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The Other Side of Belonging

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Abstract
It is generally accepted that all humans have a profound need to belong and that a sense of 'belonging together' is a prerequisite for creating political communities. Many of our existing models for this 'first person plural' fail to fully account for the increased global mobility of persons which can all too often result in serial attachments at a superficial level or the problems that can arise with a growing fragility of all belonging. This article looks at the *other* side of belonging: failure to belong—either through the loss of a sense of belonging (not-belonging) or the removal of membership belonging (unbelonging)—and the resulting damage that might occur. This can have profound implications for what happens in schools where one of the accepted major functions has always been to develop and nurture belonging in children: to each other, to the school and within the wider society. However, the general assumption that most children enter schools at a neutral stage on the belonging spectrum ready to be developed and nurtured towards citizenship belonging may no longer hold and we may need to explore new ways as to how this might be achieved.

Keywords Not-belonging · Unbelonging · Citizenship belonging · Sport protests · Windrush · Brexit

Introduction

Who 'belongs' in a country can often prove a highly provocative and contested *political* question. In philosophical terms, one of the most important functions of any liberal democratic nation-state is to integrate the often conflicting interests of disparate persons into a single collective decision-making body: a first-person-plural. For this to happen, each must have a commonly held sense of legitimately belonging together towards some form of common future. Indeed, this sense of 'belonging together' can be a prerequisite for citizens without which a sense of political community committed to some form of social justice becomes less likely (as argued by Miller 1998).

Unsurprisingly schools, more than any other institutions, because of their ability to shape normative values and beliefs are often charged with transmitting these principles to successive generations. In being so designated, they are expected to contribute to the

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development of identity-forming bonds needed by individuals and to nurture the political belonging needed by the state, often through some form of citizenship or civic education (Halstead 2007; Callan 1997). If schools are to be credited as having the power to form this 'connectedness' in society, then it matters that the philosophical and political assumptions underpinning this are sufficiently grounded to support this.

It is often assumed that belonging is a basic need and fairly straightforward to address in schools. I want challenge these suppositions. Specifically, I want to suggest that schools (particularly in the UK,[1] but also elsewhere) are often required not so much to 'develop and nurture' political belonging in practice, but to address and/or counter the damage emanating from a perceived *lack* of belonging. To make this argument, I want to develop the idea of *failure* to belong as being part of a wide spectrum rather than a simple binary. The two terms I adopt to explore this new positioning (*not*-belonging and *un*belonging) have some, albeit limited, usage elsewhere (the first in the social sciences; the second within literature studies), but have not been used previously to examine this other side of belonging.

My aim in this article is to offer a way to discuss this neglected side of belonging. Whilst I acknowledge the myriad ways in which the state, through governmental agencies, are undoubtedly actors implicated in creating the conditions for both not-belonging and unbelonging to fester, I want to concentrate on the individuals caught up in this maelstrom. In order to follow this path, we first need to understand the concept of belonging (pertaining to 'a sense of belonging') and its importance in how we envision our social and political lives. From this, I then outline a conceptualisation of *not*-belonging as the loss of a sense of belonging, whilst maintaining membership belonging. Using the example of political protest, I suggest that *not*-belonging can emanate from a decision made as a way of drawing attention to injustice and thus bringing about change. In contrast to this, *un*-belonging I purport, is far more fragile and intimately connected with having both membership belonging *and* a sense of belonging taken away and that this can create particular difficulties. To this end, I point out that whilst one of the accepted major functions of schools has always been to give children a sense of belonging to help them navigate their way in unfamiliar terrain, their ability to do so can become severely limited in some circumstances.

Belonging

Social scientists have long argued that we have a deep need to know where we belong in order to make sense of our lives and to give us a sense of purpose; we need a sense of purpose to make sense of our experiences (Frankl 1985; Guibernau 2013; Curlette and Kern 2010; Bond 2006). How we come to understand and explain ourselves *to* ourselves is often part of this. One argument is that people make sense of their lives through the stories they tell to themselves about who they are, where they come from and how they got here. As tellers of tales, our stories, our narratives, are rarely just of our making: they come into being in dialogue with those around us and in response to lived experiences. We are ever conscious of the footprints of those who went before us, who gave us our 'story' such that by collapsing linear time itself, we then form a shared collective 'present'. It is often the anchored understandings of the limits and boundaries of this that then informs the possibility of a shared future in community.

[1] For example, the UK governmental policy to actively promote Fundamental British Values in schools.

