Northumbria Research Link

Society and Space

Living with hate relationships: Familiar encounters, enduring racisms and geographies of entrapment

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Abstract

This paper utilises the concept of 'hate relationships' in conversation with the literature on geographies of encounter to explore experiences of racism for those entrapped by racist encounters with those who are familiar. In so doing, we attend to the uneven and harmful risks involved in some forms of everyday urban encounter. We draw upon case notes collated by a hate advocacy service in North East England, UK, to illustrate the cumulative damaging force of enduring hate relationships. By drawing parallels with work on domestic violence, we suggest hate relationships evident in our data exhibit distinct temporalities of routinisation, whereby harmful 'low level' violence, often under the radar of the criminal justice system, gains force through repeated neighbourhood-based encounters. In so doing, we also highlight both the situated and relational spatialities at work; localised encounters marked by familiarity, racialised territoriality and experiences of fear and immobility, but also relations of entrenched disadvantage and institutional failures that sustain harm. Concerted acts of resistance look to confront and/or escape these relationships, but as forms of resolution, where additional burdens are placed on victim/survivors, these are constrained by the same violent conditions through which such relationships are allowed to take shape.

Keywords

Hate relationships, familiarity, encounter, racisms, neighbourhood, entrapment

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Introduction

> *[She] can't get her mobility scooter out because it is kept in the shed in the back garden, and she is too scared to go past his gate to get to it. They wait until he is out before putting their bins out. They don't feel safe using their own garden. They don't have a TV and keep their voices down in the house for fear of setting him off.* (Layla[1]: Women, aged 30–40, 'Other' Ethnic Group[2])

Exploring the concept of encounter, Wilson (2017: 452) identifies a 'specific genre of contact' employed to 'document how people negotiate difference in their everyday lives' (p. 451). The productive capacity of encounters with people, places and the more-than-human world, speaks to the active and contingent construction of identity and belonging. Beyond such ontological assertions, encounters are seen as practices which hold the potential to disrupt dominant, seemingly fixed and racialised hierarchies of belonging through negotiation but also through the navigation of multicultural *and* multi-racist places. While acknowledging the value of 'contact zones' (Askins and Pain, 2011) as sites of potential conviviality (Gilroy, 2004), this paper addresses the relative lack of attention to harmful 'scratches, bumps, crackles and hisses' (Nayak, 2017: 291) that mark, and in some cases overwhelm, daily experiences for racialised communities.

Racist harassment is often considered in terms of stranger relations, because of the 'affective estrangement' involved (Mason, 2005a). However, significant harmful encounters *also* occur between those who are familiar or at least known; where routines of neighbourhood proximity have implications for how discrimination is experienced as part of a condition of violence that 'burn[s] in the background of daily life' (Laurie and Shaw, 2018: 8). As is illustrated in the opening excerpt which speaks to Layla's fear of the prospect of neighbourhood encounters (related to both everyday racist harassment and impairments resulting from injuries that formed the basis for her asylum application), we emphasise the re-production of stranger-ness through familiarity. In so doing, we further understanding of the unevenly distributed risks and burdens of *certain kinds* of encounters (or their prospect), for those who become entrapped in what we term 'hate relationships' (Donovan et al., 2019). We conceptualise hate relationships as undesirable relations re-produced through ongoing spatially concentrated 'low level' acts of violence including forms of non-verbal intimidation and harassment interspersed with threats, verbal abuse and occasionally physical violence, that leave individuals and families anxious, afraid and trapped. The concentrated, cumulative and overwhelming character of these encounters highlights both the situated and relational spatialities at work; localised encounters marked by familiarity, racialised territoriality, fear and immobility, but in some cases also entrenched disadvantage and institutional failures that sustain harm. We examine such experiences through a qualitative analysis of case notes from a hate crime advocacy project in North East of England, where 'race' was the primary, but not always sole basis for referral.

We begin by highlighting encounters as everyday practices which offer progressive potential for co-existence, but which are also riven with contextual power relations and uneven racialised burdens. We then turn to the concept of hate relationships which helps foreground harmful encounters between those who are in some way known. Following an outline of our methodology, we draw on advocacy case notes to outline how the temporal (enduring and routinised) and spatial (concentrated yet relationally produced) character of hate relationships result in the emotional and physical entrapment of victim/survivors. Given the limits of institutional recognition, we close by considering acts of resistance and specifically the significance of residential mobility as an escape from hate relationships. We suggest that

under prevailing conditions, burdens of resolution fall on victim/survivors rather than perpetrators, institutional processes or the structural forces which facilitate hate relationships.

Geographies of encounter

The literature on encounter has an established history within the social sciences (Allport, 1954; Goffman, 1961; Schutz, 1973) but has seen increased attention from human geographers as a response to universalising, psychological and apolitical orientations of such work. With attention to the micropolitics of everyday life, Darling and Wilson (2016: 2) argue that what binds this interest is attention to four key areas: '...the maintenance, production, and re-working of difference; that encounters fundamentally frame urban experiences and subjectivities; that encounters produce and encompass multiple temporal registers; and that encounters offer points of possible transformation and an opening to change'.

The first and last of these points speak to a tension we explore here. While the promise of 'possible transformation' is valued in different ways within this literature, it is also widely acknowledged that the negotiation of difference is complex, fraught and embedded in relations of power. Considering such a recognition, we argue for a heightened awareness of the uneven racialised risks and burdens involved in sustained encounters characterised by both familiarity *and* stranger-ness.

