

**EXPLORING CAREER VIA THE LENS OF PARADOX: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF THE
TRANSITIONAL EXPERIENCES OF A SMALL GROUP OF GRADUATES**

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Dedicated to Philip Gee

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Document 5

Exploring career via the lens of paradox: a longitudinal study of the transitional experiences of a small group of graduates

Ricky Gee

Abstract

Career is an activity that occurs in-the-world-with-others, an interdependent social project which inevitably has political, sociological and philosophical dimensions. Such dimensions are rarely acknowledged within the literature, a literature that explores career via a dichotomous logic lacking in criticality. This project observes how the literature uncritically views career as paid work, thus promoting work as a perpetual vortex, pulling, appropriating, colonising and sucking within all that is viewed outside of its parameters of action. This project provides an exploration of 'career' via a broader lens of the life career, a career that encompasses a diverse range of social strands (Goffman, 1961). It is argued that such an analytic lens allows richer, more nuanced and critical readings of career to occur, a challenge to career as work that invariably serves the interests of capital. Via such a lens, the project also asserts how the articulation of social strands in a person's life evoke moments of paradox, complex articulations that push conception to contemplate conclusions that contradict the entities and nature of its own inquiry. The document argues that paradoxical moments are useful and revealing moments, an analytic that provides numerous and critical readings. The notion of paradox can therefore be a useful analytic for the recursive relationship between research and pedagogy. To demonstrate and illustrate the utility of such methodology the document provides longitudinal accounts of a small yet detailed sample of individuals from the last year of undergraduate study through to up to 3 years post-graduation, concluding that paradox *is* an ontological aspect of career articulation, where there *is* articulation there *is* paradox, an important observation to contribute to the literature, policy and pedagogical practice.

1. Introduction

Career is an activity that occurs in-the-world-with-others, an interdependent social project, which inevitably has political, sociological and philosophical dimensions, such as who does what in society, how the economy of work and leisure is to be distributed and who gets the biggest say in what is to occur, why, how and when (Gee, 2014; Collin & Young, 2000; Doyal and Gough, 1991; McCash, 2006; Frayne, 2015). Career enactment at a micro-level is embedded within an interconnected wider nexus of social relations where aspects of identity, such as class, gender and ethnicity, interplay with social assemblages and systems so as to influence access to opportunity and prestige (Roberts, 2009; Hutchinson et al, 2011; Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2010 and 2015; Gee, 2014). The career theory literature has a limited history of exploring such dimensions of career, in terms of both theory (Osipow, 1983; Fitzgerald & Betz, 1994; Mignot, 2001; Hooley et al, 2018) and practice (e.g. Watts, 1996; Mignot, 2001; Hooley et al 2018). It is also a literature that invariably equates 'career' with paid work, in line with a culture, since the modern age, that has become obsessed with paid work (Frayne, 2015) where *work has become a perpetual vortex, pulling, appropriating, colonising and sucking within all that is viewed outside of its parameters of action*. This project provides an exploration of 'career' via the broader lens of the life career, a career that encompasses a diverse range of social strands (Goffman, 1961). Social strands can be viewed as significant activity - such as housing, caring, leisure as well as work careers - enacted by the individual, traced and marked via reflexive articulation connecting to a broader sense of life narrativisation (Gee, 2017, pp. 183). It is argued here that such an analytic lens provides richer, more nuanced and critical readings of career to occur, a challenge to notions of career as work that invariably serves the interests of capital (See Frayne, 2015 and Tweedie, 2013). Via such a lens, the project also asserts how *articulation of social strands in a person's life evoke moments of paradox, complex articulations that push conception to contemplate conclusions that contradict the entities and nature of its own inquiry*. The document argues that paradoxical moments are useful and revealing moments, an analytic that provides a multiplicity, numerous and useful readings to occur. The notion of paradox can therefore be a useful analytic connecting the recursive relationship between research, theory, pedagogy and practice. To demonstrate and illustrate the utility of such methodology the document

provides longitudinal accounts of a small yet detailed sample of individuals from undergraduate study through to up to 3 years post-graduation and thus provides recommendations to enhance career pedagogical, theoretical and research practice.

The industrial age - with its distribution and division of labour as well as entitlement of formal education for children and young people – provided a perceived policy requirement for an efficient matching process between individuals and the world of work so as to serve capital (Côté, 2014; Frayne, 2015; McCash, 2006; Watts, 1996; Heginbotham, 1951). To aid such ‘efficient’ practice, as well as promoting a sense of ‘choice’ for young people entering the labour market, the 20th Century saw the birth of Career Education and Guidance (CEG) (see Law, 1996). CEG, in its many guises, provides opportunity for students to explore career within the curriculum as well as gaining support from guidance practitioners at the important transitional interchange between education and the world of work (see Gee, 2017). CEG policy and practice during the 21st century has become increasingly concentrated in the educational domain of Higher Education (HE), mirroring the widening of participation of young people in HE and resonating with the elongation of youth transitions toward adulthood (Andrews, 2013; Roberts 2009). Contemporary CEG within HE, what is now invariably described as ‘employability’, provides a focus upon the transition from undergraduate to postgraduate destinations, which in-turn has become of increased institutional and sector importance. When considering the transitional experiences of undergraduate students in England, a prominent focus of this research project, it is important to consider the socio-political implications of the Browne review (2010), particularly the rise in tuition fees, which provides a new dynamic for such enactment in the UK (Vigurs et al, 2016). Studies such as Future Track (Purcell et al, 2012), in conjunction with the Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey statistics (see Smith et al, 2000; HESA, 2016), and more recently the Longitudinal Educational Outcomes dataset (LEO) (Department for Education, 2017), provide blunt findings to inform institutional policy; for example 75% of students feel they have gained skills that employers want. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) has acknowledged such limitations and has therefore recently provided a prominent consultation of important HE stake holders so as to ascertain the most effective and efficient way to gain better quality data for students and all those who support their studies (HESA, 2016). Until such consultation has been completed the current DLHE statistics prove to be important

drivers for HE institutional policy and endeavour where an emphasis upon 'employability' and graduate level destinations is to be found. This project argues that such a paradigm upon 'career' pedagogical practice places the role of a university education toward a social mechanism of maintaining societal status quo, an overtly pragmatic, functional and narrow form of pedagogy, where the HESA consultation does little to address such a narrow paradigm (Archer et al, 2003; Roberts, 2009; Hutchinson et al, 2011; Browne and Misra, 2003; Love, 2008; Bathmaker et al, 2013; Frayne, 2015; Williams, 2011). This document argues that such a move has reduced the scope of studying 'career' within the HE curriculum toward a generalised uncritical skills based curriculum which focuses predominantly on the agency of the student and their ability to become employed as opposed to a greater exploration of the political, sociological and philosophical dimensions of a broader sense of career, career as a lived experience (Gee, 2016 and 2017; Mignot and Gee, in press; Atkins, 1999; Watts, 2006; McCash, 2006 and 2008; Knight and Yorke, 2003; O'Regan, 2009; Bathmaker et al, 2013).

Given such a context this document argues that paradox becomes a useful lens to deconstructively read career articulation and enactment so as to inform the research and pedagogy of 'career'. Paradox here has been heavily influenced by the post-structural philosophy of Derrida, a philosophy that is 'mad about justice' (Derrida, 1992), as the activity of deconstruction embraces a form of 'self-criticism' that moves toward a critique of the metaphysics of presence, so as to challenge the priority and hierarchisation of binary concepts (Ashcrot et al, 2013; Royle, 2008; Crotty, 1998). The project therefore utilises such an approach so as to develop aspects of 'career studies' – viewed here as a transdisciplinary field of study promoting a theoretical underpinning of career in the curriculum (Yorke and Knight, 2006; McCash, 2008; Stanbury, 2010; Healy et al, 2018). To aid the identification and focus of paradoxical moments within career articulation the project introduces a framework of dualities - to be viewed here as "a conceptualisation of 'reality' that provides a paradoxical relationship between opposing yet entwining entities" (see Gee, 2017, pp. 187) - so as to aid 'career' exploration and career enactment both analytically and pedagogically. The dualities presented within this project are informed via important concepts present within much of the career literature, although such concepts tend to be viewed via a dichotomous 'logic'. As outlined in the literature review below, this thesis concentrates heavily upon four dualities

which it suggests are important conceptual considerations within the career literature; being and becoming, agency and structure, self and other and time and space. The introduction of such dualities challenges the literatures inherent binary and dichotomous logic, *which invariably separates concepts so as to assert a hierarchy with prominence placed upon work over other strands in a person's life, rationality over irrationality, linearity over rhizomatic 'movement', order over chaos and progress over development* (see, Gee 2017). This document therefore asserts the ontological stance of career as a lived experience, which is likely to undergo transitional moments, where significant life episodes provoke an individual, or individuals, to contemplate the paradoxical relationship between being and becoming in conjunction with the other dualities mentioned (see Gee, 2017, pp.194). The document therefore advocates a methodology which focuses on an individual's contemplation and articulation of the fluctuations between entities within the dualities mentioned, which in-turn is likely to evoke moments of a paradoxical nature. It is asserted here that such paradoxical moments, read either by the individual concerned or another, are without an underlying telos of equilibrium – uncritically present in much of the career literature - which never comes to rest. It is via the endeavour of deconstructing such dual entities that career is to be explored, where there is an anticipation that the notion of paradox can provide a multiplicity, a complex reading of career so as to invite radical and rich readings to occur.

The Professional Doctorate programme requires the writing of 6 Documents. This document, Document 5, provides the thesis of this Doctoral process, a thesis that is to assert the penetrative nature of exploring career via philosophical, sociological and political dimensions; an exploration aided by the lens of 'paradox'. The thesis is to provide an insight into the longitudinal research project that has occurred across the Professional Doctorate Documents, exploring the career transitions - from undergraduate student to post-graduation - of a small yet detailed sample of participants on a 'Youth Studies' degree at a post 1992 university; a course that the author has been pedagogically involved with for a number of years. *The thesis is constructed via bringing together a combination of predominant adapted extracts from the previous 4 Documents submitted for the Professional Doctorate programme as well as newly acquired research findings – in line with the course specification.* The thesis is the fifth phase

of a six phase process informed by the other four phases, where each phase provides a written document to account for what had occurred:

- Document 1 (Phase 1 of the project) provides an outline of the research via a research proposal;
- Document 2 (Phase 2) provides an extensive critical literature review so as to outline the philosophical architecture utilised throughout the longitudinal study - an architecture that this thesis asserts to be a useful addition to the research and pedagogical literature.
- Document 3 (Phase 3) is the first document to connect with the empirical world – so as to provide illustrations of the penetrative nature of the previously mentioned architecture - by exploring synchronic snapshots of the participant's articulations of their career enactment via a reflexive worksheet assignment as part of the participant's undergraduate study.
- Document 4 (Phase 4) provides a more diachronic analysis, exploring the career articulations of a small detailed sample, which had completed the already mentioned reflexive worksheet, up to 2 years post-graduation via semi-structured interviews.
- Document 5 (Phase 5), provides further connection with the empirical world by exploring accounts of participants a further year on from data gained in Document 4. It also crystallises the findings throughout the process so as to consider how this has influenced pedagogical practice, a practice informed via research of the author as well as contemplating how it has made its contribution to the literature.
- Document 6 (Phase 6) provides a reflexive account of the researcher's learning from the Professional Doctorate process.

This document, Document 5, is therefore to take into account the research process to answer its central research questions:

How might paradoxical moments of career, as a lived experience, be articulated during undergraduate study and within 3 years from graduation? What meaning might be ascribed to such moments and how might this influence contemplation and enactment of career?

The answering of such questions is to occur via the following objectives, set and reviewed throughout the project:

1. To critically analyse the career theory literature so as to explore various ontological, epistemological and political positions upon the concept of career
2. To critically evaluate the post-structural philosophy of Derrida so as to outline the research project's theoretical framework, to be utilised to explore career analytically and pedagogically
3. To critically evaluate a range of social research literature so as to outline the study's methodology
4. Deconstructively read student articulations of career, as a lived experience, concentrating on potential paradoxical moments so as to ascertain meaning ascribed and how this may influence career contemplation and enactment - during undergraduate study and at least 3 years after graduation
5. To synthesize findings from the above to inform the literature and influence future pedagogic practice.

The thesis will illustrate, via its connection with the empirical world, how the utilisation of a deconstructive 'methodology' based upon paradox provides the following important reflections to contribute to the literature:

Phase 3

- A pedagogy based upon deconstructing career, via a duality framework, allows undergraduate students to explore various perspectives upon 'career', where many comprehend career as a lived experience that is enacted via a range of interconnected strands and/or roles
- The endeavour of deconstructing articulations of 'career', focusing efforts upon the dualities of being and becoming, agency and structure and self and other, gravitate readings toward traced moments of paradox which can provide critical insights to occur, readings that challenge the dichotomous logic found within much of the career theory literature, as highlighted in the literature review
- Student articulations comprehend that career as a lived experience is temporal and that previous experiences traced via varied strands/roles within their lives will impact and influence future anticipation – via both synchronic and diachronic analysis
- A comprehension of the influence of 'other', both in the participant's immediate locale and via notions of social structures is enacted, although there is a clear preference for concentrating upon enactment that occurs within the locality of direct perception, where agency is asserted over structure, presence over absence, particularly when anticipating the future.
- Many of the student articulations express an emotional economy of care at play, where there is a yearning to utilise attributes of 'care' within educational and labour markets so as to aid the turbulent transitions of 'others', similar to turbulent transitions experienced by themselves.

Phase 4

- Participants provide detailed descriptions and operationalisations of career to aid career enactment with a desire for career to progress
- Paradox shows to be a useful analytic and critical moment, or motif, in career articulation that opens up a multiplicity into how career can be read, tracing tensions within career articulation that have an *enduring* nature – validated by the participants
- Paradox shows itself to be a useful lens to aid pedagogic, as well as having the potential to aid 'guidance' activities outside of the academy

- Once prominent paradoxes are explored with participants, further paradoxes tend to unfold linking to the way career has been enacted since the writing of the reflexive worksheet
- The multiplicity evoked, via a concentration upon paradox, reveals links to previous aspects, in terms of both presence and perceived absence, of the participants lives and provides opportunity to question past and future enactment
- All participants articulate an emotional economy of care that motivates career enactment, a means of self-validation and giving back to others.

Phase 5

- Considered, detailed and complex personal definitions and operationalisation of career are illustrated by the participants, where such an operationalisation may change due to different periods of the life course experienced and how contexts may adapt and challenge such perspectives
- The researcher's initial deconstructive reading of participant career and overarching paradoxes revealed in Phase 4 of the study are verified by the participants and they thus illustrate the penetrative and enduring nature of such readings and the analytical motif of paradox
- Once paradoxes are explored with the participants, participants are able to identify and articulate further connected paradoxes that enable them to provide rich readings upon their career both retrospectively and anticipatorily and to identify how they interrelate
- The participants are able to identify how perceived absence experienced within career enactment relates to the above identified paradoxes
- Participants speak of how an emotional economy of care is at play in their career articulations and how a sense of 'giving back' and providing care is important to their career enactment
- Participants are able to identify how a perceived delay to a positive return from such an economy becomes an important 'progressive' factor to career enactment which requires important forms of knowledge and skill which relates to social position and a sense of maturity

Document 5 will now present the extensive critical literature review that has occurred throughout the project – substantially written within Document 2, with additions made in Documents 3 and 4. This Document will synthesis such reviews and will also include further literature that has informed the final stage of the project. It does this before providing insight into its methodology, a methodology influenced by the thought of Derrida, the endeavour of deconstruction and how paradox can become a useful analytic lens upon career. The thesis will then provide illustrations via the articulations gained from the participants in the Phases 3-5 mentioned above. Once the illustrations have been exposed the thesis will provide discussion on how it can make a contribution to the literature and influence the pedagogic practice of exploring career within the HE curriculum.

2. Critical literature review

Section 2 provides a critical reading of the concept of ‘career’ considering philosophical, political and sociological dimensions. It argues that ‘career’ in the career theory literature adheres to a linear rational logic of progress, which places work at the centre of its paradigm so as to assert objective parameters upon individuals, negating or appropriating any subjective significance inscribed by an individual’s career enactment. It explores how such conceptions benefit capital without fully acknowledging aspects of social justice and social equity, how aspects of identity interplay with social and institutional structures that solidify societal status quo, even whilst heavily promoting the importance of agency within late modern society. It then moves on to explore how the career theory literature, from the end of the 20th century, asserts what it sees as major changes to labour market dynamics due to ‘globalisation’. Such accounts assert the importance of career agility, the ability of individuals to utilise their agency to navigate changing institutional terrain, a precarious terrain that serves capital. It highlights how notions of progress are utilised to cajole and seduce the importance of agency within career enactment with the promise of life being lived on an upward slope, a propaganda that emphasises the importance of speed within the ‘transmission era’. It will then explore the career studies literature, which partially advocate a challenge to such assumptions, providing opportunity within CEG practice to widening hegemonic discourses. The current context of pedagogically exploring ‘career’ in the HE

curriculum and the concept and practice of 'care', an important endeavour of the participants, is also explored. The overriding reading within this section is how much of the career literature has adhered to a dichotomous logic – even when trying to challenge modern perspectives - and the section highlights how considering such concepts via the notion of duality can provide critical readings of 'career', particularly when focusing on the notion of paradox. Doing so the section highlights perceived limitations of the literature so as to move onto Section 3 which explores the notion of paradox from a philosophical perspective, a perspective to be utilised in the entwined arenas of career research and pedagogy.

2.1. A critical reading of 'career'

There have been limited critical readings of 'career' within the literature, where career adheres to modern notions, which tend to be work centric, linear, with an over assertion of individual agency as well as limited consideration of philosophical, political and sociological dimensions (Barley, 1989; Mignot, 2001; Osipow, 1983; O'Doherty and Roberts, 2000; Frayne, 2015; Roberts, 2009). Barley (1989) provides an important survey of 'career', delving into career theory's genealogical roots, taking into account the influence of the Chicago School of Sociology, which Barley suggests plays an important, although at times forgotten, role in the development of career theory. Revisiting the Chicago School of Sociology in the early part of the 20th century, via theorists such as Thomas and Znaniecki (1918) and the work of Clifford Shaw (1930, 1931, 1938), Barley (1989) emphasises the School's importance of understanding and analysing people's lives, particularly those at the fringes of society, so as to provide voice to their subjectivities and how these relate to their social position and the institutions they are entwined with. Such theorists took forward the notion of life histories which came to be seen as a means of documenting 'career' and thus provide sociological apparatus to explore the situational, relational and chronological unfolding of a person's life, a life that is contingent upon a person's social position. It was Everett C. Hughes (See Hughes 1958, 1971) that took forward the notion of 'career' as a formal sociological concept promoting the discipline of the sociology of work, developing a heuristic device so as to study such a phenomena from a broad perspective. Via Hall's influence the school produced many studies such as "Hall's (1944) and Solomon's (1952) studies of medical careers, Becker's (1951) analysis of the career problems of public school teachers, Habenstein's (1954) study of funeral directors, and Wager's (1959) work on airline pilots" as well as those more predominantly at

the fringes of society such as “careers of marijuana users (Becker 1953)” (in Barley, 1989, pp. 45) and later on the “tubercular patient's hospitalization and recovery (Roth 1963), the plight of a polio victim (Davis 1963), or the process by which inmates of mental hospitals are gradually labelled insane (Goffman, 1961)” (in Barley, 1989, pp. 47). *It is worth noting here that it is via Goffman's contribution of 'career as any social strand in person's life' (1961, pp. 127) that this project takes its operationalisation of 'career', an important analytic of this project.* Such sociological explorations of ‘career’ are a means of challenging the common sense view of ‘career’ equating work, where one is to focus upon progress within a profession, what is often described as the ‘traditional career’. Although such a paradigm of ‘career’ gained much traction within the field of sociology, its views were challenged across the academy, for example Wilensky (1961, pp. 554) responded to such sociological perspectives by asserting the importance of a work centric and progressive focus upon ‘career’, ‘career as profession’, a means of reasserting the natural attitude.

A career is a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered (more-or-less predictable) sequence

Wilensky 1961, pp. 523

Wilensky's assertion was one that gained much momentum at the time and was embraced across the academy via Rosenbaum (1984); Spilerman (1977); Thompson, Avery, and Carlson (1968, see Barley, 1989). Such momentum has endured where prominent theories within the arena of the Business School still adhere to such a perspective, where work is central with a use of Darwinian teleological language.

The evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time

Arthur et al, 1989, pp. 8

Work becomes central to such traditional definitions of ‘career’ without operationalisation. Work in such literature very much comes under the bracket of ‘paid work’ and such literature makes little effort to account for its complexity, as work may also link to one’s artistic endeavours – creative acts that leave an artefact of one’s finite existence - through to mundane caring obligations, many of which are unpaid for. One question that emerges is ‘why is paid work so central to the concept of career in much of the literature across the academy?’ The work of Frayne (2015) provides a useful insight here to answer such a question. Frayne’s critique of paid work asserts how this is central to Western Culture, due to its obsession with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and human capital. Paid work, via Frayne’s analysis, provides insight into income distribution, occupation and preoccupation of many citizen’s lives, a means of gaining forms of financial, cultural and social capital, order, as well as rites de passage. Inspired by the work of Gorz, Terkel and the Autonomist Movement, Frayne puts forth an argument that is critical of Western Culture’s obsession with work and GDP. In line with this project, Frayne argues that ‘career’ is more than paid work and that cultural obsessions with work are detrimental to many citizen’s lives, as it becomes a means of gaining wealth for the bourgeoisie and thus overly dominant people’s lives. Frayne argues that whilst there have been many movements to influence better working conditions and hours during the modern age, this does not necessarily address the issue of “the right of workers to lead richer lives *outside of work*” (2015, pp. 1).

The Autonomists protested at the wasted time, lack of variety, and excessive administration of life in capitalist society. They fought for the right of workers to feel the sun on their skin, to play with their children, to develop interests and skills outside the factory, and to rest peacefully at night

Frayne, 2015, pp. 1

Frayne asserts that there is a beguiling logic within modernity, which asserts how work is a means of generating GDP, with the assumption that an increase in GDP will be in concert with an improvement in people’s lives. GDP is thus seen by many Western Government’s as a measurement of the total amount of earning and spending within a year and thus is implicitly

accepted as a means of accounting the prosperity of a country. Frayne argues that this is becoming less of a useful goal for society and asserts how this is a limited index of betterment. Frayne, reflecting upon the work of Jackson (2009) and Stiglitz et al (2010), argues that a broader focus of work may have significant policy implications, so as to not only focus on individual experiences within paid work but also outside of work and how this links to societal structures.

In an age of material abundance, it seems that there is a troubling disparity between our desire for the good life and capitalism's narrower focus on the constant expansion of production and consumption.

Frayne, 2015, pp. 4

It is via the current policy panacea of GDP that Frayne argues that the contemporary labour market becomes stunted and dis-serving of many individuals, where questions in relation to working hours have become silenced in political discussion and have been replaced by a discourse of employability and in turn how human capital can increase a nation's 'competitiveness' on a global stage. A critique of neo-liberalism is thus evoked in Frayne's account, a discourse that promotes free trade and capital flows, the outsourcing of labour, privatization, deregulation and upper-class tax cuts (See Asimakopoulos, 2009, pp. 177). Within such a context paid work is seen as gaining a high ethical status, where work is viewed to be good for not only a contribution toward GDP but also for individual health and personal character, whilst those that do not work are seen as deviant. This is also linked to a labour market that unsatisfyingly does not provide creative and interesting jobs (Graeber, 2018), underemployment (Kallerberg, 2007) and unemployment, especially since the global financial crisis of 2008 (International Labour Office, 2012, 2013). Whilst there is much to be gained from Frayne's critique of work, there is a constant adherence to the promotion of 'authenticity', explored in an unproblematic fashion, which does not align with the duality framework explored within this project. Without explorations of the complex relation between self and other - how other can be present within self and vice-versa - problematizing

notions of an authentic self, Frayne's argument still succumbs to a beguiling attraction of 'progress' toward an underlying teleology, one that this project wishes to deconstruct.