Change is inevitable and how we respond to the fragility of life and our part in it is never completely set, so that we constantly author and re-author our tales in response to this. Yet having *coherence* to our tales necessitates that we preserve a sense of continuity of purpose over time in our attempts to accommodate radically changing lives. Understanding and integrating these disparate pieces into forming a new narrative often requires integrating in some way one's sense of self and one's view of the world (Brison 1999). In other words, connecting ourselves in this way to the fabric of our surroundings is to see ourselves as an integral part of a system or community (and the rootedness and support offered therein) as somehow 'belonging'.

As members of political communities, our lives *have* to be joined together in deep ways: by participating in political communities, we share the formation and shaping of the collective laws and principles we agree to live by (Murphy 2005). Seeing oneself as part of a larger imagined community in this way allows one to transcend the limitations of one's own body to give potential for meaning to one's life, to create a shared social identity and to give access to collective goods (Mason 2000; Guibernau 2013; Kleinig 2015). But it is also to accept, have sympathy or agreement with a network of mutual obligations and values. This then places it firmly within the realm of the ethical and a fitting subject for philosophical debate.

Two Concepts of Belonging

Whilst the concept of belonging has attracted much research in recent years, it is still often poorly defined and under-theorised, often conflated with concepts of identity and citizenship (Antonsich 2010). Unsurprisingly, theorists then struggle to find the language to address the difficulties experienced by those for whom this relationship proves problematic. For example, the effects of massive displacement of peoples across the globe in the past decades has found itself reflected in the countless theories of place, identity and belonging that had previously appeared to be reasonably clear, but which now find themselves subject to renewed interrogation as countries strive to adapt to ongoing shifts in migration (Antonsich 2014; Rishbeth and Powell 2013).

Belonging, when used as a political concept, is generally accepted as being both multidimensional and multi-layered (Yuval-Davis 2006). In such cases, *belonging* can be a 'thicker' concept than citizenship alone (Kannabiran et al. 2006: 189). Emanating from the work of Fenster (2005), two distinct strands have commonly been highlighted[2]: "as a personal, intimate, private sentiment of place attachment ('sense of belonging'), which is built up and grows out of everyday practices, and belonging as an official, public-oriented 'formal structure' of membership, as for instance manifested in citizenship" (Antonsich 2010: 645). The former is often viewed as the affective bond; the latter, articulated through the language of rights and responsibilities (Fenster 2005; Yuval-Davis et al. 2005; Antonsich 2010). These two strands are generally agreed to interact, with each accorded an importance in different spheres.

Most modern western democratic societies tend to mark the *membership belonging* of individuals through the status of citizenship (Antonsich 2010; Yuval-Davis 2006). As such, citizens acquire particular social and political rights from the state, balanced by reciprocal duties and obligations. These cooperative behaviours are considered more likely amongst

[2] These are not the only strands of belonging, but for our purposes, they hold particular importance.

people who do not see each other as strangers and who share some of the same values and expectations of social life. Whilst theorists are constantly trying to reshape and rethink what it is to be a citizen so much so that citizenship is now regularly viewed as a dialogical process (Yuval-Davis 2006; Guibernau 2013), more recent feminist interrogations of citizenship suggest going beyond the traditional nation-state to consider the topic though the lens of more globalised human rights (Deiana 2013; Yuval-Davis 2011, 2009). Current research has seen a move away from overly concentrating on state-recognised membership belonging as a focus of address, towards an understanding of social, political and civil 'rights' and 'good' citizenship practices (for example Patton 2014).

Having a *sense of belonging,* on the other hand, goes beyond what might initially be thought of as feelings of 'being at home' or of seeing oneself as 'fitting in', whether to a community or place. As Mason suggests, it is to see 'our flourishing as intimately linked to their flourishing' (Mason 2000: 127). In this way, a sense of belonging to a group can be to engender identification with its aims, objectives, values and achievements on a wide spectrum. Nevertheless, the depth at which we identify may well vary from person to person or it may be affected by differing socio-economic systems.

