

**The Professional-Academic : Negotiating the
Relationships between Professional, Practitioner and
Academic Identities among Social Worker and Nurse
Educators**

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UCL Institute of Education

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

I, Paula Sobiechowska, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

From the first word of the Introduction to the last word of the Conclusion, and including the Glossary, Tables and Diagrams, the word length of this Thesis is : **79,205** words.

P. Sobiechowska

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Abstract

The study examines how nurse and social worker educators conceptualise and create academic identities through a negotiation between the interests of their professional, practitioner and academic selves. The ultimate identity position of the professional-academic, as generated from the data, manifests as an interplay of “This is who I am” - expressed in a strong identification with, and commitment to an idealised professional mission and professional self - and “This is what I do”, realised in the teaching of students and production of professional-practitioners. The abiding intent of the professional-academic is to transcend the limitations of the practice field and hold it – and in some instances the policy-makers - and the practitioner-self to account.

Academic identity-making is framed through the ‘internal conversations’ (Archer, 2012; 2003; 2000) and ‘identifications’ (Jenkins, 2008; Lawlor, 2008, Wenger, 1998) individuals adopt to establish, legitimate and maintain their position in the university. These reflect their ‘concerns and commitments’ – or orientations – to the profession, practice and the academy and shape the motivations and practices of their academic life and being. The emphasis of orientations and attendant motivations develop over time and place, variously locating individuals within a matrix of identity positions. Some positions become more fixed identity-types.

It is an interpretive, qualitative study based on semi-structured interviews with nineteen academics. A thematic analysis generated a schema of identity-making processes where: orientations are a biographical mix of engagements within each of the domains; both professional-disciplinary groups express dissonance or conflict with the practice field alongside an ideological commitment to the profession; predisposing orientations and the affordances-constraints of the university produce a range of five academic identity positions: the teacher, the moral, conflicted, integrated-complete and/or disaffected academic. All the positions require negotiations that enable the forging of personally credible and authentic professional-academic identities. In this individuals become the site of complex dynamics between the profession, academy and practice. Hence, rather than as an academic tribe apart as often described and represented in the literature, these academics – like their peers in other discipline fields - also cultivate academic identities reflective of personal allegiances to professional-disciplinary concerns and commitments that shape their possibilities, positioning and potential in the academy.

Acknowledgements and Dedications

As is doubtless often the case, although this doctoral journey has been fast-paced there have also been halts and detours along the way; and, probably as should be, I know I have not quite arrived at *the* destination as yet. The halts and detours have suggested future possibilities for continuing the exploration of occupational identities among social worker and nurse academics, there is still work to be done.

So to acknowledgements...

This thesis has been possible thanks to the generosity many people including my previous employing institution for funding part of my studies and granting a period of sabbatical leave, and colleagues for shouldering my responsibilities during that absence. I would also particularly like to thank my supervisors, Dr Celia Whitchurch and Dr Bryan Cunningham at the Institute of Education, for their patience and encouragement over the course of the degree.

I extend my thanks to the University departments and schools who so kindly agreed to participate in the study; and, of course, my thanks go to the study participants who so generously gave of their very busy time. I hope this highly interpretive representation of their contributions is recognisable and worthy of their scrutiny.

An enormous vote of thanks is due to an incredible network of family and friends, for their unfailing support and saint-like levels of tolerance. Among friends, particular thanks are due to Professor Carol Munn-Giddings, Dr Valerie Thomas, Dr Clare Walker, Dr David Backwith, Dr Paul McIntosh, Debbie Locke, Kathryn Hodges and Jean Blair. Among family, *especial* thanks go to Adrian Jack for his solidarity and steadfastness – and also to Mark Sobiechowski, John Sobiechowski and Michelle Felton.

So to dedications...

This work is dedicated to Roman and Elsa Sobiechowski, who I hope would have been proud.

It is also dedicated to academic colleagues in social work and nurse education in respect of their underestimated efforts to ensure that UK health and social care practitioners are the best they can be.

Paula Sobiechowska

10 September 2015 – Gibraltar National Day

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Glossary

BASW : British Association of Social Workers

CCETSW : Central Council for Education and Training Social Work

CPD/cpd : Continuing Professional Development

DipHE : Diploma in Higher Education

GSCC : General Social Care Council

HCPC : Health and Care Professions Council

HE : Higher Education

HEE : Health Education England

MA : Master of Arts

NA : Nurse Academic

NHS : National Health Service

NMC : Nursing and Midwifery Council

PGCHE/PGCertHE : Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education

RAE : Research Assessment Exercise

REF : Research Excellence Framework

RCN : Royal College of Nursing

SWA : Social Work Academic

TCSW : The College of Social Work

UK : United Kingdom

VSS : Voluntary Severance Scheme

Part I : CONTEXTUALISATION

Chapter 1

Setting the Scene

Introduction

This thesis is concerned with the ways in which nurse and social worker academics conceptualise and create their identities and their identity positions in the academy through a negotiation between their professional, practitioner and academic selves. There is a wealth of literature concerned generally with academic identities and a significant literature directed at the place, identity-orientations and academic practices of nurse and social work faculty. Much of it presents problematized accounts both of academic employment and the academic legitimacy of these professional educators. In terms of social work and nurse faculty, questions of legitimacy arise out of two inter-related concerns: i) individuals' apparent foregrounding of *professional identities* or identifications at the expense of academic identities; ii) the content and form of the professional-disciplinary knowledge base.

Arising out of my own professional experience and the concerns in the literature, the original aim of the study was to examine how social worker and nurse educators conceptualise and create their identities through a negotiation between the seemingly competing identity positions of social worker or nurse on the one hand,

and academic on the other. In the academic identity literature the professional titles *social worker/nurse* and variations on the phrase *professional identity* encompass the entirety of being a social worker or nurse. Although the component parts of these identities – the professional self and the practitioner self - are independently visible in the literature they are not discussed and the effect of the dynamic interplay between them in academic identity-making among social worker and nurse academics is not considered. The participants in this study made quite clear distinctions between their professional selves and their practitioner selves and the relationship between these selves in their academic identity projects. So, where the study began with an unproblematic construction of the professional social worker/nurse, to make sense of the academic identities described and pursued by the participants it became necessary to make a distinction between the concepts of the professional self and the practitioner self.

This chapter provides an overview of the origins and focus of the study, accounts for my place in it, defines terms and contextualises social work and nurse education generally and within higher education. This context is reflected in the understanding incorporated into the analysis and theorisation of the individual identity projects discussed. The chapter concludes with an outline of the thesis overall.

The Origins of the Study

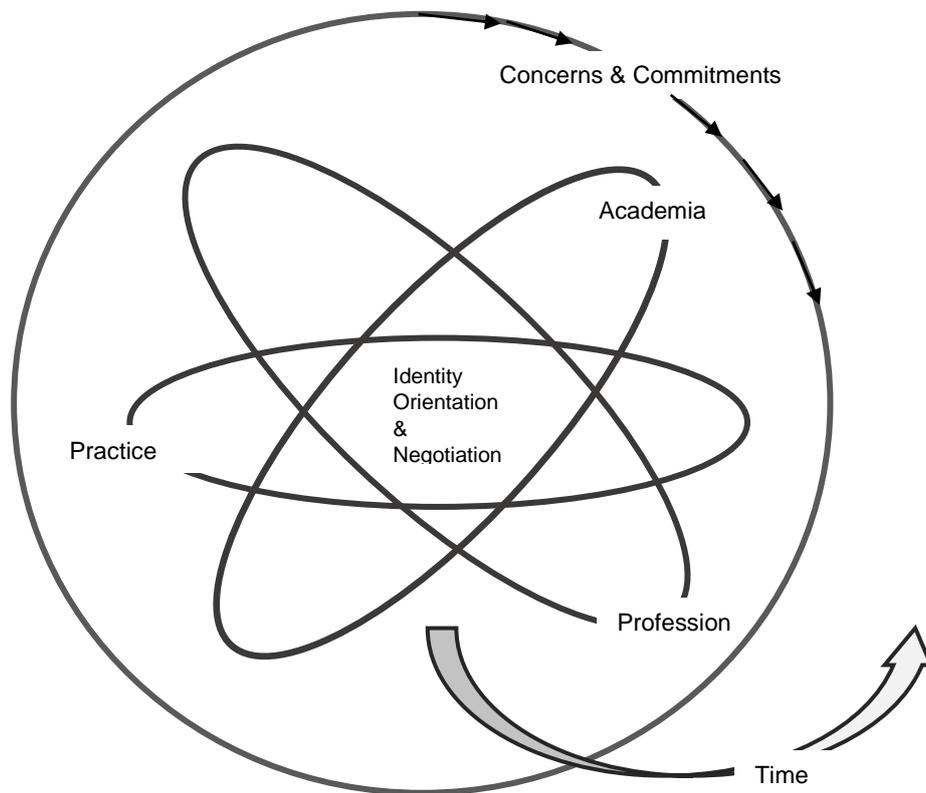
The study arose out of my experience as the Director of Learning and Teaching in a large Faculty of Health and Social Care wherein, initially, the problematics evident in the literature appeared to be reinforced. At the time the faculty had situated itself to lead or champion the implementation of significant and far-reaching institutional change intended to reposition the organisation in the higher education market-place. For myself this foregrounded questions about 'what?' an 'academic' is, how academia is practised, and who determines this. Such a line of inquiry had not consciously occurred to me previously but became critical to the successful realisation of the directorial role, and required me to engage in a reflexive evaluation of my own academic identity and positioning.

At the outset I thought that the organisation had clearly given voice to its view of 'the academic' as manifested in various policy directives, management strategies and practices. The breadth of the directorial remit charged me with strategic and operational responsibility for the academic development of colleagues from a whole host of professional-disciplines, the largest grouping of whom were nurse teachers. So I thought it would be illuminating to ask those who were being 'done unto', my colleagues, how they understood and occupied their academic role, particularly as - from a managerial perspective - they were perceived to hinder the faculty academising project. As Churchman and King (2009: 508) discuss, the differences between the 'corporate stories' of organisations and the "...*private, or 'real' stories...*" held by employees can become evident in individual identity strategies and positionings. Critically aware of my familiarity with the workings of

my own university I thought it would be helpful to ask the same questions of professional-disciplinary peers elsewhere in order to locate my colleagues within a wider occupational discourse.

Whilst motivated by the transformation of a particular institution the focus of the study is actually the academic identities of social worker and nurse faculty. Initially I anticipated the overlay of a comparative institutional study but this does not emerge from the data. This is partly due to the nature of the study group, discussed in chapters three and four, but more particularly because of how the participants describe and identify themselves. The effect of the institution is in the degree to which it enables, enhances or limits the realisation of any given individual's identity projects. An individual's identity and their personalisation of the academic role, however facilitated or inhibited by the academic environment, ultimately transcends institution and is rather an expression of individual 'concerns and commitments' as theorised by Archer (2012, 2003, 2000), Giddens (1991) and Taylor (1989). These concerns and commitments are the actual overlay shaping how individuals orientate to, or identify with a preferred group or community of interest (Jenkins, 2008; Wenger, 1998; Morris, 1967), be that the professional, academic or practice field, or some hybridisation of these interests. This is, effectively, the conceptual frame of the study: the individual's identity negotiations of their concerns and commitments, through the triple helix of profession-practice-academia over time as illustrated in Figure 1. The various effects of time are considered in more depth in chapters two and eight.

Figure 1 : The Triple Helix of Academic Identity-Making over Time



Defining Terms

Given the intertwined nature of this triple helix, limitations arise in the specificity of language to describe and ascribe identities. For the purposes of this study, the term 'professional' is used to denote social worker or nurse identities expressed through their various relations and allegiances to the mission and values of the codified profession. Practitioner identity is positioned in relation to the practice worlds of health and social care and contains something of an individual's material and/or psycho-emotional engagements with that world. As will be made clear further on in the thesis, whilst practitioner identities are informed by a general professional ethic and an individual's fidelity to the profession they are *significantly*

shaped by the individual's experience of the practice context.. 'Academic' is used to discuss the individual in their various relations to the university. The distinctiveness of the professional realm is further amplified in the use of the term 'professional-disciplinary' to locate the knowledge base in the academy, and to distinguish it in some degree from practice knowledge. These distinctions in terminology arise out of the data analysis in which differentiations of emphasis or identification became clear over the course of individual interviews, and between individuals.

Focus of the Study

It is out of the dynamic context of professional education in the academy that questions arise as to the relationships between: the individual and the professional-discipline area; the individual and the professional-practice arena; the individual academic and the mission of the institution. It is argued in this thesis that academic identities are formed and reformulated as individuals personally negotiate their orientations within and between these domains, as illustrated in Figure 1.

The concept of negotiating identity in the space(s) between spheres of interest has been long-theorised. As Lyons (1999) noted, these academic practitioners are working in bounded spaces between professional and institutional spheres, spaces that might be conceived of as 'borderlands'. Becher and Trowler (2001: 53) were of the view that this kind of bounded positioning left the cultures of professional disciplines undocumented in the academy as "*...they are far from*

easy to demarcate from their surrounding domains of professional practice.”

However, as much of the literature that encompasses the experience of nurse educators highlights the boundary between the academy and practice is actually well-fortified and rarely breached. Rather than being undocumented, it is this boundary fault-line between the academy, its members (ie: the nurse educators) and the practice arena that seems to preoccupy researchers, writers and their study participants. This is equally the case in studies of social work academics.

Generally the research and associated literature reflects a discourse of absence and/or resistance in response to, or acquisition of academic identities among these professional educators – and, it is argued, an over-identification with the practice field. These absences and resistances along with over-identification are seen to be problematic for the individuals concerned, the professional-discipline and the operational interests of the academy. However, individuals do achieve functioning and even successful identities in the academic workplace and this study has sought to understand *how* individuals accomplish this.

Given the focus in the literature on the mythic academic - eg: an early years career pursuing research interests, securing associated and necessary funding, establishing reputation through publication and dissemination; followed by a mid-career trajectory into a professorship and/or management - the intention here has been to capture the voice of front-line lecturers and senior lecturers. The aim is to represent and understand something of the general academic experience among nurse and social work educators. As indicated, many studies seem to foreground evidence of role confusion and stretch for those employed as professional

educators. They also raise questions of loyalty to the academic profession, as well as to employing institutions, and generally seem to focus on engagement in the academic role and function rather than *how* individuals negotiate the relationship between their academic, professional and practitioner identities. It is exactly this negotiation and the meanings attached to emergent identity that this study seeks to explore in the creation of academic persona. So, it is concerned to examine how these particular practitioners negotiate and experience becoming emerged in an academic world whilst keeping a 'look out' to a professional world. Essentially, the inquiry contributes to the general area of study - academic identity – through a very particular focus on the meaning of such identity, and how it is enacted, in the professional-disciplines of social work and nursing.