The notion of the 'traditional career', prevalent in much of the career theory literature, very much relies upon linear and progressive metaphors, opportunities to climb the 'career ladder' adhering to what Gellner (1972) would describe as a 'secularised salvation' and notions of a 'middle class career' embedded upon the rational logic of modernity (see Gee, 2016). Such views upon career are embraced not only in the academic literature but also within everyday discourse, for example:

A course of professional life or employment, which affords opportunity for progress or advancement in the world – (On-line Oxford English Dictionary accessed June 2011)

Even within educational policy one can find progress to be central to its conception, where education is to be progressed through a set of pre-planned sequences toward the goal of employment, for example:

An individual's lifelong progression through learning and work.

UK National Curriculum, 2007

The work centric and progressive natural attitude of 'career' is one that excludes people that do not fit within its preordained schema, where one is in a position without employment, or a person in employment that does not 'advance', or those looking after the long term sick, or looking after children or relatives for no financial return, even people of 'leisure', may be deemed to be career-less (Gee, 2016, 2017). Not only is this a paradigm that excludes people from 'career' but also one which makes 'career' vulnerable and in a position to be 'broken', e.g. Gallos' (1989) feminist critique of the masculinisation of 'career' exposes how there is cultural pressure for women to break their 'careers' so as to take on the traditional task of

being a primary carer of children. Gellner's (1972) anthropological comparison between the so called 'developed west' and its more traditional third world and developing counterpart becomes a useful means of critiquing such notions of 'career', where it pays particular attention to progress as...

European thought since the eighteenth century has come to assume the idea of progress; and, indeed, that the idea has come to permeate ordinary thought and be built into its assumptions and language

Gellner, 1972, pp. 3

Gellner categorises progress theories and perspectives into three variants: the episodic; the evolutionist; and the neo-evolutionist. Much of Gellner's work concentrates on the second variant and expresses how this came into being by paying particular attention to Darwin's theory of evolution, which Gellner relates to the 'world-growth' myth. Gellner opposes such a myth on both logical and moral grounds. This document is interested in Gellner's assertions of the appeal of the world-growth myth and how this permeates general everyday discourse, especially in relation to career, where progress has permeated western values:

People believe as a matter of course, as self-evident truths, that being literate, clean, technology-minded, monogamous (perhaps), politically restrained (perhaps) but organised, and some other features perhaps, are 'progressive' and therefore good, that their contraries are backward and therefore bad

Gellner, 1972, pp. 11).

Such binaristic notions have influenced a consciousness in a belief of an ever expanding cosmos enticed by exponential growth. Although Gellner expresses that even though these assertions are on the wane – particularly in academic discourses - he is keen to expose their allure to western thought. Gellner does this by providing 4 main categories of allure. The

first explores western man's desire to present their story as "the history of humanity" and how this history embraces a "persistent upward swing." (Ibid, pp. 12). The second is an attraction to Darwin's theory of evolution so as to entwine both biology and history. The fourth suggests that the world-growth story provides a useful philosophical stance that appears to negate transcendence and episodic accounts of the origin of things. However, it is the third category that is of most interest to this document. As this is the case the category is provided in full.

The picture [of the world-growth myth] - also merits the name of the Education of the Human Race Theory. One clear source of its appeal was that it conceived the story of the cosmos, and especially human history, in a manner analogous to the way in which middle-class people conceive and justify their lives. The period of the belief in progress was also, notoriously, a bourgeois period. *A middle-class life is, essentially, a career.* Its education already tends to be long and marked by a self-conscious series of upward steps, and its subsequent pattern is equally, or is intended to be, a continuous ascension, whether in wealth or along the rungs of some hierarchy, or both. If an individual life is validated in such a manner, what could be more than natural than that the life of mankind as a whole, or indeed the life of the cosmos, should have a similarly gratifying pattern? And both history and biology appeared to confirm such an expectation.

Gellner, 1972, pp. 13, my emphasis

Once Gellner's writing has been placed at centre stage one can start to acknowledge the origins of the contemporary and the everyday consensus that 'career' heavily equates with the work-role and with opportunities to 'climb the ladder' that lead to continual 'progress' – metaphors exposed, yet not critiqued, by Inkson's influential work on career development (2004, 2007). To challenge narrow views of 'career' results in a challenge to the 'world growth myth' the enlightenment propaganda of progress, our supposed 'secularised salvation' (Gellner, 1974, pp. 3). Gellner provides both moral and logical objections to such a 'salvation'. Logically such a story of progress may well provide an explanation of *how* human evolutionary

series have occurred but does not answer *why* this is the case. Evolution theories provide a validation to the 'schema of things' only via answering the *how*. If human societies are increasingly progressing then it begs the question as to *why* the enlightenment project has provided man with the weapons to inflict its ultimate destruction and *why* this project has included the horrors of the "holocausts of the first world war or the gas chambers of the second" (ibid, pp. 11). Such horrifying stories provides one to contemplate

If man is basically rational and/or good, *why* is it that the forces of darkness have had quite such a hold over his mind and society?

Gellner, 1972, pp. 8 – my emphasis

Modern man's fixation with progress promotes the notion of enlightened rationality which appears to underpin uncritical explorations of career in much of the career theory literature. For example, Michael Arthur - a prominent writer based within the Business School at Suffolk University, Boston, USA – as indicated before, equates 'career' as "the evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time" (1989, 2002 and 2010). Since the 1980's Arthur has advocated an argument for the career literature to embrace his notions of the 'Boundaryless' and 'New Career'. Arthur (2002) – whom has co-authored with a number of associates, e.g. Hall and Lawrence as well as Tams (Tams and Arthur, 2010; Arthur, Hall and Lawrence, 1989) - suggests that such 'new careers' are enriched by a sense of being boundaryless as opposed to 'old careers' which are bounded. He suggests that the benefits of the 'boundaryless career' are that Individuals gain

1. Skills and knowledge
2. Enhanced networks
3. Self-assurance
4. Personal growth
5. Broader viewpoints

6. Communication skills

As opposed to old bounded career benefits which are:

1. Specific work satisfactions
2. Money
3. Enjoyment
4. Social life
5. Safety and support
6. Autonomy

The new career is endorsed as providing individuals with greater mobility. It is acknowledged that such mobility may well come with a price where there is potential for people to experience hardship and distress. However, such 'negative' experiences tend not to be explored in any depth in Arthur's work. There is also an overly agented view of people's careers within his writing with an overplay of volition. With volition placed at the centre of Arthur's paradigm, Arthur rarely acknowledges sociological dimensions of the various case narratives he presents; Arthur fails to account for how social forces significantly play their part in shaping the predicaments and subsequent actions that cases articulate. Class, gender and ethnicity are rarely if at all acknowledged in Arthur's work, and only implicitly come into play and are therefore rarely analytically applied. Without taking such notions of identity into account, Arthur presents career enactment as occurring within a level playing field where an individual's 'success' occurs via their ability to enhance three domains of knowledge; knowing why, knowing whom and knowing how. Such reflexivity is to be welcomed; however, the domain of knowing 'what' is missed, as case studies explored rarely take into account how different social positions are variably influenced by social structures and systems that influence enactment. An example to demonstrate this point can be found in a paper written in 2002. Here Arthur explores the case of an individual called Bruce. Bruce lives, initially in his story, in New Zealand and his narrative starts by explaining that he is a boilermaker where

he is a union representative. The story continues to expose that Bruce started to question his union's tactics after which he became 'ostracised, and out of work' (ibid, pp. 3). There is no detail as to what occurred in this situation and the wider political dimensions and disputes involved. Bruce then takes an overseas job – gained by a friend whose family own a hotel – as a 'barman'. The story unfolds to highlight how this hotel goes into receivership. What becomes apparent in this story is that forces outside of Bruce's control are influencing his career. However, Arthur wishes to overlook such notions and would rather spend time exploring how Bruce adapts to such situations and as a result how Bruce 'gains benefits' due to enacting a 'new career'. Bruce's adaptability is to be applauded given the difficult circumstances, yet, Arthur fails to explore how the wave of 'economic dynamism' experienced, what many would describe as Neo-liberalism (Wright, 2010; Harvey, 2007; Asimakopoulos, 2009; Côté, 2014), requires Bruce to succumb to prominent economic and social forces which advocate 'agility', instead 'voluntary' behaviour of adaptation takes the fore. Toward the end of the paper there is a brief personal confession by Arthur that could potentially open the door to criticality. Here Arthur confesses that as a tenured professor he gains a 'prop for job security'. Implicit in this confession is the fact that Arthur's privileged position is gaining both boundaryless and bounded benefits. As a result Arthur asks for more reflexivity in career guidance and educational practice to acknowledge such circumstances. Such a confession fails to expose in any depth how practice and theory might endeavour to expose and challenge such inequalities. After this brief confession, Arthur becomes free to continue to push forward rhetorical notions of change and adaptability that are unlikely to hinder his and other privileged 'careers' at the expense of others.

The 'new career' appears as a response to a changing labour market, what Watts describes as 'careerquake' (1996), an environment where the reliance on stable employment via large organisations becomes precarious. As indicated above, authors such as Arthur embrace such notions of the 'new career', overplaying the hand of agency with breathless enthusiasm, where notions of interdependence only becoming explicitly contemplated from 2010 onwards (Tams and Arthur, 2010). A special addition in the *Journal of Organizational Behavior* (2010) provides opportunity to explore how the 'new career' is to consider its societal framing with its relation to agency. It is within this addition that Arthur challenges, to some extent,

his own position by exploring the interplay between agency and interdependency, a welcomed development, one that moves toward the critical, as there is an acknowledgment of how 'career agency' is social situated where "an employer's policy of flexible work arrangements may be only available to certain privileged groups of workers" (Tams and Arthur, 2010, pp. 6). Tams and Arthur advocate new directions for research on 'career agency' so as to take into account the margins and intersections of independency and interdependency. However, the assertion upon the domain of agency is still a central focus where such explorations only briefly touch upon gender, less so ethnicity and there is no mention of social class. There is also little insight into the intersections espoused, other than the promotion of interdisciplinary approaches that allow for further dialogue. The tendency here is to try and suggest that social structures are interconnected to agency, yet, agency takes the fore and is also seen as a means of changing structures, tending toward a sense of naïve optimism via the neo-liberal enactment of entrepreneurialship rather than collective activism:

... individuals have some scope to influence social structures, in particular through bottom-up entrepreneurial enactment at the underspecified (or weak) margins of the institutional status quo

Tams and Arthur, 2010, pp. 7

Such assertions are ripe to then link back to Arthur's paradigm of knowing how, knowing why and knowing whom, criticised above, again failing to consider the *what*, the systemic societal structurers at play:

One particular influence on subsequent literature has been DeFillippi and Arthur's (1996) suggestion that individuals' shaping of boundaryless careers is related to those individuals' knowing-why (motivation and identity), knowing-how (skills and expertise), and knowing-whom (relationships and reputation) career investments. This model suggests that career agency involves complementary dimensions, related to the work being performed and the relationships around that work. However, the first wave of literature did not unravel deeper questions about how agency can influence embedded institutional constellations and power.

Tams and Arthur, 2010, pp. 7

Whilst Tams and Arthur suggest the importance of context, they fail to critique in any shape and form notions of progress and technological speed, therefore it could be argued that Arthur's views appear to promote a propaganda of progress via a worker's agility and thus a cult of speed (Arnold, 1997; Collin, 2000; O'Doherty and Roberts, 2000; Gee, 2017a; Virillio 1986, 2012). With such rhetoric, certainty and order become increasingly challenged and individuals are deemed to gain heavy responsibility to navigate such moving terrain so as to become increasingly 'agile' and thus 'employable' with the hope of individual agency, via entrepreneurial enactment, becoming the main means of institutional leverage (Feller, 2010; Arnold, 1997). The assertion of 'careersquake' and the post bureaucratic age (Collin and Young, 2000) brings uncertainty and asserts Arthur's notions of the 'boundaryless career' where the certainties of old (yet well established) institutions, especially the bureaucratic work organisation, become challenged. What becomes apparent is how individuals in such a supposed terrain are influenced by notions of a competitive, flexible and uncertain labour market – the prominent focus of the career literature's exploration of structure and social systems - and how this interplays with social strands in people's lives outside of the labour market, especially as 'career' (potentially incorporating aspects of employment) can become a tempting space (and place) to 'organise reflexive activities' due to its ability to comprise and simultaneously express competing meanings without 'falling apart' or 'becoming meaningless' (Lawy, 2006, pp. 329 ; Collin, 2000, pp. 173). Therefore the fracturing of the labour market, articulated in the career literature, provides a great sense of precarity for much of the population (Berardi, 2009; Standing, 2011). This is a context where the presence of digital transmission technology provides greater communicational speed exchanges, in-turn providing an administration of 'fear' of mass unemployment due to a ...

...redundancy of man's muscular strength in favour of the 'machine tool' from the 19th century on. Now redundancy, permanent unemployment, of his memory and his consciousness, with the recent boom in computers, in 'transfer machines'...with the automation of perception, and finally computer aided design...the coming of the artificial intelligence market

Virillio, 1997, pp. 19

Agility and adaptability become rhetorically paramount in such an environment where the resources to be 'agile' are of political consequence. It is here that sociological segmentation theory (e.g. Maranda and Comeau, 2000; Asimakopoulos, 2009) can be a useful mode of analysis. Such analysis highlights how the labour market is segmented via both horizontal and vertical dimensions. Utilisation of statistics from the tri-annual Equality and Human Rights Commission review of the labour market (2010, 2015) strongly advocate how such segmentation is present upon, 'class', 'racial', 'disabled' and 'gender' lines. However, this literature does not pick up on the imperative of speed. People's ability to be agile, on first analysis, suggests that the further away that a person finds themselves from the 'core of production' the greater the challenge to access the benefits of the 'secure' work roles and the cultural, financial and social capital that may well come with such positions. For example, those at the periphery of the labour market are more likely to find themselves on casual or zero hour contracts of employment (very much embracing notions of the 'new career') compared to those closer to the centre – although that which may well be conceived as 'mythical' – who are more likely to find greater contractual stability and have the access to greater forms of cultural and social capital (Berrington, et al, 2014; Purcell et al, 2012; Woodman, 2012; Holmes, 2013; Berardi, 2009). The author is therefore to question whether the fast moving world portrayed in the career literature's supposed postmodern turn, which advocate and embrace the 'boundaryless career' brings forth a form of travel sickness - a feeling of movement whilst stationary - to those that dare to sit still, an ever increasing megaloscopical view - as increased speed of change narrows ones peripheral vision - for those within the periphery of 'core production', whilst allowing the privileged core to be positioned to watch movement from a stable high platform. The imperative of speed, and the 'agility' it provokes, appears an important dynamic of the contemporary labour market imbedded within existing unfolding social structures.

Taking such notions of speed of change into account provides a critical view upon Arthur's influential work and highlights that, although Arthur appears to be providing 'new' conceptual terrain, his work very much continues to embrace an over-reliance on the modern assumptions of 'career' where progress, linearity – although beguilingly presented as being

‘boundaryless’ - work, volition and rational decision making become important underlining assumptions, even with the new adaptations found in the career development literature since 2010. There have been some challenges to modern assumptions in relation to career, particularly toward agented rational decision theory and strategies, such critiques argue that they simply no longer relate to people’s ‘realities’ and are insufficiently nuanced to deal with ambiguity, e.g. Gelatt (1989); McAdams et al (2001); Roper et al (2010) and Ruppert (2010). However, *the cult of speed that comes with modern notions of ‘progress’ appears to be another cultural imperative found within much of the contemporary career literature, which has yet to be critically reflected upon.*

There are other areas of the career literature that wish to challenge the work centric and rational nature of career, notable points being Paton and McMahon’s Systems Theory Framework (1999) and Young and Valach’s Action Theory (2000). Both these conceptions explore how social systems influence ‘career’ – challenging the importance of rational agented decision making - and cite ‘ecology’ as a major influence. Both these theories utilise modern underpinning notions of ecology so as to commit to human systems that are “ever-changing and evolving toward equilibrium” (Patton and McMahon, 1999, pp. 135) therefore advocating “a self-organising and, therefore ultimately, a bounded social system” (Mignot, 2002, pp. 58). Yet such explanation of equilibrium is found wanting, especially as it does not take into account how conceptions of equilibrium – although potentially useful as a heuristic device articulating social reproduction and social continuity – may have conservative and reactionary tendencies (Botkin, 1991; Anker, 2002; Mirowski, 1989). There are other critical issues in relation to Patton and McMahon’s conceptions as they incorporate aspects of their ‘social system’ – such as institutions – without much detail to their construction. Such conceptions place the individual in an overly deterministic system (Mignot, 2002). Although initially seen as theoretical notions that can provide a critical stance on many of the modern assumptions of ‘career’, system theories unfortunately still adhere toward conservative conceptions and ultimately lack criticality.

Further developments within the field of career development theory has seen an emergence of ‘chaos theory’ with its main exponent being Jim Bright. Bright, writing with Pryor (2005),

provide a useful overview of such conceptions with their 'Chaos Theory; Users Guide'. Chaos theory is introduced here in the literature review as chaos theory is seen to be an approach that characterises the "individual and the environment in more complex and dynamic terms than the traditional person-environment approaches" (Ibid, pp. 292). Utilising the work of, Vondracek et al. (1986); Mitchell et al. (1999); Patton and McMahon (1999) and Savickas (1997), Bright and Pryor indicate that chaos theory provides an important development as it poses the question, "What conceptual framework of careers might be able to incorporate coherently such new ideas as complexity, change, and chance?" (Bright and Pryor, 2005, pp. 292). This is in concert with Watts' 'careerquake' observation. Chaos theory is thus heralded as an opportunity to challenge traditional approaches to scientific explanation and asks epistemological questions of career development theory which is often overlooked within the field. Chaos theory appears to challenge notions of linearity as well as introducing notions of recursiveness, which appear, at first glance, to be in concert with the argument presented within this project. Bright and Pryor therefore provide a useful overview of the essential concepts found within Chaos Theory

In linear systems, all the elements add up to make the whole, such as a credit card balance being equal to the amount of money spent plus interest and plus a monthly card fee. A nonlinear system is characterized by the elements adding up to more (or less) than the sum of the parts. For instance, the air time a song receives on the radio increases as the sales of the song propel it up the charts, which, in turn, increases the air time the song receives. In this scenario, the sales and airplay increase rapidly and nonlinearly. Of course, the final outcome sees a sharp decline in sales and airplay as the market becomes saturated and also tired of the song. This example also includes recursiveness- one variable influences another, which in turn influences the first one, and so on.

Bright and Pryor, 2005, pp. 292

Espoused within this theory is an exploration between micro activities – which is predominately described as unpredictable - and its relation to macro systems – which are

invariably stable. Chaos theory is thus seen as a reconciliatory theory between these two perspectives, which the authors suggest reflects debates within physics; between quantum mechanics and Newtonian physics. The explorations of micro happenstance and its relation to macro social systems is explored via analogous examples of dropping a pin-pong ball and predicting its trajectory, with, or without the inclusion of an excitable puppy and an electronic fan present in the room of such thought experiments. Chaos theory espouses how it can enhance prediction, especially in comparison to 'positivistreductionist' forms of analysis due to three main respects:

1. The operation of the system is observed in its entirety and not in terms of the directional causal effects of specific individual features.
2. The rules and principles that govern the interaction of individual features are investigated rather than trying to predict the exact values of specific variables.
3. The focus of interest is on how the system changes over time - its trajectory- and not the "average" levels of certain variables over time.

Bright and Pryor, 2005, pp. 295

Bringing such thought back toward the empirical world Bright and Pryor acknowledge that 'careers' are influenced by a range of facets many of which are unpredictable, e.g. 'political scandals' and 'terrorist attacks', which can change the political and economic landscape and thus areas of the labour market, e.g. 'tourism'. Whilst important to provide insight into change, and thus the potential for people to need to adapt to a changing environment, the assertion is one that lands heavily upon the side of becoming as opposed to being; discontinuity rather than continuity. The focus upon change is potentially useful as transition is a subset of 'career' (see Gee, 2017) and careers are likely to experience transition and significant change and this is where much career development work is focused upon. However, this over play of discontinuity aids the rhetoric of the ever changing landscape of the labour market and does not consider where there may well be areas that are protected from instability as described above. It is pleasing that the authors assert that people take into account many factors of their life, however, this appeal, again, subscribes to the perpetual

vortex effect of work; as described above. Another factor that requires scrutiny in regard to chaos theory is the way it perpetually refers to essence. This appears strange for a theory that is trying to challenge the positivist scientific paradigm and one that is trying to suggest that there are multiple variables at play that influence enactment. For example Bright and Pryor suggest that career counsellors *should* use chaos theory to

... look at each client in that client's entirety and then help the client understand the patterns and processes in his or her life.

Bright and Pryor, 2005, pp. 296

This begs the question of who judges 'entirety' and the patterns and processes to be statically perceived? This is again to be scrutinised in their utilisation of the work of Polkinghorne

Polkinghorne (2000) noted about science in general, "there are two levels of description. One involves energy and bits and pieces. The other involves the *whole* system and pattern" (p. 135).

Bright and Pryor, 2005, pp. 297, my emphasis

Is the viewing of the 'whole' system possible? Whose whole? Who, or what, denotes the boundaries? What occurs outside of the prescribed boundaries? Are systems hermetically sealed from influence outside of the boundaries denounced? Chaos theory thus appears to be a beguiling way to appropriate post-modern approaches, where it presents a universe of chaos, one impossible to understand, where science can no longer provide predictions and answers, but, in essence, an important word utilised in their writing, chaos theory allows its perceiver to view the 'whole' situation under analysis, yet, only if one is to take on board the essence of chaos theory, only then will the picture, the WHOLE picture become clear. This links back to the empiricist paradigm which the authors try to escape, that to know an object

is to control it (Berman, 1981). The authors get to play god by suggesting they are aware of the now complex 'essence' and 'whole' picture at play. Is this possible?

Another difficulty with chaos theory is its relation to time and space. For example:

In chaos theory, the future is thus conceptualized not principally as some place or time out on the horizon; rather, the future is essentially an individual's next thought, word, or action.

Bright and Pryor, 2005, pp. 298

Such conceptions of time require a consideration of how it links with the past and the forever slipping away present, as a next thought, or word, or action is inextricably linked to the past – yet this is not fully acknowledged, neither is *time's* relation to *space* upon such thought and action (which is explored in Section 3 of this document). Therefore chaos theory stays stuck within modernist conceptions although it tries hard to suggest it has taken a postmodern turn.

McCash (2006 and 2008) is a theorist that also looks at notions of 'recursiveness' via the activity of career studies. Career studies is presented in McCash's work as an opportunity for individuals to position themselves as career researchers, by informing how they enact 'career' via the use of career development literature. Such an endeavour is a means of challenging modern conceptions of 'career', with interest in breaking open agented rational work paradigms of career development and practice. McCash provides a useful critique of the work of Law and Watts (1977) and their 'matching metaphor' that has heavily influenced career development literature and CEG practice. In the post war years, career education, a means of support young people's transition from education into the world of work, was introduced and became common practice by the early 1970's across UK schools (Schools Council, 1972; Barnes and Andrews, 1995), where it was defined as consisting of planned experiences designed to facilitate the development of:

- Self-awareness – in terms of interests, abilities, values, etc.
- Opportunity awareness – knowing what work opportunities exist and what their requirements are.
- Decision learning – decision-making skills.
- Transition learning – including job-search and self-presentation skills.

Watts, 2006, pp. 10

This variant of career education – known as DOTS - has provided conceptual underpinning for the majority of career work within the UK, as well as North America via Hillage & Pollard (1998), where it is still a contemporary prominent influence upon educational curricular (McCash, 2006; Hooley et al, 2018). McCash (2006) provides a historical account of the rise of DOTS and how this links to ‘matching metaphors’ within the career theory literature, initiating from the work of Frank Parsons (1909), resonating with other areas of practice within the early parts of the 20th century, such as, economics, biology, management, psychology and sociology - via a positivistic paradigm. Such a paradigm asserted an ‘objective’ and efficient means of providing a productive and efficient modern workforce where everyone can find their supposed rightful place (McCash, 2006; Collin, 1996).