Politics of encounter: Conviviality and conflict

Gilroy identifies an existent 'convivial culture' in Britain which he contrasts with a melancholic nostalgia for lost empire (Gilroy, 2000, 2004). Chiming with Halls' 'multicultural drift' (Hall, 1999) and drawing upon his own experience growing up in London, he recalls 'very complicated forms of interdependence...where one set of habits flows into others and all of them are altered by that encounter' (Gilroy et al., 2019: 176). Conviviality, for Gilroy (2005: 58), emerges 'By making racial differences ordinary and banal, even boring' thus drawing on post-structuralist thought regarding the indeterminacy of meaning that can 'never be finally fixed' (Hall, 1997: 270), but also 'an alternative understanding of culture that focuses on what people do everyday rather than...their cultural origins' (Back and Sinha, 2016: 522). Such ideas are at the heart of writing on encounter that focuses on multicultural urban settings (Darling and Wilson, 2016).[3] The 'throwntogetherness' (Massey, 2005) of urban life highlights the ways in which diverse trajectories come together and are actively (re)constituted through an array of interactions (Laurier et al., 2002: 353):

> ...people in cities do talk to one another as customers and shopkeepers, passengers and cab-drivers, members of a bus queue, regulars at cafes and bars, tourists and locals, beggars and by-passers, Celtic fans, smokers looking for a light, and of course in this case as neighbours.

A core thread of a 'convivial turn' (Nayak, 2017; Neal, 2013; Wise and Noble, 2016) considers how pragmatic lived experiences challenge 'panicked' (Neal, 2013: 309) and divisive politics through everyday inter-dependencies, solidarities and negotiations of belonging (Amin, 2002; Clayton, 2009; Oosterlynck et al., 2017; Watson and Anamik, 2013; Wise and Velayutham, 2009). These relations are practiced through a variety of temporalities including brief moments that might initiate openness to difference (Laurier and Philo, 2006; Lobo, 2015) but also mundane routinised patterns of encounter as hinted at in Gilroy's account. Progressive encounters might be pro-actively facilitated (Amin, 2002; Valentine, 2008), or

generated through 'multiculturalism from below' (Wise, 2009); negotiations evident through spaces of education (Clayton, 2009), work (Rogaley, 2020), leisure (Neal et al., 2019), cafes (Jones et al., 2015) and places of residence (Cook et al., 2011). A focus on the space-times of encounter speaks to reflexive performances of identification/differentiation (Butcher, 2019) and the intensity of affective intimacies involved that have the potential to 'shift under-standings of Self and Other' (Askins, 2015: 474).

While this emphasis on the transformational promise of encounters, leads Nayak (2017: 291) to suggest that 'much of the writing...is largely celebratory', it would be misleading to argue that there is not a broad recognition of the limits and situatedness of encounter (Cook et al., 2011) and the force of harmful relations (Holloway, 2007; Nayak, 2010). The concept of conviviality for example, has been subject to clarification through rejection of a roman-ticised version of co-habitation, and a recognition of 'living together in unequal relations' (Heil, 2019: 8). Gilroy (2004: 40) himself asserts that recognising conviviality does not mean 'an absence of racism', illustrated in work focussing on the experiences of minoritised com-munities (Back and Sinha, 2016). Geographers, such as Valentine, have also sought to highlight those situations where '...proximity does not relate to meaningful contact'. (Valentine, 2008: 334). While Valentine's interpretation of 'meaningful contact' has been critiqued (Wilson, 2017), this work is part of a wider acknowledgment of the forces that shape the terrain through which encounters take place (Hou, 2016). As Valentine (2008: 333) states: 'The danger is that contemporary discourses about cosmopolitism and new urban citizenship, by celebrating the potential of everyday encounters to produce social trans-formations, potentially allow the knotty issue of inequality to slip out of the debate.'

The fragility of encounters 'as transformational' is also recognised. Racialised conflict can punctuate encounters that might at other moments offer hope of alternative ways of living (Harris, 2014). In her commentary, Wilson (2017: 457) recognises the simultaneous presence of 'risk, coercion and inequality' *as well as* 'co-constitution, improvisation and interaction'. However, her central contention is that encounters are unpredictable; shot through with chance, risk, shock, and rupture, because they are ultimately 'events of rela-tion' (Wilson, 2017: 464). Rather than acting as a brake on what Valentine (2008) refers to as 'meaningful' encounters, riskiness is seen as the linchpin of potentiality. This speaks to the spontaneity of urban encounters that constitute events sometimes read in playful terms (Stevens, 2007). Indeed, Wilson (2017: 457) suggests that attempts to design out risk 'effec-tively destroy the very grounds for encounter in the first place'. We argue that more serious attention to the violent inequalities of risk is required, particularly where damaging encoun-ters come to dominate lives.

Inequalities of risk and burden

We stress here that encounters are experienced through differential socially produced posi-tionalities, with very diverse stakes involved. As Nayak (2017) shows, supportive relation-ships with local allies, can act as a 'salve' for young people experiencing racism. Yet, even apparently progressive relationships do not take place on a level playing field of risk and reward. As Bonilla-Silva (2006) argues, for many white people racism is seen as a matter of prejudiced opinion, something to be overcome through knowledge and communication. For those of colour, racism is more likely to be viewed as embedded, institutional and systematic – much harder to pin down and shift. hooks (1992: 23) uses the example of overhearing young white heterosexual men boasting of prospective sexual and racial 'targets' on a University campus, through which the Other embodies desire as transgression from the safety of the norm; a rite of passage, but also a means of dominance. As she notes, such

encounters reveal and reinforce relations of power. 'To make one's self vulnerable to the seduction of difference, to seek an encounter with the Other, does not require that one relinquish forever ones' mainstream positionality'.