The Research Questions

The research questions drew on a literature review that encompassed generic and practice-discipline specific discussions of academic identity, and social and psychological theorisations of identity-making, to explore with participants:

1. How social worker and nurse educators negotiate the relationship between their primary professional identity and the development of an academic identity in terms of:
 - The individual's journey into academia;
 - How the individual perceives the development of their academic identity to have been shaped by the workplace (university/faculty/department);

- How the individual perceives the development of their academic identity to have been shaped by the social work or nursing profession;
- How the individual sees the relationship between their social worker/nurse identity and their academic identity, and how the relationship 'works' (eg: in terms of relationships with colleagues and/or students; capacity and motivation for self-management; the exercise of academic freedom; loyalties to professions, disciplines, colleagues, the workplace);
- How the individual exercises personal agency in the formation of their identity (eg: through adaptation, by being proactive or resistant, the adoption of leadership or pioneering roles).

2. How the relationship between a primary professional identity and an academic identity influences the ways in which the individual:

- Understands the academic role and its associated responsibilities;
- Engages with professional/disciplinary and pedagogic knowledge.

My Place in the Study

I have been involved in social work education for the last twenty-five years sometimes as a commissioner of courses, more often as an academic designing and delivering courses and working directly with students. Throughout my career the status of social work as a profession, its associated education and training, and the credibility - or otherwise - of its knowledge and research base has been under continuous scrutiny (Narey, 2014; Croisdale-Appleby, 2014; Social Work Reform

Board, 2010; Social Work Taskforce, 2009; Lovelock et al, 2004; Lyons, 1999). Both as an individual and as a member of a collective I am aware of the fragile and often disputatious spaces that myself and the profession occupy. This informs how I understand myself as a member of the academy and influences how I cultivate and project an academic identity. Once appointed as a director I became increasingly aware of similar scrutiny, insecurity and contested legitimacy in the field of nurse education. As the narrative that follows illustrates, although I had consciously reflected on and shaped my own academic identity in the course of my career, it was being a director during a period of significant institutional transformation that precipitated my intellectual interest in academic identities among social worker and nurse educators.

I became a full-time employee in higher education in 1997 and it took until 2000/2001 before I could identify myself formally as an academic. This identification emerged as I began to complement what I considered the 'domestic duties' of my role (effectively teaching and associated administration) through the development of a writing, publication and research profile. In the first instance the writing and publication reflected my pedagogical work. At a later stage funded research and evaluation projects re-established a direct connection between my academic and professional-practitioner self. In the early years these activities seemed sufficient to establishing and maintaining an academic identity however, more recently, changes in institutional, professional and market expectations prompted a reflexive review of my academic identity and positioning. Hence the last few years of doctoral study, which can be seen as a quest to secure academic legitimacy (Phillips & Pugh, 2006) and full membership of the academy. In effect,

undertaking this work reflects a commitment to my academic identity and – as with others who share similar professional-disciplinary domains (Becher & Trowler, 2001) – it has been a lengthy process of identification and socialisation. Although this journey through academia is personal, the experience is comparable to that of many in the field of health and social care ‘studies’ (Rolfe and Gardner, 2006).

I came into higher education directly from professional practice, without processing through the academic apprenticeship model of a doctorate as arguably established in other discipline areas (Goastellec et al, 2013; Gordon, 2010). Becher and Trowler (2001), and Austin (2013) note that this is not unusual in the arena of professionalising education and, indeed, observation suggests that the majority of academics in health and social care are largely recruited directly from the professions they teach. Few - as evidenced by the participants in this study - have followed a purposefully academic career trajectory and, until recently, recruitment practices have usually required potential applicants to have been ‘clinical’ practitioners. It may be that this is only to be expected in health and social care education wherein direct practice experience is central to the philosophy of the curriculum and the expectations of students, academic colleagues, professional and regulatory bodies. Nonetheless, concern and ambivalence over the lack of collective academic capital in these professions has been expressed by a number of commentators (see for example: Andrew, 2012; McNamara, 2009; Carr, 2008; Green, 2006; Segrott et al, 2006; Lovelock et al, 2004; Orme, 2003; Parton, 2001) – and institutional expectations are changing.

From my own perspective, when I arrived in the post-1992 university sector the emphasis was on teaching, assessing and licensing students as novice social workers. This training and licensing was the principal concern, alongside the pastoral care of the students. As with the respondents in this study I was employed primarily as a teacher. This is very unlike the academics and expectations discussed in some of the literature (see for example the papers in Kogan & Teichler, 2007), although Cheng (2013) reflects on the centrality of teaching in academic identities. At the time much of the administration underpinning the delivery of the curriculum and the processing of student data was managed by teams of administrators, with little involvement from teaching staff. And, with nomination and support, collegiate participation - for example, through service on Faculty and University Committees - was voluntary and discretionary. In a similar vein research too was a discretionary interest rather than an expectation or requirement of the job. It took some time for me to adopt and coalesce all these potential aspects of the academic role into an academic persona, and doing so was a personal self-directed project. There were few institutional expectations or incentives to grow such an identity, rather personal interest was fostered by a team culture committed to promoting the interests of the profession.

In contrast much of the literature maintains that the sector now requires academics to undertake a range of increasingly complex tasks that extend beyond teaching and research. Accordingly Musselin (2007), along with Henkel (2007a) and others (eg: Beck and Young, 2005; Beck, 2002), argues that academic work has been transformed simultaneously by diversification and specialisation, together with expanding forms of institutional control. In effect that academics have to:

- operationalise a number of roles (eg: as researchers, bid-writers, fund-raisers, entrepreneurs); at the same time as
- adopting specialist practices whereby the domains of teaching and research become increasingly distinct – although Henkel (2007a) does allow for hybrid roles and practices across institutional spaces and specialisms, essentially at the interfaces between research and administration; whilst being
- accountable to sometimes competing internal and external interests - fundamentally the academic market-place as manifested by institutional and disciplinary rankings, competitors, funders/investors, the government, students and their families – which, it is further argued, constitutes a reconfiguration of the academic power base and/or a different kind of collegiality.

As yet undisturbed by the trends identified by these authors I continued to hone my academic persona according to my own interests until, in 2007, on appointment as a Director of Learning and Teaching I began to think about this study. I held the role during a time of significant organisational and cultural change within the institution, including: the appointment of an almost entirely new corporate management team; an entirely new faculty senior management team; and an accompanying revision of all institutional policies, priorities and, consequently, work practices. It could be argued that the transformation set in motion a process of diversification, specialisation and business-oriented audit and accountability, similar to that described by Becher, Musselin and Henkel. As Director I became

an institutional change agent charged with realising pedagogical transformation and enhancements at the local level of the faculty.

Much of the organisational reform impacted directly on the roles and responsibilities of my academic colleagues, in the first instance most particularly in *all* of their relations with students, for example in terms of:

- personal proficiency and competence as a classroom teacher;
- extended proficiency in the use of technology to support and enhance the students' learning and course experience;
- transparency and student-centredness in the setting and assessing of assignments;
- the professional 'gloss' of outward-facing artefacts such as module guides, student handbooks and powerpoint presentations;
- a professional embodiment of the academic role (eg: availability to students through appointments and 'office hours' notifications, standardised response times to student emails and telephone contacts).

In this process the teaching-focussed work and activities of the faculty became subject to various forms of institutional scrutiny (eg: enhanced peer review of teaching, monitored attendance at training events, departmental and faculty analysis of module evaluations, the introduction of a workload balancing model). Initially the emphasis on a research-orientation *across* the academic body was less evident and, indeed, a faculty senior manager expressed some reluctance to broach 'research' with the nurse educators as it was thought they would find it too

daunting. This reflection – from a colleague with a nursing background - surprised me but, at the time, I was unaware and unfamiliar with the identity crisis nurse education has endured in its move into the academy (McKendry et al, 2012; McNamara, 2008 & 2009; Love, 1996). A later Corporate Plan set clear expectations for *all* academic staff to be research active with individual performance in this domain evaluated and rewarded through the annual appraisal system. This heralded a significant shift of focus within the institution. Although in previous restructurings the university had published papers on its expectations of 'the academic', such exhortations were not embedded in the performance management of the academic body.

In the early stages of this change management process a low-key, informal discussion percolated the faculty as individuals and groups considered their responses to the changing environment, and questioned their purpose and function as teachers. In another part of the discussion senior managers also asked questions about the academic positionings of individuals and teams, most obviously where they perceived resistances to reform or a lack of competence on behalf of the academic body. The apparently competing discourses were reflective of Ball's (2003: 219) account and analysis of similar restructuring processes in teaching wherein, he maintains institutions have to transform and discipline "*...themselves and their employees...*" and in so doing effect a "*...reworking of the relationships between individual commitment and action in the organisation.*".

Consequently, for me, this competing discourse began to highlight the criticality of identity in the academic workplace. It exposed aspects of the dynamic between structure and agency in the determination of identities and their legitimacy. On the

one hand, where managers perceived a collective lack of compliance or academic capacity, the deficit could be understood through descriptions of the staff group concerned as “...*nurses, not academics*...”. On the other hand, where individuals and/or teams were resistant to changing practices, professional identity – expressed through phrases like “*As a nurse*...”, or “*As a social worker*...”, or “...*in mental health we*...” - could be used to challenge faculty expectations of ‘the academic’ and to distance the speaker from its newly revised interests.

Both articulations serve to illustrate that ‘academic identity’ is a contested and fluid concept dependent on where and how the *dramatis personae* position and align themselves (see for example: Barnett, 2013; Cheng, 2013; Barnett and DiNapoli, 2008; Colley et al, 2007). In the instances cited the ownership of an academic identity was either dismissed/disallowed by the structural agents of the faculty, or resisted/challenged by the professional-disciplinary agents. It is also the case that, although used to different effect, all concerned foregrounded the professional-practitioner identity in the academy. This is not surprising, it reiterates a well-established standpoint in the literature that presents disciplinary identity as “...*the primary source of faculty members’ identity and expertise and includes assumptions about what is to be known and how tasks are to be performed.*” (Clark et al, 2013: 7). However, it is interesting that the professional-practitioner identity was used by colleagues either to infer an *absence of*, or to legitimate *resistance to* an academic identity.

It was the negation or disavowal of faculty academic identities that provoked me to ask *how* the staff group themselves identified as academics, I wanted to know who

they thought they were. Their apparent resistance to institutional expectations raised the question as to how individuals negotiate the relationship between their professional, practitioner and academic identities in the academy.

Professional and Practitioner Identities in the Academy : Contexts

The literature highlights a tension between an enduring adherence to primary professional and practice identities (eg: as nurses or social workers) among individuals - and thereby within the collective - and the tentative acquisition and assimilation of academic identities. The discussion is shaped in a dialectic between disciplinary knowledge production and academic identity, where there is a perceived lack of a historical disciplinary culture available to foster academic identities in these professions. Arguably – as Beck’s (2002) analysis asserts – the absence of such a culture leaves the content of the professional-discipline, and attendant identity possibilities, particularly vulnerable to political and public concern with the purpose of these professions. As my colleagues’ sentiments might suggest, the project of academic identity-making is complicated further in the ever-transmuting domain of higher education. The following overview brings these concerns together to provide a context for the study of these particular academic identities.

Social Work : Profession and Discipline

Social work and nursing are comparatively new professions and they feature as the semi-professions described by Etzioni (1969). In the UK both have been formally established as professions over the last 150 years - if professional registration and regulation, training programmes and protected status are accepted as markers. Nonetheless their associated roles, purposes and identities are barely 'settled' and certainly subject to much debate within the professions themselves, as well as among political policy makers. Such internal professional or disciplinary debate is not unusual and is described across the academy (Becher & Trowler, 2001) and within professions (Freidson, 2001). However, social work and nursing in particular occupy highly politicised places in British society and the public and politicians have a vested interest in the construction, interpretation and business of both professions. The contested nature of these professions and the associated licensing of their practitioners is reflected in the back-story of social work and nurse education itself.

As Lyons (1999) maps out, social work has had a chequered history, with a shift from a predominantly post-graduate profession to a non-graduate profession in the 1970s. She argues that its four levels of qualification in the 1980s (non-graduate, graduate, post-graduate diploma and masters) suggested *"...a degree of uncertainty about the academic status of the subject..."* and that *"The shift to a preponderance of non-graduate courses (about 50 per cent) might also be seen as evidence of a degree of anti-intellectualism within the social work profession (Jones, 1996a), as well as scepticism about its academic credentials"* (Lyons,

1999: 11). A concern with anti-intellectualism and the nature of the profession's academic credentials is pursued across the educational literature in social work (eg: Lovelock et al, 2004). This analysis similarly shared by McNamara (2008) in his assessment of the disciplinary status of nursing in the academy and within the profession. Lyons' work seems to have been premised on the fragility or vulnerability of social work's place in higher education since the early 1970s. Finally, in 2003, social work formally secured governmental support for graduate level qualification status. It was a long-fought battle. Two years later – in 2005 – social work attained recognition as a profession with a protected title and subjected itself to regulation through the General Social Care Council (GSCC).

Nonetheless, the disputed territory of social work is not reconciled. In August 2012 the GSCC was dissolved and its regulatory powers transferred to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), and the political scrutiny of professional education remains ongoing. The demise of the GSCC was consequent to the newly formed government's review of 'arm's-length bodies' (DoH, 2010) and coincided with a period during which the entire foundation of social work practice and education was itself once again under review (Munro Report, 2011; Social Work Reform Board, 2010; Social Work Taskforce, 2009), following the death of Peter Connolly ('Baby P') in 2007. A number of recommendations emerging from these reviews have been implemented, but the landscape continues to evolve as various interests contest the quality and impact of education on and in practice:

- 2010 - introduction of fast-track postgraduate qualifications via the Step-Up to Social Work initiative (DfE, 2013);

- 2013 - introduction, by Michael Gove (then Education Secretary) of an additional fast-track graduate scheme delivered by the private educational company Frontline (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/first-ever-chief-social-worker-for-children-and-fast-track-training-to-lead-social-work-reform> : accessed 19th January 2015);
- 2014 - publication of Sir Martin Narey's "*...independent review of the education of children's social workers*", as commissioned by Michael Gove – again in his role as Education Secretary;
- 2014 - publication of Croisdale-Appleby's "*...independent review of social work education*", as commissioned by Norman Lamb, Minister of State for Care and Support at the Department of Health.