Belonging is not without internal problems: to be perceived by others as belonging is very different in kind to perceiving *oneself* as belonging. One may perceive oneself as belonging—but be mistaken or believe one's claims are more firmly grounded than they are. Similarly, one may believe and possess both types of belonging, yet not be accepted by others. Discovering that how *we* perceive ourselves in this dialogue is not how *others* perceive us can be painful, resulting in grief, alienation, rage or severe distress (see Healy 2019). Nevertheless, the critical importance of having a sense of belonging (as part of our overall political belonging) continues to attract considerable research attention (Antonsich 2010; Edyvane 2011; Guibernau 2013; Osler 2009; Yuval-Davis 2006, 2011) so it is tempting to think that there could be very little left to say. Yet there has been little to no attention to the other side of belonging (for those who may not start in a neutral position or who somehow lose their sense of belonging) hence the following section starts our journey into the realm of *not*-belonging drawing on conceptual interpretations of the Kaepernick incident in the USA.

Not-Belonging

The starting point for this journey is that there is some ambiguity in the complex uses of the term 'not-belonging' that previous research has so far failed to untangle. Whilst it has some usage within discourses associated with the intersectionality of race, gender or social exclusion (for example Richmond 2002; Solhjell et al. 2019; Trudeau 2006; Deiana 2013), here I want to pick out three distinct conceptual usages from this vast literature that may be helpful to this philosophical endeavour.

Not-Belonging and Political Protest

Sport is often seen as an essential part of American society, of which football is probably the most popular (McNeal 2017) and singing the national anthem is a common feature to start major events. Such national symbols not only function to form and maintain national identity, but also play a crucial role in "fusing a nation to a state… creating a myth of communal memory" (Geisler 2005, XV); encountering these symbols needs constant rehearsal

to engender the desired feeling of communal solidarity. Little wonder anthem singing has long been seen as a way of publicly showing commitment to an ideal, demonstrating a way of binding together disparate persons, or putting "solidarity where it belongs" (Geisler 2005, Xlll).

A long history of sports protests has often drawn together the political and the social. Formalised protests run the risk of further marginalising groups that may already have good reason to feel excluded from the national narrative of belonging but "Acting as an individual during the anthem, however, also contests the message of national anthems by challenging the notion that group identity outranks individual agency" (Rorke and Copeland 2017: 89). This has historically positioned anthem-actions as a platform for social activism, a catalyst for change and a powerful conduit for protests and negotiations on the boundaries of national belonging.

Take for example the case of the sports quarterback, Colin Kaepernick, who in 2016 polarised much of American public opinion and made headline news in many other countries by famously refusing to stand for the national anthem before a match in protest against perceived injustices to the African American and minority communities.[3] His protest arose amidst an increasingly volatile realignment in modern race relationships in the USA and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement following several notable incidents between black citizens and the police which led to several deaths (Rorke and Copeland 2017):

> I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color… To me, this is bigger than football and it would be selfish on my part to look the other way. There are bodies in the street and people getting paid leave and getting away with murder.[4]

The altercation began when, after controversially sitting out for the first two pre-matches, Kaepernick employed a common protest in sport by kneeling on one knee for the national anthem at future matches. 'Taking a knee' then acquired a symbolic resonance of its own as a shared ritual of protest over and above Kaepernick's usage, with his protest spreading amongst other players (including school children) (Rorke and Copeland 2017; McNeal 2017).

It is important to note that Kaepernick did not protest with, nor suggest, violence: he used his voice and position to further the cause of those without 'voice' in the cause of justice.[5] To understand such symbolic acts requires us to understand the meaning in the context of the symbol as if we were part of that community. The voice of the actor was 'heard' through his body language—the act was performed in public (not hidden away in a locker-room) thus establishing itself as a form of public dissent and/or a call to action. The body language used (on bended knee, head bowed in prayer) showed that this could be interpreted as a stance of personal devotion, humility and love for his country and fellow citizens in the same way as those who adopt the traditional stance of hand on heart whilst standing. So how might we interpret this in terms of not-belonging?

[3] There have been many interpretations of the Kaepernick events from a wide variety of stances: sociology, psychology, politics, sports science, to name but a few.

[4] http://www.nfl.com/news/story/0ap3000000691077/article/colin-kaepernick-explains-why-he-sat-during-national-anthem. Last accessed 13.9.2018.

[5] This is not to ignore the fact that who counts as a citizen (and thus belonging within the boundaries of shared rights and duties) has not been reinterpreted to include disenfranchised groups throughout history, nor to underplay the denial of 'full rights' to significant groups. What it does do is demonstrate the complexity of the way in which the three interpretations depicted here can interact.