In other fields, we also see how burdens of negotiation and adaptation are unequally weighted. McGhee (2003) and Back et al., (2002) in their analysis of UK 'community cohesion' policy, problematise the whiteness of the 'common ground' to which racialised and migrant communities are expected to assimilate. In work by Moffette and Ridgley (2018) on 'Sanctuary Cities' in Canada, notions of inclusive hospitality reproduce paternalistic tolerance of the guest by the host. And for Butcher (2019), exploring adaptations made by young people in gentrifying Hackney, London, UK, there are classed and raced expectations about who is required to change to fit the 'new' neighbourhood. Questions of power take on further significance when considering everyday racist harassment. In recent research on Islamophobic incidents in North East England (Hopkins et al., 2020), for example, one female participant spoke of conducting reflexive 'risk assessments' before choosing whether to enter certain spaces. Those who are racialised are far from passive passengers, but encounters with people and places are bound up with uneven risks and burdens.

Awareness of these differential positionalities shifts attention from the examination of encounters as a means to a 'more general positive respect . . . for Others' (Valentine, 2008: 325) (which diverts attention to the attitudes and practices of majoritised groups) towards an exploration of how the unequal terrain of everyday life is navigated by those living 'in the midst of racism's ruins' (Back and Sinha, 2016). Back and Sinha's (2016) work with young adult migrants in London shows how 'convivial worlds' are made using 'multicultural tools' in contexts of racism, immigration surveillance and hostile policing. In a similar sense, Peterson (2020) highlights how in Glasgow, ethnic and cultural minorities carve out alternative spaces of belonging through micro connections, amidst micro aggressions. Conviviality is both a means and product of those experiences but not necessarily an intended goal. We look to build on these contributions by suggesting that for those in our study, the omnipresence of racist harassment becomes overwhelming, or as Nayak (2010: 2374) in his study of 'race encounters' in the English suburbs argues: 'It is through these prosaic encounters that 'white lines' of power are enacted, embodied, and condensed, giving rise to an affective geography that tenuously secures, and thickens, the accumulation of race difference'.

Such experiences shift the terrain upon which relations are built and lives lived, where the overwhelming desire is not necessarily 'positive inter-ethnic relations', but freedom from hate. In Nayak's (2017) more recent work with young Bangladeshi women in Sunderland, attention is drawn to how 'race encounters' animate racial difference with alarming frequency in ways which scar lives. Through our own research in this same region, we show how hate relationships materialise through the routine spaces of the home and neighbourhood.

Hate relationships: Stranger-ness through familiarity

Research on racist violence in the UK (Hopkins et al., 2020) and Sweden (Listerborn, 2015) illustrates the significance of public spaces where strangers seize impromptu opportunities to target those who are unknown, yet simultaneously 'somebody that we recognise as a stranger' (Ahmed, 2000: 49). However, embodied differences deemed threatening, unwelcome, and 'out of place', are also formulated through encounters of routinised proximity. As UK government reports (Hambly et al., 2018) suggest, the majority of racist hate crimes occur outside or near to victims/survivors' homes and racialised conflict between neighbours is commonplace (Walters et al., 2016).

Feminist geographers have extensively examined how gendered violence operates through what are considered 'private' home spaces (Little, 2020; Pain, 2014). These spaces of 'intimate geopolitics' (Pain and Staeheli, 2014) characterised by violence which may be hidden, controlling and embodied (Little, 2020), are connected to wider forces and gendered inequalities. This is an understanding of violence as a 'multi-faceted and multi-sited force – interpersonal and institutional, social, economic and political, physical, sexual, emotional and psychological' (Pain and Staeheli, 2014: 344). While proximity alone is no reliable way of assessing the character of relations, the propinquity of familiar yet hostile relationships conditions experiences, particularly in terms of coercive and controlling behaviour. While we do not make a direct equivalence with experiences of domestic violence, we draw parallels in exploring incidents of racism within some neighbourhood contexts. In so doing, we foreground experiences of those that are familiar because of their strangerness (Ahmed, 2000), but also estranged (Mason, 2005a) through their very familiarity.

A productive discussion of harmful encounters comes through a dialogue with the concept of 'hate relationships' that we outline in detail elsewhere (Donovan et al., 2019). Hate relationships are not just singular moments, nor are they solely inter-personal events. They accrue power through repetition at the intimate scales of the home and neighbourhood, but are also given weight through broader affective economies of hate (Ahmed, 2001) and relational 'violent conditions' (Laurie and Shaw, 2018). This brings our attention not just to moments of encounter but those forces which sustain such relationships and entrap victim/survivors. Ongoing forms of violence perpetrated by 'known' consistent individuals reinforce hierarchies through 'low level' acts, that feed off and contribute to established inequalities. These acts often fall under the threshold of criminality and in some cases, identification as violent or harmful. By drawing parallels with the domestic violence literature around coercive and controlling behaviour (Donovan and Hester, 2014), we emphasise temporal and spatial dimensions that result in cumulative psycho-social toll, immobility and entrapment.

The study and methodology

This paper is based upon research conducted with an advocacy organisation in North East England. Amongst other services, the organisation receives funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria to provide a Hate Crime Advocacy Service. The service helps those at risk of, or affected by hate crime to speak up, secure their rights and navigate appropriate services or support. The service covers all protected characteristics (under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and Criminal Justice Act 2003) of 'race', religion, disability, transgender identity and sexual orientation. Individuals can self-refer or may be referred by those concerned about their welfare. The overarching aim of our study was to assess the extent to which cases reported might be defined as 'hate relationships' (Donovan et al., 2021).