The discussion that began in qualifying training now also extends into the knowledge and skills requirements for postqualifying practice, as explicated in the Department of Health review of the Croisdale-Appleby report (December 2014). All of these reviews have two effects, they: i) reconstruct the role, purpose and ascribed identity of the practitioner; and ii) imply that there is something 'wrong' with the focus and quality of professional education and the practitioners it produces. It is in this context that social worker educators have to make sense of their redefined identities – which have become something similar to Bernstein's (2000) 'prospective pedagogic identities' - and purpose in the academy.

Nursing : Profession and Discipline

A similar process can be seen at work in the construction and reconstruction of nurse identities through the medium of professional education. Although professional registers were established in the member countries of the UK in 1919 (NMC, <http://www.nmc-uk.org/About-us/The-history-of-nursing-and-midwifery-regulation/> : accessed 8th December 2014), the road to registration reflects an enduring battle over purposes and identities as initiated and expressed in the opposing views of Florence Nightingale and Ethel Bedford-Fenwick (NMC, 2014; Andrews & Robb, 2011; Rafferty, 1996). Their legacy might be understood as a conceptual fault-line in the identity of the profession and its membership between a vocational-craft emphasis and a technical scientific-medical focus. These identity tensions of the profession are played out in the history and landscape of nurse education.

Recent reviews of nurse education and attendant public debate surface a third dimension of identity tension arising from the advent of the graduate nurse. This nurse is seen as potentially less caring of patients and less competent and compliant in the exercise of technical skills (Patterson, 2012; Mitchell, 2008; Longley et al, 2007). Picking up on a thematic thread that runs through all of the nurse education reviews Carr (2008) asks both 'who is a nurse?' and 'what is nursing?'. The questions arise for him given that much 'caring' work has been delegated to health care assistants and support workers, and responsibilities previously held by junior doctors are devolved to nurses. As he avers, in principle,

the question is pertinent to the educational purposes of the academy and its members.

Whoever nurses are, like social workers, when they are seen to fall short of political and public expectations government-led reviews are instituted that generate extensive recommendations about practice and education. As the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) highlight, there have been four major health care reviews since 2010, including the Willis Commission (2012) which undertook a review of nurse education for the Royal College of Nursing, (RCN, a membership-led professional body for nurses). Consequently, in 2014, the NMC and Health Education England (HEE) commissioned a consolidating meta-review – *The Shape of Caring* – to inform nurse and healthcare assistant education and training in England. The NMC explain (<http://www.nmc-uk.org/media/Latest-news/Shape-of-Caring-review-to-improve-nurse-and-healthcare-assistant-training/> : accessed 8th December 2014) that the intention is to:

“... bring together the recommendations and evidence from recent reports into care in England, including Francis, Cavendish, Keogh and Berwick. These reports have highlighted the need for improvements to the education and training of nurses and healthcare assistants.”

Here the implication - that there is something ‘wrong’ with professional education and the practitioners it produces - is clear. Again, it is in this context that nurse educators have to make sense of their identities and purpose in the academy. As

historical accounts and the various reviews reflect, there is a long-established discourse in nursing about its place in the academy.

Social Work and Nursing in the Academy: Disciplinary Integrity

In 2006 Rolfe and Gardner, in an opinion piece, highlighted the probability of identity or role confusion for 'nurse-academics' where allegiance and membership of the primary professional group – rather than of a discipline, as such – predominates. Nearly a decade earlier Lyons (1999: 144) argued that social work occupied a boundary position “...*between education and practice...*” concluding that “*Issues of dual responsibility or conflicting loyalties are likely to persist for social work educators.*” More recently, Murray and Aymer (2009) offer an analysis of stretched identities among nurse, social worker, teacher and medical academics; they highlight a strong, on-going identification with ‘first order’ professional arenas among these vocational educators. In a contemporary study of nurse educators Duffy (2013) does not describe the predominance of a nursing identity in terms of role-strain or identity stretch, rather she describes the adoption of distinct identity positions in which individuals adopt, accommodate or marginalise academic identity. These authors are concerned with the academic identity of nurse and social worker educators because of the contested legitimacy of both these professions inside and – as has been highlighted - outside of higher education. Arguably, as authors such as Duffy (2013) and McNamara (2009 & 2008), reflect that the academisation of these educators is central to the realisation of the ongoing professionalisation project both in education and practice.

Nonetheless, these authors are framing 'academic' identity more in terms of Bernstein's (2000) conceptualisation of 'retrospective-elitist identities' than his theorisation of secularised academic identities (Beck, 2002; Bernstein, 2000) and the more overextended academic identities discussed, for example, in the edited works of Gornall et al (2013), and the analyses of Ball (2004) and Marginson (2000).

Where social work has a relatively long-established - albeit problematised - history in the academy (Miller, 2014; Lovelock et al, 2004; Lyons, 1999), in contrast nursing generally only moved from hospital-linked/associated schools of nursing into higher education establishments during the early-1990s. Ousey and Gallagher (2010) note that the transition was complete by 1995. The relocation was the ultimate recommendation of Project 2000, a review of nurse education undertaken in the mid-1980s (Longley et al, 2007; UKCC, 1986). So, although a long-held ambition of the professional interests embedded in the NMC and RCN (O'Connor, 2007), the 'dignification' (Becher and Trowler, 2001) or academic colonisation (Barnett, 2000) of professional health education is a relatively recent phenomenon. It is also the case, certainly with regard to nursing, that a greater part of this academicising process has occurred in the post-92 higher education sector which, as Barnett notes (2000), had an established history of *training* professionals. Even with the move into the university, although degree courses were available, nursing education remained primarily at diploma level with the greater number of nurses graduating as 'diplomates'. It was only from 2011 that nursing became an all graduate profession as recommended by the NMC (Mitchell, 2008).

With the move into the university both nurse and social work education have retained their foundations in apprenticeship, skills-led models of learning where within the degree programmes (both graduate and postgraduate) half of the learning is in a practice environment and half based in the university. As noted, arguably neither profession carries with it – at this stage – a disciplinary history as such, and both borrow academic content from the fields of life and social sciences. In trying to distinguish between the discipline and the qualifying training of the profession Lyons (1999) highlights a troublesome relationship between disciplinary theory and professional training in social work education. This is a concern that runs through the educational reviews (noted above) and the academic literature pertinent to both professions. It is an important consideration as the conceptualisation, content and practice of a discipline is seen as the significant feature of academic identity formation.

However, a focus on identity-generation and maintenance through discipline *per se* is a potentially problematic notion for those working in health and social care. Gardner and Rolfe (2006), for example, describe nursing as a technology which others study and research, rather than a self-generative discipline that creates its own knowledge. This viewpoint is also adopted by McNamara (2009), for whom the lack of a legitimate disciplinary base reinforced by the attendant isolation of nurse academics – given their absence from the practice field even as researchers – exemplifies the “...*dilemma that goes to the heart of the identity of nursing academics and academic nursing.*” (2009: 1577). Comparable concerns are echoed in the social work literature by, for example, Orme and Powell (2007), Green (2006) and Parton (2001). These authors reflect on the eclecticism and

borrowings of the professional knowledge base, a lacuna in the theorisation of practice itself – a charge also made in the very critical Narey (2014) report – and the self-limiting but ideological anti-intellectual stance of the profession, reinforced by the utilitarian training demands of the practice field. As such they underline the fragility of the discipline and critique the academic identities of social work educators. Wehbi (2009) further highlights the fragility of the discipline, and the profession, in the competitive environment of Canadian higher education. She urges social worker academics to publish from their on-going practice experiences and from the scholarship of their teaching, asserting that “...*if as social workers we do not write our story ourselves, others will write it for us, and perhaps not in a sympathetic light...*” (2009: 506). This anxiety and similar ‘calls-to-arms’ pervade both the nursing and social work literature around disciplinary status and academic identity.

Given these starting points, and much of the current discourse around the challenges and threats facing academics in general (Gordon & Whitchurch, 2010; Clegg, 2008; Harris, 2005), it is timely to examine more closely how identities are being forged among social worker and nurse academics. At the heart of the study is an exploration of the interplay between what have been described as primary or first order professional identities (Boyd, 2010; Murray and Aymer, 2010; Rolfe and Gardner, 2006; Lyons, 1999) and the academic identities that educators evolve, their knowledge claims and their ways of practice. It has been of fundamental concern and interest to explore whether colleagues do indeed strain under a burden of potentially conflicting dual identities, or whether the duality of their identities is an asset, or whether some form of hybrid identity emerges for

individuals - as Duffy (2013) found. None of these questions can be asked solely with regard to the individual however, as well as disciplinary/professional concerns the general context of UK higher education must also be taken into account.

Academic Identities under (Re)Construction

As the broad literature highlights, higher education often perceives itself and its cultures as under threat and regards itself as subject to the demands of external forces. Recent changes are most particularly evidenced in the competition among institutions for a market share of tertiary education, at home and abroad. Economics and institutional survival are now at the very heart of the academic enterprise (Temple, 2014). The increasingly explicit business-orientation of universities is forcing or requiring a reconceptualisation of academic identities (Scott, 2014; Kehm & Teichler, 2013; Smith, 2012; Ball, 2003), a trend already noted and documented by Halsey (1992). In her analysis of the institutional landscape in the UK, Clegg (2008: 330) cites managerialism and consumerism as “...*undermining the traditional autonomy and respect accorded to academics as intellectuals and professionals...*” As the title of her paper suggests (*Academic identities under threat?*) the whole concept of ‘an academic’ is under scrutiny, and the long-held ideal type may no longer be relevant or feasible. Nonetheless, Clegg describes individuals as trying to develop and maintain identities in ‘conflictual spaces’ and notes that “...*how to be a proper academic is a moving goal; moreover one that is fraught with ambiguity.*”

Observations from my own experience, as well as the literature, suggest that the corporatisation of universities has increased the pressure on academics to perform and, arguably, to conform as well as demonstrate their academic and/or intellectual capital (Rhoades, 2010). In an early work, Henkel (2000) recognised and documented the rapidly changing context of higher education and the associated impact in terms of academic practice and identity. Latterly Henkel (2007a) and others (eg: Kogan & Teichler, 2007; Barnett, 2005; Becher & Trowler, 2001; Gibbons et al, 1994) identify also an increasing distance between teaching and research in the academy. Again the dissolution of this relationship is largely ascribed to economics, ie: the distribution of research funding streams, associated institutional reputation and income generation. This corporatisation of research influences the roles and responsibilities available to academics and hence the ways in which identities can be formed, claimed and legitimated. In analyses focused on the neo-liberal restructuring of higher education the academic role is argued to have become 'overextended' (Gornall et al, 2013) – accommodating an unprecedented range of tasks and functions - *and* 'unbundled' McInnis (2010) – stripped of expertise whilst, at the same time, confined to increasingly technical and managed tasks. All such analyses are concerned as to what these new working practices might mean for academic autonomy, disciplinary authority and the 'life of the mind' (McInnis, 2010), argued to be a central feature of academic identity.

In his seminal work on academic identities and practices, Becher's original 1989 study highlights the secondary status that the education of professionals generally has held in the university. Barnett (2000) notes that academics have always had

a foot in the professional world but that it is only more recently that professionals have established a foothold in academia. This apparently recent vocationalisation of higher education (Eraut,1994) arises out of i) the professionalising projects of occupations such as social work and nursing; ii) national educational reviews and policy initiatives such as Dearing (1997) and Browne (2010). Both of these reports locate their recommendations in a context concerned with national economic health and individual well-being driven through competitive, inclusive and effective higher education. These processes have brought 'new breeds' of academics into the university who, as the contributors in the edited work of Gordon and Whitchurch (2010) indicate, appear to challenge established conceptualisations of academic identity. Some, for example Harland and Pickering (2011) in a discussion of the value of higher education, appear to continue to question the legitimacy of professional education in the academy. These themes of legitimacy and marginalisation persist in the analysis and accounts of social work and nursing in the academy.

On the whole these 'new breeds' are discussed generically in the literature pertaining to academic identity. As Boyd (2010: 10) notes in the introduction to a recent study regarding education lecturers much of the literature "*...on becoming an academic...*" does not account for identity-making within particular subject fields or work contexts. Where earlier seminal work, for example Becher (1989), looked at the relationship between academics and disciplines those representing professional education were limited to lawyers and mechanical engineers all of whom, along with the rest of the study participants, were from elite institutions. Recently edited texts - such as those by McAlpine and Åkelind (2010) and Barnett

and DiNapoli (2008) – do not rectify this omission. The exploration of academic identity projects among nurse and social work educators presented here endeavours to redress this balance.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is presented in three parts, the first – which includes this introductory chapter - is concerned with identity and identity formation in the academic community. It considers how the making of individual identity is shaped by individual reflexive practices and the influence of structuring forces such as family, community, employing and professional institutions. It examines concepts of ascribed and acquired identities and those that are contested or validated. This section draws on academic literature to provide a frame for the case study research.

The second part of the thesis describes the qualitative case study approach to the study which involved a total of nineteen social worker and nurse academics, drawn from three universities. Two ‘new’ post-1992 universities and a pre-1992 university were included in the study as representative of the sector. Based on the work of Henkel (2000) and the observations of Clegg (2008) it was anticipated that institutional status might significantly affect the realisation of particular types of academic identities. As the analysis in chapters four, six and seven indicates institutions do greatly effect identity-opportunities and identity realisation but – in this study – this is not obviously predicated on their status.

In the third part of the study the findings from the semi-structured interviews are analysed and discussed. The findings indicate that academic identities are shaped through the interplay of an individual's orientations – or identifications as theorised by Mead (Morris, 1967) and Jenkins, 2008 - to their disciplinary profession, the field of practice and the academy. Chapters six and seven explore how the affordances and constraints of the university – conceptualised as its occupational norms and its proximity-distance from practice - enable or inhibit individual identity projects, with such projects understood as the pursuit and expression of an individual's 'concerns and commitments' (Archer, 2012, 2003 & 2000; Taylor, 1989). Both of these chapters provide a rich descriptive account of the interviews where chapter eight endeavours to analyse and synthesise the thematic strands of chapters five, six and seven in the presentation of five academic identity positions or types described as: i) the teacher; ii) the integrated-complete academic; iii) the disaffected academic; iv) the conflicted academic; and v) the moral academic. In order to reflect the fluidity and overlap between these identity positions chapter eight is lengthier than its counterparts, extending the discussion across two chapters would imply further categorisation that is unnecessary.