CEG policy and practice during the 21st century has become increasingly concentrated in the educational domain of Higher Education (HE), mirroring the widening of participation of young people in HE and resonating with the elongation of youth transitions toward adulthood, with a prominent focus upon employability (Andrews, 2013; Roberts, 2012; McCash, 2006, 2008). Given such a context McCash (2008) provides a view of the conceptual widening of the employability agenda by the encouragement of career studies. Building upon the arguments of Yorke and Knight (2006) McCash promotes the notion of employability connecting with multiple discourses so as to include a student’s home subject of study, as

well as other/further disciplines so as to promote a transdisciplinary exploration of 'career'. Career studies therefore provides a useful endeavour to open space within the HE curriculum, where 'career' may be explored via a broad perspective, so as to not succumb to the hegemonic paradigm of DOTS. Doing so McCash asserts that academic exploration of 'career' can provide multiple readings, readings that may move toward philosophical questions such as "what it is to be human?" (2008, pp. 3). This appears as a praiseworthy endeavour to invite criticality, however, latent dogmatic sentiment is present within such conceptions, prevalent in much of the career theory literature, which un-reflexively obsesses with the notion of individuals 'fitting in' and being 'satisfied' with one's life (e.g. Savickas 2000, 2005, 2008; Inkson, 2004, 2007; Cochran, 1990). This is best encapsulated with McCash's use of a quote from Cochran (1990, pp. 83) who expresses:

What is the nature of a good life, a good career? Phrased practically, how *should* one live? ...Were it taken seriously, we would be studying Aristotle, Kierkegaard, and others... (My emphasis)

Such expressions provide a pre-conceived notion of an underlying structure to be found by individuals if only they are to search hard enough. From an anticipatory perspective, the prominent question becomes how *should*, as opposed to, how *might* 'career' be lived? The insistent underpinning of the *should* within the career theory literature has rarely been reflected upon. The undercurrent of the should provide teleological and dogmatic notions of 'career' which may well mould toward the normative, circumscribing becoming toward a preconceived undercurrent of 'being' – succumbing to the guardrails of the metaphysics of presence. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) provide a cautionary note on such dogmatism toward the metaphysics of presence by charting how the ancients provoked questions of 'how should one live their life' which later, via post-structural philosophy, move toward the question of 'how might one live their life?' (See May, 2005). The question of 'should' promotes an ontology of an objective sense of being, either via the Platonic 'forms' or via positivistic notions of 'fact'. May (2005) argues that this is conformist and has the potential to be dogmatic. An ontology that concentrates on that which 'is' – May suggests – resonates with questions of 'should' as opposed to 'might', where the question of how might 'career' be lived

provokes the notion of an open future, that which does not have to adhere to a preconceived underlying structure.

...for the ancients, the question of how one should live is asked within a context that assumes the existence of a cosmological order to which a good life must conform. A human life does not exist divorced from the cosmological whole within which it is embedded. It has a role to play that ought to converge with or at least complement the movement of the rest of the universe. For Plato, that role consists in seeking the Good; for Aristotle is a matter of living out a specifically human teleology. Neither doubts... that the universe has an order to it, a stability and a general form that ought to be mirrored or conformed to by the lives of human beings.

May, 2005, pp.4

May's argument then moves toward a suggestion of how such ontological views become normative, dictating action set within a given epoch. As May reflects:

Abnormality need not be seen as a violation of the norms of human existence. It can as well be a refusal to conform to the "ontological" requirements of a given historical movement

May 2005, pp. 14

The placing of notions of how one *should* live a good life therefore evokes the risk of a normative underlying structure of 'career' irreverent to any notion of 'deviance' – a concept extensively explored by the Chicago School, e.g. Hughes (1971) and Goffman (1961); for an overview see Barley (1989). McCash acknowledges that a transdisciplinary approach to exploring 'career' will invariably invite tensions between different philosophical paradigms – in particular between positivist and constructionist epistemologies. Taking such tensions into account invites an exploration of ethics, morals and beliefs to come into play, where an

underlying notion of the 'good life' has a danger of being taken as pre-determined given. It is worth noting here that there is much criticality to be found in areas of McCash's career studies approach, such as; critically understanding the labour market, critical thinking, exploration of the influence of culture upon 'career' such as whether individuals are free to make 'career choices' and the use of language and its power implications – e.g. if 'career' can be deemed a neutral term or does it have gendered, ethnic and classed connotations. However, much of the career studies literature appears to invite a notion of the 'should' via an imperative of seeking life satisfaction and/or finding one's place within preconceived structural relations. It is argued here that the career studies approach would benefit from a reflexive contemplation of preconceived teleology, questioning the interplay between how 'should' and how 'might' one live their 'career'. Such an interplay acknowledges how the 'should' and the 'might' can be viewed as a duality, where the promotion of the importance of the question of how 'might' one live their life moves toward a sense of a future that should be open – a future with a future. On the other hand for the 'might' to be contemplated requires that it acknowledges a *should* that appears to be objectively presented. To acknowledge that this is a duality is to acknowledge the dangers of uncritically promoting a 'might' in the guise of a 'should'. However, it is also important to promote a question of the might that only has an underpinning of a should to promote a might via a never ending interplay, a requirement to promote open exploration – whilst considering its contextual containment – so as to keep such 'movement' in play, what could potentially be described as a politics that is never resolved or a 'justice' that is always out of reach (see Spivak, 1988; Derrida, 1992; Derrida and Caputo, 1996). Considering such an interplay – one that considers temporality, one that is inevitably place bound - also invites an acknowledgment of the relationship between being and becoming. It is of note that much of the career studies approach traces notions of being and becoming as separate entities, for example where being is presented via - "a sense of acting and being in the wider world (Barnett and Coate, 2005, pp. 58)" (in McCash, 2008, pp. 2) - and alternatively, notions of becoming are presented via "an on-going process of learning to become" (McCash, 2008, pp. 97). The career literature fails to take into account how being and becoming might be contemplated as a lived experience where being and becoming inherently invites paradoxical moments – which this document argues are conceptually evoked at moments of transition during significant life episodes (see Gee 2017). Such contemplation may evoke how a strong sense of becoming can provide the Deleuzean notion

of 'deterritorialisation' – freedom from dogma so as to flow infinite creation (Colebrook, 2002) - yet a strong adherence to only becoming comes with particular risks. Firstly it can provide a sense of startlement (See Love, 2008a) which may still succumb to the implicit rhetoric of 'change' inherent in capitalist society, where the 'new' and 'new be-comings' become structurally framed:

Capitalism is the historical epoch that is both most open and closed to deterritorialisation. Capitalism seems to encourage the proliferation of the new, but this is always a new grounded on the principle of exchange.

Colebrook, 2002, pp. 67

Can such 'exchanges' beguile individuals to have a sense of 'freedom' and 'becoming' which may well assert actions that adhere to economic and capitalistic imperatives? The important point here is for the career studies literature to acknowledge career as a lived experience that experiences an interplay between being and becoming, where the literature's tracing of such notions is to not allow one to overly play out the other as well as not seeking a conservative notion of equilibrium.

To contemplate notions of being and becoming also evokes the complex notion of desire' –as well as its interplay with self and other and agency and structure. Although McCash within the career studies literature opens up the modern matching metaphor of 'career', he still links to uncritical notions of 'desire'. For example, McCash (2008, pp. 39) utilises King (2004), to insist that the positioning behaviour of 'career' *should* have an imperative toward managing contracts, skills and experience so as to achieve one's *desired* career. What becomes apparent, when advocating life satisfaction, is that desire becomes an unproblematic and simplified notion held within the subjectivity of an individual – unfettered from outside influences – linking to a sense of underlying pre-ordained archetypes. However, Gelatt (1989) – once an advocator for agented rational decision making theory – highlights cautionary critique of presupposed desire, as what one wishes for may well be unattainable or overly

and covertly guided by cultural influences. When faced with the question of 'desire' one is to question

...how do we know what it is we desire? The answer to this may be because it (the object of desire) is desirable

Billington, 2003, pp. 125

Billington invites us to contemplate that there are cultural imperatives when contemplating desire and that it is forever out of reach due to the cruel illusory psychology that places us in a state of eternal angst (Billington, 2003; Nettle, 2005, p45). Once inviting contemplations of 'desire', aspects of inhabited culture, and thus 'other', come into play. The isolated contemplation of 'self' therefore does not take into account the influence of 'other', where thought of the other is problematic to the point of being impossible. Caputo (2000) asserts that the 'self's' notions of 'other' become entwined with a sense of 'self'. What becomes apparent is the 'self's' interplay with 'other', via interaction with 'other', invites an understanding of difference. To contemplate our difference with the other is to venture toward alterity, to acknowledge such alterity so as not to shape toward our own wishes, to become unprepared for such alterity, however:

How is one to prepare for the coming of the other? Is not the other, as other, the one for whom one is precisely not prepared? Does not preparation relieve the other of his or her or its alterity so that, if we are prepared, then what comes is not other but the same, just what we are expecting? Would not extending true hospitality toward the other involve a certain unconditionality in which one is prepared for anything, which means that one is not prepared? Is the only adequate preparation for the coming of the other to confess that we cannot be prepared for what is coming?

Caputo, 2000, pp. 41

Such problematisation evokes paradox, where paradox draws also toward the very notion of reflexivity and that which appears to be a 'natural' predicament for the self, as indicated in Royle's (2008) reading of Derrida's notions of the 'self'. Royle (ibid, pp. 54) suggests that:

Hearing oneself speak – that is to say, even if one is keeping silent listening to oneself in the interiority of one's own head, keeping an ear out, so to speak, in order to be able to hear oneself think – hearing oneself speak is perhaps 'the most natural thing in the world', we also know, or think we know, that hearing oneself speak is not 'really' in the world at all: we like to think and feel that it doesn't involve having to 'pass through what is outside the sphere of "ownness" in any way.

Royle is alluding to what Derrida calls 'the regime of normal hallucination' - "To hear one-self is the most normal and the most impossible experience" (ibid, pp. 54). Under such a lens our sense of autonomy and self-reflexivity becomes problematized. The important point here is that to bring forth a so called 'intrinsic desire', a desire that can come from an individual's subjectivity, an underlying archetype, untouched from cultural influence - prevalent in managerial and planning strategies to career as well as underlying in aspects of the career studies literature – *promotes an overt notion of being over becoming, self over other and agency over structure*. The self is therefore presented in a fashion that knows and is 'prepared' for alterity by an un-acknowledgment of 'other' within 'self' – and vice-versa - so as to promote a beguiling 'ghost within the machine' (Ryle, 1949).

To summarise; Section 2.1 has explored varied perspectives upon the complex concept of 'career' paying attention to the career literature's presentation of theory and pedagogic approaches. This section has explored how linear notions of career – which at times become disguised via 'boundaryless' depictions - have embraced the logic of enlightened rational progress which succumbs to the narrow vista of work and a rhetorical promise of a brighter future, where progress is seen via the imperative of speed of change. It has also highlighted how perspectives that challenge such assumptions succumb to a logic of 'equilibrium', as well

as touching upon how the literature addresses the notion of being and becoming, self and other and agency and structure. This section has argued that when contemplating such concepts the career literature has considered these as separate entities, as a result the literature has succumbed to an adherence to philosophical questions of ‘how should’ career be lived rather than ‘how might’ career be lived, even when considering career via notions of ‘chaos’? Before moving toward how notions of paradox may aid career reading the document will provide an exploration into the context of the study, the Massification of HE under a regime of widening of participation.

2.2. The Widening of Participation of HE and its potential normative embourgeoisement of the population

As this study is to explore the career articulations and enactment of a small sample of contemporary HE students, it is worth noting that the sample is made up of a number of participants that are the first generation in their family to attend university and therefore are likely to be characterised as students that fit ‘Widening Participation’ policy initiatives. This section accounts for the premise that the participants within the study are situated actors positioned within a marketised HE sector, a sector that has experienced the widening of participation, especially within post 1992 universities. This setting is one influenced by neo-liberal forces that potentially cajole the subject to shape their own identity (Giddens, 1991), one where class collectiveness has been dissolved yet class position and social divisions are still acknowledged (See Furlong, 2009; Bathmaker et al, 2013). Within this section a contemplation of such social assemblages is to take place, to consider how the biographies of the participants are likely to be influenced by important social characteristics, even when absent from their accounts. The section starts with an exploration of widening participation policy since the late twentieth century and then to consider how this has occurred at a time where class consciousness has been dissolved, yet such social assemblages have not loosened their influence.

Within the UK, since the end of the 20th century, there has been an emergence of education policy that seeks to widen participation within the HE sector, where policy has interacted with the elongation of Youth experienced in OECD countries due to post-industrialisation with its

subsequent changes to labour markets (Furlong and Cartmel, 2007; Thomas, 2005; Furlong, 2009; Côté, 2014). Consideration of the participants 'status' within the life course is of importance, as the participants are undergraduate students within a full time course. Therefore notions of 'youth' transitions come to the fore, especially since the decline of mature students since the tripling of fees (HESA, 2018). Within the sociological discourse of 'Youth Studies' one is to account for how 'youth' is a complex and debated concept, to the point that it is to be considered a "floating Signifier" (Côté, 2014, pp. 63) which may change due to the context under analysis. Within the UK youth is to be officially limited to the age of 16-19 (Bynner et al, 2002, in Côté, 2014), whereas, in much of Europe – in particular Norway and Finland - it may be defined to last until age 29 (Wolf et al., 2004; Ministry of Education Finland, 2008 in Côté, 2014). A construction of the term youth therefore depends upon setting and its relation to adulthood, where youth is seen as a period in flux, elongated between notions of dependency – be it financially, politically or upon family/community relations – and independency (Pole et al 2005; Côté 2014; Furlong and Cartmel 2007). Côté (2014) accounts for how in the UK the neo-liberal influence - instilled by the Thatcher administration onwards, emphasising a shift of fiscal responsibilities from governments and the wealthy to individuals and their families - has resulted in UK governments being less willing to provide financial entitlements to its young people to offset their economic disadvantages compared to Norwegian and Finish equivalents. Such notions are important to take into account in relation to the participants of this study and how education becomes an important institutional endeavour that interrelates with such status and its interaction with labour markets. Such elongation of education and youth therefore interconnects with widening participation policy, particularly since the late twentieth century. From a policy perspective, Thomas (2005) provides a useful historical analysis of the emergence of Widening Participation policy in the late 1990s, which is to be viewed as a renaissance period for widening participation, a period that appears to rhetorically seize opportunities so as to radically change HE so as to overcome elitism and exclusion. Such an agenda faces the challenge of changing well established institutions to incorporate a range of diverse needs of a broader constituency of learners (Thomas, 2005, pp. 1). Before such notions of widening participation universities were the preserve of the minority of the population where the UK participation rates in post-compulsory education in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s accounted for less than 20 per cent of school leavers and where no more than 5 per cent of the relevant

age group entered HE in the 1950s (Thomas , 2005, pp. 1), very different from the New Labour administration's aspiration – present during the midst of the 'renaissance' period - for 50% of 19 year olds to access HE (Furlong and Cartmel 2007). The widening of participation is promoted via economic arguments very much under the imperative of increasing human capital, very much in line with functionalist arguments (see Côté, 2014), where education is seen as an unquestioned contributor to skills and qualities that feed into the labour market. The notion of widening participation via this lens is that a more educated population will provide a more skilled workforce capable of meeting the demands of a post-industrial society. Such visions of human capital have been heavily criticised via critical/ Neo-Marxist approaches which question the need for prolonged forms of credential-based education, arguing that the main purpose of education is to seek the status-quo of social-class structures and the preservation of a large mass of surplus labour and opportunities to amass wealth by Capital (see Côté, 2014). A growth in university provision across OECD countries has resulted in some commentators to question the latent functions of education via the lens of the hidden curriculum and notions of indoctrination (see Bowles and Gintis, 1976, 2011 in Côté, 2014) especially given the notion of underemployment experienced in many OECD countries (Kallerberg, 2007, in Côté 2014) and experiences of unemployment since the global financial crisis of 2008 (International Labour Office, 2012, 2013 see Côté 2014). What is to be questioned – from a socio-political stance - is whether youth transitions within education have become a new “filter” of “social reproduction, with credential attainment acting as a smokescreen, obscuring structural obstacles by attributing success and failure to specific attributes of the individual in making youth transitions” (Côté, 2014. pp. 80). Although liberal notions of social justice within Widening Participation policy present a picture of social mobility, these views still succumb to economic imperatives via notions of limiting the risk of social unrest and disturbance, particularly at a time where the youth labour market has seen a considerable decline of opportunity (Furlong and Cartmel, 2007). Education therefore becomes perceived as an important mechanism in the endeavours of UK and European governments to overcome what has been termed 'social exclusion' (see Thomas and Jones, 2000; Leney, 1999, in Thomas 2005). However, whilst the widening of learning opportunities to non-traditional groups may well provide opportunities to increase social and cultural capital, it may well at the same time be viewed as a means of normalisation and control (see, for example, Woodrow, 2000; Preece, 1999 in Thomas 2005, pp. 3). What becomes apparent

is that Thomas' historical account resonates with Roberts' (1997) notions of a normalisation process in contemporary society where social structures have become restructured as opposed to a rhetorical sense of destructure, where policy motivation to widen the benefits of education may be based on a normative embourgeoisement of the population (Walkerdine, 2003).

Furlong (2009) considers the interplay between agency and structure, within the sociological literature, where the late twentieth century saw dramatic shifts in the emphasis of such dual entities and its relation to 'class'. Furlong suggests that the seminal works of Beck and Giddens in the 1990s asserted a move from an emphasis upon structure – to be found in much literature in the 70s and 80s, which first accounts for youth transitions becoming complex and elongated in conjunction with a rise in youth unemployment – toward a notion of individualisation and a rise in the emphasis of agency. Such a shift in emphasis for Furlong accounted for a change in metaphors used in the literature from 'trajectory' to 'navigation' when considering youth transitions. Furlong suggests that such a shift in emphasis may well assert too much of a prominence upon agency with class becoming, in the words of Beck (1992), a 'zombie' concept. Furlong does not wish to overly emphasise the notion of structure and social determination, rather that he wishes to express how 'class' may still be pervasive within youth transitions. Furlong suggests this is apparent when exploring transitions in relation to HE. Within contemporary society many young people will experience HE where class-based experiences are still of importance, due to elite routes, through upper secondary school and into prestigious universities, being "still dominated by the middle classes", while secondary routes toward sub-degree courses or "undergraduate study in one of the ex-Polytechnics are largely a preserve of working classes and lower middle classes" (Furlong 2009, pp. 4). It is also of note that attainment, conditioned by social, cultural and economic resources, may also influence an avoidance of elite institutions.

Such changes within labour and educational markets have therefore influenced the sociological discourse on youth transitions so as to reconsider the social considerations at play. Furlong wishes to assert that such changes require an accounting for individualisation, yet at the same time, class is still a prevailing consideration, particularly in relation to access

to HE where there are segmentations across class, ethnic and gender lines (see also EHRC 2010 and 2015). Furlong is keen to highlight that there is a distinction between pre and post 1992 universities, vocational and academic subjects and employment destinations, where some courses lead to employment with higher wages compared to others. It is apparent that certain elite institutions are for the preserve of privileged individuals. Other forms of divisions occur across the student body, for example, those that are financially supported by family as opposed to students that have to provide an income whilst studying. Furlong questions the student perception of such divisions and asserts that although this may not necessarily be recognised as class stratification, students are aware of divisions and that their situation may differ to others and that peer interactions are to be shaped by such divisions and that the “language of class is frequently invoked by students as an explanation for differential experiences” (Ball et al, 2002; Christie et al, 2005; Reay, 2007; Furlong and Cartmel, 2009 all in Furlong 2009, pp. 8).

Furlong accounts that individuals in late modern society seek for individual solutions, which are still strongly shaped by social class, gender and ethnicity. Furlong asserts that class is still alive and kicking, and is still a valid analytic approach that can utilise information on structural location, a means of investigating outcomes, an analytic which young people are aware of in relation to resources and life chances. Furlong (2009), in line with other commentators of youth transitions in late modernity e.g. Roberts (1997) and Côté (2014), suggests that prolonged engagement within education has required young people to develop a learner identity, where they are to be encouraged to describe themselves as students, a role that is to entwine with other strands in their life and communities that they come into contact with, in the past, present and future, where class and the potential for social mobility is to be contemplated. Such social mobility, Furlong asserts, is not to cast aside a working class identity, but to accommodate new experiences within a narrative that respects their working class roots, where outcomes are

...not simply linked to the material resources of class, but also to a set of subjective capacities through which individuals are differentially equipped to manage their lives.

Furlong 2009, pp .10

With the massification and widening of participation of HE, contemporary employment and education policy has provided a focus upon student transition into and beyond undergraduate study (Gale and Parker, 2014; Vigurs et al, 2016;). Gale and Parker (2014) account how transition literature falls into three categories, where there is an emphasis on: accounts of programs designed to assist students, particularly in the first year of HE (e.g. Heirdsfield et al, 2008; Hultberg et al, 2009; Kift, 2009; Tinto, 2008 in Gale and Parker, 2014); quantitative and qualitative analyses of HE students (e.g. Hillman, 2005; Krause and Coates 2008; McInnis, James, and McNaught, 1995 in Gale and Parker, 2014); theoretically informed conceptualisations of transitions, “including but importantly extending beyond formal education contexts” (e.g. Colley, 2007; Ecclestone, 2009; Quinn, 2010; Worth, 2009 in Gale and Parker, 2014, p735). Transition, via Gale and Parker’s conceptions, therefore correspondingly falls into three categories where transition is viewed as either induction, development, or becoming. Gale and Parker’s constructions therefore become useful as a means of critiquing such literature, particularly the first two variants, where there is an emphasis on the notion of career – although not operationalised – that does not follow predictable linear conceptions, and where student voices and experiences have limited exposure within the literature to influence policy. Gale and Parker therefore emphasise the requirement for institution’s to ‘adapt’ so as to become more inclusive and appreciative of diversity rather than relying on the adaptations of individual students. However, Gale and Parker appear to conflate the notion of transition with change, via their definition of transition as “*the capability to navigate change*” (2014, pp. 737, original emphasis). Via these notions, Gale and Parker do not consider what or who is to constitute the significance of such changes, where change could be a continual everyday occurrence, e.g. change of clothes, change of location or change of weather. Such a conflation therefore limits insight into how ‘transition as becoming’ is to be contemplated, especially in considering its paradoxical relationship with ‘being’. Gale and Parker accept, utilising the work of Sotirin (2005), that becoming has the ability to ‘explode’ ideas about what we are and what we can be beyond the categories that seem to contain us, where becoming “offers a radical conception of what a life does” (Sotirin

2005, pp. 99 in Gale and Parker, 2012, pp. 745). Therefore, greater exposure of becoming's relationship with being provides a deeper insight into when and how 'change', or episodes of 'change', is to be contemplated, and, or are of significance. Becoming via Gale and Parker's lens therefore tends to succumb to the warnings articulated in Section 2.1, where a strong adherence to becoming can provide a sense of startlement (See Love 2008a) which may still succumb to the implicit rhetoric of 'change' inherent in capitalist society, where the 'new' and 'new be-comings' become structurally framed potentially beguiling individuals to have a sense of 'freedom' and 'becoming' which may well assert actions that adhere to economic and capitalistic imperatives. This document therefore concludes, as already presented, that *transition is to be viewed as a subset of career, where significant life episodes provoke an individual, or individuals, to contemplate the paradoxical relationship between being and becoming.*

The Future Track study is one study (Purcell et al, 2012) which provides a longitudinal view upon undergraduate transition. Its focus is on how students, which applied in 2005/06 to go to university, have 'progressed' from the application stage to 6 months post-graduation. A particular interest is how this cohort compared to previous students as it is acknowledged that this cohort have the additional challenge of transitioning into a labour market experiencing one of the worst recessions within history. The study utilised a large sample of approximately 130,000 participants that it considers covers different categories – such as ethnic groups, subject groups, or types of HE institution – so as to be able to draw conclusions confidently about the impact of different variables on experiences and outcomes. The study is considered to provide important quantitative and qualitative data which it collected via on-line surveys. Such a panoramic view provides some useful policy data – e.g. that 75% of students feel they have gained skills that employers want. However, given its methodological focus – which Gale and Parker would classify as 'transition as development' - the study does not provide sufficient detail of how 'career' - which is not operationalised and appears to be underpinned by modern assumptions, where career is equated with work and the paradigm of career choice - is lived as an experience. The Future Track Study also does not cover a cohort that are having to pay the increased fees introduced in 2011. A more contemporary study of student transitions is conducted by Vigurs et al (2016). This study provides a

comparison of the experiences of graduands who paid the full fees post 2012 and those paying the lower fee utilising semi-structured interviews - 26 students across the sample attending Russell Group universities and 22 a post 1992 university. Vigurs et al acknowledge that student finance policy in the UK HE sector has radically changed over the past twenty years where such changes are becoming a focus for a growing body of education research (Bowl and Hughes, 2014; Bachan, 2014; Wakeling and Jefferies, 2013; Wilkins et al, 2012; Dearden et al, 2011; Moore et al, 2011; McCaig, 2010; Callender and Jackson, 2008 in Vigurs et al, 2016). Vigurs et al suggest that such studies provide a perspective upon enrolment behaviour and the beginning of students' HE careers – in line with Gale and Parkers notion of induction and development. However Vigurs et al wish to provide an insight into how the most recent increase in tuition fees and changes to student loans, since 2012, have affected the views of graduands and their anticipated perceptions of future career trajectory – in line with Gale and Parker's schema of 'becoming'. Critical of the new fee regime Vigurs et al assert how changes to English graduates of 2015 have incurred approximately £44,000 in student debt, compared to £26,000 in 2014, thus an accident of birth of just one academic year can nearly double a student's debt. Utilising the work of Crawford and Jin (2014) Vigurs et al point out that "almost 75% of students who graduate in 2015 will never earn enough to pay back their loans in full" (2016, pp. 2). Vigurs et al are keen to point out that not many students are likely to be fully aware of the terms and conditions of their student debt and that this may have consequences in relation to future anticipation of career trajectory. The study therefore concentrates on how perceptions of debt may influence 'career choices' before and after entry to university. The report highlights that Post 1992 graduands are more likely to be on vocational courses, experience financial difficulties and being in extensive paid employment whilst studying than their Russell Group counterparts. The report also highlights that post 1992 students are also more nervous and anxious when considering university and navigating such a transition and are more willing to take 'any' job when graduating from university which has reconfigured the notion of a 'gap year' from one of exploration and volunteering to one of consolidation of debt for many widening participation students. The report highlights how the rise in fees has exacerbated issues of anxiety in regards to postgraduate transitions and in particular student financial futures as indicated below:

There was a higher sense of urgency with the 2015 group in terms of finding ways to earn money as soon as possible after graduation, if not before. Of course, this did not apply to all of the 2015 students. Those students who had secured paid employment (graduate job or otherwise) or who could rely on the support of their families, often demonstrated feeling more comfortable with financial concerns postgraduation, although most acknowledged that, given the higher levels of debt, they would feel very worried if these protective mechanisms and support systems were not in place

Vigurs et al, 2016, pp. 21

The report asserts how students from non-traditional backgrounds and lower social strata perceive fewer opportunities and make unprepared choices based on an unclear image of the potential opportunities of their graduate futures. This can therefore be viewed as a potential mechanism of inequity in higher education having a domino effect upon graduate outcomes. Such findings are in line with the work of Bathmaker et al (2013) highlighting how class may well have a bearing upon the student life career, how university might provide useful cultural capital gained, yet still operates within certain class boundaries. Therefore the widening of participation in HE has resulted in what Roberts would describe as a restructure of societal structures rather than a 'destructure' (1997), thus keeping enduring class divisions in place.