We accessed advocates' case notes which document all communication with clients from the period 1 June 2017 to 31 March 2019. One hundred and eight-two cases were referred with 181 accepted.[4] The client profile was evenly balanced in terms of gender, with the majority between the ages of 26 and 50 (72.1%). In terms of ethnicity, although a broad spectrum of ethnic groups was represented, the largest groups identified (making up 74% of clients referred) were White British[5] (25.3%), Black/Black British – African (18.5%), Other Ethnic Group (15.8%) and 'Unknown' (14.4%).

The accounts recorded in the case notes varied between cases and advocates with some including comprehensive detail of key episodes, meetings and interventions. These notes

were interpretations of events by advocates, but in some cases included direct quotes from clients. Case notes were filtered to identify those exhibiting characteristics of 'hate relationships'. This judgement was based on whether there had been repetitive incidents generated by the same perpetrator(s) and suggestive elements, in the description of impacts on clients, of coercive control. This process generated 50 relevant cases (27.6% of overall accepted cases), which were anonymised for thematic analysis utilising NVivo qualitative data analysis software. Out of these 50, some notes did not have overt evidence regarding the identifiable elements of hate relationships, yet evidence was identifiable in clients' eagerness to achieve resolutions and their desire to be rehoused, to have security equipment installed or to get the police involved.

While it is recognised (as is evident in Layla's account) that experiences of hate are intersectional (Macdonald et al., 2021), the focus of this paper is on cases where the primary basis of the incident has been recorded as 'race' and/or religion, which makes up the majority of the filtered incidents in this period (68%, n = 34).[6] In terms of perpetrators of 'race' based incidents, where this was clear from the notes, 18 were 'neighbours' and 11 'local'. Clients' gender was evenly balanced between males and females.[7] Thirty-one (91.2%) were identified as non-White British'.[8] Eleven (32.4%) were identified as Muslim, seven (20.6%) Christian, seven (20.6%) as Other religion, three (8.8%) as no religion and 10 (29.4%) as religion unknown. Cases were concentrated in some of the most deprived areas of Newcastle-upon-Tyne – consistent with previous research conducted on third-party hate reporting in the region (Clayton et al., 2016). However, there were also cases in other parts of the region, including rural Northumberland and more affluent urban areas.

Our methodology contrasts with 'livelier' ethnographic accounts employed in the encounter literature (Askins, 2015, Nayak, 2010, 2017; Wise and Velayutham, 2009). Multiple layers of interpretation (referral, advocacy and analysis) entail a degree of distance from lived experiences. The focus of advocacy is also on supporting clients through harmful episodes – not always inclusive of wider (potentially non-violent) experiences. However, the value of our approach lies in the power of mediated accounts that have been silenced and ignored. Our research shows how advocacy often provides the first opportunity to be properly listened to and taken seriously, despite in some cases, years of trying to bring these harms to light (Donovan et al., 2021). With the use of these notes also comes a responsibility to respect the confidentiality of clients. In the analysis that follows, we have therefore sought a balance between humanising detail whilst ensuring the anonymity of those subjected to hate relationships.

The space-times of hate relationships

For cases filtered as 'hate relationships', there were mutually constitutive temporal and spatial characteristics identified. The encounters which re-produce hate relationships are enduring and routinised, spatially concentrated yet also relationally produced. We explore these dimensions to illustrate the damage of hate relationships in which clients became entrapped.

Enduring and routinised encounters

Established literature on urban multiculture explores a spectrum of temporalities from the fleeting (Wilson, 2011) to 'sustained encounters' that may engender forms of empathy (Matejskova and Leitner, 2011). In our work, we focus on the impact of harmful encounters where they are constitutive of normalised hate relationships, which do not lead to

'apathy and indifference' (Laurie and Shaw, 2018: 14). Hate relationships take the form of multiple incidents that might be considered 'low level' harassment, committed consistently by the same perpetrators, in these cases, neighbours or 'locals' (Donovan et al., 2019). These acts often do not meet the threshold of a hate crime, and in some cases such as Mustafa's, it appears as though acts are committed with an awareness that actions go under the radar.

> . . .*he has been having constant problems with the next-door neighbour [who] has been shouting, using insulting words, banging on the door or the wall, putting his bin in their front garden, and blocking the shared access path to the back garden so they can't get their bin in or out. He often bangs for about 5 seconds, which is not long enough for client to record or report to the council.* (Mustafa: Man, aged 40-50, 'Other' ethnic group)

The range of acts included the throwing of objects such as stones, mail being stolen, the placing of bins and other objects in the way of houses, leaving dog faeces in front of properties, blocking parking space and flat access areas, the damaging of property and cars, nonverbal intimidation and the use of noise to disturb and upset clients, particularly late at night and early in the morning. Such actions were sometimes interspersed with more explicit verbal abuse and threats as Imani's case makes clear:

> . . .*adamant that those are the same youths who were verbally abusive towards her last year, when they were heard shouting towards her: "we will drag you and your black bastard (meaning 3-year-old son) on the street and beat you", said that the verbal abuse occurred when client challenged their behaviour (youths were seen throwing stones on the estate from the roof).* (Imani: Woman, aged 30-40, Black/Black British-African)

Taken as individual acts, some encounters might not be considered as violent or discriminatory. Taken together through repetition and in relation to more explicitly racist language and occasional physical violence, hate relationships, driven by an orientating force of whiteness (Ahmed, 2007), become apparent. The length of time over which such encounters are experienced is variable, but in some cases, as we see below for Fatima, this spans decades *and* was repeated with regularity. Since 2010, she has reported 36 racist incidents to Northumbria Police. While specific perpetrators over this longer timescale may have varied, a relationship was established between Fatima and those identified here as 'lads'. This account suggests a sense of being 'stuck' (Straughan et al., 2020) over an extended period in conditions over which Fatima had limited room for manoeuvre, apart from erecting a fence to prevent incursions.