In conclusion, the thesis illustrates that – as in other disciplines – among the academics who participated in the study allegiance to the primary *professional* commitment predominates. Allegiance to a mythologised academic life (eg: the pursuit of intellectual interests or McInnis' (2010) 'life of the mind'), per se, is generally less marked. The *professional-academic* identity is an interplay of "This is who I am" as realised in the strength of identification with the profession, and "This is what I do" as realised primarily in the teaching of students and the

production of professional-practitioners. In a paper published in 2012 Findlow used the same terminology – ‘professional-academic’ - in her ethnographic study of newly recruited nurse educators undertaking an Academic Practices course. Findlow does not define her use of this term. In this study, the terminology arose out of the analytical process and the endeavour to determine a descriptor that accounted for the essence of the identity positions types individuals cultivated and occupied. In acknowledging a commitment to the mission and values of a given profession it also acknowledges the troubled orientation and positioning many of the respondents had in relation to practice, and recognises their distance and/or absence from the practice field. As established in the research literature absence and distance from practice is a key problematic in the making of these professional-academic identities. While the conclusion offers a partial reframing of the professional-academics’ position in the university it cannot transcend the entrenched problematic of this academy-practice gap.

Chapter 2

Identity Projects

Introduction

This chapter draws on a range of academic literature to provide a frame for the conceptualisation of identity. As this study is an exploration of how social worker and nurse educators develop a practice of being an academic it is concerned with the forging of identities as an on-going process of 'becoming'. Archer (2008), drawing on the work of Colley and James (2005) considers also processes of 'unbecoming' in the construction of professional academic identities. These are concepts that suggest identity formation is a never finished project (Henkel, 2000), and that becoming, being and unbecoming is mediated through the will and agency of the individual in response to the worlds they perceive they inhabit (Archer, 2000; Giddens, 1991). Generally the thesis is informed by this theoretical lens as outlined in the time-space-relational matrix presented in this chapter and pursued in the review of identity-making processes offered by Giddens (1991, Archer, 2000, and Wenger (1998), in particular.

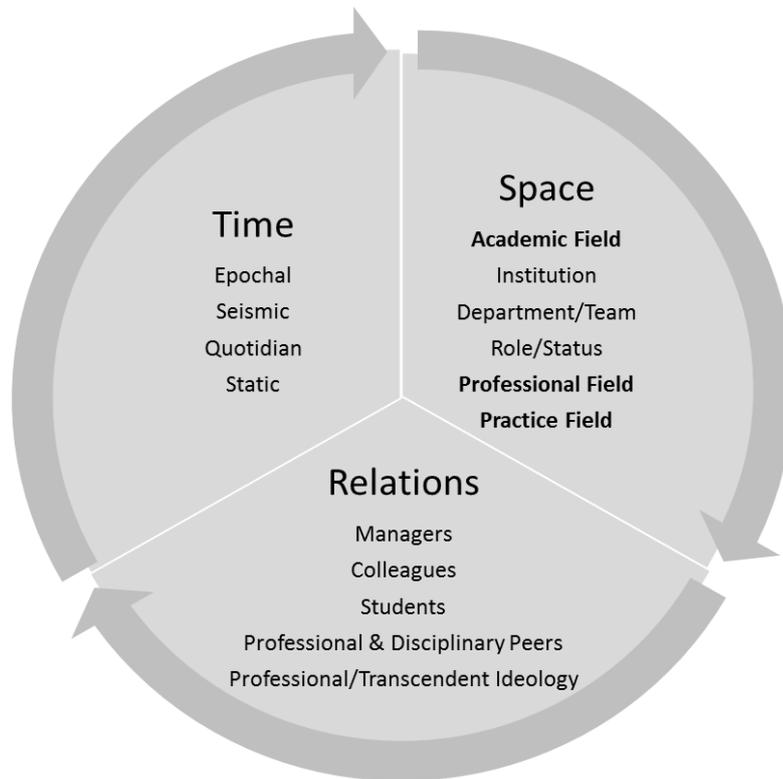
Through the work of Giddens (1991) and Archer (2000), the chapter explores the making of individual, abstracted, reflexive identities in pursuit of 'inner wishes' or 'concerns and commitments'. The selves emerging from the work of these theorists are described here as 'Reflective' and 'Dialogic' respectively. These terms are used only to indicate the emphasis in each author's work; individuals

themselves are not one or the other, both processes – reflexivity and inner conversations – are component parts of identity-making. The work of Wenger (1998) is used to help locate the individual in a context – a community of practice – and so highlights the criticality of *participation* and *doing* in identity-making. Where these authors foreground the individual the remainder of the chapter goes on to explore the structured spaces and processes of identity-making: social role, belonging and the field of academia. In so doing it begins a discussion about the relationships between agency and structure in the making of individual identities.

The Time-Space-Relational Matrix

The time-space-relations matrix, in Figure 2, illustrates the dynamics between social relations, social spaces and time in identity-making as established across a range of theoretical standpoints, eg: Bourdieu (1988 & 1992), Foucault (Rabinow, 1984) and Bernstein (Moore, 2013). The same dynamic is reflected in the more applied literatures of identity studies (eg: Archer, 2012; 2003 & 2000; Jenkins, 2008; Lawlor, 2008; Wenger, 1998). All of these writers, along with Giddens (1991), observe that identities are made over time and that identity, consequently, is an accomplishment rather than innate and essential; and that it is also multiperspectival and contingent. Time is understood in terms of life-course, life-planning and life events. In the matrix time is further conceptualised from my readings of the academic identity literature and incorporates institutional time.

Figure 2 : The Time-Space-Relational Matrix of Identity-making



Here time, space and social relations are held to be in a constant state of dynamism, each constantly acting on and in relation to the other. In this model 'time' is not a fixed entity, it has at least as many permutations as 'relations' and 'space'. For the purposes of this study the matrix reflects the three physical spaces available to social worker and nurse educators in the making of identities or adopting identity positions: the academic field, the practice field and the professional field. Each of these fields are populated by others who variously make up the collective(s) of the fields – this is the domain of social relations. It is arguable whether professional/transcendent ideologies are best placed in the domain of relations or spaces. As professional ideology is embodied by the collective of the

profession and as commitments to transcendent ideologies (eg: faith, social action, virtue) are also held by collectives they have, in this instance, been assigned to the domain of social relations. As noted, the concept of time, in the model incorporates an historical and contextual aspect. Although not illustrated here, the identity-making of the matrix is bounded by the broader political and social sphere that shapes social work and nurse education and that has re-shaped British Higher Education - as discussed in chapter one.

With, perhaps, the exception of Giddens (1991) – for whom relational influences appear to be of less consequence – most other theorists posit identity-making as a process through time and space, and as a relational practice – eg: between individuals, collectives, systems and structures; and in relation to professional and/or transcendent ideologies. The matrix supposes that identity is not a ‘thing’ rather that it is something that one ‘does’ in relations with others and over time. Jenkins (2008: 17) theorises that “...*all human identities are, by definition, **social identities.***” as they are the outcome... of our meaning-making practices. As they are built out of interaction and meaning they represent a way of trying to be in the world and so “*Identity can only be understood as a process of ‘being’ or ‘becoming’... never a final or settled matter.*” (2008: 17).

Our interactions with others are always conducted out of our own contexts or space. The spaces are created by collectives of complementary and competing interests – or are left uncolonised by these interests (see, for example, Moore on Bernstein, 2013) - and operate through a range of structures and practices. In a sense this makes all spaces both structural and ideological, or cultural. In some

instances space is a literal, physically-bounded place as implied in the separation of the academic, professional and practice fields in Figure 2. Where networks and virtual worlds have arguably *dis-placed* the privileging of physical co-locality in identity-making (Castells, 2004; Giddens, 1991), the physically-bounded space of the university in relation to the bounded spaces of the practice fields of social work and nursing nonetheless remains the focal point of the discourse concerned with the academic legitimacy and positioning of these professional-disciplines in the academy. So, how our contextual spaces are situated in the broader socio-cultural environment, how they are configured locally, how we occupy structural roles and/or adopt identity positions within them all influence our engagements and relations with others – be they internal or external to our perceived and literal spaces. Thus Jenkins describes identity as “...a *multi-dimensional classification or mapping of the human world and our places in it, as individuals and as members of collectivities...*” (2008: 5). As his assertion suggests, nothing is fixed in terms of context or relations, and we belong to different collectivities – or hold ‘multimemberships’ as Wenger (1998) describes it – and these ‘indexes of the self’ (Taylor, 2008) locate and identify us differentially in our contexts and our relations. It will be seen in later chapters that the dynamic between space and relations is fundamental in the identity projects of social worker and nurse educators.

Terms such as ‘relations’, ‘engagement’, ‘shift’ and ‘movement’, ‘being and becoming’ all imply ‘time’, and the speed of time is variable in identity-making processes. Barnett (2008) discusses the effect of time in the making of academic identities, and his account could be read as the particularities of time and its effects

as encompassed in the seismic and quotidian time presented here. For the purposes of this study, in Figure 2 time is conceptualised as:

- Epochal : reflecting historic periods in the course of a collective project as evident in the academic literature concerning, for example, the historical trajectories of the university, disciplines and academic identities. It is through the work of this time that practices, statuses and institutions are reified and become part of a collective or community culture (Wenger, 1998). It is also the time in which myths are made. The reifications and myths of epochal time are imbued in the social roles to which individuals aspire - such as that of the social worker, the nurse, the academic – and create the professional or transcendent ideologies (eg: social justice, care of the patient, academic freedom) with which they identify (Jenkins, 2008). In this model it is the professional and/or transcendent ideologies that frame the commitments through which – variously – individuals pursue their motivating interests;
- Seismic : reflects the current time of fast-paced, unprecedented change that is perceived to be disruptive of collective customs and practices. This time is evident in the academic literature concerned with the demise of the university and the professoriate. Where customs and practices are seen to be disrupted it may be more or less possible for individuals to pursue their identity-projects informed by transcendent ideologies. Over time, seismic time may transmute into epochal time (eg: Readings’ – 1996 - posthistorical university);
- Quotidian : reflects the daily experience and negotiation of life and identity projects and as such it presupposes action and direction in pursuit of ‘inner wishes’ (Giddens, 1991), ‘interests’ (Jenkins, 2008), ‘commitments and

concerns' (Archer, 2012; 2003 & 2000). This time is the practice time of being and becoming a certain kind of person (du Gay, 2007). Where interests are not recalibrated with regard to reconfigurations of space and social relations over time, or where a particular identity-project is thwarted quotidian time may become static;

- Static : reflects periods of inertia, as experienced by the individual and/or the collective, reflecting the cumulative effect of unrealised or thwarted identity ambitions. I describe this time as 'static' as a preferred identity or identity-positioning cannot be realised, and there is little or no progress in the attainment of the particular identity project.

The Individual Identity Project

Taylor (2008) laments the absence of any discussion of 'history' around concepts of identity formation and draws on the work of Hall (2004) to identify four key stages in Western conceptualisations of identity. In his schema the first stage lasted up until the 17th century, a period when, he argues, identities were ascribed or 'taken-on' in response to the external expectations or needs of a traditional, pre-modern society. In this characterisation identity is really determined by an ascribed social role; for example, in terms of occupation, gender, status. Taylor argues that the second stage emerged through the challenges posed by the work of Descartes for whom identity was "...*forged through work on the self...*" (2008: 28). Taylor's third stage arises in the 19th century through the work of Hegel and Freud who, he suggests, heralded the incorporation of "...*the non-rational, the subconscious and*

the emotional.” (2008: 28) alongside the workings of reason in the making of the self. Taylor’s latest and fourth stage in conceptualisations of identity is the current post-modern age in which the focus is on “...*the relationship between an individual’s sense of existential fragmentation and the need to assert some level of self-unified identity*” (2008: 28). Taylor concludes that for the postmodernist philosophers “...*identities are always ‘under construction’ in contexts that are characterised by indeterminacy, partiality and complexity.*” (2008: 28). This is the position adopted by Giddens (1991), and the contingencies and dislocations of identity are also discussed in the work of du Gay (2007), Jenkins (2008) and Bucholtz and Hall (2010).

Taylor is of the view that although described historically these four identity positions continue to operate concurrently in the modern world. For example, in a review of three identity studies in academia he argues that respondents in all the studies appeared to “...*have largely ‘taken on’ beliefs in autonomy and freedom...*” (2008: 34), practices and ways of being – he speculates – that may have been core to their expectations of an academic career and anticipated identity. Effectively, in this example Taylor is emphasising the continuing power and influence of social identities – that have been forged over epochal time - rather than the ascribed identities he draws out of the first historic period. The power of such social identities is borne out in a study of ‘young/er’ academics undertaken by Archer (2008). She found that her respondents had well-established expectations of the academic social role, and were disappointed to find an erosion of the values and principles they perceived to be embedded in the role – an erosion that they saw as directly affecting their work practices and hence their identities as academics. The

participants of these studies appear to be trying to enact Wenger's (1998) 'paradigmatic' identity trajectory, ie: to undertake and fulfil the mythic role of 'academic' constructed through custom and practice over time and imbued with value commitments. An anticipation similarly held by some of the participants in this study.

Individuals who occupy academic positions are not required by their societies and communities to do so as such, it is a life choice that – by whatever means – they have made. Giddens, Wenger and Archer clearly articulate the concurrent interplay between identification with, and occupation of social identities, personal reason and emotion in the creation of an intact self. As noted, for each of these authors – and others – the individual identity project is forged in communities in which social relations are of critical importance. The concept of 'social relations' infers a degree of action and participation in the world and also suggests – again – the socially constructed nature of roles and identities. We have to learn how to be certain kinds of people and, arguably, negotiate such being in relation to our own interests and those of the collectives to which we belong or subscribe. Although Giddens is ambivalent about this social membership, the work of Wenger provides a useful platform to explore social relations.

The Participative Self

Wenger (1998) locates identity-making in the processes of participation in communities (as, for example, in the relational and spatial domains of the identity matrix at Figure 2) and asserts that “...*participation shapes not only what we do, but also who we are and how we interpret what we do.*” (1998: 4). His thesis privileges local communities of practice, such as teams, over those that are larger – in his example - employing organisations. The power of communities – which can be extended beyond physically located teams or departments, to include disciplines, professional and other networks of interest or commitment - is echoed in the early literature on academic identities. Henkel (2000), for example, discusses the relationship between the individual and the discipline, the individual and the department (described as the ‘unit’ in her work), and the individual and the institution (‘enterprise’). Her discussion suggests a hierarchy of loyalties and influences, with the enterprise – arguably until more recently – being of least consequence in *people’s conception* of their academic identity and practices. The author herself however, like Delanty (2008), views the university, or college, as the organising point and location out of which academic identities have been practised. More recently Henkel (2007b), in response to the changing landscape of higher education, appears to charge institutions with even greater responsibility in sustaining individual and collective academic identities.