Section 2.2 has accounted for how the participants are situated actors that are to construct their own career biographies within a policy regime of widening participation and via neo-liberal forces that cajole the subject to shape their own identity, one where class collectiveness has been dissolved yet class position is still acknowledged. Notions of class are considered and articulated via the participants of the research, what becomes of interest is how this interrelates with notions of work, especially as undergraduates in anticipation of 'work' and 'shaping up' to a future work role and identity, are an important aspect of youth transitions. Such anticipation, provoked via the institutionally inscribed transitional moment of graduation, is likely, for the sample under consideration, to contemplate paid work within the caring professions, as this is a very likely destination for Youth Studies students and is

apparent in the articulations of the participants that ensue. The next section therefore provides a review of important literature on care and professional practice.

2.3. The emotional economy of care within ‘professional’ career enactment – a tension between intentional affectual return and social mobility

Care with its etymology based within notions of ‘to grieve’ is an important concept within this study, one that is heavily linked to the sample but also one likely to have transference for other under and postgraduates. Section 2.3 therefore explores the work of Tronto to consider care from the perspectives of a cognitive disposition as well as a form of practice and enactment. The exploration of Tronto’s work, a prominent writer in the care arena, is placed under a Derridean deconstructive reading to acknowledge that care can be viewed as an economic activity, one that involves exchange, recursively linked to financial as well as emotional symmetry. Such a deconstructive reading therefore brings into question the humanistic dimensions of Tronto’s literature - in line with the epistemological stance of this thesis. It is via notions of the ‘other’ and the duality of ‘gift’ and ‘economy’ that notions of care can consider its paradoxical dimensions. A gift, in Derrida’s view, when acknowledged is always annulled and tainted. When one is given a gift there is a sense that the gift must be repaid, that the receiver is somehow in debt. Even the giving of a ‘thank you’ is to try and assert that the articulated gratitude in some way pays semblance to the given gift (Derrida and Caputo, 1996).

What becomes apparent when exploring the articulations of the sample in this longitudinal study is how they speak highly of their value of ‘care’. Care becomes an important marker of the life career as both a preoccupation and an occupation of time. Many of the accounts highlight how the participants have experienced turbulent episodes in their life which required the help and care of someone in their community, this provides a yearning for the participants to want to care for others and provide a sense of ‘giving back’ – completing an emotional economy of care yet via the guise of a gift – see Section 5. ‘Care’ thus becomes an important attribute to take to educational and labour markets in the exchange of emotional recall as well as financial reward. Derrida expresses that the giving of a gift can taint the

concept of the gift. If the gift is given as a means of gaining a return this is by no means a gift, if a gift is given so as to satisfy a sense of self-righteousness, which could be a prominent aspect of 'care', again, the gift is made void and thus becomes economy, a sense of equal exchange (Derrida and Caputo, 1996) such a duality brings to the fore questions as to the intention and parameters of care giving and how this is to be contemplated as part of career enactment – a prominent focus of the sample within this project.

Care is a phenomena that is hard to define and there is limited literature exploring its dimensions as a concept. The work of Fisher and Tronto (1990), who acknowledge that there is no systemic and conclusive definition of 'care' within the literature, provide a feminist and humanist critique of capitalistic modes of care, thus arguing for an 'ethics of care' where care can be viewed as a potentially universal activity that helps to maintain and 'repair our world' so as to...

...live in it as *well* as possible. That world includes our bodies, ourselves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web (Fisher and Tronto, 1990, pp. 40 my emphasis).

The intent to live 'well' is of prominent focus in Fisher and Tronto's work where care provides a sense of sustainability, leading to the question of who is to judge such 'wellness'? How or what is to be sustained and why? This provides an impetus toward the ethical, to consider power dynamics and power relations to account for such a judgment. Taking a feminist stance Tronto wants to make apparent that care is imbued as a female activity throughout much of history, emphasised by the activities of "mother's *work*, to welfare agencies, or to hired domestic servants" (Tronto 1993, pp. 17, my emphasis). Such activity thus becomes gendered and this therefore links in concert with historical accounts of 'woman's' work' and its supposed financial value – which more often than not is judged by men. Care is thus positioned as functional 'work' rather than an art or play, placing it firmly within the realm of the homo faber as opposed to homo luden – to take on-board historian views on human

action such as Huizinga (1948) or Mumford's divide (1967 and 1970)¹. Such historical categorisation therefore places women's work toward servitude. Tronto wishes to widen the lens upon care, and its enactment, so as to highlight how concerns about care permeate our daily lives and the institutions found within the 'modern marketplace' and 'the corridors of government'. It is here that Tronto makes apparent the prominent power dynamics of care within society.

As a result, caring is greatly undervalued in our culture in the assumption that caring is somehow "women's work," in perceptions of caring occupations, in the wages and salaries paid to workers engaged in provision of care, in the assumption that care is menial. One of the central tasks for people interested in care is to change the overall public value associated with care. When our public values and priorities reflect the role that care actually plays in our lives, our world will be organized quite differently.

Tronto, 1993, pp. 16

It is apparent that care does not occur within a social vacuum, it is a political activity, one that writers such as Tronto wish for us to re-evaluate from a radical feminist perspective. Another writer that considers such dimensions is Gilligan (1982) who suggests that modern conceptions of care provides 2 major moral accounts; an ethics of justice and an ethics of care. Utilitarian and Kantian abstract principles emphasising rights and duties thus influence notions of an ethics of justice adhering to a sense of impartiality and rationality. However from another perspective an ethics of care highlights a recursive relationship between responsibility and duty; relationships and principles. Such perspectives highlight the importance of the context in which care occurs (Gilligan, 1982 and Tronto, 1993 – see Barnard, 2017). Such an ethics of care is therefore extended to include five phases (Toronto 1993, pp. 127):

¹ Such historian's suggest that human action can be classified into two major activities homo faber – man the worker – and homo luden – man the player. The implication here is that the activity of homo luden provides an innovative and transcendent quality, a 'what if' quality, providing deviance from pre-ordained rules, whilst the homo faber provides a servitude to an existing order, to consolidate its order without question, thus subsidiary in regards to imagination (see Rojek, 2005, pp. 47).

- 1 Attentiveness: noticing the need for care in the first place – actively seeking awareness of others and their needs and point of view (of caring about).
- 2 Responsibility: assuming responsibility for care – with responsibility being embedded in a set of implicit cultural practices, rather than a set of formal rules (taking care of).
- 3 Competency: the actual work of care that needs to be done – one's ability to do something about another's needs (care giving).
- 4 Responsiveness: the response of a person who is cared for to the care giving – remaining alert to the possibilities of abuse that arise from the care receiver's vulnerability.
- 5 Integrity of care: the four phases fitting together as a whole, involving knowledge of the context of the care process and making judgements about conflicting needs and strategies. These judgements require assessment of need in social and political and personal contexts.

Therefore when considering 'career' enactment one may consider what the impetus and motivation is to provide and enact 'care', to be attentive toward care, in comparison to other engagement? Who and how do individuals become positioned to be 'responsible' to 'care'? How do societal mechanisms assign roles to provide care and how might social forces cajole certain individuals toward such roles? What formal and informal pedagogical mechanisms might be at play for individuals to learn the skills and attributes to care? As already acknowledged care may well be provided as a gift, a sense of providing a service to another that seeks no return, yet Derrida suggests that this is 'impossible', that the giving of a service comes with a return, either a financial reward, or a sense of gratitude from the receiver or a sense of self-righteousness of the giver in doing what is deemed to be 'right' or 'needed'. By opening up the duality of gift and economy this project wishes to consider continental accounts of care - from Heidegger (1962) through to Levinas (1985) - via notions of responsibility - and Derrida via hospitality and the duality of gift and economy (see Derrida

and Caputo, 1996). Such accounts challenge the humanistic perspective evoked via Gilligan and Tronto; to challenge essentialist notions of knowing what it is to be human or the meaning of human nature, as Sedgwick (2001, pp. 166) denotes:

If we take the notion of 'human' as signifying something that is predetermined, as meaning something like 'self-conscious' and 'free willed', and base our account of ethics upon this, are we not already presupposing too much?

What this section provokes is useful considerations when reading career enactment and articulation, especially in consideration of the sample in this study where care is of a focus of concern, where care is to be viewed as a complex phenomenon one which provokes contradiction, tension and paradox, acknowledged by Tronto.

When people recognize that care is a complex process with many components, it becomes possible to avoid either despairing about care or romanticizing it. Care is more likely to be filled with inner contradictions, conflict, and frustration than it is to resemble the idealized interactions of mother and child or teacher and student or nurse and patient.

Tronto, 1993, pp. 17

Care may well provide a tension between the 'giver' and 'receiver', also, care may well provide a tension within both interlocutors, a sense of whether one is right to provide care or whether one feels disenabled via the receiving of care thus evoking the potential for paradoxes to be found within the career articulations of both care givers and receivers. It is by deconstructing and challenging humanist perspectives that care can consider the complex duality of gift and economy, where a sense of otherness can come into play, to not presuppose that which is human and how one 'ought' to behave – linking to the duality of the should and the might presented earlier. Care with its etymology rooted in grief has to also acknowledge the gift of

death, where death ends the emotional economy of care where there is to be no affectual return as:

No matter how successfully we care for ourselves or others, human life ends in death.

Tronto, 1993, pp. 18

The career dynamic of care is thus complex and multidimensional imbued with paradoxes, hinging in particular upon the duality of gift and economy. With a focus upon employability and a credentialised HE curriculum, care becomes a milieu to economise such activity, to provide a vocational impetus to professionalise caring roles within the care giving sector which have not been deemed as such before. Profession - rooted within the realms of the clergy, medicine and accounting (Clarke and Newman, 1997; Oakley, 1986) – provides a legitimisation of expertise, a symbolism that one is more skilled with a broader knowledge base greater than a ‘layperson’; due to a professional having to undertake a lengthy process of licensed, legitimised and inaugurated training and/or education. Profession provides an identificatory label, one that can communicate expertise quickly to another as well as providing a sense of esteem toward the self. The symbolism of the ‘profession’ is one that will provide a relational power with other, both other professionals within the same, as well as, different fields and the layperson, influencing the distribution of rewards, capital and esteem (Hoyle, 1975; Oakley, 1986; May and Buck, 1998; Seden et al, 2011). Such status therefore enables, as well as constrains, where the professional is required to follow normative and regulative processes, rules and policy, thus providing a tension between practice as an art, sensitive to its context and an acknowledgement of previous experiences and ‘intuition’, as well as a science adhering to espoused ‘scientific’ objective entrenched forms of ‘best’ previously ascribed practice (Scott, 2008, pp. 222; Parker and Bradley, 2003, pp. 4). With consideration of ‘care’ within the realm of the profession, it potentially becomes entwined in systemic and political networks, connected to the widening of HE which provides a flux of non-traditional graduates eagerly looking to fill newly calibrated ‘professional’ roles within a post-industrialised society, a situation that resonates with the sample under scrutiny in this study (Scalon, 2011; Furlong, 2009).

Section 2 of this document has taken into account the extensive literature review that has occurred in Documents 2, 3 and 4 as well as important additions found since the writing of Document 4. The review has provided insight into political, sociological and philosophical reading of the literature taking into account important contextual dimensions of career when considering the transitional experiences of HE students in a full fee regime in a post-crash world where many students graduating from an ex-polytechnic, studying Youth Studies, anticipate working within a 'caring profession'. The critical literature review that has taken place has demonstrated the benefit of how paradox, guided by a duality framework, may be a useful moment and space to consider and read career enactment, and thus an opportunity to enhance such reading via pedagogical interactions informed by theoretical contemplation. To complete the recursive connective relationship outlined in the introduction of this project - theory, research, pedagogy and practice – deeper exploration of the dialogical 'movement' of entities found within a duality framework is now to occur, so as to highlight further how paradox becomes an important contemplative moment to encourage critical readings of career. *The paradoxical nature of duality invites complexity and pushes conception to contemplate conclusions that contradict the entities and nature of its own inquiry.* The next section therefore analyses Derrida's notions of the relationship between time and space so as to highlight such 'movement' and paradox.

3. Philosophical architecture - the dialogical 'movement' of duality that evokes paradox

As indicated in the previous section this document argues for career to be explored as a lived experience. To analyse such an experience the document argues for the utilisation of a duality framework which was initially espoused in Document 2. The dualities utilised are those that can provide useful insights into the career literature. The section above has provided an initial analysis that highlights how the literature has a tendency to present concepts in a dichotomous nature. This section, is a means of highlighting the dialogical 'movement' that occurs between dual entities by exploring the duality of time and space, which is explicitly underexplored within much of the career literature. Advocating an exploration of this duality invites a consideration of the prominence of 'presence' within the career literature which

uncritically asserts structuralist and metaphysical notions. The duality of time and space is considered via an analysis of Derrida's notions of the entwined relationship between such important and fundamental conceptual parameters. As a result important Derridean concepts will be explored – i.e. *différance* and *trace*. The section will then briefly explore how such 'movement' can be considered in relation to the other dualities that could be utilised within a duality framework.

Inviting the paradoxical nature of dualities is to invite a multiplicity, complex, nuanced and critical reading of career, an intent to explore and challenge every day discourse and action; in particular by highlighting blind-spots within everyday binary systems, e.g. being and becoming (Derrida, 1978). To invite paradox is to move toward the endeavour of deconstruction, to decentre concepts, to question their meaning and historical tracing (Caputo, 2000), a challenge to structuralist modes of thought, which Derrida holds to be characteristic of Western metaphysics (Sedgwick 2001). Structuralism, in the 1960's, was a very prominent discourse within the academy, especially in France. In a number of famous essays published in 'Margins of Philosophy' (e.g. *Différance* and *Ousia* and *Gramme*) Derrida (1982) assertively advocates a 'move' away from the static and fixed nature of structuralism which he suggests privileges 'form' over 'force'; as Sedgwick denotes:

Structuralism can be defined as the privileging of the formal conditions governing meaning over the creative conditions that give rise to it.

(Sedgwick 2001, pp. 196)

Therefore Derrida asserts that structuralist accounts presuppose that that which is fixed, that which is stable, that which presents its self as an ontological norm is 'a defining feature of objectivity' (Sedgwick, 2001, pp. 197). Derrida (1982) though argues that our understanding of the world comes from a sense of difference - that concepts and words only make sense by understanding what they 'are' in relation to what they 'are' also 'not' - therefore concepts such as being and becoming and light and dark tend to incorporate a binary sense of hierarchisation, e.g. 'being' historically asserted as having more prominence than 'becoming' (Derrida, 1982; Gray, 2004). This further accounts for a privileging of literal language over metaphorical language. Derrida wishes to expose that the understanding of the so called

‘literal’ is to take the form of metaphor via language and its interplay within unfolding structural relations in a constant inter-play of differing and deferring. For Derrida it is metaphorical ‘play’ that is so inherent in the production of meaning (Sedgwick, 2001, pp. 206). The important notion here is that binaristic hierarchisation can provide an oppressive and limited lens upon our world-view. Deconstruction can therefore be viewed as an intent to think ‘that’ which cannot be thought due to already contradicting that which appears to be considered entwined, yet, also separate (Royle, 2008), where meaning is not a matter that concerns only so-called ‘literal’ language, rather, “meaning is produced by a process of simultaneous differing and deferring” (Sedgwick, 2001, pp. 206) Derrida’s notion of *différance*. Meaning therefore involves ‘movement’ – in this case ‘between’, ‘within’ and ‘without’ the pre-mentioned dual entities of the dualities presented – that which never comes to rest as it depends on differing and deferral.

An exploration of Derrida’s (1982) *Ousia and Gramme* can provide a useful means of exploring such conceptual ‘movement’ before demonstrating how this could be applied to explore ‘career’, so as to avoid dichotomous notions of ‘career’ – present within much of the career literature. It is in this text that Derrida provides an analysis of the history of metaphysics where the Western metaphysical tradition has always privileged presence over non-presence. Derrida accounts that non-presence within this history has always been thought of in “the form of presence (it would suffice to say simply in *form*)” (ibid, pp. 34). For example when considering temporality, accounts of the past and the future are always defined by their relation to the present and presence.

From Parmenides to Husserl, the privilege of the present has never been put into question

Derrida 1982, pp. 34

It is via Derrida’s analysis of ‘time’, and its relationship to ‘space’, that Derrida further asserts that meaning, reason and ‘good’ sense have been produced by the grounding of presence, where no experience, by definition, can ever depart. Of prominence in Derrida’s analysis is the writing of Aristotle’s ‘Physics IV’ where a contemplation of time is taken. It is here that Aristotle’s *aporia* based on the principal of *nun*, the now, is put into question

The now is determined as the intemporal kernel of time, the nonmodifiable nucleus of temporal modification, the inalterable form of temporization. Time is what overtakes this nucleus, in affecting it with no-thing.

Derrida 1982, pp. 40

The *nun*, for Aristotle, Derrida asserts, provides ‘punctuality’, a means of determining the now as a point. However, this becomes problematic, a point in time, the supposed present, is not possible as it is to be destroyed by that which is to come-to be – the future – and that which has ceased to be – the past.

Derrida seeks to deconstruct the *nun*, the now, its supposed punctuality, so as to explore its paradox. Derrida asserts that Aristotle opens up such paradox, yet, to conclude via presence. The initial opening of the paradox comes via the interplay of the sensual and non-sensual, which Derrida asserts provides the premise of a thought of time no longer privileging the present.

It is because time does not belong to beings, is no more part of them than its determination of them, and because time is not of (phenomenal or noumenal) being in general, that it must be made into a *pure* form of sensibility (the nonsensuous sensuous).

Derrida 1982, pp. 48

It is important at this juncture to dive deeper into this analysis so as to advocate its influence upon this project, a means of demonstrating ‘movement’ between the framework’s dualities so as to aid analytic and pedagogic exploration.

For presence to be contemplated, to become contemplated, one has to pin one’s ‘sense’ of Being as a being. Presence, contemplated as a sense of now, as a punctuated ‘spatialized’ point, initially and thus inevitably becomes isolated. An infinitesimal point though cannot be divided – as this will ensue the becoming of an other point, an other now. If isolated, such a ‘point’, within a ‘conceived’ isolation, thus does not acknowledge that which is ‘outside’,

other 'connecting' nows, other 'presence', the presence to-come and the presence that has ceased to be no-longer. For such presence to coexist becomes impossible as such presence as coexistence with other presence, only has meaning in a unity of a single same now.

This is *meaning*, sense itself, in what unites meaning to presence. One cannot even say that the coexistence of two different and equally present nows is impossible or unthinkable

Derrida 1982, pp. 54-55

Following Derrida's notion leads to the now being the impossibility of co-existing '*with itself*' an other self, an other now, an other same, a double. This provides the possibility of impossibility – paradox. Therefore Derrida concludes – for the time being – that

Time is a name for this impossible possibility

Derrida 1982, pp. 55

The 'point', in its spatialized form, as initially presented, therefore, incorporates time, as the co-existing of spatial points occurring temporally.

The *with* of spatial coexistence arises only out of the *with* of temporalization.

Derrida 1982, pp. 55

As accounted for by Hegel and Heidegger, as Derrida acknowledges, one cannot treat space *and* time as two separate concepts. Derrida spends time contemplating and critiquing the spatialized concepts of time, and, how measurements of movement consider time but are not time. He moves toward an assertion that the Aristotelian aporia challenges the notion of time as presence but fails to fully do so. Therefore Derrida asserts that the now, the present,

Therefore, does not define the essence of time.

Derrida 1982, pp. 55

Derrida concludes that the concept of time 'belongs to metaphysics' where it names the 'domination of presence'. Such dominance for Derrida suggests that...

The entire system of metaphysical concepts, throughout its history, develops the so-called "vulgarity" of the concept of time... but also that an *other* concept of time cannot be opposed to it, since time in general belongs to the metaphysical conceptuality. In attempting to produce this *other* concept, one rapidly would come to see that it is constructed out of the other metaphysical or ontheological predicates.

Derrida 1982, pp. 65

Derrida does not therefore intend to invert to a privilege of absence, as absence provides 'nothing' to 'think' about or would become a negative mode of presence – in danger of reverting to a privilege of presence. It is here that Derrida brings into play his notion of the *trace*.

In order to exceed metaphysics it is necessary that a trace be inscribed within the text of metaphysics, a trace that continues to signal not a direction of another presence, or another form of presence, but in the direction of an entirely other text.

Derrida 1982, pp. 65

Where the trace, Derrida cautions, provides no 'philosopheme' that is prepared to master presence, where presence is only to be mastered. It is here that Derrida asserts that the trace is a movement of difference that provides the condition of possibility of thinking, as without the trace there is

...no sense, no signification, no speaker, no thought as such. Yet, at the same time, the trace is none of these. Rather, it indicates a fundamental possibility of repetition...that is inherent in the production of meaning.

Sedgwick, 2001, pp. 207

It is useful at this juncture to consider how such a deconstruction of presence relates to career theory, how much of the career theory literature succumbs to the guardrails of the metaphysics of presence, reliant on that which is made 'present' 'within' career. Absence, or perceived absence, may therefore be an important aspect of 'career' which is rarely reflected upon in the career development literature, where an absence of a father, an absence of a child, another, a job, a leisure pursuit, a yearning for a becoming that has not come. One may be absent to such an absence? One may well have gained a 'presence' and then lost such a presence, the losing of a parent, a child, another, a coming-to-be. Such notions are something that is reflected upon in this project via its deconstructive endeavour.