> *Client has experienced racist abuse in [city] for around 30 years but has gotten worse since her husband died. She says that when she goes out lads shout abuse at her, including threats to cut her up in pieces and threats to rape her - this would happen twice a day sometimes . . . They were coming into her backyard with their bikes, saying 'we're going to get you', 'there's the n*****' and 'why don't you open a corner shop'. She has had [a] tall fence put up since then.* (Fatima: Woman, aged 60–70, 'Other' ethnic group)

Reasons for referral in the case notes of all those experiencing 'hate relationships' are defined by the 'constant' and/or 'ongoing' nature of the harassment. The enduring nature

of encounters combine with routinisation, to form what is referred to in the case of Mustafa and his sister as a 'steady stream of harassment'.

> . . . these incidents form a steady stream of harassment and bullying that are having an increasingly severe impact on the client's and his sister's lives. To the extent that they genuinely fear that they may be physically attacked and even killed. It is this overall pattern of harassment that is the issue.
> (Mustafa: Man, aged 40–50, 'Other' ethnic group)

These normalised (yet not accepted) relationships have a cumulative impact. The ongoing character of violence results in a psycho-social toll, that over time wears victim/survivors down, with significant implications for mental and physical health (Macdonald et al., 2021). In the case of Fatima above, it was recorded that she felt 'degraded, exhausted and very hurt' and would sometimes stay in bed for a week because she 'can't face getting up'. There are several other instances where the mental health of clients is explicitly raised and eight participants (out of 50 filtered cases) reported changes in their physical health such as heart attacks and strokes due to them being subjected to attack, ridicule, but also as we discuss further below; confinement and inadequate support.

Despite evidence of constancy, there can also be irregular rhythms. As is clear above, the death of Fatima's husband had significant influence on the regularity and severity of this abuse. Incidents may flare up and die down again, due to various interventions, changes in circumstances for either/or victim/survivors and/or perpetrators and even in some cases, changes of season. Yet, when they do begin, they are often repeated with regularity. This can be seen in the case of Aras (Man, aged 30–40, 'Other' ethnic group), where a temporary resolution was achieved through forms of negotiation between perpetrators and victims and apologies were made, but for un-documented reasons, incidents revived: 'They have said sorry, but then they start up again'. In addition, as Laurie and Shaw (2018: 13) suggest, 'violence refuses to be bounded by a temporal event and can haunt the future potentials of subjects'. As seen for Layla at the outset of the paper, even in the absence of violence, the prospect of further incidents hangs heavy, and fear has a disabling effect.

Spaces of familiarity and entrapment

As we write elsewhere, 'hate relationships might not only exist between individuals but with locations associated with individuals' (Donovan et al., 2019: 192). We draw attention here to the home and neighbourhood, which become sites of insecurity, immobility and confinement. As Mason (2005b) notes, for those incidents which constitute harassment though repeated patterns of targeting, 'residential localisation' becomes even more important. In our data, perpetrators were mainly next-door neighbours, family and friends of those neighbours, those living in the same streets or adjacent roads, or those from the local area who become recognisable (Mason, 2005b) as part of neighbourhood-based routines.

Unlike some writing on conviviality and neighbourliness (Gilroy, 2005; Heil, 2014), the cases referred to here are not always situated within what might be described as ethnically diverse neighbourhoods. Practices of community-based security and support (Phillips et al., 2007) seem absent in many cases and the sense of isolation from proximate support networks is implicit. While some clients mention positive relations with other neighbours, others experience their localities as what Spicer (2008) calls 'excluding neighbourhoods'; limiting the ability to develop affective ties which as Méndez and Otero (2018) suggest might insulate people from neighbourhood conflict. This has implications for the situational

vulnerabilities we discuss in the sense that unwanted attention is directed towards clients who become hyper visible in neighbourhoods characterised by whiteness, deprivation and socio-economic marginalisation (Clayton, 2008). The consequence of this is racialised territoriality at both local (see Saabir's account) and national (see Rose's account) scales:

> On the 8th November he was having some work done to the house when the kids threw stones over the wall, cracking a window. Client took photos and reported this to the police. He also went to speak to one of the kid's parents. The kid said: 'this is Leighton Estate[9]; you shouldn't be here'. (Saabir: Man, aged 40–50, Asian British-Indian)

> She went outdoor and start recording and taking pictures of them. They called her a 'fucking bitch' and told her 'to go back to your fucking country' (Rose: Woman, aged 30–40, Black/Black British-African)

Many of the incidents documented are proximate to the victim's home, or on occasions the home becomes the target. This reduces the ability to avoid, escape, or rework the basis of these relationships. Encounters with those who are familiar *but also* violent, compromises the safety and security that homes should, but often do not, provide (Tyner, 2016). The position of the home within the neighbourhood is also significant. While the home may provide some respite from exposure to harmful encounters beyond its walls, violence cannot be forgotten or entirely escaped. As referenced above in the case of Layla, if the situation remains unresolved, clients continue to be haunted. This fear also means that behaviour is self-regulated. In the following example, Faizan, whose family were seeking asylum in the UK and were already struggling with PTSD, became hyper vigilant of their behaviours (such as his young children crying) to avoid 'igniting the neighbours' who had recently moved in below them. The quality of the built environment is significant here. The type (often flats and terraced housing) of housing means neighbours often live cheek by jowl, where walls, ceilings and floors are thin and where the lives are not as 'private' as they would be in more affluent housing contexts (Koch, 2018).