Wenger – like Giddens, Archer, Bourdieu, Foucault and du Gay (in his 2007 overview, *Organising Identity*) - emphasises practice and doing with others as the crucible of learning, meaning-making and identity-formation. For Wenger this

practice-doing is not a thing of the moment but an enterprise that is worked on over time and context by generations of individuals and collectives. Wenger argues (1998) that it is practice and engagement with practice that defines the collective or community of practice, not social roles (eg: social worker, nurse, academic), or institutional affiliations *per se*. In communities of practice individuals are mutually engaged in a joint endeavour, and their work is supported by a shared repertoire that includes: history and stories, artefacts and tools, styles and actions, discourses and concepts. In essence this articulation is a later iteration of the identity thesis put forward by Mead (Morris, 1967) and resonates with Bourdieu's theorisation of *habitus* within a *field* - of community or practice. For Bourdieu entry, or socialisation into any field cannot be "...by an instantaneous decision of the will, but only by birth or a slow process of co-option and initiation that is equivalent to a second birth." (1992: 68). So similarly, Bourdieu's 'initiation' includes ways of doing things, mutual recognition and misrecognition (of acts), and rites of passage. Participation is a practice and, he argues, that as a learning process it generates one's dispositions and by inference identity(s). Where Bourdieu (1992) argues that this generates homogeneity, with individual differences merely an expression of variation within a particular milieu, Wenger – like Mead (Morris, 1967) - argues that diversity is necessary and lends itself to the 'progress' of the community and its practices.

As do Mead and Bourdieu, Wenger locates the development or realisation of identity in our participation in communities where they: "... become anchored in each other and what we do together...." (1998: 88), and so can be described as 'interlocked'. Equally, although with different emphasis, as Wenger's identities are

'interlocked' so Goffman's (1990) are 'fixed'. However, this does not mean that any of these identities should be read as static and never-changing. Wenger's communities shift and evolve, requiring individuals to renegotiate and realign the self in occupying changed positions. Goffman's actor is always making decisions about how to play a part in the community as are Bourdieu's players, who are allowed to observe and respond to the constructions of the field (1992) – even where, for Bourdieu, *comprehension* of the field is in question. The reflexive agency and transformative power, or otherwise, of Bourdieu's agents is the subject of some debate (eg: Shusterman, 1999). The point, however, is really to establish the shaping potentialities of the communities in which we are 'involuntarily situated' (Archer, 2000: 10-11) or which we elect to join (Morris, 1967; Jenkins, 2008).

Where Bourdieu appears to privilege the power of the field in identity-making, Wenger (1998: 145) holds up the concept of *identity* as "...a pivot between the social and the individual..." that is forged out of the interplay between the community and the person. His definition of identity is absolutely framed by social relations "...practice entails the negotiation of ways of being a person in that context." (1998: 149). Our experiences of participation are important in terms of how we are reified in practice, hence the concern (among Wenger's claims processors) with status as it is an external conferment of expertise. The reification may be through the reward systems of the organisation, through the esteem and regard of co-workers, or membership of a profession. Consequently he describes identity as "... a very complex interweaving of participative experience and reificative projections." that constitutes a "...constant work of negotiating the self." (1998: 151). It is to be presumed that such interiorised negotiations have also to

accommodate unrealised reificative projections, such as those held by some of the respondents in this study.

As Bourdieu's actors are seen to occupy more than one influencing social space (Earle, 1999), so Wenger's thesis acknowledges that we do not belong to only one community [of practice]. He situates individuals in a "...*nexus of multimembership.*" (1998: 158-163) where our different memberships are held simultaneously in a nexal tension in which, at different times, one or other membership identity may prevail over others. For Wenger there is a work of reconciliation to be undertaken, not to merge or dissolve all our selves but to hold them where they become "...*part of each other, whether they clash or reinforce each other. They are, at the same time, one and multiple.*" (1998: 159). Wenger is in search of a unified self and regards this on-going work of reconciliation – irrespective of outcome – as "...*intrinsic to the very concept of identity.*" (1998: 161). This work of reconciliation is a project that operates over time (1998: 158). As such he characterises the temporality of identity negotiation in terms of:

- “1. *a work-in-progress*
2. *shaped by efforts – both individual and collective – to create coherence through time...*
3. *incorporating the past and the future in the experience of the present*
4. *negotiated in respect to paradigmatic trajectories*
5. *invested in histories of practice and generational politics.*”

In Wenger's theorisation time, place (space) and social relations - as illustrated in Figure 2 - lend purpose and coherence to an individual's long-term identity project. Others, such as Bucholtz and Hall (2010) and Giddens (1991), adhere to a similar identity-making model but understand relational time and space as less stabilising factors and individual's actions within them much more contingent. Bucholtz and Hall, examining identity through language and narrative, view identity as constantly emergent, never settled, positionally-dependent on temporary roles and allegiances, always mediated through relations with others - whose identity projects are presumably equally fragmented. Hence it is described as "*...always...partial, produced contextually situated and ideologically informed configurations of self and other.*" and "*...constantly shifting both as interaction unfolds and across discourse contexts.*" (2010: 25). Despite the points of similarity, this is a more challenging and complex formulation of identity-making than that provided by Wenger but, paradoxically, less *other-determined* than the self-referential reflexive identity posited by Giddens.

The Reflexive Self

Giddens writes of "*... the institutional reflexivity of modernity...*" and the focus of his entire thesis is concerned with the "*...new mechanisms of self-identity which are shaped by – yet also shape – the institutions of modernity.*" (1991: 2). In his analysis the postmodern world is self-regarding and subjects itself to unending surveillance through which self-monitoring it shapes, reshapes and positions itself. He argues that this reflective and regulating stance is now also more obviously

apparent in individual lives, and that such a reflexive self may even be a survival mechanism in the modern world. Archer (2012) also depicts an increasingly complex world arguing that there is no longer a regularised Bourdieuan 'game' based on known but unspoken rules, hence reflexivity again becomes an imperative survival strategy. Effectively, one has to know how to act in unknown and uncertain circumstances, it is not sufficient to rely on tradition and habituated ways. Jenkins (2008), however, does not regard the reflexive self as a modern phenomenon. He argues that the theorisation of identity has always been concerned with relations between the individual and the collective and that both are unequivocally implicated in each other. For Jenkins (2008) 'doing' identity is the individual's strategic practice of negotiating their place(s) in the social order. As such it is an inherently reflexive process that negotiates interactional dynamics of domination, resistance and identification and is where the 'realness' of identities are brokered (Bucholtz and Hall, 2010).

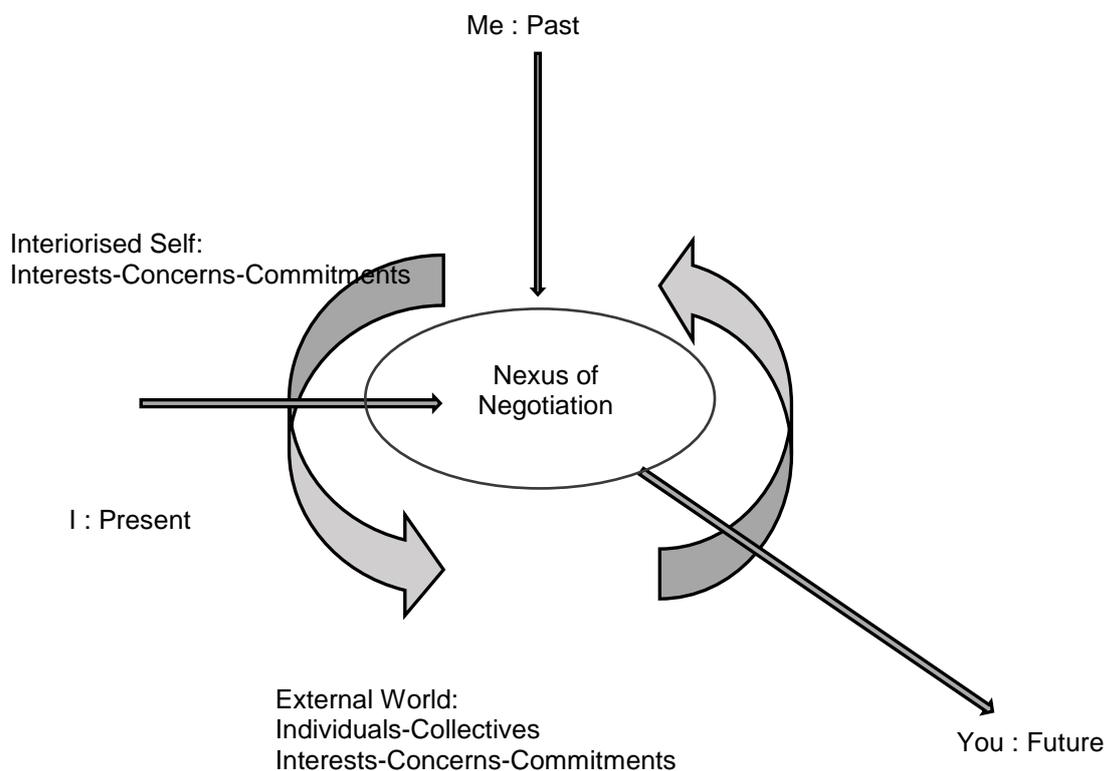
Giddens foregrounds the physical dislocation of social relations from the specifics of location and argues that this complicates the possibilities of identity-making and shaping. He argues that as we participate in global enterprises (eg: through professional networks or personal involvement in social action groups) we are no longer reliant on the proxemics of a physically bounded *place* as the most immediately important context for our identity-making and expression. This viewpoint infers certain assumptions about the boundedness of our proximal places and seems to exclude the possibility of local spaces - including the microcosm of the family - holding within them identifications and commitments to/with more widely dispersed communities of interest. As Jenkins (2008) notes

groups – communities – define themselves at their boundaries, but that the boundaries are fluid and “...*permeable... and identity is constructed in transactions at and across the boundary.*” (2008: 44). Nonetheless, a dislocation of social relations from locale and, for Giddens, the powerful influence of mediated experience requires the making of self-identity to be a reflexive process. He states (1991: 5) that: “*The reflexive project of the self, which consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised biographical narratives takes place in the context of multiple choice as filtered through abstract systems...*” For Giddens this seems to be a problematic of identity-making, where for Wenger and Jenkins it is simply the work of negotiating our multimemberships to realise our motivating interests and concerns over time.

Giddens is concerned with how the individual chooses to live and argues that this is a daily decision made in the context of the self as it unfolds over time. Consequently, he describes identity as a biographical narrative and argues that it is in “... *the capacity to keep a particular narrative going.*” (1991 54) that an individual’s identity is to be found. As new events occur they are woven into the story, taking account of past and future trajectories. Like Archer, Giddens’ (1991) draws on the theorising of Mead (Morris, 1967) to introduce an ‘I’, ‘Me’ and ‘You’ held in discursive tension within the individual as they reflexively create and re-create the self and their own self-identity, the subjectivity that makes sense to them over time. It is argued that this dialectic between the interiorised self and the external world, and the past, present and future generates an individual’s sense of self or individual consistency through time (see Figure 3, *The Coherent Self*). This reflexive self assumes ‘direction’ on behalf of the individual – although it might be

argued that 'direction' is something that can sometimes only be seen with hindsight, or may be followed out of necessity rather than volition, as such. Nonetheless, Giddens, drawing on the work of Rainwater, argues that a sense of direction is necessary to the making of the self in accordance with "...the individual's inner wishes." (1991: 71). Giddens' 'inner wishes' could be read as synonymous with Archer's 'concerns and commitments' and the generalised 'interests' that permeate Jenkin's analysis.

Figure 3 : The Coherent Self – A Reflexive Dialogic Negotiation of the Self through Time



Giddens' project of the self is very internally-focussed and referenced, with a cognitive awareness of the personal lifespan dominating the individual's life choices. This is argued to be important on two counts: i) with regard to the notion of 'authenticity' – being true to oneself – which is described as “...*the moral thread of self-actualisation...*” (1991: 78-79); and ii) with regard to the concept of 'life-planning', which seems to suggest a very active, strategic planning for the future, and a tool for framing the narrative of the self through time (eg: “...*when I became a nurse; when I studied for...*”). Although such strategic life-planning seems like an idealised process and arguably, as Jenkins notes (2008), one only available to certain privileged - demographics. Nonetheless, Giddens pursues the idea of the reflexive individual 'colonising the future' through life choices made in the present thus shaping themselves and their (potential) circumstances rather than being a passive subject of fate.

For Giddens, external referents such as place, individuals, groups and rituals hold less and less significance for the internally-referenced, reflexive project of the self. Even so, this same individual is constantly self-regulating in anticipation of, or in response to the expectations and/or circumstances of the collective enterprise. Towards the end of his analysis, Giddens acknowledges that “...*self-development depends on the mastering of appropriate responses to others;...*” and argues that the person who would be 'different' to all others has “...*no chance of reflexively developing a coherent self-identity.*” (1991: 200). We have to be recognisable to others, and *how* others recognise us shapes the identity possibilities and actualisations available to us.

The Dialogic Self

As with Giddens, Archer (2000) is concerned to (re)locate the reflexive self in the postmodern world as a self that is self-knowing, self-interested, active and influencing rather than a self that is subjected by forces it cannot 'see' or effect. Archer's reflexive agent is constituted through the "...*ultimate concerns and commitments.*" (2000: 2) that influence an individual's practical engagement in the world. These concerns and commitments are generated in relation to external – as well as internal - reference points (such as the 'transcendent ideologies' in Figure 2) and can be read as more altruistic than Giddens' seemingly self-interested 'inner wishes'. She argues that it is primarily through the pursuit of these concerns and commitments in the world over time that "...*our continuous sense of self, or self-consciousness, emerges...*" (2000: 3).

A continuous – and coherent - sense of self – generated through an unavoidable embodiment is a fundamental tenet of Archer's thesis as it supposes our reflexivity "...*to know oneself as the same being over time, means that one can think about it.*" (2000: 8). She is careful not to confuse the *concept of self*, as a theoretical construct, with *sense of self* which she frames as an individual's view of personal continuity over time and through experience. For Archer, drawing on a canon of philosophical works, the embodiment of the human being – our practical action and being in the world - is critical to our identity-making.