Interpretation 1 What is common to many examples of *not*-belonging is that it often juxtaposes *membership belonging* and a *sense of belonging* in distinctive ways. As Mason has previously pointed out, a sense of belonging to the 'polity' is not the same thing as belonging to the citizenry (Mason 2000: 127). A person may see herself as deeply bonded to the polity, may recognise and value the institutions of that polity, but see no sense in associating with fellow citizens beyond their specific community. Similarly, a person may see herself as deeply bonded to her fellow nationals, develop contact across a variety of other cultural or interest groups, yet remain suspicious and lack trust in the polity itself (a variant of horizontal cohesion to fellow citizens versus vertical cohesion to the state).

An adaptation of this might position the sense of belonging depicted here more flexibly. For some, this may become an intensely felt localised belonging, but rejection of a national belonging: "I'm a Scouser" or a retreat into religious or ethnic identity groupings or even into gangs, criminal organisations or radical groups. For others, it may form part of a more generalised *not*-belonging *anywhere*: "no one *gets* me". For others still, this may result in a localised *not*-belonging (not belonging *here)* for example: "I can't wait to get away from here and find others like me."

Interpretation 2 *Not*-belonging can also be a considered stance adopted by individuals who believe that their belonging is only a matter of words with little effect on their lived reality. In other words, the group may see her as belonging but she does not feel this matches her lived experience. Take for example the underlying principle behind the rule of law in modern western liberal democracies that it should articulate the set of standards and principles appropriate for citizens and officials to adhere to and which limits the kind of injustice or illegal use of power that may be exercised by those in authority (Murphy 2005). Problems arise, however, when a law or sanctioned behaviour is seen to be adversely applied to some members of the group rather than all members of the group on grounds that appear discriminatory (for example, racial profiling). The corrosive effects over time of the *mis*application or interpretation of the rule of law can lead to a community-wide distrust of both the law and those upholding it when laws are applied differently within different communities (as protested by the Black Lives Matter movement in the USA). This seems the strongest contender for the conditions informing Kaepernick's motivation, when set against the historic background of slavery, discrimination and disenfranchisement in the USA.

Here *not*-belonging can function as a weapon to address the boundaries of everyday or institutionalised discriminating practices: "you *say* I belong here, but you *treat* me as if I don't". In other words, the national group may see formal membership (which may itself be given grudgingly) as being sufficient—but the individual (or minority community) wants belonging to have the same practical application as for all others. Some undoubtedly make a decision themselves to *not*-belong in this way as the end of a long journey after seeking to belong and finding themselves constantly rejected; for others, it is a rational course, particularly for those who may appraise that what is on offer is unappealing, contrary to other deeply held principles or as failing to address problems viewed as 'institutional injustice'. This form of dissent has historically played a useful role in politics, holding governments to account to ensuring fairness and recourse to justice for those affected (including a long history of sports protests). Whilst this need not be done by entire publics, where significant sub-groupings are made to feel that they are automatically seen de facto as outside of the

group, ‘not one of us’, accepted under sufferance or in need of ‘special attention’ in a way in which others are not, the dissent can become infused with righteous anger.

Interpretation 3 A sense of belonging can be a social identity attribute and thus something we ascribe to ourselves (self-defining) or something that is withheld from us (denoting issues of power and control). This form of *not*-belonging, similar to interpretation 2, can begin through the experience of being seen as separate, unwanted or different to the group. Where it differs is that neither party may be completely committed to seeing the other as belonging: it is always qualified or open to revision. For some, it may appear that the bar is always being raised to discourage or prevent their full acceptance; for others it may seem that new practices challenge existing ones. This sense of being *perceived* by others as not belonging *here* can be re-enforced by wider social structures and routine practices in a society, all of which can communicate powerful exclusionary messages (Davis and Nencel 2011; Healy 2019).[6] The main point is that a *self* is not a simple construct that comes into being entire of itself, but is constituted reflexively in relation to others and dependent on their actions (Taylor 1989; Macmurray 1961).

In some situations, all three interpretations can simultaneously be held, each interacting with the others (albeit in different ways and at different levels); in others, individuals may be subject to only one. However the interpretations can identify very different cases of damaged senses of belonging: in the first case, this may result only in the *absence* of a sense of belonging *here* with the individual happy to move on elsewhere; for others, the feeling of rejection may prompt leaving with considerable long term anger, damage or regret. The more challenging cases are often those associated with the second and third interpretations in that these may motivate individuals to take public action to achieve change.