> … the new neighbours from downstairs- 4 occasions of banging on the door, shouting abuse ('P***' and other words which he couldn't catch), complaining about the noise. Family has been keeping the noise to a minimum and 'feel like thieves in their own home', creeping around to avoid igniting the neighbours. (Faizan: Man, aged 40–50, Asian/Asian British-Pakistani)

In other cases, racism is perpetuated within the home. There are examples (as seen for Fatima above) of perpetrators physically entering the home-space of the backyard, but hate relationships can also develop through intimate familial relations. While Valentine et al. (2015) highlight that in some families defined by racial diversity, there is a need (based on love and obligation) to find a 'moral proximity', it is also true that difference can be treated as a threat, disrupting 'idealised imaginings of how family 'ought to be'' (p. 292). In our study, there is evidence of racism directed at fellow family members. Living with difference is literally played out in ways that expose the situational vulnerabilities of clients through intersecting racialised and gendered violence (Hopkins, 2019). For example, Nala, continued to share a house with an ex-partner who was physically abusive towards her and her children as well as overtly racist towards them and others. This stark hate relationship appears akin to post-separation abuse that can result from a domestically violent and abusive relationship.

> *Ex-partner's racist attitudes and behaviour became worse and worse throughout the last two years. This included things like humiliating black waiting staff at Nando's, talking about 'immigrants' and 'wanting his country back', praising Trump and his racist attitudes, humiliating her older son for his choice of (black) music and dance styles.* (Nala: Woman, aged 40–50, Black/Black British-African)

There is also a dangerous ambiguity at work in some experiences of home life and the 'outside world'. For those subjected to hostility, there is a fear of leaving the home in anticipation of confrontations (see Fatima's account above and below). In other examples (see Ali below), the reverse was the case – where he would avoid returning home. In both cases, the home space become a source of fear. Such risks were actively navigated (Hall and Bates, 2019), but in so doing, a further layer of unfreedom materialises; a sense of carcerality (Moran et al., 2018).

> *Client says that she feels like a prisoner in her home . . . If she goes out she has to check that there's no-one around, and she ends up not going out at all.* (Fatima: Woman, aged 60-70, 'Other' ethnic group)

> *'I'm trying to keep myself at work rather than staying at home'* (Ali: Man, aged 40–50, unknown ethnic group)

Relations of entrapment

Drawing attention to the entrapments that hate relationships produce, requires consideration of the forces that give weight and longevity to these experiences. This moves our attention away from direct forms of intentional violence perpetrated by identifiable offenders, to think through how hate relationships are also constituted in relation to 'intimate violence [that] may be tacitly or explicitly sanctioned by states and institutions' (Pain and Staeheli, 2014: 344). The case notes do not always speak to direct forms of institutional violence – but in all cases constitute part of a landscape and atmosphere of harm. The cumulative toll on health and wellbeing is exacerbated by the (in)actions of key local institutions which includes not taking clients claims seriously, being dismissive and failing to adequately record incidents; 'where doing nothing is a cause of harm' (Laurie and Shaw, 2018: 9). For Jo and her family, the fact the Police have failed to take seriously their experiences has stretched this hate relationship out for years. *'The effects of all this over the past 4 years have been immense. Husband has faced huge amounts of stress and humiliation in visiting court, solicitors, police stations etc. 'Son's mental health and wellbeing have been hugely affected.'* (Jo: Female, aged 40-50, White British, husband also identifies White British but racially targeted due to 'darker tone').

Some clients are more explicitly forced into and trapped within hate relationships because of limits on freedom of movement. Those subject to the asylum system, for example, have no control over where they live and the nature of their accommodation (Kissoon, 2010). Forced dispersal across the country into often inadequate accommodation can occur at short notice. In one such case, the family had been moved from a city in the English Midlands (where they were relatively happy) to a city in North East England. For those seeking asylum, housing is privatised (Darling, 2016) and there has been much controversy over this provision in the region amidst an explicitly 'hostile environment' policy context (Cassidy, 2020). Upon their relocation they have experienced ' . . . problems everyday going to school or

shopping, with neighbours swearing at them and being racially abusive'. After several months, the family were re-housed again (in another northern English city) despite their appeals.

Most, although not all, cases examined took place in deprived neighbourhoods and social housing (21 out of 34 cases). For these residents, our data suggests Housing Associations (HAs) play a crucial role in re-producing both the likelihood of, and harm caused by, hate relationships. As a key part of the UK social housing landscape, HAs are not-for-profit organisations that own, let and manage rented housing, often to those on low incomes. They have a responsibility to maintain properties and ensure the safety of homes that are fit for habitation. One the main obstacles in allowing HAs to adequately respond to incidents is that they do not have the authority to intervene, yet as mentioned above, the Police are often unwilling to recognise the situation as serious enough to pursue. There is evidence to suggest that in some situations HAs have not taken seriously justified requests of tenants which would help them to better deal with harassment. For example, requests for a walled garden to prevent unwanted incursions were turned down and in another case the client's request for help paying for insulation to be fitted in alcoves to prevent noise-based harassment was unsuccessful.