Archer identifies three orders of reality – the natural, the practical and the social – and associates them with emotional domains that "...*relate to our physical well-*

being..., our performative achievement..., our self-worth..." (2000: 10). How we balance our concerns in these domains determines our particularity and individuality, and constitutes our personal identity. She argues that the balance is achieved – at any point in time – through an internal conversation between our logic and our emotions, or a negotiation between our thoughts and our feelings with regard to our experience and positioning in the three orders of reality. Our personal identity is expressed in the world through our life choices, behaviours and engagements with others; the singularity of our performance is recognisable by others.

However, personal identities are not forged in a vacuum but in circumstances beyond our choosing or control (eg: 'race', gender, class, dis/ability) and so are directly affected by social circumstance. Archer (2000: 262) describes us as "*...involuntarily situated beings.*" within this space. She argues that it is the interplay between our 'ultimate concerns and commitments' – generated out of the choices we make from our socialising experiences - and our socially ascribed positions that fashions our singularity and individuality. Archer (2000: 260) identifies three phases in the acquisition of social identity:

- (i) the initial acquisition or ascription of *Primary Agency* - located, for example, in gender, race or class;
- (ii) the transformation of primary agents through the exercise of *Corporate Agency*, ie: individuals working collectively to transform aspects of society;

(iii) the realisation of the *Social Actor*, who is able to occupy the roles and identities made available through the reproduction or transformation of society.

In Archer's analysis primary agency is always about collective experience and/or positioning and the term is only used in the plural. It is the social actor who is properly regarded in the singular and who can possess a "...*unique identity*." as expressed in the way in which they occupy a role. Interestingly the author argues that not everyone can become a social actor as some are unable to find "...*role(s) in which they feel they can invest themselves, such that the accompanying social identity is expressive of who they are as persons in society*." (2000: 261).

For Archer, initial – eg: occupational - role choice is an expression of nascent personal identity that has emerged from experience, skills and interests – but not direct experience of the role. Actual experience of the role informs the individual's decisions about whether to occupy the role and/or how to occupy it. These decisions are informed by balancing out the ethical, ideological and practical strengths and limitations of the role for the individual. Where individuals choose not to continue investing in a social role the 'costs' can be 'expensive'. Withdrawal from a role, for example, may require some shifts in personal identity as an individual re-evaluates their personal strengths, limitations and preferences. The reconfiguring of an identity can affect the social role(s) that remain available to the individual. For those who successfully acquire social roles the issue becomes one of personal investment, how much of the self is going to be invested in the role and, having identified with the role, how 'good' is one going to be in it? Individuals

occupy more than one social role and the roles compete for their time and investment, so the individual has to actively manage and balance the demands of the roles – much like Wenger’s practitioners negotiating their multimemberships. Archer (2000) argues that all of these decisions are worked out in an *internal dialogue* (represented as the ‘nexus of negotiation’ in Figure 3) and so ultimately it is the reflective, active person who personifies the roles which they occupy. Throughout, her thesis Archer focuses on the centrality of “...*our deep private inwardness...*” (2000: 105-106) in identity-formation.

Although Archer (2000) takes issue with the postmodernist focus on society, text and language, her reflexive identity-maker is a discursive individual, as illustrated in Figure 3. She describes the individual as “...*the ‘I’ the subject of self-consciousness...*” in dialogue with the “...*‘You’, the maker of the future..*” (2000: 12). The ‘You’ is constantly assessing current concerns and investments of the ‘I’ in order to determine their continuity into the future. The dialogue between the ‘You’ and the ‘I’ is a constant iteration, realignment and reaffirmation of personal identity; hence identity-making is psycho-social work and the expression of identity over time, hence an accomplishment. Archer introduces an intra-subjective ‘Me’ to the dialogue. This internal ‘Me’ facilitates the conversation between ‘I’ and ‘You’ as it holds all that is known, it is the databank of the self, informing the negotiation of the future self. This identity-making is not an abstract, intellectual exercise but its purpose is to “...*define what we care about most and to which we believe we can dedicate ourselves.*” (2000: 231). The author makes this assertion as part of her argument that identity is forged through and is an expression of our ultimate concerns and commitments.

Social Role and Identity-Making

In discussing the relationship between roles and identity, Taylor (2008) takes a similar tack to Archer and – citing Castells (1997) - makes the case for the centrality of the identity project: “...’*identities are stronger sources of meaning than roles...In simple terms, identities organise meaning while roles organise functions*’ (p.7). *For individuals, roles give rise to context-specific opportunities to express, and even to develop, personal identity.*” (2008: 29). From this perspective identity-making is again strongly concerned with personal meaning making and the public expression of that private meaning. However, du Gay (2007) draws attention to the problematics of personalising official, public roles. He questions – from a standpoint of accountable democracy - the legitimacy-desirability of such personalising practices. Equally, based on a number of theoretical resources, he takes issue with the concept of the de-contextualised, self-actualising individual and rather reiterates the power of containing contexts – historical, cultural, institutional – in the constitution of plural and contingent identities. For du Gay (2007), drawing on the theorisations of Foucault, the role *can* ‘make’ the person through the individual’s engagements with the apparatus of the institution/system and the ways in which they ‘train’ themselves to be within the context.

In many respects an earlier work by Taylor (1999) anticipates du Gay’s analysis focussing, as it does, on achievement-based orientations to role, where identity-formation is linked to competence (as *per* Wenger and Archer). Identity is formulated as an evolutionary process as competence(s) is acquired, refined and extended. Here competence extends beyond discipline to encompass everyday

occupational practice in the changing and emerging roles which academics find themselves occupying. Taylor uses the concept of 'indexes of the self', the indexes being culturally shared signs linked to the workplace, the discipline and 'being an academic'. He argues that these indexes coordinate the academic identity which is otherwise not a 'unitary construct' nor necessarily an expression of the intrinsic person. Rather, in this argument, identity is an attribute associated with role and context, leaving the individual as a "*...situated academic who shapes and is shaped by his or her individual workplace.*" (1999: 40 - 43). This suggests the relationship(s) between the individual and the collective is mutually generative, an idea with which Archer (2000) takes issue.

Archer (2000) argues that roles have properties of their own that exist beyond the characteristics of the occupant, they can also change and be made redundant. They are dynamic "*...because the activities of (corporate) agents transform the role array...*" and because of the legacy of successive incumbents (2000: 304). Consequently changes in the framing or expectations of social role can create a dissonance between the individual and the role. For her it is not easily possible for individuals to "*...change most social identities at the drop of a hat or like exchanging hats.*". Given the investment in, and commitment to a role personal change may be too difficult or not even possible as, again, the psychological costs may be too high. So, Archer argues "*...when our personal identity can no longer be expressed through our social identity, then only bad faith characterises the continuing role incumbent.*" (2000: 304). This undermining of the self is discussed by Giddens (1991), drawing on the work of Winnicott and Laing he argues where there is a discrepancy between the routines required of the social self and one's

biography then a 'false self' emerges which can only have detrimental effect on self-identity. This is not the view of others - for example Jenkins (2008) and McIntyre (2007) – who describe the resilience, contingency and tolerance of identity to withstand or adapt to change and contradiction.

Nonetheless, in Archer's (2000) analysis, where the dissonance between personal and social identities is too great individuals only meet the expectations and requirements of the position, and occupancy of the role no longer generates a positive self-worth. Although, to follow the logic of her overall thesis, how a person negotiates imposed role change is presumably also dependent on the balance of concerns and commitments which they are pursuing at a given moment in time. Concerns and commitments are not exclusively professionally-focussed, they also incorporate the personal and domestic realms of individuals' lives. Similarly persons may also change – through a re-prioritisation of concerns or the advent of new concerns – whilst the role remains unchanged.

Goffman (1990) writing at the end of the 1950s discusses how 'actors' are socialised into the social roles they occupy and that the socialisation process (through its training, licensing and such like) not only appears to transfigure the actor but also has the potential to 'fix' the person. He describes this as a bureaucratisation of the spirit through which loyalties and duties to our social group are invoked and through which we become certain kinds of people. Although Goffman's description seems to portray the individual as something of a passive participant, his idea of 'fixing' does bear some resemblance to Archer's (2000) account of social identity formation in which she identifies certain points when an

individual has to commit to and occupy a position – or withdraw. It is also possible to see the links between Goffman’s thinking and that of Foucault where again individuals are seen to be ‘made’ by their social context through a process of ‘objectification’ – to disciplines, norms, rules, social practices - and self-made through a voluntary process of ‘subjectivication’ (Rabinow, 1994; 1984). The latter being a process of training oneself into said disciplines, norms, rules and practices. Whilst subject to these bureaucratising and objectifying-subjectifying processes Goffman and Foucault’s protagonists are, nonetheless, able to negotiate their selfhood within their contexts. In contrast it would seem that Archer’s agent would not or could not permit a bureaucratisation of the soul without causing psychological damage.

Goffman’s (1990) emphasis is on the social performance of the role or social space according to shared rules, rather than realisation of social identity through the personal characteristics of the performer. As such his ‘actor’ may be regarded only as an ‘animator’ of roles, a concept resisted in Archer’s insistence on the *personification* of roles. On the other-hand, in his proposition that status or social place “...*is not a material thing... it is something that must be realised.*” (Goffman, 1990: 81) his ‘actor’ becomes much more of an ‘agent’. Foucault’s ‘self’ is very much a co-produced entity, reflecting a negotiation of powers between institutions and individuals which he describes as ‘governmentality’ (Rabinow, 1997). Foucault’s ‘subjectification’ or ‘technologies of the self’ – ie: the ways in which we practice who we become – are dependent on our identifications (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982; Lawlor, 2008).

Identity and Belonging

There is, of course, an on-going dynamic between our identity and belonging; identity-making is about belonging and finding a place in the world. For Archer (2000), at least, commitment within the identity-project is also a commitment that looks outward to the social world. She describes belonging as an expression of who we are, which in itself is an expression of moral commitment to a principle, an enterprise, a like-minded group of people. Moral commitment is itself expressive of significant degree of emotional involvement and investment in an endeavour. Whilst not invoking moral commitments and investments, Jenkins (2008) also argues that identification is a process that reflects the pursuit of individual interests.

Wenger (1998) identifies three types of belonging: engagement, imagination and alignment. Imagination connects current experience with knowledge of the wider world through time and space thereby imagining other, different ways of being and practice; alignment describes an investment of energies to contribute to broader enterprises (of an organisation, an employer or a social movement). In order to invest in an enterprise one has to be able to *identify with* the venture overall, and recognise that there is something different about *this* venture compared to similar others (Jenkins, 2008; Lawlor, 2008).

Wenger argues that identities are formed out of the tension between our various forms of belonging and the meanings that we can negotiate in the places in which we exercise belonging. This dual process of 'identification' and 'negotiability' "...determines the degree to which we have control over the meanings in which we

are invested." (1998: 188). Effectively, as noted earlier, identification describes how the individual identifies as something and/or with something, in preference to other possible identificatory choices. Identification is also attributed to us by others. Hence it is a social as well as a subjective experience-process and is not always open to our consciousness. Wenger says that "...our identities can develop by being engaged in action without being themselves the focus of attention." (1998: 193). As noted earlier, negotiability is how we are able to exercise power in generating meaning in the locus of identification.

Academic Identity in Higher Education

Reviewing the literature in 1992, Halsey described the discourses on the university as thematically held together by the concept of 'crisis'. The continuing themes of hiatus, crisis and transformation persist and dominate the literature (see for example: Cunningham, 2014; Kehm and Teichler, 2013; Collini, 2012; Cummings and Finkelstein, 2012; Halvorsen and Nyhagen, 2011; Amaral et al, 2008; Slater et al, 2008; Deem et al, 2007; Readings, 1996). Where Halsey frames the crisis as spiritual, these more recent observers frame it as a crisis of institutional and professional (ie: academic) identity. They ask: what is the purpose of the university; who is the university for; how should the university focus itself in terms of education and training, and teaching and research; how is the reshaping of the academy reshaping academic lives?

The questions are precipitated by a more egalitarian but also increasingly economically driven society that has required a massive expansion in higher education. As outlined in chapter one, all of these authors argue that institutional responses to the competing agendas of cultural progress and greater social integration against the demand to service economic efficiency and competition shapes not only the university – as hypothesised by Barnett (2009) – but also shapes academic roles and responsibilities, academic identities and attendant practices. They also continue to identify a proletarianisation of the academic workforce, described by Halsey as constituting a “...*threefold reduction of power and advantage...: in autonomy of working activity, security of employment, and chances of employment.*” (1992: 125). In this modern university academics are said to have lost their expertise and exceptional status as a profession (Henkel, 2000). Rather, it is argued, they have increasingly become ‘managed academics’, technicians and knowledge workers (Fanghanel, 2013; McInnis, 2010; Winter, 2009; Deem et al, 2007). Hence the disappointments of Archer’s (2008) new appointees, unable to realise their dreams of academia.

For Henkel (2000) academic identities are made up of the “...*values, agendas and self-perceptions*” that individuals hold and her interest in the 1990s was to explore the implications of far-reaching policy changes on those identities (2000: 9). Henkel argues that throughout the 19th and 20th century occupations and professions were a key source of identity and that this was no less the case in academia where “*Traditional academic award systems reflect the cultivation of an institutionalised individualism within a community of peers.*” (2000: 13). She promotes the now-established idea of the ‘project of the self’ through time, carried

out in relation to others as the member of a collective or tradition. This is the “...*bounded and defining space within which to forge an identity.*” (2000: 15). Like her contemporary, Archer (2000), Henkel also frames identity as an expression of commitment to something, with a view that commitment is inherently value-laden. Drawing on Polyani (1962) she identifies some of the values held in the academic community to which, she argues, individuals are expected to adhere: for example, the “...*pursuit of truth..., academic freedom, originality, integrity and equality...*” (2000: 17). More recent contributors to the discussion (eg: Clarke et al, 2013) continue to recognise and promote these academic values or virtues.