When associative civil society and/or governmental agencies follow a narrative that actively ignores some of the multiple identities within that body of persons (part of the collective ‘we’), the political can become as associated with the ‘tyranny of the majority’ just as much as with the pursuit of social justice and fairness. Subordinating an entire group in this way not only serves to dehumanise the individual members, but can also have the practical effect of making their lives more precarious and to be ultimately seen as ‘disposable’ (Lytle 2017). This can cause some to retreat further to a polarised position.

Not-Belonging and Schools

It has long been accepted that part of the role of schools is to aid pupils in the acquisition, development and expansion of their existing sense of belonging at differing levels: to each other, to the school and within the wider society. Whilst it has frequently been assumed that this can be done by a strong school ethos combined with some form of citizenship/civic education or values programme, this may not always be sufficient to account for our need to narrate and re-narrate our lives in a way that gives meaning and purpose to our practices.

[6] Take for example the case of Yogesh Khrishna Davé who changed his name to John Smith on his CV to get an interview for promotion: See https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-38751307 for details. Last accessed: 11.4.2019.

Most schools in the UK are accustomed to encountering diversity in some form or other; a wider range of multiple possible selves that might be encountered could easily be further addressed through their ethos, pedagogy or content that could be woven into our collective narrative, although this may not be without controversy or misunderstanding in some quarters in the initial stages.[7] The kinds of political deliberation I have in mind here requires encouraging an honest and open-minded critical reflectiveness amongst participants along the lines suggested elsewhere (Ravitch and Viteritti 2001; Hess 2009). In this way, they might offer a way to reconnect with abandoned belonging narratives or offer new ways to reinterpret the evidence that initiated a break; they might raise questions about the value of alternative belongings. But what we know of successful programmes suggests that this is not something that can be 'done' to pupils—they have to be actively part of the solution (Ravitch and Viteritti 2001; Hess 2009; Gereluk and Titus 2018).

However governments frequently expect schools to do far more than this. In the UK, for example, schools are required to act more or less as an arm of the state by identifying and reporting those 'at risk' or vulnerable to manipulation under anti-terrorism legislation (DfE Nov 2014, 2015). The result of this increasingly reductive and restricted visioning of how citizenship belonging could be explored frequently then serves to further marginalise the very subjects who need it most by dismissing the values and legitimacy of part of their multiple identities in favour of the primacy of particular state-sanctioned identity/loyalties.

Unbelonging

Whilst *un*belonging has some limited usage within literary studies (for example Fernández 2017), it has not as yet been subject to philosophical examination nor applied as a lens to encapsulate the feelings and experiences of those who have 'lost' political belonging. At a basic level, to 'unbelong' is to have what was thought to be certain or taken for granted removed, disconnecting us from others: it is quite literally to 'undo' the ties of belonging. In such cases, *membership* belonging has been revoked, removed or challenged in some way, usually by the state and without the consent of the subject,[8] leaving them bereft of the shared rights associated with this, damaging or eroding any sense of belonging associated with that place.

If belonging represents home and safety, of nesting and rooting, *un*belonging becomes positioned as a place of exile and danger, of homelessness and rootlessness for those who once belonged, but are now abandoned as outsiders.[9] But our 'home' is rarely just a geographical place: it is also a set of reciprocal relationships, of everyday events and practices, of accepting and being accepted as a legitimate part of a larger whole, involving both membership *and* a sense of belonging. From the very start, we are

[7] For example, parents in a school in Birmingham protested the use of a relationship programme called 'No Outsiders' as a form of sex education in primary schools. See https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/12/culture-war-lgbt-lessons-relationship-education. Last accessed 12.04.19.

[8] There may be occasions where individuals themselves seemingly reject their membership *before* developing membership belonging elsewhere or who *regret* their decision.

[9] See http://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/olympics/37037273. Last accessed 5.12.18. One of the moving images at the 2016 Olympics was the decision to allow refugees to compete under a neutral Olympic flag. Whilst there has been a considerable history of independent athletes competing under such a flag, this was the first time it was applied to the stateless, allowing ten athletes from four original countries to compete. I am indebted to Dr Anthony Thorpe, University of Roehampton, for this example.

born into a social world necessary for our existence as 'inter-dependent beings' (Butler and Athanasiou 2013: 4). When this temporality is threatened or put under pressure, the anchors of established beliefs that root us in our daily lives become contingent on social processes outside of our control. The existential stress emanating from this can leave such persons estranged from others and aspects of their own 'self'.