Derrida's notions of the relationship between time and space invite paradox, an attention to context, place, temporality, the supposed appearance of form, force which creates 'form's' trace and resulting in a community of the question (Derrida, 1978 in Love, 2008). It is via the notions of Derrida, as described above, that the duality framework presented takes its influence, especially taking into account how dualities evoke paradox and how paradox becomes an important methodological analytic moment in relation to career. It does so, so as to question important parameters that are perceived to influence 'career' inviting 'movement' – in this case 'between', 'within' and 'without' the pre-mentioned 'entities' that constitute a duality - which never comes to rest as it depends on differing and deferral. The intention of the document is to now briefly consider aspects of how such a framing, a focus upon paradox, focused via the pre-mentioned dualities, can be utilised methodologically, to provide illustrations via the participant accounts that have been traced, deconstructively read to provide another reading and trace.

4. Method(ology)

Much of the document so far has already indicated its ontological and epistemological stance – an important aspect of methodology (Henn et al, 2009; Bryman, 2004; Crotty, 1998). Ontologically career is viewed as a lived experience with paradox viewed as an ontological aspect of career articulation. Epistemologically this thesis asserts that one way we can begin to know how to contemplate such a complex multifaceted experience is via the post-structural philosophy of Derrida that highlights the interplay and 'movement' between

entities of the already mentioned dualities, a movement that provides 'paradox', an important moment, space, motif of deconstructive reading. This section therefore will pick up such notions so as to move toward how such philosophical underpinnings will influence further aspects of methodology – i.e. sample, method of data capture to provide illustration, the reading of such data, ethics and researcher reflexivity. This section therefore is to summarise, recount and utilise extracts from the methodology sections within Documents 2, 3 and 4 so as to highlight the important dimensions of the methodology utilised throughout the project and how such methodology also informed the final phase of the longitudinal project – new 'data' collected for Document 5.

The aim of this longitudinal and exploratory research project is to explore the career articulations of a small yet detailed sample of participants. The project has involved the following 5 stages that mirror the Documents written for the Professional Doctorate.

- Phase 1, research proposal (written up in Document 1)
- Phase 2, an extensive review of the literature (written up in Document 2)
- Phase 3, explorations of written articulations of career, via a summative reflexive worksheet assignment, as undergraduates – from a sample of 10 undergraduate students from a Youth Studies degree at a post 1992 university (written up in Document 3)
- Phase 4, semi-structured interviews with participants up to 2 years post-graduation (from the same degree) and evaluation of findings from Phase 3 with the participants (written up in Document 4)
- Phase 5, further semi-structured interviews and evaluation of findings with participants a further year on from graduation from the same degree (Included within Document 5)

The phases set out above provide an opportunity to explore the transition from undergraduate to post-graduation, to explore how the participant articulations of career unfold and how paradox can be utilised to deconstructively read career articulation, to

provide critical readings that do not succumb to the dichotomous logic found in the literature – as described above. The project’s connection with the empirical world (Phases 3-5) explores both written and oral articulations of small interconnected samples, providing illustrations of the penetrative nature of the philosophical architecture devised. The illustrations suggest the utility of paradox via a duality framework and how this is a critical means of reading career, this paper also accounts for how this can have a recursive relationship with pedagogy and practice – explored in Section 5. The endeavour throughout the empirical stages is to seek for articulations that resonate between accounts and the literature review within this and previous documents, and the philosophical schema set throughout the project, as well as those accounts that become discontinuous and therefore appear unique - so as to provide useful *illustrations* of the ‘inventive’ nature of paradox, as a focus and medium for deconstructively reading career.

The prominent method of data capture in Phase 3 was via a ‘worksheet’ completed by the participants as students, where they were asked to complete the following assignment:

ASSIGNMENT 1 Worksheet (Reflexive exploration of personal career narrative) - 1500 words

In order to demonstrate your ability to synthesise learning and evidence from a range of diverse sources; reflect, justify and present your own personal approach to transitions and ‘career’ development by answering the following question:

‘What is ‘career’ development theory and what benefits – if any - does such knowledge bring to your ‘career’ when faced with the transition of leaving the role of undergraduate Youth Studies student?’

Please take into account the following to achieve learning outcomes:

- Reflections made on career narrative to date and thoughts on your perceived ‘career’ trajectory.
- Integration of transition and ‘career’ development theories which are applied to ‘self’ and ‘other’ so as to synthesise learning from diverse sources
- Effective use of communication using a range of media

- Reflections that highlight the opportunities and threats that such theories present for your 'career' narrative.

Phases 4 and 5 captured oral articulations from semi-structured interviews with the participants, up to 2 years after graduation for Phase 4 and a further year on for Phase 5. Both phases utilised the same interview schedule:

Interview schedule – Phase 4-5

How has your 'career' unfolded since graduation?

How are you defining 'career'?

How does this unfolding relate to previous experiences of 'career' enactment?

What or who has influenced you during this period?

How might this relate to previous 'career' enactment?

What are your views of my analysis of your 'career' articulation?

The notion of paradox was utilised to analyse your 'career' articulation – what are your views on the paradoxes explored?

Does paradox come into play in your reading of career?

How?

What meaning might you ascribe to paradox?

Care appeared an important aspect of your articulation is this still the case?

The completion of the 'Reflexive Worksheet' provides opportunity for reflexive accounts of the student career, a theoretically informed form of autobiography and articulation. It is important to note that such accounts are pedagogically framed and therefore the documents analysed are viewed as artefacts of the pedagogy enacted², where the participant plays the role of student, providing an articulation of career as a lived experience layered with theory, their own interpretations and utilisation of theory. The artefacts analysed therefore provide a synchronic snapshot of career articulation, an articulation that is academically framed to

² As this is the case the accounts provided for below are presented as close to their original state as possible. Therefore the author has not corrected or indicated where there are potential 'mistakes' of articulation.

demonstrate learning. Such accounts, although pedagogically framed, still provide insight into both the participant's personal world, via multiple perspectives, that acknowledges the role of student, and how this relates to the locale and wider socio-political context in which it is immersed and immerses (Roberts, 2002). Phases 4 and 5 provide opportunity for further career articulation, this time orally via semi-structured interviews with the researcher. The articulations traced therefore had a temporal dimension to provide a diachronic analysis, as the longitudinal aspect here allowed for reflections upon the previous Phase(s) as well as dialogue with the researcher to occur.

The methodology for Phases 3-5 was informed via biographical research literature; ranging from life histories, oral histories, life articulation, and individual case studies (Seale et al, 2004). *Articulation is seen as an important trace here, articulation considered as the tracing of subjective experience, an experience interconnected with other, with articulation's etymology rooted within 'joint' (www.etymonline.com accessed 01/2019), where articulation joins traces, interconnecting strands of the life career of the participant (Goffman, 1961).* All of the mentioned means of biographical methods are particularly concerned with the individual's life experiences and the meanings and interpretations they ascribe to their own life history or biographies, including the utilisation of theory learnt. The important point that unifies such approaches as biographical, is that they are a means of giving a 'voice' to individuals (Roberts, 2002, pp.3). The pedagogical artefact under analysis in Phase 3 was therefore seen as a document written by the participant which could be considered as naturally occurring, via the role of student, and the interviews within Phases 4 and 5 as forms of oral articulation of career (Stanley, 2004, pp. 224), a referent of social life exploring individual experiences, meanings and aspects of life history (Letherby and Zdrodowski, 1995; Roper, 2001; Stanley, 2004; Smart, 2007 – see Goodwin 2012, pp. 4). This document is asserting the notion of how a deconstructive reading could be a means of reading such accounts, where articulation, at times informed via the literature (especially in Phase 3), can be considered as a representation of the participant's own 'story', interrelating with other stories, where the text point outward to a social life lived (Denzin, 1989, pp. 11). Within Phase 3 of the study – considered in the discussion section – the pedagogical artefacts utilised were ready to hand to the research, providing data that was 'imported in' rather than being

specifically designed for this phase of the project, more conversant with the interview methodology utilised in Phases 4 and 5.

So as to provide a framed conversation with participants – as well as allowing scope for conversations to be shaped by the participants - semi-structured interviews were utilised in Phases 4-5. Therefore a small set of broad questions were utilised to frame discussions (see above), shaped by important parameters of the literature review, methodology already announced, as well as and taking into consideration ‘findings’ generated from Phase 3 of the project. The small set of questions were consistently utilised across all participants in Phase 4 and 5, as well as allowing for ‘naturally’ occurring deviation – hence the use of semi-structured interviews (Maxwell, 1996).

All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed, and participants were made aware of this (see Participant information sheet, Appendix 1). Interviews were considered as a method as it is in keeping with the individualised accounts explored in Phase 3. Written accounts were deemed inappropriate for this phase of the study as the students were not necessarily within education and therefore there would not be a naturally occurring opportunity to explore written career articulations. It is acknowledged that this has provided a different form of text to be analysed – the spoken rather than the written word and a conversation that is not academically framed. It is deemed as not important, given the epistemological stance of the project, to compare like for like texts in Phases 3-5; the difference of the method used is considered a strength of the research design, that the analysis can take into account how different framings of articulations of ‘career’ are likely to influence such articulations and this will be considered in the discussion section. Interviews were seen as an opportunity for an in-depth discussion with the participants so as to encourage introspection and ‘honesty’ in a similar fashion to the written accounts, where interviews encourage participants to “articulate their tacit perceptions, feelings and understandings” (Arksey and Knight, 1999, pp. 32). With many of the participants, now graduates, living in many areas of the country, interviews also provided a practicality that focus groups could not, i.e. the difficulty and expense of bringing participants together in one location at a set time.

All interviews within Phases 4 and 5 were transcribed verbatim, both as a means of aiding analysis and also providing an opportunity for the researcher to become extremely familiar with the texts. As already expressed within Section 3 deconstruction is not considered as a method, nor is it to follow a set procedure. Phase 4 and 5 of the project thus sought to explore episodes where the texts reveal contradiction and paradox. As is the case with Phase 3, deconstructive readings of the texts focused upon notions of duality already mentioned as well as the overarching paradoxes identified in Phase 3. Such paradoxes were revealed, via the sharing of the researcher's analysis of their worksheet, a week before the interview was to take place. The verbatim texts from the interviews have comments attached to themes that appear to be relevant to the case study and also themes that link to other accounts, whether via significant similarity or difference. The data gathered throughout Phases 3 -5 are numerous and therefore the interpretation of the researcher provides its own story, condensed to a linear narrative to meet the guidelines of the Professional Doctorate assessment. The deconstructive reading has therefore provided a trace as to the researcher's reading, exploring the empirical data, to connect with the empirical world, so as to provide illustrations of the insightful power of deconstructive readings of career that avoids the dichotomous logic of the literature especially when prominent paradoxes are explored - e.g. vulnerability as protection - which have unravelled via the deconstructive notion of duality announced.

4.1. Sampling

As this is an exploratory research project, exploring an area of the literature that is underexplored (Robson, 2003) all phases of the project utilised small yet detailed purposeful samples. Phase 3 included a purposeful sample of 10 consenting participants (see Appendix 1), representative of the third year cohort of 32 students studying a Youth Studies degree within the school of social science within a post 1992 university (Yin, 2011). This sample provided written accounts of their career, as an assignment as part of their studies as indicated above. It is worth considering that entry to the course under consideration requires 240 UCAS points (at the time of Phase 3) and therefore is one of the lowest entry

requirements within the School of Social Sciences at the university in question. Many of the students within the study account for how they are the first in their family to attend university and therefore are likely to be characterised as students that fit 'Widening Participation' policy initiatives. The ethnic makeup of the students is very diverse and many students express how they come from a lower socio-economic position.

The sample of Phase 4 contains 5 graduates from the same Youth Studies degree utilised in Phase 3, 3 that graduated in 2015 and 2 that graduated in 2016. The aspiration of the research project is to provide a longitudinal dimension and the initial desire was to utilise the same 10 participant's that participated in Phase 3. However due to difficulties in locating participant's post-graduation and gaining convenient times to meet with the participant's and the time frame of completion, the sample resulted in only 3 of the previous 10 utilised in Phase 4. Faced with this difficulty new participants were considered which involved the recruitment of graduates from the 2016 cohort - from the same course that would have completed the same assignment. Participants were contacted to ask for their consent to contribute and once consent was gained – with participants being given details of the research project (see Appendix 1) – their reflexive worksheets completed as an undergraduate were shared with them along with the researcher's deconstructive reading of such a text. Similar to Phase 3 a purposeful sample was utilised (Yin, 2011) with many of the identity characteristics of the Youth Studies degree's cohorts considered when selecting participants - taking into account age, ethnicity, gender and class makeup of the cohort. The cohort is predominantly female, mainly constituted of students that are the first generation in their families to attend university, which is the case for the vast majority taking part in the research. Whilst it is acknowledged that the dimensions of any sample in social research is of upmost importance to the 'validity' of its findings, practicalities often shape such dimensions (May, 2001; Henn et al, 2006, 2009; Bryman, 2004), therefore the sample is considered representative of many Youth Studies students and is able to provide illustrative accounts for this exploratory research so as to demonstrate the penetrative and enduring nature of the philosophical schema already announced.

Phase 5 of the project is utilised to further the longitudinal aspect of the research. The main purpose of this phase is to demonstrate the enduring nature of paradox as a form of deconstructive reading and to explore how the participant career unfold a further year after graduation. Due to the difficulties in recruitment at this stage only 2 participants are utilised in this sample, the 2 participants are participants that are consistently present throughout the 3 empirical phases of the project and therefore allow for in-depth illustrations of the enduring nature of the philosophical architecture announced across the 3 phases.

4.2. Ethics

This document stands by the claims made in Document 2 that ethics is a complicated concept, one that harmonises with the endeavour of deconstruction, where there can be no pre-set formula in which ethics *should* be followed, that ethical practice – if there is such a thing – is to be sensitive to the context in which it is enacted. As highlighted in Document 2, Caputo (2000) wishes us to contemplate the ‘end of ethics’ due to a radical hermeneutic of ‘not knowing who we are’ acknowledging that ethics is not an ‘object’ to be found with a capitalised E. As indicated in Document 2, ethical practice is not to follow the Nottingham Trent University’s ethical governance (Nottingham Trent University 2008) via a naive adherence to a ‘tick-box exercise’ which largely becomes a matter of the ‘reputational management’ of the institution (Dingwall, 2012). However the project is sensitive to the participant’s ‘well-being’, it has gained the consent of the participants, via e-mail and telephone communication and has provided detail of the research being under taken, see Appendix 1. Taking Dingwalls’ argument into account, it is evident that for this project there is a power dynamic in play, however, it appears that this research is in line with much social research where the courtesy of participants granting time and access to researchers only has to consider the likely consequence of participant accounts becoming public knowledge as well as the degree to which participants trust the ‘promises’ of the researcher they are dealing with (Dingwall, 2012). In such research activities, Dingwall asserts that participant accounts call for the “sort of assessment we all make everyday” and do not require a sense of making “complex scientific judgements about the risks of an experiment” that are present in the infamous Zimbardo (2008) and Milgram (1963) experiments (Dingwall, 2012, pp. 13). Dingwall

therefore argues for professional judgment of the researcher to be 'de-centralised' from institutional endeavours so that the reflexive judgement of the researcher can become a prominent account for ethical practice throughout the duration of the project and beyond, which has taken place during this research project³. It is clear that there is a power dynamic between researcher and the participants and that there could be an element of 'economy' at play here – the provision of data generation requiring a return of cultural capital and/or the good will of a lecturer who can provide a better grade and/or a glowing reference for future opportunities. However, although this sparks a difficult micro-politics at play – very well highlighted by Keenan (2012) who asserts that even the most sensitive research exchange may well be shadowed by moments of instrumentally covert practices – the author is left to reflexively contemplate on the ethics at play, an ethics that is to be constantly open to interpretation (Love, 2012, pp. ix). In such circumstances the researcher is left to contemplate the 'benefits' and 'risks' of the participant involvement and the subsequent events of such participation. Therefore it is important that this research project has followed such factors to harness a sense of an ever unfolding relationship with 'goodwill' and 'fair-play' that is to be contemplated by the researcher, not only within research interactions, but also within the activity of knowledge co-production, where all accounts utilised and means of identifying participants have adhered towards the anonymous, so as to avoid the identification of the participants that may cause 'harm' in the future.

³ Taking such notions into consideration – especially the notion of 'trust' - it is worth noting here that on a number of occasions I have asked for consent from students undertaking the module under analysis to present aspects of their written work at a number of local, national and international conferences. In all instances such dialogue with student participants has resulted in the participants expressing how they would be 'honoured' for me to use their work, in fact on one occasion two students were so keen for their work to be presented that they requested that they present the findings themselves – which they did (at the Nottingham Trent University School of Social Sciences Alternative Futures Conference, 2014).

5. Researcher Reflections

This section will provide the researcher's reflections upon the deconstructive readings of the 'texts' under scrutiny in Phases 3-5, it will take each phase in order. Firstly it will consider the main reflections gained across the samples utilised in Phase 3 and then Phase 4. The reflections of Phase 5 will explore the two participants for this sample, but will take into account their articulations across the 3 Phases, this is to illustrate the enduring nature of the deconstructive readings made, how these are verified by the participants and also how the phases interconnect to illustrate the methodology utilised throughout the project. The notion of 'reflections' is utilised instead of the usual framing of 'findings', this is to be in concert with the Derridean philosophical architecture announced, as Derrida (2007) suggests that invention is to be considered as both a 'finding' as well as a 'construction', avoiding the explicit notion of 'findings' moves the research away from a positivist paradigm and also acknowledges the researcher's invention in terms of their part in the numerous readings that could occur when reading the 'texts' under scrutiny, consistent with the epistemology of the research.

5.1. Reflections upon Phase 3 across the sample utilised

This section explores the way in which the 10 different cases, utilised for Phase 3, interconnect, where there are emergent themes to be fed back into the literature. The notion of paradox is the most prominent focus of the deconstructive endeavour, which is aided by the consideration of the pre-mentioned dualities highlighted above. The deconstructive reading of each case, after taking into account duality, considers if there is an overarching paradox that can aid the reading of the text, which is accounted for by the title of all the cases read⁴.

⁴ Participant J - Protection as vulnerability; Participant K - Stability enables as well as disables; Participant N - Social mobility as safety and risk; Participant C - A question of should as might; Participant H - A yearning for being whilst becoming; Participant I - Constraints enable, enablement constrains; Participant M - Self as object as well as subject; Participant O - We are and are not our experiences; Participant R - The continuity of discontinuity; Participant S - Essence as presence and absence

The most prominent reflections at this stage are:

- A pedagogy based upon deconstructing career, via a duality framework, allows undergraduate students to explore various perspectives upon 'career', where many comprehend career as a lived experience that is enacted via a range of interconnected strands and/or roles
- The endeavour of deconstructing articulations of 'career', focusing efforts upon the dualities of being and becoming, agency and structure and self and other, gravitate readings toward traced moments of paradox which can provide critical insights to occur, readings that challenge the dichotomous logic found within much of the career theory literature, as highlighted in the literature review
- Student articulations comprehend that career as a lived experience is temporal and that previous experiences traced via varied strands/roles within their lives will impact and influence future anticipation – via both synchronic and diachronic analysis
- A comprehension of the influence of 'other', both in the participant's immediate locale and via notions of social structures is enacted, although there is a clear preference for concentrating upon enactment that occurs within the locality of direct perception where agency is asserted over structure, presence over absence, particularly when anticipating the future.
- Many of the student articulations express an emotional economy of care at play, where there is a yearning to utilise attributes of 'care' within educational and labour markets so as to aid the turbulent transitions of 'others', similar to turbulent transitions experienced by themselves.

Many participant accounts start with a definitional analysis of career that entwines the participants own subjective readings of the literature in conjunction with their own acknowledged experiences. Career when initially analysed by the participants, which tends to start with an abstract analysis, has a tendency to challenge the natural attitudinal notion of career as being overly concerned with education and work. Both Goffman and Super are heavily utilised as a means of broadening notions of career.

Super (1996) defines career as being an order and a balance of roles that an individual experiences throughout the development of a lifetime. This definition is evident as parting company with my partner unexpectedly changed part of my daily routines and disrupted my home life.

Participant N

“Career is flexible and elastic, enabling it to adapt well to a variety of functions and contexts” (Collin et al, 2000, P: 1). Nevertheless, from a sociological perspective Goffman suggests career is any social strand in an individual’s life i.e. friendship career, work career, family career, academic career (Goffman 1961).

Participant I

Although the participant assignments start in such a fashion, where career is read in a manner that challenges the ‘folk theory of career’ (Bowman et 2005), future projections of career enactment have a tendency to utilise the paradigm of the natural attitude, where there is an emphasis upon rational career decision making, where the individual is to *find* a fit of attributes toward a professional occupation, one that they can be proud of – in particular Student K, C and H. Such expressions, or focus upon ‘career’, appears to fit with the participant circumstances. Such circumstance appear to provide a consideration of how leaving full time education requires, for many of the sample, a transition from full time education to focused destinations of either further study or paid employment. There is an assertion of agency in such articulations, an agency that is connected to others-in-the-world. However many of the students utilise ‘techniques’ to aid such agency, which therefore, via deconstruction, questions the nature of agency, where other brings to bare its constitutive influence. In the case of many of the students they utilise trait and factor theory so as to ‘creatively’ use the techniques of others to find ‘oneself’.

Williamson (1939) describes ... trait and factor theory because we try figure out our own identity, such as traits to find our correct career path, and a good way of living in order to achieve and be capable to do things effectively, we all have our different

capabilities for us to gain potential, and this is how I created my career narrative and development through life.

Student H

This paradoxical interplay between self and other, and agency and structure, occurs often within the texts, where the students acknowledge that the self is constituted by aspects of other and vice-versa, such paradoxes are at times explicitly acknowledged by the students, for example Participants J, K and H. It appears for many that the contemplation of such a paradox is something that does not come easily, one that has to be forced to be acknowledged, likely due to its potential dampening of perceptual agency and decision making which appears to be an important aspect of career enactment for a number of the participants, e.g. Student K, S, O, C, J and H.

Looking at 'self', it is easy to see where and how 'others' have influenced me and my decisions in life, probably more so than I would care to admit.

Participant M

Assertions of agency within the accounts very much utilise the metaphor of navigation rather than trajectory (see Furlong, 2009), where the participant is to assert their agency within the assembled structures and locations that they find themselves within, environments that incorporate other. Such assertions of agency may also account for a tendency to avoid a macro analysis of their social positionality, with a preference toward that which is perceived, a micro analysis that adheres to form, presence over the force that shapes form, that which maybe absent from perception, what Derrida would describe, via his deconstructive reading of western metaphysics, from Plato to Husserl, as an "obstinate desire to save presence" as explored in Section 3 (Derrida, 1989, pp. 51). Rarely do the accounts explicitly take into consideration such absence, be it how force, that deemed outside of direct perceptual contact, may influence career enactment, or where the acknowledgment of being, as well as the unfolding of becoming, is defined as much by what it 'is not' as by what it 'is'. Deconstructive readings reveal how absence and presence have the ability to co-'exist', how one rests on the reliance of other, in particular in the case of Participant O ('We are and are

not our experiences') where absence somehow leaves its mark and a potential yearning for a void to be filled...

...when I was 7 years old, all communications between us [mother and siblings] and my father stopped when my mother, older brother, younger sister and I moved countries to escape an abusive relationship between my siblings and I, and our father. The decision to completely adjust our lives could be defined as a 'fateful moment' as the shake up wholly disrupted mine, my siblings, and indeed the rest of my family's ontological security. Being the only person who could be responsible for our safety and well-being at that time, my mother changed the course of our lives...

Participant O

Such a reflection indicates the way in which previous events mark and scar the articulation traced, scaring by what is present as well as absent, how such events provoke notions of transition, the co-existence of being and becoming, coming to be marked and questioned within consciousness. Such a threat to 'ontological security' provides a consideration of who one is, who one is becoming, but also, and not fully reflected upon, perhaps due to the obstinate desire for presence, what one is no longer and not to become. Such absence, as well as that which is marked and traced as one's identity, ones being, whilst engaging with an acknowledged unfolding of becoming, becomes also a sense of what one 'is' via what they 'are' not. Such paradoxes are found extensively in the accounts, similar to Participant O's; Participant J when mentioning the death of her friend/patient (see Section 5.3), Participant M when mentioning divorce of her parents, Participant S when mentioning leaving her abusive partner; many adhering to an over evaluation of presence over absence.