In other cases, there is evidence that local authority Anti-Social Behaviour teams and the Police, have colluded with perpetrating neighbours, for example, to minimise the chances that surveillance technology would pick up the level of disturbance being experienced. There is an emphasis here on the pacification of offenders, which speaks to institutional indifference and arguably institutional racism. Again, we can see parallels with the domestic violence literature which emphasises the collusion with and condonement of men's violence by the criminal justice system (Dobash and Dobash, 1979). The result for those who are victimised is a further sense of entrapment as routes to recognition and support are narrowed. This excerpt from an email sent by Raha whose family had experienced multiple incidents, including incursions onto her property, provides evidence of feelings of frustration and distrust. She had been logging incidents with the Neighbourhood Housing Team, but reached a point where she has stopped reporting due to a lack of action.

> From being a victim of hate on several occasions and the police refusing to put CCTV cameras up and now gaining access to my property back garden without my consent has added fear stress and invaded my privacy. I have reported this once again to the council who have said they can't do anything about it as it is a private landlord and to contact the police ... I am feeling very vulnerable at this moment of time and embarrassed I am trapped in my own home and the council and the police are doing nothing. (Raha: Woman, aged 30–40, Asian/Asian British-Bangladeshi)

Clients become entrapped in enduring and spatially concentrated relationships that produce vulnerabilities, not due to their own identities, nor through problems innate to specific neighbourhoods, but through the relations that sustain fertile ground for hate relationships to take hold. While not all institutional responses were perceived as negative, the sense of not being believed and not possessing adequate evidence for a concerted response that would alter the situation, was clear.

Resistance, negotiation and escape

Clients were not entirely reliant on local institutions in their responses. As Browne et al. (2011) illustrate in relation to LGBT safety, community-led responses emerge through recognition of inadequate formal responses. Willingness to become involved in the advocacy

process already signifies a challenge to the direction of stigmatisation (Donovan et al., 2019). Despite the habitual and normalised status of hate relationships, and the manner in which structural violence might become taken for granted (Laurie and Shaw, 2018), experiences of hate are not deemed acceptable by victim/survivors.

In addition to the self-regulation noted above in Faizan's case, there is evidence of clients attempting to negotiate with perpetrators. We have noted that everyday negotiations of difference are central to the encounter literature. However, there is a dearth of work considering the type of negotiations seen in our case notes, pro-actively initiated by the victim/survivor with the aim of de-escalating situations and altering the terms of the relationship. The case notes speak to some courageous efforts to confront perpetrators, their families and acquaintances, despite the clear risks involved. For example, we saw in the case of Saabir, that the client took photos of a cracked window, reported the incident to the police and spoke to the parents of the perpetrators. In some cases, such as for Gloria, this form of victim-led negotiation yielded relative success in allowing for a less tense co-existence when confronting parents of a young neighbour consistently targeting them and their property (including their car).

> *They have spoken to his mother, who did offer to pay for the damage, but told her they simply wanted his behaviour to stop. Since then things have been quieter, and they have been experimenting with parking closer to the house. However, they are deeply affected by this.* (Gloria: Female, aged 50–60, Black/Black British-African)

However, such action rarely brought about longer term resolutions, keeping the attention at bay before harassment re-commenced. Nor did it prevent the longer term damage of being 'deeply affected'. A further way in which clients look to respond is through making adjustments to their home by installing protective and surveillance equipment, which both allow for a record of (visible) acts and as a preventive device to discourage harassment. Some take these actions on the advice of the Police, HA or local authority, while others act independently. This is a demonstration of pro-active resistance, but also evidence of the additional burdens placed on victim/survivors to resolve these situations.

In extending this point, we finally turn to the most evident manoeuvre out of/away from hate relationships. Many of the cases analysed do not end in a clear resolution, and records often cease when contact is lost or when the client indicates they no longer require such services. However, one of the main ways in which resolutions do seem to occur is through physical movement. Where the client is living in privately owned or rented properties, this may take place without the knowledge of the advocacy service and is only discovered through unanswered calls, letters or emails. However, for those in social housing, these processes are more clearly documented.

For some clients, such as Mustafa and his sister, experiences of the region are alienating and exclusionary, including, but extending beyond experiences in and around the home. This necessitated a movement away, in a similar way that Vickers et al., (2019) discuss moving away as a possible route to improving employment prospects for new migrants in the region. '*Client is beginning to think about moving South as he feels that the people and police in [city] are racist in general – he has been spat at in the shops and feels very unwelcome at the doctors etc.*' (Mustafa: Man, aged 40–50, 'Other' ethnic group).

For others, it is specific neighbourhoods and housing arrangements they wish to move away from. For Nyasha, with diminishing prospects of things improving and with the help of a supportive housing officer, movement to an alternative home in the same city is seen as effective in bringing about a more hopeful future for her and her son.

The lady from [HA] came out to see her the day before and was very supportive; she wishes she'd known about their Victim Support service sooner. The lady has put her down as a priority to move home, which the client has decided she would like to do. She said she feels that she has a future now. (Nyasha: Female, aged 40-50, 'Other' ethnic group)

As noted in relation to the experiences of those seeking asylum, some clients have no influence over such re-location. Others can exercise a degree of choice but may be hampered by the lack of recognition that characterises hate relationships. Such an absence of evidence restricts escalation and prioritisation by local authorities and HAs. Others may need to balance additional considerations and commitments. Some clients may have established support networks, employment and/or school places locally. Nyasha, for example, despite eventually wishing to move, originally expressed reluctance due to the potential disruption caused and a reticence to upend lives because of the actions of others. '*Advocate explains that the client doesn't want to move, because "her house is there, and it is close to her son's school, where she also works"'*.