When we are familiar with locations, they are no longer empty spaces to us but infused with memories and meanings that cannot be easily replicated elsewhere. When displacement is from a particular geographical territory, it does more than just dislocate our personhood: it can put one at odds with ones environment. This leaves the 'unbelonged' adrift—untethered to a recognisable social milieu, without anchoring to previous conceptions of a self and self-purpose that gave meaning to our lives. Similarly, being deprived of the bonds that tie us to others inevitably affects struggles for self-actualisation. To return to our narrative metaphor from earlier: we are often theorised as both author of our own narrative and a bit-player in the narratives of others. Yet becoming an "actor with an identity" requires the communal conditions that foster claims affecting our capacity for agency to hence "transform human beings into subjects" (Foucault 1982: 777). Struggling to craft 'a self' under the condition of such violating conditions comes at a cost: when law (as the regulatory power) itself fails to protect or to redress injustice and reinforces the foreclosure of an anticipated possible future, we are in essence 'subjugated' (Foucault 1982). In other words, when the self can no longer recognise itself within the normalised matrixes of belonging, the resultant struggle then starts to partially erase important facets of normalised self-identity reducing us to objects.

The general assumption has always been that individuals are more or less certain about their roots and hence where they belong. Indeed, our ability to locate ourselves in time and space could be claimed to hold *unbelonging* at bay. But the situated positioning of social actors under conditions of *un*certainty encourages the idea of a very different conception of belonging. If we are beings who *can* be dispossessed of food, shelter, land, home or citizenship, then we become utterly dependent on those who hold power over us for our very survival (Butler and Athanasiou 2013).

The previous security of belonging, of everyday practices and trust routines reminds us of a growing fragility of *all* belonging in a political community. As Wardie and Obermuller remind us, the right to travel and settle is at best 'arbitrarily allocated' (Wardie and Obermuller 2018: 4): in a world of increasing movement, attempts by governments to control and manage this movement by evoking 'national security', 'borders', 'walls' or 'redefined citizenship' results in real damage to individuals' sense of belonging. Whilst historically we have always been dependent to some extent on the actions of others—kings and emperors; of battles fought and lost; of negotiated trade-offs in land disputes—what is new is that political belonging is increasingly conditional and open to retraction, forcing some into the realm of unbelonging, often with indifference to the suffering of individuals (as the following examples will show). Such governmental mercilessness then adversely affects the ways in which some communities position themselves in how they think about their political belonging beyond their chosen 'community of identity'.

Whilst it may be traditional to introduce material by the strength of argument, in what follows, this writing style is rejected in favour of demonstrating how each of the examples removes a little more belonging than the previous one. In the first example, individuals believed they had both membership and a sense of belonging (although the former proved a mirage); in the second, Ms Begum retained her membership belonging (until it was removed by the UK Home Secretary) but lacked a sense of belonging in her initial

departure for Isis; in the third, the subjects had their membership belonging removed which in turn erased their sense of belonging.

Example 1: The Windrush Scandal

Named after the troop ship that brought West Indians and their children to Britain after the Second World War, the term 'Windrush' has come to be associated with an on-going reorientation of the relationship between citizens and the state. For many who answered the call to rebuild the UK by taking on essential jobs after the devastation of war, their 'home' was a new, permanent life: they saw both themselves and their children as British. This had its origins in a particular enforcement of an ongoing 'hostile environment' policy in the UK on issues of immigration, nationality and citizenship. For example, the 1992 Commonwealth Immigration Act removed the rights of holders of British passports who lived in the colonies to enter and settle in the UK. Further restrictions in 1998 and 1971 removed the rights of Commonwealth citizens without family who had been born in the UK to seek permanent settlement. This led to many Windrush migrants and their children seeking to be 'naturalised' in the 1970s.

Many of the children of the original Windrush generation who accompanied or followed on lacked the paperwork to prove their settlement entitlement thus leading to the classification of hundreds as illegal immigrants. This gave a direct incentive to pursue the most vulnerable (or those least likely to have access to sufficient social capital to challenge or change such decisions) and led to widely reported scandals: individuals going on holiday to the West Indies and unable to return; of individuals deported to places where they had few links; of families separated or torn apart (Wardie and Obermuller 2018). The important point for our purposes is that these people *believed* themselves to be citizens, thought they 'belonged' but had that membership belonging removed by the state, and in many cases were literally left as 'citizens of nowhere' by actions of their own government.