With an adherence toward perceptual presence and form, the community becomes an important mode of analysis, without taking into account how this co-exists with wider social assemblages and forces. For example

As a Secondary school pupil I did not really see College or University as a realistic goal and in our community University was looked upon as something we don't go to. However after gaining my GCSE qualifications I did not know what I wanted to do until

my friend mentioned going to college and studying performing arts, as drama was the highest grade I achieved I went along with him and applied. This is where Bill law and a sense of self and other came into action, as I have been influenced by other to go to college and study performing arts, however I myself chose to go along with him

Participant K

When aspects of social structures come into play it is usually an acknowledgment of the students perceived notion of social divisions, gained via direct experience rather than an abstract account that utilises the literature. For example, when Student K suggests that people from his neighbourhood do not go to university, or when Student N suggests that she lacked cultural capital when moving from a working class area in The East Midlands to a more middleclass lifestyle in London;

...being part of a new social network in London at times I felt behind in terms of my academic ability and recognised I was less advanced than others. This began to have a detrimental effect on my self-esteem and I started feel less confident about myself and un-happy with my self-worth and self-identity.

The analysis above provides a comparison with other, where the self is to evaluate in comparison to other, how other therefore starts to constitute the self, even via a negation, and vice-versa. It appears that when other is significantly and specifically acknowledged, as a paradoxical constitute of the self, within career articulation, it has to be an-other that can be trusted, an-other whose views may be allowed to be willingly individuated, that which resembles a form of trusted inheritance – e.g. as indicated explicitly via the notion of inheriting values from her mother, within the account of Participant H.

My mother significantly influenced who I was and played a major role in my personality and career narrative. In agreement with this, Middleton (1993, p.161) writes that parents often influence the personalities of their children, and in turn their “career aspirations”. My mother was always an empathetic person with a genuine interest in helping others. I feel I inherited many of these characteristics from an early age, her work also signified these traits. During my childhood and adolescence my

mother undertook a variety of social work roles, often working as a support worker and a care worker. I feel this did influence my decision to work within a social profession, as my mother became my role model and in turn her work inspired me. Bill Law refers to this as the modelling process in making vocational choices, which is the process “by which people are influenced by example” (Gikopoulou 2008, p. 36).

In comparison to the influence of the locale, to consider social structures is to consider a cold and barren analytic, where other shapes via a sense of absence, one that may well dampen agency, as illustrated by Student N when considering her experiences of crossing perceived social class boundaries.

He [reflecting upon the work of Milburn (no date given)] emphasised education as the key element to social mobility, which was relevant in my case as it was the primary component missing in my overall development and thus was a limiting factor to true social mobility for me. Whilst I had believed that my class had changed through socio-economic factors alone, the more I mixed in different circles the more my limitations were exposed

When considering future projections, the natural attitude has a tendency to be evoked, where students gravitate toward the vortex pull of work, work via the notions of a neo-liberal subject, very much in the guise that Walkerdine (2003) accounts for. A subject that wishes to engage with the labour market as a means to gain fiscal goods so as to consume – explicitly accounted for by Student K - a subject that has to define its individualised role, to provide individual solutions to problems via the work role – with education as its spring board – to assert their values that are to fit with the opportunities available, an autonomous self that makes decisions to navigate career enactment – as explicitly accounted for by Participant J. This neo-liberal subject, one that asserts agency, is a self that acknowledges the influence of other(s) and at times the social structures in which it is immersed and immerses, which accounts for its being via enacted moments of becoming that re-in-scribe a sense of being that has to adapt to the market at play. The attributes that are widely articulated by the participants are those that associate with the ability to ‘care’. Such attributes appear to come

from the students ability to have navigated moments of turbulence, where such navigation was aided by others and now there is a wish to take such attributes to the labour market so as to give back, as well as the potential to 'progress' as indicated by Students C, K, J, H, S, M and O.

My hard beginning in life shaped my image for my future, having spent so much time surrounded by people who wanted to help me, I realised that I wanted to give back and help other young people. Initially believing I wanted to be a social worker, I applied for a social work course at university, which required relevant experience. As my mother is a teacher of special needs in a high school, I started volunteering at a youth club for young people with special needs as I felt I had enough knowledge and skills to be able to help the young people enjoy themselves for a few hours a week.

Participant O

In terms of my own career narrative I feel that the most influential aspect was my individual role within both my family and peer group; I was always the one who looked after members of my family, put others before myself when possible and who my friends came to if they just needed someone to talk to. All of this experience, I feel, has developed skills, such as, understanding, empathy and listening skills, which have developed in order for me to go into the desired role I have once I leave university, as well as contributing greatly to my progressive 'career' throughout my life so far.

Participant M

I chose youth studies as living in a deprived area of [The East Midlands]. Lack of support and care given to under privileged youth often caused them to engage in criminal activity not only for entertainment, but to support themselves financially, this was a subject close to my heart as a number of my friends had received prison sentences for such behaviour, I believe that with the correct support this may not have occurred.

Participant S

When arriving at college my mother fell ill, this was a fateful moment within my life. ... I acted as a carer to my mother and would support her with everything until she was well enough to look after herself again, as well as being a full time student at the time. However due to looking after my mother I started to feel a real passion in regards to helping people and during my college course I particularly enjoyed going into schools and youth offending services, to put on shows and provide motivational talks around bullying, knife and gun crime which I really enjoyed as I was helping and supporting these young people and empowering them to help themselves.

Participant K

A wider notion of career has enabled the students to come to a strengthened consideration of the worth of their caring attributes, attributes which have been acknowledged to have occurred via previous experiences, or the absence of experiences that may well have been anticipated. This is not surprising given the nature of the course under evaluation, a course that has historically been linked to supportive youth work roles and has frequently attracted female students. Few of the students have reflected upon the notion of gender and how this might come into play, Participant J being a significant exception (see section 5.3). Care appears to be a useful attribute to address social issues identified as needing addressing, the aiding of turbulent transitions for young people, turbulence that resonate with many of the articulations traced. However, rarely is there an analysis of what might well cause such turbulence, how social divisions such as class, gender, sexuality and ethnicity may result in inequality that may well cause such turbulence, where force may influence form. Therefore as already accounted for, the articulations concentrate on that which is perceived, that which is 'present' over and above that which may be considered 'absent'.

Taking into account the emotional economy of care articulated above, many of the participants view 'interventions' via caring professions to be a plausible conduit for engaging in acts to aid the turbulent transitions of young people. Such acts are viewed as not only providing help to others but also to the self, a form of economy, where the participants may enact social mobility and affluent career desire. There are no notions of collective responses to such difficulties and/or solutions that may occur outside the role of the profession. The

professional role anticipated are to occur mainly in the public sector which harmonise with the roles of the significant adults accounted for in the participant articulations with social work, youth justice work and education being the most popular anticipated destinations. The work role becomes the key focus of future navigation, parenthood being one other area of focus, one that has already occurred or one that may occur once financial and professional stability is found, as is the case for Participants C, K, S and J.

This section has provided insight into how the influence of Derridean thought and the endeavour of deconstruction may be enacted to aid the reading of career. The section has highlighted that deconstruction that focuses on prominent dualities, although not always presented as such within the career theory literature, provides a focus upon articulated moments of paradox, where paradox becomes an important space for critical reading, a space to be encouraged and explored, rather than one that is avoided. The next phase of the project provides opportunity to explore how deconstructive readings – focusing upon paradox – may be utilised post-graduation, to also show its enduring nature within career articulation.

5.2 Reflections upon Phase 4 – across its sample

This section explores the way in which the 5 different cases, utilised for Phase 4, interconnect, where there are emergent themes to be fed back into the literature. As mentioned previously all 5 participants engaged in interviews with the researcher, where the researcher's deconstructive reading of their worksheets, including identified overarching paradoxes, was discussed, as well as the other questions in the interview schedule. The overarching paradoxes, as is the case with Phase 3, provides the title of each case⁵. Section 5.1 already highlighted the penetrative nature of utilising paradoxical moments within the written accounts of the sample. Phase 4, via its longitudinal dimension, provides an opportunity to consider not only a synchronic snap shot of career articulation, but also a diachronic reading

⁵ Participant J - Protection as vulnerability; Participant L - The chance for certainty, certainty for chance; Participant R – The continuity of discontinuity; Participant O - We are and are not our experiences; Participant E - stability as instability, instability as stability

to consider the potential enduring nature of reading career via the lens of paradox. Section 5.2 therefore provides the following important themes to contribute to the literature:

- Participants provide detailed descriptions and operationalisations of career to aid career enactment with a desire for career to progress
- Paradox shows to be a useful analytic and critical moment, or motif, in career articulation that opens up a multiplicity into how career can be read, tracing tension within career articulation that has an *enduring* nature – validated by the participants
- Paradox shows itself to be a useful lens to aid pedagogic, as well as having the potential to aid ‘guidance’, activities outside of the academy
- Once prominent paradoxes are explored with participants further paradoxes tend to unfold linking to the way their career has been enacted since the writing of their reflexive worksheet
- The multiplicity evoked, via a concentration upon paradox, reveals links to previous aspects, in terms of both presence and perceived absence, of the participants lives and provides opportunity to question past and future enactment
- All participants articulate an emotional economy of care that motivates career enactment, a means of self-validation and giving back to others.

As is the case for Phase 3 of the project, Phase 4 provides participant articulations that illustrate an attention to detail when operationalising career, post-graduation. Such accounts highlight the enduring impact of the pedagogy experienced as an undergraduate and that participants are aware that their views upon career adapt when experiencing new environments, particularly the world of work. For example, Participant E speaks of her operationalising career from a broad stance, in effect equating career with enactment, the life career, imbued with a sense of ambition.

... how I define career is what I have done with my life and what I want to do with my life and isn't just about education or work it's like ... your aspirations, its everything ...

Another more precise articulation comes from Participant L who expresses how his learning of the concept of career, as an undergraduate, made him question the natural attitude, continuing to shape his conceptions as a post-graduate in the labour market. Participant L articulates how career can be viewed from a wide lens, where notions of strands becomes of analytic utility, to inform enactment by considering action both retrospectively and anticipatorily, considering how different strands entwine and interrelate and how certain strands will have certain salience at certain points in his life. As is the case for Participant E, Participant L implies that career has an upward trajectory, one that has a desire to progress where the analytic of strands can enable a more precise reading to help this to occur.

Well before university you thought career as a job, so you taught me different, different strands obviously, I think I talked about strands in my life [within reflexive worksheet] ... well one important one was football. That was a massive thing like I can see and reflect on it how that has made me the person that I am, because I like being around people I like team work, I hate losing, I think that is where part of my ambitious comes from as well, I am such a sore loser and I hated losing and I don't want to lose in life so, that was one of my career strands there, I am very career focused I think, I think I am very career, my job I am talking about now, but, I am focused on making my career as my job is a focus that I enjoy it, but my career as partner getting a mortgage that is important to me as well so I can see my different lines of career and I want them all to progress and together because I think as my job progresses my role as a partner progresses and being able to support my girlfriend more and she is then able to support me more and I don't know, I think ... they are all in line and all supposed together then when I have kids that grows with me but as I was saying earlier about the kids [service users of the children's home] they cross over those strands cross over and mixed and makes it hard no straight lines and they are all progressing together that means your life is going well, I still play a bit of football but I still have that little strand for my health [laughs]

Leisure, friendship, romantic relationships and work are all entwined above where the many facets of career, the life career, are to be considered to interconnect to progress, to pass onto others to then enable further progression, also apparent in the articulations of Participants R and J explored in Section 5.3.

The research case studies provide ample illustrations of the enduring nature of the prominent paradoxes found in Phase 3, that were presented to the case participants before being interviewed for Phase 4. Participant O provides a powerful account within Phase 4 to provide such an illustration. Participant O was present within the Phase 3 sample, a young woman of Irish decent, now working as a primary school teacher, who articulated in her reflexive log that she had experienced abuse in childhood by her father. When discussing my reading of her overarching paradox described in Phase 3 – ‘we are and are not our experiences’ - she provides a revealing illustration to confirm the enduring nature of such a paradox...

...yeah I would agree I think, I would never say I was a victim of anything and I, by saying that I am highlighting that yes I was a victim, but don't call me a victim – if that makes sense? And the way that I have used that almost, as a status that I don't want to have, is, by, you know reminding myself of it and actually good things do come from bad things that happen and by claiming I am not victim, that I was a victim of, it's kind of put me in this mind frame of 'well if you are not a victim, you know you have got to be a survivor' kind of thing, if that makes any sense at all

The illustration above highlights a tension within career articulation, where a sense of being has been shaped by undesirable events that have occurred, yet, the participant wishes not to be identified by such events, to become other than what has been traced, even though such events leave their mark. Participant R (see section 5.3 for further detail), also a participant in Phase 3, who currently works for a large charity that is tasked with social integration, is a child of a religious minister where she experienced many moves of location as a child and therefore

Phase 3 provided the prominent paradox of 'continuity as discontinuity' which was discussed during the research interview.

I think it probably in terms of what I reflected upon in my career at that point it's probably bang on because ... I think a lot of it came from that I was very aware that I had been a very here and there ... like I moved to this place and then I moved to this place and my friendship groups would change and my life would change quite a lot, so I think the writing that I did reflect on me having a lot of discontinuity on what you could call career, I think that is probably what I was on mass trying to get at when I was writing it, so yeah, so I think that it is pretty spot on

Participant L, a lively, sociable, white young male from Irish heritage who comes from a self-confessed working class and turbulent background, provides useful articulations in Phase 4 via his experiences of being a manager working in a children's home in the South East. His overarching paradox revealed via the researcher's deconstructive reading of his reflexive worksheet provided the paradox of 'the chance for certainty; certainty for chance'. This comes from his experiences of coasting through his career only to have a chance opportunity presented to him via a teacher to attend a young person's retreat. Such opportunity allows Participant L to anticipate a future working with young people whom have experienced difficulty so that he can now be the one to be providing *chance* meetings, to allow interaction to aid a direction and a future for young people, to allow the *chance* of a new beginning to provide a '*certain*' focus. The opportunity presented by his teacher provides what he describes as a fateful moment, one that he takes to place more certainty upon his career direction...

... he [previously mentioned teacher] sent me on a retreat to a catholic retreat centre and the time away to reflect on stuff ... I think one of the reasons that I do what I do now is because I have realised that if it wasn't for my support network I would probably be in prison like my friends were.

Dialogue, within the interviews of Phase 4, which focus on overarching paradoxes, provides opportunity for further articulations of paradox to flower, in particular Participant L illustrates this when discussing his work with children in care. Participant L speaks of how the technocratic nature of the environment of the care home provides a focus upon the child, the importance of recording 'outcomes' and how such recordings can inform practice in the future, to provide 'certainty' for future enactment in the turbulent world of young people in care, order upon chaos. However, such order and certainty can provide a dampening of the act of care - a potential gift - to economise such acts, to reassert the chaos of the life previously lived. Although Participant L *rationalises* the need for such technocratic recording, that which may become useful in the future, he also considers the *irrationality* of it in relation to the supposed child centred care he should be providing and whether the records will ever be read and whether the constant need for paperwork provides a reinforcement of institutionalisation, *an economisation of enactment in the guise of a gift*, a constant reminder for the child that they are in care, where care asserts a vulnerability, the ability to wound as well as the propensity to be wounded.

...it is all about child centred so they [children in the children's home] have got to sign everything ...on a daily basis, recordings, they have to sign it and they get so fed up with it, you have to bribe them to sign it, like I will literally be there turning the page where they need to sign it and they don't read it, but, because it is a tick box exercise they have got to sign it and they have got to be involved in their care ...it is institutionalised, as I said earlier our ethos is homebased but then that sort of thing does make it institutionalised where like you do forget sometimes that it is a children's home it does feel like a normal home just like I was talking about earlier like them bickering like they bicker like brothers it's more like brothers than strangers in a fight; but yeah, it does, yeah it does compound them and it is a reminder that they are in an institution basically and it is sad but I do see both sides

The paradox of rationality as irrationality, as well as gift and economy, flowered from the initial paradox of chance as certainty, providing a tension within career for Participant L and the young people he interacts with, demonstrating the enduring nature of the paradoxes evoked and how they enable opportunity to consider career from multiple perspectives, which is also the case for Participant R. As already mentioned Participant R revealed paradox hinges on 'the continuity of discontinuity', from this unfolds notions of the 'freedom to be tied down – being tied down to enable freedom', where money is articulated as providing choice and agency, freedom, yet, the gaining of money constrains one's activities. Such a discussion comes from the exploration of Participant R's views upon student debt and its relation to work.

...student debt it doesn't bother me at all it doesn't even, that wasn't a driving factor to why I needed full time employment that was more, more that I wanted the freedom to be able to rent my own house and have a car and do nice things and go on holiday and things like, that's, it's that sort of thing, it's funny it's like that circle isn't it? You have to have a job to be able to afford to do nice things but you can't do nice things because you have got a job [really laughs]

A duality of work and leisure is those evoked linking to notions of agency and structure, linking to notions of freedom and constraint. A further unfolding occurs for Participant R in Phase 4 where there was a consideration upon the relationship between consideration as inconsideration. This is very much along the lines of Derrida's notions of the duality of gift and economy, where being considerate may well occur in the form of a gift, yet, at the same time, be underlined via a notion of economy, a sense of give and take. If one is considerate are they considerate in the aiding of the 'other', at the expense of the self? An altruistic 'gift'? Or is such a 'gift', a means of being considerate, a form of economy, and a consideration of the self that has to interplay with other, to either manipulate the other or present a sense of self-righteousness.

People just get offended if you tell them that they're wrong or they're, in fact if someone said you're inconsiderate they would just find it offensive, but if I got into a conversation where I was like 'well I think this is where, I understand where you are coming from, or I am trying to understand' well they are probably more likely to start thinking the way I am thinking [laughs] yeah,

Apparent with all the cases are moments during the interviews where participants articulated that they had 'never thought of that' or that on reflection of the overarching paradox, evoked via the research interview, may well provide another reading of career, a reading that can then potentially shape future enactment, suggesting that a concertation upon paradox may well have a guidance function. As indicated by Participant O, when reflecting on the paradox of 'we are and are not our experiences', she reflects upon how this has influenced her enactment as a newly qualified teacher and how this provides a comparison to her peers, thus consolidating her understanding of her career enactment.

... I don't think that people in their NQT year if they hadn't been through the sort of childhood, who hadn't struggled in school, I don't think that they would have that intuition to think that this child needs 10 minutes on their own or this child needs just 1-1 attention just for a few minutes even if it's just at play times, but that is maybe what they need, I think that's almost a bonus for me so that I have been through that so I can relate to the children.

There are many articulations that express how the multiplicity evoked, via a concentration upon paradox, reveals links to previous aspects, in terms of both presence and perceived absence, of the participants lives and provides opportunity to question past and future enactment. This was particularly prominent in the cases of Participants E and O. Participant E, a Criminology Masters student at the time of interview, speaks of this in relation to her mother and father divorcing when she was a child, where she went to live with her less affluent mother and therefore having to leave behind a comfortable life style that she had

become accustomed to before the divorce, when her more affluent father was the main 'bread winner' of the home.

... I think if I had ... been brought up with two parents with a normal family with no split up with money and stability I would definitely wouldn't be who I am now, and I wouldn't want to be that person because I would be so boring and I wouldn't realise that there is more and I wouldn't have understood the struggle and maybe realise that there is more after sort of not having it and getting it I understand it more, I say to my brother he doesn't remember the bad times, you don't remember how bad it was, and he is like 'oh, what you going on about' and I am like you don't remember when we had no food and had to go to grandmas and then he is like 'that didn't happen', 'yes it did', so I think that is what like powers me to want to do it [Masters degree], I don't want to go back there

The absence of a 'normal family life' provides a motivation to want to provide a different life from that enacted by the participant's father, to consider how such an absence does influence enactment, a venturing away from what could have occurred if such an absence had not occurred, not been taken away. Participant O also considers absence via her experiences post-abuse of her father where she had to speak to many professionals.

I absolutely hated it, I hated the attention, I hated that I had to talk to people, I hated being different I think, a lot of the time I would be pulled out of school to speak to the police or pulled out to speak to my social worker and I just wanted to be a normal child.

The sense of an absence of being 'normal' provided a void to be filled for Participant O, the void of normalcy played an unbearable loathing in terms of her childhood identity, compounded by the support being offered. Participant O provides accounts of how she learned to live with such a bearing and how this made her determined to follow a career that could provide opportunities to give back, to give back to other children whom may well be

experiencing similar turbulence within their lives – what this project describes as an emotional economy of care. It is via the enactment of the role of ‘teacher’ - to provide pedagogy and pastoral care which includes discipline as a form of care – that such activity provides an intentional affectual return, providing a validity of career enactment. Such enactment provides a validation of identity, where the scar left via traumatic events are to be a learning experience, linking to Nietzsche’s (1888) old adage of what does not kill you will only make you stronger.

I was talking to my friend about it a few weeks ago and they were like ‘oh, oh, oh’ you know, trying to feel really sorry for you and I am like, ‘no, look at me, look at what I have done I wouldn’t be a teacher I would be working in an office somewhere’ so yeah, and bet a lot of people think ‘oh poor O’ but nah, or maybe poor 7 year old or poor 6 year old but not now I don’t feel sorry for myself at all I think that it’s something that is down to the social workers and the teachers and the police I wouldn’t be able, this wouldn’t have come about if I didn’t have all this intervention from all the different agencies

Many of the participants find themselves coming out of university with debt, where a move toward the labour market for the gaining of fiscal goods is contemplated. Many of the sample have gone into work to gain money and have navigated toward work helping young people, or further study to move toward caring professions in the labour market, keeping to a core value of aiding the lives of young people more vulnerable than themselves – what this document describes as an emotional economy of care. Such an economy provides an attraction toward studying youth studies at undergraduate level due to experiencing turbulence early within career. Once in the labour market all assert that they have experienced ‘advancement’ within career bringing many rewards, for the majority financial rewards. However, there appears to be a tension with such a movement where advancement too far from the validation that comes from care activities, or activities that provide a delayed duration and distance of desired emotional affectual return that comes from care, is not too long. This is well encapsulated via Participant R

...it's one of the things that I have to think about is, you know if I keep going the way I am going the next move up is becoming a manager in the staffing team, I've been told, I have been told to apply for those sort of roles and I have said no I don't want to as its even further away from on the ground. I do get fulfilment out of what I do because I get people who from the program teams who manage on the ground come back and say 'oh, this staff member that you recruited is really amazing they did this' and then I get e-mails from staff members saying 'I just want to say thank you this has happened' and whatever so I still get snippets of it but I don't get it on a daily basis like I did when I worked with these young people on the ground, so yeah. It is something that I have to consider and remind myself as to why I am doing this job and I essentially work in recruitment and I never aimed to work in recruitment but because it's in an organisation like it is then I still get worth from it.

This is also the case for Participant J (explored in depth in the next section) whose overarching paradox of 'protection as vulnerability' comes from a yearning to provide care so as to gain a major means of 'self-validation', a means of gaining an affectual return via an emotional economy of care where a wait in duration of such a positive return can be an uncomfortable experience. This is specifically reflected upon when discussing her experience of a social work placement (as part of her Social Work Masters) where she had to 'control' a service user rather than giving 'care'.

yeah, yeah, [pause] it [controlling service users] it sort of attacks my [pause] it attacks what I am used to, so I think my brains sort of goes, 'oh my god this person doesn't like you, you're not doing what this person wants, you're going against what they think is good for them.' You know 'you're not helping them out now, you're not getting that feeling of you are helping them' because they are blatantly sort of going 'what are you doing to me?' But you sort of have to realise that that is eventually for them, so I have gotten used to that idea, but it has sort of sent me into melt down a couple of times if I have had to say 'look I am really sorry but, you know you're not doing what's best for

your child' you know 'we are going to have to remove your child at the moment for a court order' you know it sort of all goes into melt down, you think that you are being horrible person and that the control sort of takes over, and sometime, it has to, you have got no choice, but yeah it is a bit of a, it's not nice to do the control bit it is necessary sometimes, I have to get used to that [slight laugh/sigh/exhale]

Section 5.2 has provided insight into the career articulations gained via semi-structured interviews within Phase 4 of the project. Phase 4 provides diachronic readings to occur to illustrate the enduring nature of paradox as a motif to read career, one that the participants engage with, which reveals useful tensions experienced within career enactment. To illustrate such enduring nature of paradox, the next section provides in-depth readings of Participant J and then Participant R. These in-depth readings will take into account Phases 3-5 of the project highlighting how the phases interrelate.