In discussing identity and discipline Henkel uses the work of Geertz (nd) who, she says, thought that “...*disciplines are ways of being in the world.*” to put forward that academics “...*are not just taking up technical tasks but taking on a ‘cultural frame that defines a great part of (their) life’.*” (2000: 18). She furthers her argument through the work of Clark, 1983 who noted the power of disciplinary associations, professions and learned societies to foster very strong identities. In effect, Henkel notes that the academic task is to weld together these disciplinary interests and identity with that of the institutional enterprise. For Henkel the enterprise is key to the success of the discipline as it is the place where academics practise and “...*consolidate and refine their disciplinary identities.*” (2000: 19). However, in 1994, Gibbons et al had already mapped out differentiated and dispersed disciplinary territories in their modelling of Mode 1 and 2 knowledge. This analysis displaced the centrality of the university in knowledge production and questioned the hegemony of the disciplinary tradition in a transdisciplinary world of applied science. Gibbons’ Mode 2 practitioners were concerned and committed to the

solution of real world problems, rather than the production of – arguably – esoteric knowledge. As Becher (1989), Becher and Trowler (2001) and Gibbons et al (1994) highlight, disciplinary status and academic identity are very often the subject of economic forces and less often an expression of idiosyncratic interest or commitment. These earlier analyses are similarly reiterated in the work of Naidoo (2005), Deem et al (2007) and Musselin (2010) and so, as Henkel partially anticipated, the ascendant power of the institution – for example, as a mediator of government policy and employer – appears to have trumped that of the discipline. Reflecting on the relationships between discipline, identity and institution Deem et al (2007) note the continuing strength of disciplinary identity but are not so sure that Henkel’s ‘enterprise’ remains a site of disciplinary and academic sanctuary.

Making Academic Identities – A Boundary Practice

In terms of actually being an academic Henkel identifies two main dimensions in which individuals operate: i) discipline and professional development within it; ii) role availability within the university – eg: researcher, scholar, teacher, administrator. McAlpine and her colleagues (2008) in surveying the current landscape of higher education (and drawing on the work of Castells, 1997) note that discipline-anchored identities have been destabilised and unboundaried by recent changes in the academy. Nonetheless, McAlpine and her colleagues take the view that those employed in universities can actually occupy a number of roles and positions. A view echoed by her editors, Barnett and DiNapoli (2008), who observe that the role array available in universities now offers individuals the

opportunity to occupy multiple '*horizontal*' and '*vertical*' identities at departmental, faculty and/or university level. In principle Miller (2008) agrees that recent developments should have opened the university up to supporting a greater flexibility in academic identities, but she does not dismiss the power of market forces that can undermine integrity and autonomy, and can neuter or divest academic performances of moral purpose.

So - these authors argue - up to a point, individuals can create their identities through the activities in which they 'choose' to engage. Inferring the identity-making processes and models discussed in this chapter, McAlpine et al (2008: 120) note that: "*The investment that the lecturer makes... will vary depending on the extent to which the purpose and the role are congruent with his/her personal identity goals, and whether they are institutionally mandated or personally chosen.*" Delanty (2008) on the other hand, in a contribution to the same edited text, describes the emergence of innumerable 'subject positions' (ie: roles and positions) as an outcome of the governance of identities through the technologies of higher education (eg: funding streams, resources, rewards, sanctions). This suggests an ongoing process of political manoeuvrings in the formation of occupational and social roles and their relative traction. Consequently, for Delanty, identity-making is not as clear cut as it perhaps was – eg: through the prism of discipline - and is also, perhaps, less a matter of individual volition as much as an expression of an individual's responses to a constantly shifting organisational context. Where the pace and process of structural change potentially disenfranchises Delanty's agent, the admission of various and multiple role

possibilities creates space for du Gay's (2007) multiply contextualised, contingent, pluralistic person.

This is a person who negotiates themselves in context, over time, "...*in relation to particular 'local' purposes.*" (du Gay, 2007: 10), and the realisation of their self-interests (and is hence another variation of *The Coherent Self* in Figure 3). This person is more explicitly situated in the realities of a material context compared, arguably, to the individual who adheres primarily to a transcendental identity based on an entity such as 'discipline'. This is not to dismiss the inherently dynamic form and content of disciplines which, in principal, also require identity-recalibrations on behalf of adherents. As in every other iteration of identity-making, du Gay's individuals are deeply situated in material worlds which shape them and/or on which they make an impact. The ongoing theoretical discussions in identity studies hinge on the degree to which the relationship between agency and structure is seen evenly balanced or weighted in favour of one element or the other. Jenkins (2008) further formulates this juncture as a relationship and/or negotiation between the internal and the external, between claims and categorisations.

In order to reconcile the disciplinary-institutional and agency-structure tension he perceives in the making of academic identities Delanty (2008) recasts the university as an interpretative site where individual and collective projects are negotiated. Effectively he renders universities as manifestations of "...*process over form - ...*" (2008: 127) and so inherently and constantly identity-generating of the individual and the collective. Although challenging it is useful to understand the university as a *process* rather than a *form* given that all elements of the

academic world – individuals, collectives, rule systems, missions, stakeholders – are in motion over time and whereby identities through a relational, negotiating process are “...*constantly shifting both as interaction unfolds and across discourse contexts.*” (Bucholtz and Hall, 2010: 25).

This kind of modelling highlights the fluidity and seeming boundarylessness of present day higher education. Given this McAlpine et al (2008) find that Wenger’s apparently bounded communities of practice are not sufficient for describing or analysing positions and practices in modern higher education. They argue that communities of practice do not take sufficient account of “...*the relation between structure and personal agency, the dialectical... experiences of individuals with different roles within multiple embedded overlapping structures.*” (2008: 118). This however reads as a very particular understanding of Wenger. His work – as highlighted in this chapter - does incorporate the concept of an individual’s multimembership within, across and outside of a community of practice over time. Described as they are, Wenger’s (1998) communities have boundaries simply because some people are initiates and participants while others are not. Within the bounded space of the practice individuals variously occupy physical, intellectual and psycho-emotional positions. Although Jenkins (2008) does not use the terminology ‘communities of practice’ he does posit institutions – be they material or transcendental – as entities of “...*established patterns of practice.*” that are one of the most important contexts “...*within which identification becomes consequential.*” (2008: 45).

However they are configured, instituted and understood 'communities' – professional, practice and academic - are primary sites of identity-making, of the negotiation between internal individual identity claims and external ascriptions of identity. How well an individual can assert a claim, adopt or resist categorisation and classification determines their location in and orientation to the communities with which they are affiliated.

Conclusion

Whilst also drawing on a range of literature, this chapter has primarily reviewed three key theoretical perspectives concerned with personal identity formation (Wenger, 1998; Giddens, 1991 and Archer, 2000). Although these authors do not necessarily share the same philosophical stance they do nonetheless share – in my reading of their work - similar fundamental understandings of identity genesis, maintenance and transformation. Conceptually they locate the individual in practical, social and natural worlds and accord the individual the capacity to determine their own practical and social relations to the world. That is, individuals are afforded the power to decide *who* they are, and *how* they are going to be in the 'situated' environment in which they find themselves. As such the individual is positioned as an agent or actor in their circumstances.

The agency of the individual is manifest in a *constant* reflective dialogue that encompasses: an evaluative negotiation of personal history; a negotiation of inherent interests and social memberships, which can be understood as 'concerns

and commitments' that generate out of a process of identifications/non-identifications and circumstantial prioritisations; an appraisal and engagement, or not, with the affordances and constraints of the situated experience; and the intentions or aspirations of a projected future self. It is immaterial as to whether individual determinations are reactive or proactive, any determination is an agentic act based – crudely - on an evaluation of the 'costs' and 'benefits' that entail in the pursuit of individual 'concerns and commitments' and/or 'interests'. Wenger's participative self, Giddens' reflexive self and Archer's dialogic self all make decisions and engage in negotiations about their investments or being in the world, privileging different concerns and commitments over time. It is the balance of interests an individual chooses to hold in relation to, and engagement with, the structured world in which they live that is the pivotal point of identity-negotiation, the crux of the agency-structure dialectic.

It is our engagement with the world and our actions in and upon it that require us to reflect upon our personal positioning and the meanings our position(s) hold for us. In all three models explored it is the interplay between our past, present and future that determines how we position ourselves in our worlds. It is argued that it is through our internal, self-referential negotiations that we establish continuity and coherence of the self over time. This continuity and coherence is expressed in our public narratives and our practice competence (eg: as a parent, a professional, a friend, and so on). We are not fixed in our narrative or our practice as we reshape ourselves through – again – our practical involvement in the world. Being in the world not only locates us in time but very clearly locates us in particular spaces; our commitments to certain spaces (eg: academic/disciplinary specialism,

institutional department, research and/or teaching, professional association or network) may disrupt the primacy of time as our coherence is realised through our adherence to particular practices with which we identify and make us who we say we are.

In conclusion the theoretical and analytical framework of the thesis arises out of the literature reviewed in this chapter, along with the contextual overview of chapter one and what was the concurrent, iterative analysis of the participant interviews (as described in chapter four). The framework reflects a synthesis of the identity-modelling posited by the authors and – as illustrated in Figures 4 (p.146) and 8 (p.274) - brings together the concepts of:

- Multimembership, where the predominant communities of membership are hypothesised as the three domains of the professional, practice and academic worlds;
- Identification, which is hypothesised as an individual's intellectual and affective dispositions to the domains of profession, practice and academia – and discussed in this thesis as 'orientations';
- Structure and agency in the academy, hypothesised as the interplay between the enablements and constraints – or technologies – of the university and the orientations and 'concerns and commitments' of individual academics' identity-projects; and
- Time and space, both of which are aspects of the structural context in which academic identities are negotiated, and which – in this thesis - are also hypothesised as the proximities and distances between the academic and

practice worlds that individuals negotiate to establish, legitimate and maintain their position in the university.

The remainder of this thesis examines and analyses these processes at work in the identity-projects undertaken by social worker and nurse educators in UK Higher Education. In so doing it explores also how individuals in their identity-making manage and/or accommodate the uneasy place social work and nursing – as the vocational, applied studies suggested in chapter one – are argued to occupy within the established order of the university.

The following two chapters form Part II of the thesis providing an outline of the research design and methodology, and a preliminary overview of demographics, institutions, participants and thematics.

PART II : THE STUDY

Chapter 3

Research Design, Methods and Process

Introduction

This chapter describes the qualitative frame through which this study was undertaken: an exploratory case study based on semi-structured interviews with nineteen academics (n=10 social worker, n=9 nurse) from two post-92 universities and a pre-92 university, with findings derived from a thematic analysis of the data. The chapter is presented in two parts: the first outlining the qualitative frame of the study; the second providing an overview of the research process actually undertaken.

Research Design and Methods

A Qualitative Frame

Given this study is about the identities that two complimentary groups of academics generate and develop out of their experience of being educators within specific professional education domains, it is well-suited to a qualitative inquiry. In defining qualitative research Luttrell (2010: 1-2) describes it as “...*an effort to highlight the*

meanings people make and the actions they take, and to offer interpretations for how and why....". Denzin and Lincoln (2008) in a historical review of qualitative research practices summarise it as the study of "...*things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.*" (2008: 4). In these ways qualitative research is concerned with the experiential knowledge (Stake, 2008) people have about themselves as certain kinds of people - in this instance as particular kind of educators - in particular contexts at particular times. The singularity of the qualitative frame is that it starts, as Alvesson & Skoldberg (2000: 4) note, "...*from the perspective and actions of the subjects studied,...*". As identity is a subjective experience and construct – even when it is attributed by others – the starting place of this inquiry needed to be with the perspectives of social worker and nurse academics in their contexts. This perspectival nature of qualitative research frames it as an exploratory, descriptive and interpretive practice (Bryman, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000).

Although Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) foreground the participants of qualitative studies, they also acknowledge that the researcher brings their own understanding (ontology) and epistemology (knowledge) of the world to the inquiry. In effect, both the researcher and the researched engage in a study with pre-existing experiences and frames of understanding about the matter under inquiry. Usher (1996) points out that the meaning of action and behaviour – ie: of being a nurse or social worker academic - is achieved through the interpretive 'schemes' which individuals and groups use to understand their experience. In this study both I and the participants brought to the inquiry our personalised meanings of 'academic', 'nurse', 'social

worker', 'university' and so on. How each party understood these things was shaped – for example - through experience, conversation with other members of our communities over time, professional and political reading. In qualitative research the researcher and participant negotiate their interpretations *in situ* as far as they are able – in this instance through the talk of the interview. This again reflects the exploratory nature of qualitative inquiry, in the to-and-fro of the interview content and meaning are relatively open.

The material outcome of the engagement (eg: audio-recording, transcript, text) is subject to further interpretation by the researcher through the analytic process in which each singular interview is considered in relation to all others, and in relation to the wider discourse in which the study is located. This iterative sense-making process (Luttrell, 2010) is also described as a 'circular' (Flick, 2006), or as a 'circular, iterative, spiral' (Usher, 1996) of data collection, analysis and theorising. It is the approach adopted in this work and both the process and the outcomes are described and explored in the chapters that follow.

It is through this interpretive, iterative process that analytical themes are generated and developed but there is a fine balance – between detail and generalisation - to be achieved in qualitative work. Silverman (2010) is very clear that it is *detail* with which qualitative research is concerned, and that its intention is directed to non-positivistic understandings of phenomena. Alvesson and Skoldberg (2000) trace the roots of qualitative approaches to a critique of the claims of scientific objectivism generally, and the limitations of its methods specifically in the social world. Within the approach there is a resistance to the totalising effects of the

scientific method which is seen to be “...*intolerant to difference.*” (Usher, 1996: 11) and nuance. The problematics of totalising concepts in identity studies are highlighted by both du Gay (2007) and Jenkins (2008). du Gay, like Silverman, advises attention to detail and particularity in order to “...*get closer to the objects... we seek to understand, treating them with a degree of care and concern...*” (du Gay, 2007: 12). The capacity to pay attention to and to use the details of individual experiences seems essential in a study concerned with identity as it allows for: the accommodation of each highly individual account; tolerance of tension and contradiction in the data; and the surfacing of the processes by which people *variously* locate and/or understand themselves in the social world of professional education.

Nevertheless a thematic analysis is dependent on some level of generalisation within the data. The analysis undertaken in this work is described in more detail in chapter four but it endeavoured to privilege the data in the first instance whilst, at the same time, holding in mind its potential relations to the contextual and theoretical discussions outlined in chapters one and two. The data-driven generalisations emerge both out of the commonalities of experience – eg: working in a university, being the member of a particular profession, not being in the practice field – and from differences of experience that suggest classificatory boundaries. These generalisations are reflective of shared meaning systems (Usher, 1995; Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000), for example in the ways that participants understand how universities work, or the purpose of their academic role. They also arise out of respondents’ volitional identifications and

categorisations – ie: the identity or identities claimed or presented - during the course of an interview.