Example 2: Shamima Begum

In February 2015, three 15-year old schoolgirls from London ran away from home to join Isil in Syria and become 'Jihadi brides'. One of the three, Shamima Begum, was traced by *The Times*[10] to a Kurdish detention camp in February 2019. Ms Begum was accompanied by a new-born son, who later died in the camp. After a variety of interviews in which she asked to be allowed to return to the UK, her family was informed that an application to have her citizenship of the UK revoked had been made by the Home Secretary, Sajid Javid: she was considered a safety risk should she be allowed to return, and had shown no remorse for her actions. Despite an appeal against the loss of her citizenship, the Home Office held that her plight was a consequence of her own actions and thus they could not be held responsible. To date, she remains in a camp.

Undoubtedly, she felt little sense of belonging in the UK—as demonstrated by her initial departure for Syria—but she had kept her 'membership': her citizenship. Whilst of itself this example may seem out of place in this section, it is what this says about the conditionality of citizenship that proves interesting. Section 40 of the British Nationality

[10] See http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/decoding-shamima-begum-why-we-shouldnt-be-surprised-by-her-lack-of-remorse-mbgxdbtzf for details. Last accessed: 05.03.2019.

Act 1981 states that UK citizenship can be removed from someone if they are entitled to nationality of another country, in line with international law. Begum had a Bangladeshi parent(s) and arguments were made that she was entitled to citizenship through her family so that she would not be stateless if her UK citizenship was rescinded (this was disputed by the government of Bangladesh). But this opens up a space in which those who are second generation immigrants (children and grandchildren) can be subject to the removal of their membership (and cast into a form of exile) in a way in which those who can make ancestral claims to membership further back, are not.

Example 3: Leaving Europe

For many UK citizens (both overseas and in the UK), Brexit has been about the loss of a valued part of their identity: their sense of being Europeans and/or 'settled', of expanding their sense of belonging beyond the shores of the UK (Browning 2018). Whilst it also entailed the loss of *membership* rights (freedom of movement amongst others), it is the additional removal of their *sense* of belonging, that left some traumatised and seemingly in a sense of 'unbelonging'. For many settled EU citizens in the UK who had come to see themselves as *included* and permanent, to find they were unwanted and rejected by their 'neighbours' came as a shock, affecting how they *felt* themselves to belong (Browning 2018). To suddenly find that previously-held certainties about the future are little more than dreams, the removal of feelings of safety, being 'at home' and belonging polarised newly emerging images of national belonging that few could aspire to (Cassidy et al. 2018). Indeed the experiences uncovered by the Windrush scandal have left some EU citizens uncertain as to the dependability of political promises made by politicians re their status after Brexit.

Collective identity-constructs are argued to frame our imagined communities thus creating lasting political institutions (Cassidy et al. 2018). Where such constructs expand beyond the national to form a supra-national entity of cooperative practice, this undoubtedly impacts on the range of possible belongings individuals may aspire to. Whilst it is possible for several identities to co-exist, attempts to build cross-national bonds in the European Union have habitually been seen as contentious, particularly around the creation of a common sense of Europeanness (Educational Audiovisual Culture Executive Agency 2012; European Parliament 2006; Hobolt 2016). Despite this, it has long been a tenet of citizenship research that any such feelings of belonging to Europe would have to be 'created' (and thus encouraged and taught about in schools), yet it would appear that such emotional tetherings were being engendered 'undercover' without the need for direct state education.

In all three examples, the actions of the state trump the needs/desires of individuals, which can in turn negatively influence the attitudes of communities to the rule of law (when identified as the actions of governmental agencies). Unbelonging then becomes positioned as a *personal* failure—even when it is the apparatus of the state shifting the borders of belonging. Those who occupy this space are deemed to have 'done something wrong' that now prevents them from being part of the national imagery, failing to identify, or ultimately to fully participate in important aspects of national life. The resultant ontological anxiety when this is removed inevitably destabilises. This then leaves some not only physically displaced (removed and 'sent back' to countries of origin in some cases) but results in the removal of *all* senses of belonging and a deep sense of loss: the loss of identity and a loss of closely held values. What we have good reason

to believe is that where the disruption of belonging has been deliberately caused by the state, it moves the subject to appear to them*selves* as an object, helpless and worthless at the mercy of others—smashed into fragments: in other words, not only affecting how others see us but how we see ourselves.