5.3 Reflections upon Phase 5 – an in-depth reading of 2 participants a further year on from graduation

The previous sub sections have taken into account the major themes that have emerged from Phases 3 and 4 of the project, providing illustrations across the participants within phased samples. The purpose of this section is to explore the 5th Phase of the project, this phase only concentrates – due to practical constraints – on two cases. As this is the case the cases will be explored in-depth. The in-depth reflection upon this phase provides a brief insight into reflections of the cases in Phase 3 and 4 and then brings up-to-date new 'data' gathered in Phase 5. Phase 5 illustrates the following important findings, many of which confirm and further validate the themes identified in previous phases.

- Considered, detailed and complex personal definitions and operationalisation of 'career' is illustrated by the participants, where such an operationalisation may change due to different periods of the life course experienced and how contexts may adapt and challenge such perspectives

- The researcher's initial deconstructive reading of the participant's career and major paradoxes revealed in Phase 4 of the study are verified by the participants and they thus illustrate the penetrative and enduring nature of such readings and the analytical motif of paradox
- Once paradoxes are explored with the participants, participants are able to identify and articulate further connected paradoxes that enable them to provide rich readings upon their career both retrospectively and anticipatorily and to identify how they interrelate
- The participants are able to identify how perceived absence experienced within career enactment relates to the above identified paradoxes
- Participants speak of how an emotional economy of care is at play in their career articulations and how a sense of 'giving back' and providing care is important to their career enactment
- Participants are able to identify how a perceived delay to a positive return from such an economy becomes an important 'progressive' factor to career enactment, which requires important forms of knowledge and skill which relates to social position and a sense of maturity

This section will now start by exploring the first of the 2 case studies, Participant J, whom has been explored in-depth in all empirical phase of the project. It will then explore Participant R who has been a present member of each sample although this is the first time her case is exposed in length in the submitted part of the Document process of the study.

5.3.1 Participant J – Protection as Vulnerability; comfortable with being uncomfortable

Participant J is a white self-confessed working class female in her mid-twenties. She is a hard working individual who has consistently across the study spoken of the importance of caregiving to her career enactment. Career for Participant J has consistently been operationalised as paid work, although she is sensitive to other perceptions. Participant J

experienced the divorce of her birth parents within childhood, resulting in her living with her mother, whom she considers to have had a tough life spending many years bringing her up on her own. Participant J has a half-sister that she is very connected to, who is of dual heritage and who has learning difficulties, Participant J feels very protective of her younger half-sister. With care being an important aspect of career articulation, Participant J speaks of how she values positive regard gained when enacting care, how care is looked upon as an aspired gift, yet, at the same time can acknowledge how this seeks a return within an emotional economy of care. Such an economy for Participant J makes her feel vulnerable when providing protection, via care, to others, how providing inadequate protection may hurt her as well as the receiver of care, hence providing the overarching paradox initially identified in Phase 3 and confirmed in Phase 4 and now 5. Participant J, once graduating from a Youth Studies Degree, goes onto do a Masters in Social Work, reflected upon in Phase 4. The Phase 5 interview is conducted on the day of graduation of her Masters. Participant J, at the time of the interview, had recently gained employment as a Social Worker in London, had also gotten engaged to her partner and recently passed her driving test. The reflections below illustrate how an exploration of such an overarching paradox allows other paradoxes to come into play. Phase 5 also demonstrates Participant J's eagerness to explore such paradoxes and how the knowledge gained from the previous phase has provided her with a useful career analytic, illustrating the penetrative and utility of paradox as an analytical motif. This section will now provide illustrations of each of the above themes across Phases 3-5, concentrating most heavily on what is found in Phase 5 with some brief extracts from Documents 3 and 4 to contextualise more in-depth the findings gained from Phase 5 of the project.

As indicated above Participant J has consistently across the study articulated a position upon career as paid work. This is evident in her worksheet in Phase 3 where she expresses

The term career is subjective and I have always felt that it links with the accustomed idea of career, which suggests it is about work, occupation and progress. There are many perspectives on career, which include career as life roles a person may play throughout their life or career as being any social strand a person has in their life.

(Goffman, 1961) (Arthur, 2010) suggests that it is a sequence of an individual's work experiences over a lifetime. This definition is what I feel is closest to my perception of career. Nonetheless, I acknowledge that this is a very narrow idea of career and can seem as being very exclusive.

Participant J therefore equates career as work, experiences that constitute a sense of progress, but at the same time can acknowledge that it is likely to mean different things to different people. This is also expressed in Phase 4 where she asserts how this is an exclusive perception upon career, but one that enables her to fulfil her own desires in life given the context she is in, someone fresh out of university looking to stabilise herself financially before starting a family, a constant yearning articulated through-out the project. It is through a stabilisation via work that Participant J can progress to a position to become a mother as well as take full advantage of the missed opportunities her mother experienced. What is clear from Participant J's articulations is that she wishes to take advantage of the absent opportunities experienced by her mother, a means of progressing not only her own 'career' but her families also.

I do hate to say it, but, I do find that it makes me seem to be stuck up, but I feel like it's [career] work, but only because this is how I have been brought up with my mum because she never had the opportunity to really have a good education and went straight into work and wanted me to do better...

The delaying of motherhood is seen as an important aspect of Participant J's career enactment, to put on hold her own desires, to navigate the post-industrial milieu that she finds her self within, a structure that restrains desire, where she chooses to navigate in a productive manner so as to eventually provide the agency she requires to fulfil her desire to become a mother. With such determination to get to such a position, a position that has to be delayed, Participant J castigates anyone that she perceives to deviate from such preconceived navigation, as identified in Phase 4.

... I still feel as though I am very young to be married and having children but I think that is also because of I have been socialised into 'don't have kids have dogs, make sure you get your job' and you know 'make sure it's worthwhile a career'.... when you see people your age that have got three children and you are like 'you're so young what are you doing? What's wrong with you?' You sort of think that you're the one missing out but, I suppose yeah it will just have to be thought about at the time. I think it is because I like structure, I don't like not knowing, I like being in control.

This is still considered in Phase 5 another year on from graduation and on the cusp of starting work as a fully qualified Social Worker. What becomes apparent is how well Participant J can articulate career, how she is aware that she still has an exclusive view on career that suits her circumstance and how this may change in the future once she matures and heads toward her desired goal of becoming a mother

I would love to have said in my mind that I am an open minded person especially in the job I am doing, I feel that the only time that it will really change is if I have a baby and I can see it from my perspective because sometimes, because I am very tunnelled vision and I know that we did the assignment on the course many people saw career as very broad but mine is very narrow minded and I agree it is very narrow minded, I just see it as work, but until I see it happen to me I can say, you know what being a mother is really hard, you need to think about vaccinations, you need child development knowledge, you need all this knowledge all this that and the other and it is the hardest job you can do you know, you are working as a mother, you know as I am a female you know it will be different from the different point of view of a man, a father, until that happens I still view it as work, it would be different if I was pregnant now or I had had a baby I think, I would give you more a definition linked to the research but it is still tunnel vision for me it is still work

(my emphasise)

Work is central to Participant J's paradigm of career, even motherhood, which is contemplated as potentially being part of career in the future, seems to only fit that paradigm due to being hard work and a job, though one that is likely to be unpaid. Motherhood is anticipated as an enactment that is likely to occupy and preoccupy time much like her studies and paid work do now and have done in the past. The taking up of opportunities, both education and work, are vital to serve the family narrative started and initiated by her mother, where education and the work of a professional is likely to provide a financial setting that allows a place for motherhood to occupy time, once the time is felt ready to do so. This appears to be a planned enactment that has 'worked' for the participant and one that she wishes not be distracted from.

I have stuck to this plan and life is never about a plan, but it seems to have worked quite well so far and I don't want to jinx it, but I know I did mention that being a mother in the future would be really important to me because my partner that I am with now is the person I will be married to and hopefully have children with. I think that it is something that if you were to interview me in two years and I had a child I would say that that is more important to me than more job, and it rightly should be, but I do think that is where it has been for the last 15, well how many years, it has been education and following a plan to do a Masters, doing something that will get me into a job and get my teeth into. I was mentioning to my lecturers earlier, you know, in five years' time I will be a manager somewhere and saying that I can do this, and having been a student myself being a student educator, it is just following a plan of education and employment

What becomes apparent is that Participant J's desire to enact hard work, to follow a plan, to be seen to progress, to take advantage of the lengthy educational path she has taken toward a profession, is to be extended once in the work place toward a linear progression toward management, with one eye on motherhood once the time is felt right to do so.

During Phase 4 the overarching paradox of 'Protection as vulnerability' was first revealed to Participant J. As indicated in Document 4, Participant J acknowledges and verifies the deconstructive reading the researcher presented to her of her reflexive account written as an undergraduate. Such a deconstructive reading acknowledges the paradox of 'protection' – an important activity for the participant an activity entwined with notions of care – 'as vulnerability', how the protection of others provides a great sense of validation and strength whilst also providing a risk of harm, to both self and other. This paradox very much came from what the researcher felt was a significant aspect of the summative assignment written as an undergraduate, which reflected on an experience where the care for another ceased abruptly, where the gift of death ended an emotional economy of care.

I applied for an undergraduate degree in children's nursing as I felt this career was very suitable to my characteristics, personal values and found myself becoming very enthusiastic about this prospect. I continued gaining work experience in the NHS and this is the precise time my ontological security was threatened after I had experienced a prominent fateful moment. (Giddens, 1991) I was assigned to work with oncology patients which began pleasantly, however after several months of becoming friends with a patient, I witnessed her condition deteriorate rapidly. I had been with her at her time of death and this was extremely emotional. I felt as though I had not been able to help her, something I have found confidence in when referring to my identity, questioning myself and my emotional resilience. I could not continue on working and understood that a career in nursing was not appropriate for me and decided to apply for a youth studies degree that offered me many other possible career paths.

As reflected upon in Document 3, this event challenges Participant J's perception of career, one where the enactment of care becomes questioned where protection, so vital a motivator, ends with a negative return, one that makes Participant J vulnerable as the act of protection is seen to have failed. The deconstructive reading once shared with the participant in Phase 4 provides a challenge, a questioning of the endeavour of care and protection from a differing

perspective, how the giving of care provides an emotional economy, how validation comes from care, a sense of purpose, a taking as well as a giving.

I thought it was really useful [the deconstructive reading] ... in a way that you described it, but the caring as a strength and vulnerabilities and the paradox of that, that I thought was really good, as I think it reflects both aspects of me anyway of what it means for me to do it [care for others], cause I think it does validate me as a person if I help others... I think it does highlight that, what you go into sometimes reflects that you need to feel worthy ... but yeah, [heavy sigh] I don't know vulnerability is quite a, it's quite a broad subject I suppose. [long pause] yeah vulnerability [a silent reflective whisper]. [Pace picks up and is more assertive] yeah when I read it I did, it sort of made sense it was a bit like scary that, that is really true, but you wouldn't sort of go to someone and say, well oh, selfishly, you know I am helping you out because it makes me feel better, cause really it should always be like that person, and what you are doing for them, but it does make you, you know, you are doing something to make yourself feel better, I suppose.

Care is therefore wished upon as a gift, where the participant in some way gives herself over to the care receiver, where they are put first. However, Participant J has to acknowledge how there is always a return that is anticipated, a need for reassurance and validation that comes from the thank you or gratitude that comes back into play in the emotional economy of care announced. The emotional economy of care, via the paradox exposed, becomes manifest in consciousness to the participant, where discussion in Phase 4 allowed an unfolding of further connecting paradoxes, in particular how her work experiences as a social worker provide the paradox of 'care as control and control as care', as highlighted in the above section.

yeah, yeah, [pause] it [controlling service users] it sort of attacks my [pause] it attacks what I am used to, so I think my brains sort of goes, 'oh my god this person doesn't like you, you're not doing what this person wants, you're going against what they think

is good for them.’ You know ‘you’re not helping them out now, you’re not getting that feeling of you are helping them’ because they are blatantly sort of going ‘what are you doing to me?’ But you sort of have to realise that that is eventually for them, so I have gotten used to that idea, but it has sort of sent me into melt down a couple of times if I have had to say ‘look I am really sorry but, you know you’re not doing what’s best for your child’ you know ‘we are going to have to remove your child at the moment for a court order’ you know it sort of all goes into melt down, you think that you are being horrible person and that the control sort of takes over, and sometime, it has to, you have got no choice, but yeah it is a bit of a, it’s not nice to do the control bit it is necessary sometimes, I have to get used to that [slight laugh/sigh/exhale]

Care for Participant J is focused upon as a means of gaining a quick positive emotional return, however there are times when this is not deemed appropriate by the participant, and therefore a sense of controlling someone is presented in consciousness as being in the best interest of the care receiver, however, such an enactment feels alien to usual intended enactment, an enactment that seeks verification via positive regard. Control at times becomes enacted, an act which is seen via a longer term lens as something that is perceived via the care giver as caring in nature, in the best interest of the service user, though they may not see this at this time and it is hoped that they may be able to at some later date. Within the semi-structured interview in Phase 5 further paradoxes unfold when revisiting the overarching paradox of protection as vulnerability. What is of note is that the participant had taken on-board the paradoxes explored in Phase 4 and came prepared to the interview with her observations of other paradoxes that had become manifest within consciousness. A fateful moment that had occurred between Phase 4 and 5 had been seen as an impetus to acknowledge such paradoxes, in particular how ‘helping provides a sense of helplessness’. The fateful moment of note is an episode involving the participant’s younger half-sister whom had experienced a period of mental distress culminating in the writing of a couple of suicide notes, found initially by the participant’s mother.

I can say this as I know it is anonymous, and I trust you and I think we have a good rapport, it was last year, at the end of last year my sister had stopped eating, she didn't eat very much and she got loads of chocolate and my mum said that she feels that there is something wrong with her, she's like 'I know as a mother's instinct, I know there is something wrong' she ending up looking under her bed as she had a feeling that she was hiding something, she found a different bunch of suicide notes, there was one for me and my mother and one for her friends at school, it has been a while since that happened and it has resolved itself and my sister said she would never go through with it, she was upset at the time and she didn't know who to talk to ... my mum started to blame herself as she had depression in the past, I had sort of had to become the parent as them two, to me, had become crumbling bricks... she is only 15 and my mum has always been this steady rock and I thought what do I do now I am the one that has got to sort this out and the paradox that I found which is what I was thinking about is that I found that I was the helper but I found that I felt really helpless.

The event appears to throw the participant into uncharted territory, forcing a reconfiguration of the relationship between the participant and her mother, a change in power dynamics that disorients the participant at first, a position loaded with meanings of finitude, forced by her sister's actions, providing a threat toward the act of protection again, to be made vulnerable, yet this time perceived as 'helping providing a sense of helplessness'.

Both Phases 4 and 5 provide insight into the subjective value structures of the participant, how experiences and episodes shape such structures. In Phase 4 this is particularly manifest due to the Master's course providing a focus upon reflective practice. What becomes apparent in Phase 4 is how such reflection provides a tension for Participant J, how the course is pushing for certain codes of values that at first challenge the participant's 'personal' set of values and sense of 'authenticity'.

...you start to get a bit more of the professional values as your own, and you start to make links with anti-oppressive practice which is so integral to that, but it is also good that I have got that anyway. When your personal and professional values start to conflict you start worrying about where you are going to get lost in being as you are now ... when is that point gonna be where I have got to forget what my judgements are and what my instincts are? Are they gonna get swallowed up ... that sort of taught me that meshing my professional and personal values together so it is sort of continuous being and becoming, because it is forever evolving I think, and that has just been through experience. I was a bit worried that being a social worker I would have to lose some parts of myself but it just sort of means it has got to be adapted differently.

The dualities of being and becoming and self and other are present in such reflections. The participant contemplates how the self is a moving projection and that a deep rooted sense of self – values - are adaptable and context dependent, constituted by experiences with other, including the other within self. This is further explored in Phase 5 where another two further paradoxes emerge, a challenge to dichotomous logic, where certainty can only be evoked via a sense of uncertainty and how one has to become comfortable with the uncomfortable of uncertainty. This is evoked when reflecting upon the interview in Phase 4 where the participant spoke of how notions of ‘professionalism’ are lent upon when having to deal with ambiguous social work encounters.

I know before I spoke about the professionalism and the guidelines and all that is a nice safety net for you, well it’s nice as it tells you, to do this and to do that, it really is not like that when you get into it, it is very much like a mixture of everything and if you don’t get the balance right you really will mess up ... and the welfare of the child that should be at the front of your mind or, you know, am I thinking of the practice guidelines that is saying I should do it this way or I should do that, and then your values, you are like ‘I am not treating them, I am not treating a parent like an equal, valuing that they are an independent person they have got a right to do this’, it is just

gonna go all, and there is no way you are going to know what is the right thing to do, there is no way and that is what I don't like as I would have said before any of this [studying and working as a social worker] that I am a black and white person with my values, with my judgement of saying that 'I did the right thing', with being right or wrong, and it is very grey ... I don't like not knowing I think that is why it is a benefit for me to learn because I like to know I like to be certain about things, or, I at least like to have the information there to make a judgment so for social work, social work is so grey there is no black and white there is no black and white what so ever

... you just can't, as long as you are certain that you are uncertain then you will be fine, yeah that is the best way to put it because if you think 'yeah I know this I have done the right thing 100%' people will look at you and go 'hold on a second' ... yeah you have to be uncertain and be comfortable with being uncertain.

What is of note here is how the reflections provided by Participant J in Phase 5 are in concert with her illustrations provided in Phase 4, how the enactment of care, via social work, provides a challenge to her yearning for certainty. An analysis of enacting care is perceived to be difficult, where there are multiple perspectives to be read, where learning becomes a means of improving, progressing, one's reading of enactment, yet learning is acknowledged as only providing a certainty of uncertainty, in-turn qualities to be able to feel comfortable with such uncomfortable situations. As reflected upon in Phase 4, such reading resonates with Kafka's (1992) notions of 'before the law', where the participant, as practitioner, has to justify her enactment to a higher law, potentially oneself, one's profession, policy, one's own assigned gateway to universal 'Law' to justify why one has done what they have done, how this relates to the tension and paradox of care as control, personal values as professional values as well as linking to the prominent dualities within the philosophical architecture announced: self and other, agency and structure and being and becoming - where there is an acknowledgment that protection becomes vulnerability and vulnerability becomes protection.

Phase 5 provides an opportunity to consider how the participant has taken on-board the researcher's deconstructive reading that occurred in Phase 4. Participant J relishes this opportunity and illustrates how she has utilised such knowledge to help her to read her own career articulations and where she suggests it may have other utility – something considered in the Discussion Section.

... when I came in here first and said paradox with me with my sisters situation being a helper but feeling helpless ... that has helped, it illustrates your thoughts and your feelings ... how that helps me understand what has happened and how that happens, but I would say it continues and I think actually if you were ever going to use it in therapy it would be the best thing ever as it helps people understand why they say what they do and why they feel that way, what ways they, you know, feel situations like that which I wouldn't have thought of and it makes you think, you know, if you feel helpless you just need to relax and if you are a helper and you are also helpless you are really not helping anyone at all and so it does I think it is necessary for research, academia, personal life, relationships, everything.... I have really enjoyed it [the interview], it is good, it is like a therapeutic, cathartic, yeah I have enjoyed it thank you

The next section will now explore Participant R in-depth, following the same format utilised for Participant J.

5.3.2 Participant R, Discontinuity as continuity; agility for stability

Participant R is a white young woman in her early twenties, who leaves university to gain a full time job with a national charity that specialises in community engagement of young people in the North West of England. Participant J is a daughter of a Methodist minister and a head teacher where, as identified in Phases 3 and 4, her father's occupation as a minister is an important aspect of her career articulation as this involves her family moving at regular intervals. What becomes apparent is that the participant becomes accustomed to such

moves which result in discontinuities to her career enactment, resulting in significant changes to her housing, relationship, leisure and education careers, where such discontinuity becomes anticipated and normalised, thus a 'continuity of discontinuity'. A discontinuity that occurs when venturing into the teenage years provides a rebellious reaction, a means of challenging her parent's authority and lack of perceived concern for Participant R to have a say in her future, what is perceived as an absence of responsibility and agency. Participant R verifies the deconstructive reading presented during Phase 4, and Phase 5 illustrates the enduring nature of such an overarching paradox and how this results in unfolding a range of other paradoxes that shape enactment, although such revelations are accepted with less enthusiasm, initially, than Participant J. Such unfolding culminates into a consideration of how work with socially deprived and socially insignificant young people provides significance within career enactment, as she is able to provide such young people with opportunities to enhance their lives and thus enable them to gain more social significance, another form of giving back and the enactment of an emotional economy of care.

During the course of Phases 3-5 Participant R has been consistent upon her operationalisation of career. Participant R sees career from a broad perspective taking on-board the work of Super and Goffman as illustrated in her reflexive worksheet.

Super (1980) challenges the common perception of 'career' as occupation by suggesting that career and occupation should not be used as interchangeable synonyms - 'a career is a sequence of positions held during the course of a lifetime, some of them simultaneously' (Super 1980, p.286) whereas occupational career is 'the sequence or combination of occupational positions held during the course of a lifetime.' (ibid, p. 286) Goffman (1961) reiterates this by suggesting that 'career' is refers to the social strands in a person's life.

This is further explored in Phase 4 where the participant acknowledges that she still holds such a broad view but that this has been challenged by the work environment that she now frequents.

...somebody had received an application where they said that 'my career at university, da, da , da , da, da...' and then there was this whole debate in the office about like 'why on earth has somebody said they have got a career when they are just a student?' and I was the only one that was saying 'oh, actually, career [both of us laughing] can be seen as social strands' but yeah definitely, especially in the staffing team career is seen as employment cause we don't see it as anything else

This is reflected upon also in Phase 5, again such a broad perspective is challenged by the same work environment but the participant still keeps to a broad perspective of career, a perspective that she believes is counter to a culture, via her perception, that is driven by money. It is also worth noting that the participant, as is the case for Participant J, can recollect her reflexive log, demonstrating the enduring nature of the pedagogy that has taken place.

I think, because I am in an environment that involves employment, so career is employment in that environment, but I haven't got to a point that I dismiss that other strands in my life could not be called career ... that essay I wrote said career can be viewed from many perspectives, having studied that, in an odd way I say I have a bigger value to all that, I mean so many people are just driven by their work careers, employment driven, whereas I think a bit differently to that, like I have always said I should be a mum, and I would have no intentions to go back to work once I become a mum, and in that sense , I still recognise how those different strands interconnect but at the moment because of the nature of what I do at the moment my biggest idea of career is employment.

As is the case with Participant J, anticipation of motherhood appears to be an important dimension of career, an activity to be respected, and one that can be described as central to career. The overarching paradox of 'discontinuity as continuity' was deconstructively read during Phase 3 which came from the researcher focusing their deconstructive reading upon the multiple discontinuities the participant experienced as a child, which appear to leave their trace, a mark, a texture, a scare upon articulation.

As the daughter of a Methodist minister, an occupation of which entails moving 'circuits' (a group of local churches in which ministers preach) every 3-5 years, I was destined to fairly regular transitions in my life from the day I was born, or arguably, before I was even conceived. It meant that my career would be suddenly altered by one single event, in which all of my social strands would be shifted.

The use of strands here provides an insight into how the discontinuity in one area of life, the family, has a knock on effect upon other strands. The notion of strands provides conceptual insight into Participant R's reflexivity, and appears to be an analytic she is able to utilise. Within Phase 4 of the study the researcher's perceived overarching paradox was first revealed to the participant, where the participant provided a verification of such a reading.

I think it probably, in terms of what I reflected upon in my career at that point, it's probably bang on

With Participant R having experienced many transitions in her childhood, due to her father having to relocate due his work as a minister, Participant R becomes adept at adaptation, where discontinuity appears to make the participant able to cope with stressful fateful moments and episodes, this is reflected upon in Phase 4 where the participant considers a period in her life when her father becomes ill.

