline: A New Meta-narrative for Post-War British History', *Twentieth Century British History*, vol. 27, no. 1 (2016), pp. 76–99.
47 Edgerton, *Rise and Fall*, Chapter 18.
48 J. Saunders, 'The Untraditional Worker: Class Re-Formation in Britain 1945–65', *Twentieth Century British History*, vol. 26, no. 2 (2015), pp. 225–248, at p. 228. For example K. Laybourn, *A History of British Trade Unionism, 1800–1990* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1992); A. Reid, *United We Stand: A History of British Trade Unionism* (London: Penguin, 2005); C. Howell, *Trade Unions and the State: The Construction of Industrial Relations Institutions in Britain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).
49 Saunders, 'The Untraditional Worker', p. 228.
50 R. Hyman, *Strikes* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1989), p. 37.
51 *Ibid*.
52 M. Roper, 'Slipping Out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History', *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 59, no. 1 (2005), pp. 57–72, at pp. 65–66.
53 J. Hinton, *Nine Wartime Lives: Mass Observation and the Making of the Modern Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 18.
54 Todd, *The People*, p. 275 and p. 284.
55 For example Boston, *Women Workers*; Coote and Campbell, *Sweet Freedom*, pp. 9–10; Thane, 'Women and the 1970s', p. 171.
56 For example Boston, *Women Workers* on Ford at pp. 278–280, on Trico at pp. 315–317 and Rowbotham, *The Past is Before Us* on Ford at pp. 165–166, on Trico at p. 227, on Fakenham at p. 200, p. 208, p. 233, and Imperial Typewriters at p. 319.
57 Hinton, *Nine Wartime Lives*.
58 L. Abrams, 'The Unseamed Picture: Conflicting Narratives of Women in the Modern European Past', *Gender and History*, vol. 20, no. 3 (2008), pp. 628–643, at p. 631.
59 For a discussion of revisiting interviews see J. Bornat, 'A Second Take: Revisiting Interviews with a Different Purpose', *Oral History*, vol. 31, no. 1 (2003), pp. 47–53.
60 The interviews were semi-structured, following P. Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives, Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 1–42.
61 M. Bracke, *Women and the Reinvention of the Political: Feminism in Italy, 1968–1983* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 23–24.
62 Browne, *Women's Liberation Movement in Scotland.*

63 C. Hughes, *Young Lives on the Left: Sixties Activism and the Liberation of the Self* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015).
64 J. Phillips, *Collieries, Communities and the Miners' Strike in Scotland, 1984–85* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), p. 4.
65 *Ibid*.
66 L. McDowell, S. Anitha and R. Pearson, 'Striking Narratives: Class, Gender and Ethnicity in the "Great Grunwick Strike," London, UK, 1976–1978', *Women's History Review*, vol. 23, no. 4 (2014), pp. 595–619.
67 S. Anitha, Ruth Pearson and L. McDowell, 'Striking Lives: Multiple Narratives of South Asian Women's Employment, Identity and Protest in the UK', *Ethnicities*, vol. 12, no. 6 (2012), pp. 654–775, at p. 763 and 767.
68 *Ibid*., pp. 769–770.
69 J. Sangster, 'Telling Our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History', *Women's History Review*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1994), pp. 5–28, at p. 6.
70 *Ibid*., p. 13.
71 Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives*, p. 15.
72 A. Green, 'Individual Remembering and "Collective Memory": Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates', *Oral History*, vol. 32, no. 2 (2004), pp. 34–44, at p. 42.
73 G. Smith, 'Beyond Individual/Collective Memory: Women's Transactive Memories of Food, Family and Conflict', *Oral History*, vol. 35, no. 2 (2007), pp. 77–90.
74 C. Hughes, 'Negotiating Ungovernable Spaces between the Personal and the Political: Oral History and the British Left in 1960s and 1970s', *Memory Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1 (2013), pp. 70–90, at p. 87.
75 R. Clifford, 'Emotion and Gender in Oral History: Narrating Italy's 1968', *Modern Italy*, vol. 17, no. 2 (2012), pp. 209–221.
76 McDowell *et al*., 'Striking Narratives', p. 769.
77 *Ibid*., p. 769.
78 This is also demonstrated by A. Thomson's well know example of Fred Farrell and the Anzac legend, A. Thomson, 'Putting Popular Memory Theory into Practice in Australia' in R. Perks and A. Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 300–311.
79 P. Summerfield, 'Culture and Composure: Creating Narratives of the Gendered Self in Oral History Interview', *Cultural and Social History*, vol. 1 (2004), pp. 65–93, at p. 93.
80 L. Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), p. 47.
81 Todd, 'Class, Experience and Britain's Twentieth Century', at p. 495.
82 C. Linde, *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 1–3.
83 Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, p. 40.
84 Linde, *Life Stories* in Abrams, 'Liberating the Female Self', at p. 21.
85 *Ibid*., pp. 29–34.
86 Hilary Young, 'Hard Man, New Man: Re/composing Masculinities in Glasgow, c. 1950–2000', *Oral History*, vol. 35, no. 1 (2007), pp. 78–79.
87 *Ibid*., pp. 77–78.

88 Kathryn Anderson and Dan Jack, 'Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analysis' in Rob Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *Oral History Reader* (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 155–170, at p. 170.
89 Smith, 'Beyond Individual/Collective Memory', at p. 80.
90 *Ibid*., p. 80.
91 *Ibid*., p. 88.
92 C. Langhamer, 'Love and Courtship in Mid-Twentieth-Century England', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 50 (2007), pp. 173–196, at p. 173.