Unbelonging and Schools

Whilst membership belonging is outside of the scope of schools to bestow, schools and education systems often play a supportive role as part of their community outreach particularly for those who may have sought sanctuary here from their own unbelonging elsewhere. We must remember that '*un*belonging' for children is usually dependent on the membership belonging of their parents: only those aged over 18 can be removed in their own right. Nevertheless there are countless anecdotal stories in the UK of how schools have intervened when some of their pupils (and their families) have been threatened with deportation: how schools have petitioned, run campaigns, highlighted the issue in the press—all to have membership belonging reinstated, sometimes successfully. Whilst laudable, we have no research to draw on for how many campaigns are *un*successful. We have considerable evidence for the effects on the mental health of unaccompanied *child refugees* particularly around issues of trauma and PTSD, yet there continues to be important long-term knowledge gaps on how refugee children view themselves, how they trust adults and institutions in their lives, or on how they rebuild the necessary affective bonds having had them forcibly broken (Bean et al. 2007; Vervliet et al. 2014; Sierau et al. 2019). Similarly, we have research on refused asylum seekers in general (Blitz and Otero-Iglesias 2011) or on refugee children and their families, but with a few notable exceptions (Allsopp et al. 2014), yet there is still a need to further examine the position of those protected until the age of 18 (after which they may be forcibly removed to their country of origin, whether or not they have familial ties there), and how this disruption to their sense of belonging impacts on their emotional and social lives.

As indicated earlier, instances of unbelonging nearly always involve loss of membership and the removal of a sense of belonging, all of which puts an increased burden on schools to adequately respond to the damage caused. Traditionally, schools have always held the possibility of encountering multiple possible selves found through their ethos, pedagogy or content that could be woven into our collective narrative. The ideal has been for schools to be seen as a neutral place for offering multiple explanations and interpretations; a place for exploring our stories, how they intersect and can be interpreted; a place for nurturing an 'integrated self' by drawing those so affected *into dialogue*, opening up discursive spaces where ideas can be deliberated safely without fear of consequences. But their ability to do this is increasingly under stress.

Schools are often reluctant to address political questions in a critical way for fear of losing their 'neutrality' or themselves being held to public account. Yet we know that when individuals feel disconnected from society, when the rules officially governing the conduct of the group have little translation into reality, maladaptive behaviours and disconnectedness may follow (Ferguson 2010; Clegg 2006). Similarly, where significant numbers of residents (or particular groups) fail to tether themselves to the existent belonging narrative, society runs the risk of becoming less stable and more fragmented. All of this suggests a possible scenario that we cannot afford to ignore long term.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have reminded us that the development and nurture of political belonging is still a live and important topic for theoreticians to grapple with. Furthermore, I have offered a vocabulary to enable us to further conceptualise two distinctive ways in which the other side of belonging can be explored. As *not*-belonging illustrated, this has the effect of rendering the individual as an outsider: they may have *formal* membership belonging, but the reality positions them as 'not part of us' and thus someone who can be discounted. Similarly, unbelonging when aligned with the inability to feel at home as one who is capable of autonomously acting on the world (having lost *both* membership and a sense of belonging), reframes the person as 'disconnected' from their own possible *future* narrative: a storyteller without a story to tell.

Much of this not-belonging and unbelonging is the direct result of poorly conceived, badly drafted and error-strewn enactment of what currently passes for public policy. For example, 2 years on since the Windrush scandal, and no attempt to redress the problems has been made. But not-belonging and unbelonging can equally result from the cruel enactment of austerity measures and the subsequent precarity of social life: the growth of family poverty, the deliberate sanctioning and withdrawing of benefits from already vulnerable people etc. Crucially, children from such backgrounds are not entering schools holding a neutral stance on the state and their place in it as future citizens.

All of this has increasing relevance for schools positioned as the main source of support between the individual and the state. To put it in more philosophical terms: schools have long been credited the ability to develop and nurture the sense of belonging needed by the state to create a citizenry (Callan 1997). But the assumption that most children enter schools at a neutral stage of the belonging spectrum ready to be developed and nurtured towards this end may no longer be justifiable and we may have to rethink how this might be done. Schools are increasingly asked to make up for this 'belonging deficit' in large numbers of pupils, often without recourse to appropriate aid or advice. With increasing numbers of children entering school already ensconced in the not-belonging (or even unbelonging) part of the spectrum, we need to have genuine conversations around how we can (and should) address this in educational terms. I do not pretend to have the solution to this—I merely wish to start the conversation.

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