... like my dad has been in hospital for a few months, with, with, well we couldn't, well not even the doctors could figure it out, if someone had said 'oh, this is going to happen in the future' I would have thought 'oh no I am going to be in bits and I am going to find it really hard' etc. etc. But I just cracked on with it and I could deal with it and it was only until the end and when he came out of hospital that I could reflect on what had happened and thought 'oh that was an intense period of my life' but at the time I just cracked on and that's just how you deal with life, cause I have been around a lot and I have been thrown into lots of different situations as a kid I think is just how I am now, which is good, it's a nice trait

Although the participant can acknowledge the strength of such a trait she also acknowledges how she tries to avoid discontinuity. In Phase 5 she appears to be reticent to even mention the word discontinuity and she reflects upon how she can cope with such moments but wishes to avoid them to find a sense of stability.

I think I dislike discon... I can't say the word, discontinuity, I dislike that now, I actively try and make sure that my life has more continuity in it, I don't know why, I'm quite happy just to coast, you know some people actively seek changes and things like, I think that because, like change and discon, I can't say that word, I am going to stop using it [laughs]; change it was always forced upon me it was never my choice you know, I never said 'I want to move schools or that I wanted to live in this place or where ever', it was always just thrust upon me like 'this is happening now', so even though I was familiar with that and when change does happen unplanned I can deal with it, I can adjust, but, I think as a result of that I avoid making changes myself, only in employment though, I have just realised that, I mean I have moved around, after uni I moved back home and then moved to here, I mean I didn't have any friends here in [city in the North West] so I can move around in that sense but in employment, that, I like the continuity, like I have graduated and stayed here, I mean yeah, my job has changed a little bit, but still in the same team and in sense I have known what I am going into, I think that is an interesting side of things, I like continuity now.

Reflection upon her participation in the research appears to provide a guidance function, a revelation to the participant of her career enactment where employment appears to provide an important means of stability. As articulated in Phase 4, the participant suggests that gaining employment is something that she is anxious about, especially when facing the transition toward graduation as a third year undergraduate, something that appears to be exacerbated by the HE institutional mechanisms of employability.

I might turn out to be not a very good person to employ was what my worry was, then I think that I worried that I wouldn't be able to put theory into practice and there is a lot pressure put on you by education to be able to go into full time employment and I think they measure, yeah HE places seem to measure success and their success by student going into full time employment, which I was very aware of and that made me quite anxious about things.

Participant R gains employment via a national charity, one that was introduced to the student, where a visiting speaker, now a colleague, was invited to speak to the students as part of the undergraduate curriculum. Initially Participant R works directly with young people on programmes that aid young people to become socially integrated – in particular those that are disenfranchised and disengaged from learning and employment. During Phase 4 she gains a promotion to becoming a recruiter of workers in such programmes, something that at the time she reflects positively upon, even though it provides 'distance' from working with young people and gaining a direct sense of satisfaction, via an emotional economy of care similar to Participant J – as already highlighted in Section 5.1.

I do get fulfilment out of what I do, because I get people who from the program teams, who manage on the ground, come back and say 'oh, this staff member that you recruited is really amazing they did this' and then I get e-mails from staff members saying 'I just want to say thank you this has happened' and whatever so I still get

snippets of it but I don't get it on a daily basis like I did when I worked with these young people on the ground, so yeah. It is something that I have to consider and remind myself as to why I am doing this job and I essentially work in recruitment and I never aimed to work in recruitment but because it's in an organisation like it is then I still get worth from it.

The distance and duration of gaining positive regard is now perceived to take longer than working 'on the ground', yet the position of employment during Phase 4 is one that still provides a sense of 'job satisfaction' that is important to Participant R. This is further reflected upon in Phase 5 where the participant has experienced another promotion. Her role now entails recruiting specialised workers to work with the most hard to help young people on the programmes mentioned before. The participant is the only such recruiter in the country, something that she is very proud of. The participant utilises the metaphor of a 'cog' to consider how her position is different now compared to when she was interviewed in Phase 4.

... getting something from my job, is like job satisfaction, like feeling happy in my job and making a difference to me is being one of the cogs that make this whole process happen in the [charity], like, now I feel as though I am quite a significant cog, whereas before I was a smaller cog

The interview then proceeds to explore the meaning behind such a metaphor paying particular attention to the notion of significance. Firstly, the position of being the only recruiter of her kind in the country is reflected upon and how if she was to go off sick then that particular 'cog' would no longer turn and its connecting cogs, many of which are perceived to be smaller, would no longer work. Then she expresses how significance relates to the responsibility of working with vulnerable young people, young people that are significant to her because of their insignificance to society, therefore emerging an unfolding paradox that chases the overarching paradox mentioned before.

...well the thing that is underpinning the responsibility is what is making it bigger ... it boils down to the fact that it is involving young people that come from really horrible backgrounds. I mean if it was working with, this is going to sound really horrible, but if I was working with young people that didn't face all these barriers in their life and in their careers, if all those young people didn't face all those barriers ... I would feel less responsible as I would feel like I know that they have more chances and opportunities coming their way, they have tons of time to do what they are doing, for [the charity] to have an impact, for these young people they are going to face a lot of barriers to their life, if I get my job wrong, you know, then that crosses off an opportunity, well there is only going to be a few opportunities for them.

Participant R paints a picture of very hard to help young people that experience multiple barriers toward being integrated within society, where many young people are involved with 'gangs' and are on the 'wrong side of the law'. These young people are described by the participant as isolated, yet, there are numerous amount of such young people. It is such 'horrible' circumstances that appears to make the young people significant for the participant, young people that require significant attention, requiring her attention more than those that are in a better predicament to navigate their lives.

... if the support wasn't provided, if there wasn't the people, say social workers, key workers, people that are at [the charity], if they were not people there to provide support to these young people, you know, they would be in a gang or being groomed by a gang or be on the brink of it, they would be in it by now, so in that sense they are really vulnerable.

The interview then provides space for the participant to explore how the charity she works for provides opportunities for young people to help with their sense of agency, to allow them to build their self-esteem and to start to consider themselves as significant, to feel integrated

within their communities and to feel part of society. What becomes apparent in the interview is how the goal of her work enactment – providing insignificant young people with opportunities to enhance their own agency and to become to feel more significant – mirrors her yearning as a child when experiencing the numerous discontinuities forced upon her via her father having to move circuits. Such enactment appears to be trying to rectify feelings of being isolated as a child, not having a sense of agency, a feeling of not being significant and lacking responsibility due to having discontinuity forced upon her.

... you would have no idea either, my mum and dad were never like ‘oh your dad is going to move soon and he is going to be job hunting’ they would never say that they would just bring it on you, just one day you are fine and then the next day we are moving, not literally but the next day I find out we are moving ... I did feel pretty isolated because of that, isolated in the sense of that I was never included in the choices that my family was making even ... I mean I was never informed until it was quite final. I think if I had been given a bit of heads up about that, the decision process, I would have felt a little bit more comfortable with it.

This appears something that the participant gets used to until she is on the cusp of becoming a teenager. At the age of 12 the participant speaks of her displeasure of having such discontinuities forced upon her.

... when I was 12 I had just done the transition from primary to secondary school and I had done a year at secondary school and then I was going to move and I think I found that one the hardest ... I tell you what I didn’t unpack, I lived surrounded by cardboard boxes for about a month, I mean I refused to move any of my things into my new bedroom, so I think I struggled with it. I went along with it, I used to cry every day I went to school, I hated the whole process of it, I don’t know why? I think it was just the unknown of it all, I visited the school before I went and I didn’t like it I had all these negative perceptions of where, where things were going to be at

It is here that the participant acknowledges how such experiences, linked to the paradox of 'discontinuity of continuity', mirror her current career enactment, the yearning to want to address isolation, insignificance and an absence of agency of the young people she works with. She reflects upon this via connecting with a personal activity she performed at age 12 during this difficult transition, where she makes a list of how she would parent when she is older, to challenge the perceived absence of such values being enacted by her own parents.

... when I was younger I made a list of all the things I wanted to do when I was a mum and I think all of the things are, you could link back, I still don't have the list, but I remember all of the things on the list could be linked back to making my future son or daughter feel valued and like, I guess to have autonomy and be who they want to be as people, like my mum and dad had this clear idea of how their sons and daughters should be like there were like never to move in with a boy before you are married and x, y and z and never have children before you are married, etc... As a teenager I always really struggled with that but they had this idea of what they wanted me to be like so you could link all of those things back to me having autonomy and thinking that my ideas and my values etc. are important in some way

During the interview the researcher poses a question, to question the connection between the discontinuities continually experienced and how this might link to present career enactment which the participant verifies, yet only upon a subconscious level.

Researcher – it sounds to me as though you are enacting some of that list in the role you doing now, making sure that these young people have autonomy, that even though society don't think they are significant you do, that you value their opinions, give them opportunities is this the case?

Participant R - yeah, yeah you are right, I mean consciously no, but I think subconsciously yes

The yearning to address the absence of feelings of belonging and agency, as a child, appears to magnetically pull the participant toward a work career enactment that addresses such issues for others, disenfranchised young people in this instance. Youth is something that is reflected upon in the interview, where the participant expresses her reactions to the prominent transition of moving home at 12, providing feelings of isolation, where rebellion appears to become a means of addressing an absence of agency.

... my mum and dad would say that you should totally go to church and you have got to do this, and this, like, and I was just like no! I am the youngest of the family and my siblings are all meeting my mum and dad's expectations but I just totally don't and I think that period in my life is where I was having that transition, actively not caring what my mum and dad think and I want to be my own person, and ... I would be the extreme, I don't know, I was just being a little shit really... I was 14-16 sort of age, it was like, it was after that move when I was 12 my friendship group were like the popular kids that weren't very nice kids, would always go out drinking and telling your mum that you were at one mum's house and you would be on a field drinking 2 litres of Strong Bow, it was that and I think because I had that friendship group it enabled me to become, yeah not what my mum and dad wanted me to be, but I think as a result of that I have now become a lot more content with just being my own person, even at that point they didn't disown me or anything and now I am like I can live with my boyfriend now, they wouldn't be happy with this if it were up to them, but I never struggled saying 'oh we are going to move in together'. I think that time of me rebelling against everything they wanted me to be has enabled me, now, as an adult to be who I want to be

The participant strongly asserts that rebellion provides her with a sense of much needed agency at a time where she had felt it was diminished, a time where she is coming of age and wanting to shape her own identity, one that is having to work against the barriers being inscribed by her parents, not allowing agency desired. The participant then reflects upon the limits of such rebellion, how the rebellion may initially provide much needed agency but how it then moves toward its own difficulties, where the rebellion into the environ of the 'popular' group comes with its own restraints, unfolding a paradox of 'freedom as restraint', a reflection that revokes the previous worksheet written – again showing the enduring nature of the pedagogy experienced.

I remember writing in my worksheet about actively making a decision to go to a different college from my friendship group, you could probably say that at that moment in my life I didn't want my life to go in a way that my friends were going, but at the time that was linked to me not liking the kids I was hanging out with they were very bitchy and two faced and things like that, it was things like that. I probably, yeah from that point onwards I was more well behaved, I still went to parties and things when they were on, but I didn't get in as much trouble as I did before that.

A compromise appears to be struck, a position where the participant gains much needed agency, which at first required an extreme reaction to challenge the absence of agency needed in her family life, however this becomes tempered once the restraint of the new group incorporated within becomes acknowledged as being detrimental to identity formation.

Unlike Participant J, Participant R has a less enthusiastic reaction to her knowledge of the paradoxes revealed in Phase 4. The researcher asks if the revealing of the overarching paradox has had an impact upon career enactment

I don't think, maybe like for a few days, I was thinking about, for me anyway I just slipped back into usual stuff, to have an impact it would have to be a conscious impact, I recognise what has come up there, and either like it or not like it and choose to, I have never had a conscious effort to look at that or notice that

As is the case with many of the participant articulations during this study the emotional economy of care appears a motivating factor for career enactment for Participant R. As with many of the participants money plays second fiddle to the enactment of 'giving back' and 'making a difference' and this appears alien to significant others in Participant R's life, others that appear to have a different motivational force.

Making a difference is my major motivator, I mean my partner is highly driven by money, ... if I won the lottery I would still work here and do what I do, which my partner finds insane. He would immediately leave work and not turn up the next day, where I would carry on, I would still do this. Most people have employment because they need to get by, of course I need to get by, but that is not the main reason why I do what I do

Care, as is the case for Participant J, is to be seen as a gift, to be given without a return, in particular not to be overtly returned via a financial capital, only enough to life comfortably,

If it was paid higher [jobs in the care sector] you would get people doing the job who shouldn't be doing it, might not be best suited, when money is the main motivator I think that when it comes to care the quality off the care is of lesser quality, yeah people who are already in it and in it for the right reasons could be given a promotion and it be the same, but if all of a sudden you're paid tonnes more you would get more people thinking 'oh yeah I could do that' cause it is x amount of money instead of y, but they, because their motivation isn't 'I want to make a difference' the quality will be less

The duality of gift and economy become apparent, care needs to be given for the supposed *right* reasons, to make a difference, to arguably, for Participant R, fill the void left by diminished agency as a child, where turbulence was regularly experienced, allowing for agile responses yearning toward stability. This is now played out within the work role where the participant provides a supposed gift helping insignificant young people, not to be weighed down by money looking for a return, an insufficient motivator, but where her enactment provides a giving that does ask for a return, as demonstrated here, to replenish an absence of agency, and feelings of isolation that now leads to satisfaction, an emotional return.

Researcher - so if it is not money what are the rewards you get?

Participant J – it is the satisfaction, it's the feeling that when I leave work and I have done something successful and been involved with something that has gone well that is when I am like 'yes!' that is my reward

Section 5.3 has provided in-depth explorations of 2 case studies that have been present in all empirical stages of the research project. The section has illustrated the penetrative and enduring nature of deconstructively reading career via the motif of paradox. The next section will provide discussions to the limitations of the project as well as its contribution to the literature and professional practice of exploring career within the HE curriculum.

6. Discussion

This longitudinal project provides insight into the recursive relationship between pedagogy, research, theory and practice, utilising paradox as a focus upon reading career. This section will discuss the contribution this project makes to the literature across the recursive domains mentioned. It will also discuss the perceived limitations of this exploratory research and

suggests useful future practice that could occur to build upon the emergent themes that have arisen from the project.

The project highlights that the pedagogy experienced by the participants is one that has an enduring nature. All participants are able to willingly reflect back and reference the worksheet completed as undergraduates, where articulations of career, there, as well as throughout the phases of the project, are nuanced, personalised and complex. The articulations consider important philosophical, political and sociological parameters of their own careers, with a contemplation of the important interplay between the dualities of self and other, being and becoming, agency and structure and time and space. Participants are also able to articulate notions of paradox and find such an analytical motif of utility to aid career enactment. Such textuality is counter to the 'skills' approach found within employability focused HE curricular input, which provides, as accounted for in the literature review, a frustrating, overtly pragmatic, functional, uncritical and narrow form of pedagogy (Archer et al, 2003; Roberts, 2009; Hutchinson et al, 2011; Browne and Misra, 2003; Love, 2008; Bathmaker et al, 2013; Frayne, 2015; Williams, 2013; Gee, 2016 and 2017; Mignot and Gee, in press; Atkins, 1999; Watts, 2006; McCash, 2006 and 2008; Knight and Yorke, 2003; O'Regan, 2009). This document therefore illustrates that a pedagogy that allows space for students to operationalise and reflect upon career, informed via the literature and a duality framework, can provide an emphasis toward criticality, questioning rather than overly embracing personal agency in a post-crash world. However, it is worth considering whether such articulations gained in Phases 4 and 5 have been unearthed due to the prompted interaction of the longitudinal dimension of the research. The sample is of potential significance here, as the researcher has to acknowledge that recruitment was a challenge, due to geographic location as well participants having time to participant. One point of discussion therefore is whether the participants are those that enjoyed and found the pedagogy of use. Future research that explores a broader sample may provide a broader insight into those that gravitate to such pedagogy described, as well as considering those that may not find the pedagogy impactful, so as to consider reasons why.

The project asserts that paradox, influenced via Derridean thought, is a useful focus upon deconstructively reading career, one that aids research. The penetrative articulations traced above illustrate how paradox provides an insight into career enactment, with an avoidance of the dichotomous logic found within the career literature that over plays agency over structure, being over becoming, self over other, rationality over irrationality and linearity over rhizomatic movement. The reflections above trace how the participant validates the researcher's reading of the major tensions found within articulation; what has been described as an 'overarching paradox'. The notion here is that the tension affects all other areas of articulation, which is illustrated above, as once paradoxes are explored others flower and unfold. *This is not to assert notions of an objective structure to be found underneath articulation, so as to find 'The Reading', a God's eye view.* Rather, that the overarching paradox found, constructed, invented by the researcher - taking into account Derridean thoughts on invention, as something that is both 'found' as well as 'constructed' - provides a focus for deconstructive reading, one that could potentially change, although the accounts suggest their endurance. The notion of overarching here might be best described as relating to an analogue of magnets of the same pole endeavoured to be placed together, the same yet now opposing, providing a traced yet latent field, one that provides movement and energy, which does not have a telos of equilibrium and is thus unresolved. The bold philosophical claim here is that paradox *is* an ontological aspect of career articulation, where there *is* articulation there *is* paradox, however the paradoxes are likely to have numerous readings. What is being suggested here is that a duality framework can enable insightful paradoxes to aid the reading and understanding of articulation and in-turn enactment. Therefore, future research may wish to consider how paradox may be utilised to further deconstructively read the literature as well as inform future research to explore career articulation; as it has to be accounted for that the samples utilised in this exploratory research are detailed, yet small. It is also worth considering another limitation here, how traced validation that comes from the participants may succumb to power dynamics of interaction, perhaps where participants overly agree with the researcher as they may well perceive them as someone with a greater claim to knowledge and research credentials. As indicated in Document 4, care has been taken when reading the transcripts to consider participant 'evasion' tactics or where articulations appear contradictory (Berg, 2004). Participant R becomes of interest here where there are times when she initially appears to challenge the

readings by the research, yet after further discussion becomes to consider its merit. However the consideration of 'evasion tactics' is further complicated by the fact that the research is interested in contradiction. The hope is that the author's 'logic' has been exposed for the reader to come to their own conclusions as to what can be taken from such traces. To further address areas of 'participant reactivity' further research will be useful to provide broader samples of articulations that can be read against the philosophical architecture announced.

An important theme that emerged is what has been termed 'an emotional economy of care'. Strong illustrations are provided above to account for this theme that emerged from the participants. With care being of prominence for the sample, with youth studies being a predominantly female course linking to caring professions in the labour market, it will be useful for future research to consider if such an economy occurs in other domains of the academy and beyond. The duality of gift and economy allows for contemplation of interchange and the (im)possibility of the 'gift'; whether this can translate beyond care, where other courses may have a different prominence - for example money, creativity or utility - becomes an important question and contemplation for future research.

The final theme to emerge is future utility of paradox as a means of reading career within practice. The researcher was surprised at the participant learning that came from engaging in the interviews in Phases 4-5. Whilst the interviews provided a research focus, the participants express, and the researcher himself felt the interactions at times, ventured into pedagogic, guidance and therapeutic territory. Researcher reflexivity provided an awareness of when this occurred and at times this was made apparent to the participants. With the practice dimension within this project very much focusing upon career exploration pedagogy, or a form of career studies that places the student in the position of career researcher, framed via notions of paradox and duality (McCash, 2006), future research and theory endeavours may wish to explore the potential utility of such a framing into other arenas of practice, such as career guidance, youth work, social work and therapeutic domains, currently outside the scope of this project.

7. Conclusion

This Document outlines an important longitudinal exploratory project which utilises a small yet detailed sample to illustrate the penetrative nature of exploring career via the notion of paradox. Paradox, it has been illustrated here, becomes a space, a place, a moment, potentially episodes that are to be explored and embraced rather than avoided, which is prevalent in much of the career development literature, an ontological aspect of career articulation. The project highlights how the penetrative nature of such an approach appears to have great utility to challenge the neo-liberal, managerialist and functional pedagogy found within the HE curriculum, a means of providing space for undergraduate student to become career researcher, to deconstruct their career articulations so as to trace important tensions in such articulations, articulations that are immersed in the world and have the world immersed within them. Such a critical approach appears to have utility in the HE curriculum, as well as a research motif and potentiality for wider practice and theoretical implications.

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Appendix 1 – Research information and ethics form distributed to participants

Ethic form and information for participants.

Research Title: Exploring career as a lived experience via the lens of paradox;

Research Question: How might paradoxical moments of career, as a lived experience, be articulated during undergraduate study and 6 months post-graduation? What meaning might be ascribed to such moments and how might this influence contemplation of career?

Research background and information sheet

Thank you for the interest you have shown in taking part in this research project. Before you agree to participate, I would like you to read through the following information, which will help to explain the project in more detail and how you can potentially contribute. If you have any questions about the project, or the nature of your participation which are not answered here, please do feel free to get in touch (contact details can be found at the end of this document).

Aims of the project

To analyse a small yet detailed sample of third year undergraduate students at a post-1992 university toward the end of their studies and following this sample post-graduation.

Objectives and supplementary questions

1. To critically analyse the career theory literature so as to explore various ontological, epistemological and political positions upon the concept of career
2. To critically evaluate the post-structural philosophy of Derrida so as to outline the research project's duality theoretical framework to be utilised to explore career analytically and pedagogically
3. To critically evaluate a range of social research literature so as to outline the study's methodology that will aid the exploration and analysis of student articulations of their career as a lived experience, concentrating on potential paradoxical moments so as to ascertain meaning ascribed and how this may influence career contemplation - during undergraduate study and 6 months after graduation

4. To synthesize findings from the above to inform the literature and influence future pedagogic practice.

Your contribution

This research project is to explore participant articulations of their 'career'. The first stage of the project is to analyse the worksheet assignment that you completed during your studies on the Transition and Learning Skills Module. The analysis is interested in any articulations of paradox in relation to career as a lived experience and how the contemplation of important dualities may well aid articulations – e.g. self and other, agency and structure and being and becoming

The second stage would like to conduct an interview (of up to about an hour long), in which I would like to discuss your perceptions of your career since graduating from the Youth Studies degree – approx. 6 months after graduation. The final stage of the research is to compare and contrast your written articulations – during undergraduate study – with your spoken reflections as a post-graduate. I would like to audio record the interviews, since this will enable me to listen to what you are saying more at the time, rather than having to write lots of notes. It also means that I will have a precise record of what you have said.

Storage and use of the data

Once your interview has been recorded, it will be transferred on to my PC as a digital recording. I will then transcribe your interview so I can import it into a qualitative analysis package as a text document. Transcriptions will be kept for possible future analysis. Quotes from your interview may appear publication in the future, where they are deemed relevant to the interpretation of the data, if this is the case they will be made anonymous.

Anonymity and confidentiality

I will use a number of measures to ensure your data is kept confidential, and that you remain anonymous. Any files (digital audio and textual) which contain data will be kept securely on a PC and backup storage device in a password protected folder. Your name will be removed from any data that is published – it will not be linked to your name, or initials. In addition, anything you mention in your interview which could be used to identify you will not be published.

Your rights

There is absolutely no expectation that you *must* take part in this research project. Participation is entirely voluntary, and should you wish to withdraw at any time, you may do so and any data recorded up to that point will be destroyed.

Are there any disadvantages to me taking part?

You will need to give up an hour of your time sometime in January or February 2016, and be willing for me to analyse your written assignment which is currently stored – like all submitted assignments – on NOW. It is hoped that you find the interview interesting and useful enough to outweigh this draw upon your time. I do not intend to ask you about any sensitive topics or issues, and if you feel that at any time you would prefer not to answer a question, that is absolutely fine.

The project has also been approved by the College Ethics Committee.

What's in it for you?

It is hoped that you will find participating in the research an interesting and useful experience. Simply talking to someone about your own experiences of career may also benefit future contemplation and enactment.

Contact details

Postal address:
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Exploring career as a lived experience via the lens of paradox;

Voluntary participation consent form

Please read and confirm your consent to have your written Worksheet assignment analysed and also to be interviewed for this project by initialling the appropriate box(es) and signing and dating this form

1. I confirm that the purpose of the project has been explained to me, that I have been given information about it in writing, and that I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary, and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without any implications for my legal rights ☐
3. I give permission for my Worksheet to be analysed and also to be interviewed – which will include it being audio-recorded by the researcher, ☐
4. I agree to take part in this project ☐

Name of participant

Date

Signature