In some cases, the difficulties involved in moving may result in financial penalties, practical difficulties, unwanted effort and additional investments (e.g. specially adapted homes, decorated homes). For others, such as Rose, moving home offered little hope that scenarios would improve due to the limited options within both private rental sector and the social housing system where residents would be placed in poor housing or neighbourhoods deemed 'unsafe':

She was offered a house by [HA], but she doesn't want to move because it has one bedroom less that the current home and she doesn't want to get rid of furniture it has cost her to buy or to start everything (in terms of decorating) from scratch...Police have advised her that the area she has been offered is unsafe and not a good area. She would rather not move at all. (Rose: Woman, aged 30–40, Black/Black British-African)

Escape through mobility highlights that harmful encounters are experienced as enduring situated relationships concentrated in and around the home. It also speaks to additional burdens placed on those already subjected to racism: a requirement to adapt to their own marginalisation by moving away, rather than a concerted systemic effort to deal the practices that sustain such relationships.

Conclusions

Much of the literature dealing with urban encounters focuses on how risky and fraught interactions speak to the contingency of identity and belonging, with a central concern for progressive potentialities. While we value the counter-politics of thinking through identities that are subject to re-working, our research highlights that the terms, risks and burdens of different forms of encounter require further consideration. We highlight the unevenly distributed risks that the 'throwntogetherness' (Massey, 2005) of specific urban places might present, where power geometries condition the manner of negotiations. We draw attention to how patterns of encounters form in neighbourhoods through routines of familiarisation, in violent, exclusionary and racialised forms. We have illustrated this through cases recorded by a hate crime advocacy organisation in North East England to show that for a significant number of clients, enduring and often what is seen as 'low level' violence accrues in and around the home in the form of 'hate relationships'.

Through 'hate relationships', we address the call from Laurie and Shaw (2018: 10) to 'better comprehend violence in its multiple forms'. We draw upon the domestic violence literature to suggest there are parallels with patterns of coercion and control, which are often unidentified, mis-identified or condoned by those in positions of authority. Akin to experiences of domestic violence, the temporal and spatial dimensions of such relationships include a drawn-out psycho-social toll, feelings of insecurity and experiences of entrapment. We recognise our study brings attention to specific manifestations of racism, and that discrimination is not solely experienced through such relationships. We also acknowledge the experiences discussed in this paper are not representative of all racialised lives in the region and do not capture the full and complex experience of those working with the advocacy organisation. At the same time, given these are often hidden experiences which intensify marginalisation in often unbearable ways, there is a vital specificity to accounts which we can reasonably assume speak to a wider phenomenon.

Employing the language of a relationship not only allows us to recognise the temporal nature of these forms of racist violence but also the socio-spatial connections between individual actions, places and wider relations that frame the possibility of harmful encounters. As such, there is a need to recognise the power of both situated moments of encounter as violent everyday realities and the relational connections *seemingly* beyond those moments. Despite evidence of active and courageous forms of negotiation, the forces at work through everyday encounters condition resistant acts. We draw attention to embedded inequalities of 'race' and class, but also institutional practices that facilitate entrapment. We explore situations in which victim/survivors are concentrated in often marginalised neighbourhoods and residualised housing tenures where tensions are heightened, but where institutional responses are too often characterised by lack of proof, disbelief and forms of collusion. This seems particularly important when considering the dynamics of racisms experienced in places that have been most adversely affected by a 'chronic urban trauma' (Pain, 2019).

Crucially, any efforts to thin out 'the accumulation of racial difference' (Nayak, 2010: 2374) must deal with the concentrated, enduring and cumulative nature of harmful encounters and their relations to broader power geometries of 'race' and racism. We suggest that closer attention must be paid to the violent force of encounters which build through space and time, re-producing racialised power relations as a slow psycho-social toll and an overwhelming force. These are encounters that are hard to escape and which restrict more progressive possibilities. Perhaps more than scratches, bumps, crackles or hisses (Nayak, 2017), our research speaks to experiences defined by a persistent and sometimes deafening white noise. Action to prevent hate relationships and the encounters that constitute them requires progress on multiple fronts that are sensitive to place-based dynamics. This includes, but is not limited to practices of housing, criminal, racial and social justice – with the desire to be free from harmful encounters at the very centre.

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Notes

1. Names used in excerpts are pseudonyms.
2. The ethnicity of clients is classified by the advocacy organisation.
3. This has been subjected to important critiques given the role of rurality in processes of racialisation and the changing geographies of multiculture that Neal et al. (2019) outline.
4. This related to referrals from 149 clients, 148 of which were accepted.
5. In the UK, 'White British' is a commonly used, yet problematic categorisation, which denotes those who identify (or are identified) as racially 'white' and nationally/ethnically British. Often these identifications are hegemonic and subject to conflation.
6. This included several cases that identified intersections between 'race' and religion, disability and gender.
7. With one client identifying as neither male nor female.
8. This includes eight (23.5%) identified as Black/Black British-African, three (8.8%) as Asian/Asian British-Pakistani, three (8.8%) as Asian/Asian British-Indian, two (5.9%) as Asian/Asian British-Bangladeshi, two (5.9%) as Asian/Asian British-Other, one (3.4%) as White-Other, one (3.4%) as Mixed-White/Black African, 10 (29.4%) as Other ethnic group and three (8.8%) as unknown.
9. This is relatively self-contained housing estate of mostly newer properties set within a larger multi-ethnic residential urban area in one of the most deprived parts of this city.

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