A Comparative Case Study

The research was designed as a comparative case study – looking at identity-making within two occupational populations - in order to investigate the questions that arose out of my directorial role. Case studies are defined by the researcher's interest in the workings of bounded entities or systems (Stake, 2008; 1995), even though boundaries can be difficult to discern. As both Stake and Yin (2009) highlight the boundaries between phenomenon and context intersect and it is the researcher who determines where to set the limits of the case. At the outset of this study the boundaries of the case were clear: the identity-making processes and practices among academics in the professional-disciplinary fields of 'social work' and 'nursing'. This construction satisfies Yin's (2009) criteria for case studies where the abstracted notion of 'identity-making' is located in the actual phenomenon of nurse/social worker academics. Alternatively 'identity-making' can be read as Stake's conceptual framing 'issue' of case study work (1995), effectively the focus of a study.

Both authors discuss case study inquiry in terms of singulars and multiples. Yin uses the terminology of 'multiple' case studies, where Stake (2008) puts forward the notion of the collective case study. He describes this as a way to "...investigate a phenomenon, population or general condition." (2008: 123) and in so doing

seems to invest the incorporation of a number of participants and/or sites with a conceptual purpose to understand the nature of the case beyond the singular (even though he advocates resisting generalisations). The focus of this study and its participants accommodate all three of Stake's investigatory criteria:

- in their specific micro collectives they are *populations* that reflect something of the *phenomenon* of being a nurse or social worker academic struggling with the *issue* of identity-making;
- at a meso-level, as a *population* of professional-educators, they can be seen to reflect a collective experience of the *phenomenon/issue* of identity-making;
- at the same time, at a macro-level, they can be seen as members of an academic collective and so reflect something of the *general condition* of being an academic in higher education.

The overlapping memberships that the participants occupy illustrate the problematic of establishing the boundary of the case. Nonetheless, this multimembership has to be accounted for as it is the context in which social worker and nurse academics negotiate their identities.

The juxtapositioning of multimembership, context and agency highlights the challenge of analysis in qualitative studies, including case studies. Apart from the multidimensional elements of the case Stake (1995) also notes that collective case studies are built on small samples and so are not necessarily representational. Hence he also advises a cautionary approach to generalisation and emphasises,

rather, that the “... *real business of case study is particularisation,...*” (1995: 6). For Stake the point is to generate insight into the circumstances and conditions of the case (singular or collective) in its own right. In this work it was anticipated that adopting a case study approach would allow for:

- respondents’ accounts of their academic selves to be expressed as individual representations of the self, siting the individual as a case in and of themselves;
- a ‘cross-case analysis’ (Creswell, 2013: 101) through which individual accounts contribute to an understanding of both the professional-disciplinary collective and academic collective by bringing together “...*the expert knowledge of a number of people or biographies in respect of a concrete experience of...*” (Flick, 2006: 142) - in this instance of being a nurse or social worker academic.

An Interview-led Inquiry

As this study is predicated on how individuals make their identities, and so is concerned with their experiential selves, the interview seemed the most appropriate mode of inquiry. The notion of the experiential self is important here because, as is made clear by a number of authors, the interview can no longer be thought of as a “...*clear window into the inner life of any individual.*” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008: 21). Rather, as Kvale and Brinkman (2009) advise, interviews create a space which is “...*intersubjective and social, involving interviewer and*

interviewee as co-constructors of knowledge." (2009: 18) - usually, as in this study, about the 'life worlds' of the respondents.

Silverman (2010) notes that the co-creation of knowledge has been viewed as problematic because it is not a reliable "*....source of information about what actually happens in the situations described...*" (2010: 21), but he argues that to try and understand interview data as fact is mistaken. Rather interview data represents a series of iterative interpretations on behalf of the interviewee about situations, experiences and themselves. As such Dowling and Brown (2010) see the interview as a transformative space, asserting that "*... the act of making your experience explicit of necessity entails its transformation.*" (2010: 7). Where Dowling and Brown refer to this as "*...the epistemological paradox...*" those in the field of narrative research (for example, Andrews et al, 2008) reframe the paradox as a methodological position. Among narrative researchers participants' stories reflect identity-making processes at a moment in real time. The experience of the narrator is mediated – among other things - through the self they want to present to the interviewer, their motivations for engaging in the interview, the stories available to them and the changing self through time (Phoenix, 2008; Czarniawska, 2004; Gubrium and Holstein, 2001). The verbatim data collected within this study illustrates these processes, it is possible to see/hear how individuals negotiate the presentation of their academic selves in the course of an interview.

Rather than problematic it was anticipated that these features, of what has become termed 'the qualitative interview' (Bryman, 2012), would be the most flexible method for inquiring into individuals' identity projects. The intention was to open

up as much exploratory space - within the parameters of the inquiry - for the interviewee as possible. While Bryman (2012) posits that there are increasingly blurred boundaries between unstructured and semi-structured interviews, Gibson (2010) defines the semi-structured interview as the “...*researcher working through their analytic interests in real time, creating distinctive and unique discourse events that are topically similar to each other...*” (2010: 62). In this way, despite all of its flexibilities, the interview *is* framed by the researcher’s purpose. This in itself can be seen as an ethical stance: there has to be a purpose for involving individuals in the time-expensive process of interviews, and for recording their personal views, opinions, information.

Having set the theoretical scene, the remainder of the chapter describes the actual research process undertaken.

The Research Process

Ethical Considerations

As both the theoretical and methodological literature illustrates, inquiring into academic lives involves more than taking into account the decontextualised individuality of the respondent. In talking about ‘identity’ respondents are describing and reflecting on relationships between themselves and their colleagues, and the organisations in which they work. This is sensitive material which has the potential to expose individuals and organisations. For the individual

respondent this means they must have confidence and trust in the interviewer and, equally, the host institution too must have a sense of confidence in the interviewer and the value of the inquiry (Flick, 2006). Individuals need to be assured that they are not maligned and institutions that their reputations are not called into question.

At an administrative level some of this is managed through institutional ethics approval processes and the usual assurances of participant information and consent forms, where confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed. There is also an ethical responsibility to respect and protect the confidentiality of all participating parties and so places and people remain anonymous in this text, hence in appendices 1-3 (ie: letters to gatekeepers, information sheets and consent forms) I have edited my locational details as a researcher. With these principles in mind throughout the thesis the research sites are only described by their general features and, for ease of reading, all sites and individuals have been assigned pseudonyms – as noted below:

UniversityWide : Social worker Academics	Robert, Chris, Vicky, Kate, Della
UniversityWide : Nurse Academics	Ellen, Elaine, Maggie, Tyrell, Greg
UniversityAffiliate : Social worker Academics	Erin, Eleanor, Geraldine, Leslie, Kevin
UniversityAffiliate : Nurse Academics	Val
UniversityCity : Nurse Academics	Vanessa, Linda, Geoff

However, managing the ethical domain simply through administrative procedures is not enough. As already noted research always causes a disturbance in the field. The field only becomes known to itself once it is approached as a site of study when it may then become anxious about “... *the limitations of its own activities...*” (Flick, 2006: 117), and question the motives for the research and its benefit. These anxieties are primarily addressed through relationship building with the organisation and participants (although Flick doubts that it is really possible to overcome a degree of wariness). The critical point here is to ensure that participants are legitimately convinced of the purposefulness of the study and its ‘worthwhileness’ in terms of their time and contribution. I tried to achieve this in a number of ways. Prior to submitting ethics applications I emailed the chairs of panels to seek their support and to insure that my request was understood within a context; having secured approval I emailed thanks to the chairs and began communicating directly with the faculty and departmental gatekeepers. In the case of my own institution I had a personal interview with the Dean. Once in the field the organisational relationship basically fell away, I was not called to account by the participating institutions and did not report back to them. My relationship was with individuals and through the course of the interview period there were several exchanges of email – checking and confirming dates, answering queries about the study, thanking people for their time. Disturbance and anxiety about personal limitations and/or efficacy only emerged in the actual interviews as participants talked through, made and remade their identities. In this process they did become known to themselves.

There were other disturbances in this research in terms of ethics and method:

1. *I anticipated and was drawn into a reflective consideration of my own academic identity;*

Over time this was variously more or less empowering and it did shape the conduct and interpretation of the interviews. I was highly alert to this process; there are a range of reflective notes documenting my thinking in notebooks, at the end of interview transcripts and analysis, and within the interpretive analysis of transcripts. These notes formed part of the contextual resource for the study (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009; Dowling and Brown, 2010). Although qualitative research is an interpretive practice I wanted to be sure I stayed as close as I could to the content and spirit of participant's contributions.

2. *Conducting part of the study in my own institution positioned me as an already known 'insider' (Flick, 2006) both in organisational and professional terms;*

Arguably this had the potential to emphasise concerns pertaining to confidentiality and power (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009). In varying degrees and ways all of these participants were known to me but I consciously tried not to take this for granted nor to presume upon this knowledge. I had never interviewed any of them before, nor peer-reviewed their classroom practice, nor co-taught with them or undertaken any joint work with them. Their academic identities – how they viewed themselves, their anxieties, frustrations, their ambitions, how they understood their work – were unknown to me. In terms of establishing and maintaining confidentiality it is the *purpose* of the interview that becomes critical, my purposes lay outwith the operational or managerial interests of the university. Out of professional, personal

and intellectual curiosity I wanted to explore the making of academic identities with colleagues. In this, as with any other participants, I was bound to respect colleagues' rights to confidentiality and anonymity.

Power relations prevailed in my organisation (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009) and there was the potential for them to be emphasised as, up until the beginning of the study, I had occupied a senior role in the institution. Theoretically this had the potential to further accentuate the power differentials in the interview and influence the presentations colleagues offered of their academic identity-making. However, concern about the institutional power I may or may not have had over an interviewee cannot be understood simply in terms of organisational hierarchy and responsibility. In fact, organisationally and professionally the power differentials between myself and the interviewees were wide-ranging and complex: we were professional-disciplinary peers; we held a range of organisational roles between us with varying degrees of seniority and responsibility in relation to each other; some had strong academic profiles and identities beyond the immediate confines of the university; our educational backgrounds and trajectories were different; and there were age, gender, nationality and ethnicity differentials. These power relations were not only evident in my own institution but also enacted – consciously and unconsciously - through the interviews at each of the study sites.

As a researcher I approached my colleagues in the same way I approached all other participants. At the beginning of each interview I talked through the purpose of the study, answered questions and systematically went through consents and anonymity protocols. The intention was to be clear and reassuring about the

purpose and process of the interview specifically, and the study generally (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009). Rather than distrusting me I think I was seen as a trusted and trustworthy insider, this was why people agreed to talk to me about themselves - my institutional reputation was to my advantage. This was gratifying but I had then to be careful that interview disclosures remained focused, respectful of other members of the local community and that – when discussed - other colleagues were not referred to by name. Equally, when colleagues generally asked how my research was going I spoke in broad terms of ‘my participants’ encompassing all of the study sites.

3. *Within the wider study, as a social worker academic, I was also positioned as an insider (Trowler, 2012) in terms of professional-discipline and employment as an academic;*

This positioning had implications in terms of my professional subjectivity and the reliability of the interviewees’ accounts. Although Kvale and Brinkman (2009) regard sound knowledge of the inquiry subject as an ethical pre-requisite to interview studies, they do also caution against over-identification with participants and going “native” (2009: 75). In this study I am, however, already a native. I cannot suspend my ingrained knowledge of the field and Usher (1996) explains that this knowledge can be the legitimate starting point of an interpretive inquiry. Kvale and Brinkman are concerned about the professional distance of the researcher in reporting findings, while Usher is concerned that initial standpoints and understandings are extended through any inquiry. It was in the interviews and their subsequent analysis that these two concerns were tested.

David Silverman (2010) reflects on his experience as an insider where, having disclosed his own professional identity, he entered the field “...*in the knowledge that a certain amount of professional self-consciousness would be inevitable*” (2010: 31). In Silverman’s terms this self-consciousness expresses itself in the professionally acceptable responses and actions of respondents, where the messiness of practice and experience is kept ‘hidden’ from the researcher. Effectively this is another iteration of Dowling and Brown’s (2010) methodological disturbance or paradox. In reality the mutuality of knowledge and experience was advantageous, there was nothing about the ‘messiness’ of the professional-disciplines that could easily be kept ‘hidden’. The most significant thing that could be hidden was the being and performance of the interviewee, but this is also the case where the interviewer is a stranger to the content of the study and its participants. Discussing the parameters of narrative inquiry Phoenix (2008) observes that respondents only have so many permissible stories to tell and that these often reflect a moral or redemptive positioning of the narrator – as they reframe personal messiness. For Scott (1996) these seeming problems concerning the credibility or authenticity of the interviewee are simply how the narrative self works reconstituting “...*itself at different moments and, more importantly, reconstitutes reality, both past and future.*” (1996: 66).

Kvale and Brinkman (2009) highlight a number of ethical issues that can arise in the course of interview-based inquiries, and draw attention to the potential stresses that may surface for the interviewee. As they note, the illuminating processes of interviews may be empowering and enabling but they also have the potential to challenge self-understanding and self-concept. I could not know in advance the

vulnerabilities of prospective participants but I needed to be alert to them. Although the interviews were not intended to be therapeutic ethically it was my responsibility to take note of and work with the emotional content of them. Chapters five, six, seven and eight all illustrate that some vulnerabilities did emerge and ultimately contributed to the delineation of the conflicted and disaffected academic. This is not just a matter of analysis though. In six of the actual interviews the participants and I had to negotiate quite carefully for the presented self to be 'ok' by the end of the interview.

Contexts : Institutions

In order to recruit participants to the study it was necessary to approach a number of higher education institutions. From the outset the study was designed to include my own institution – UniversityWide – as it was where tensions in the conceptualisations and practice of being an academic were first observed. Given this, for me, locating part of the study in my own institution was a matter of ethical attentiveness. However, as explained in chapter one, in order to understand what was happening in the particularities of my own environment I wanted to explore how typical the processes and practices of identity-making and positioning adopted by my academic colleagues were of a wider constituency.

While this strategy was intended to extend the voice of academic identity-making, there was also an intention to explore whether and how different social worlds (structures) enable or constrain individual (agentic) identity projects. In the original

research design this interest arose out of the literature that drew out apparent differences in the academic experience across the sector (see for example: Clegg, 2008; Henkel, 2000). In particular the analysis that, historically, institutional type has determined the weighting of teaching and research in an organisation, the two enterprises primarily regarded as constituting the core of an academic identity. Although more recent inquiry and debate – as noted in chapter two – suggests that ‘the core’ of academic identity is no longer as fixed by these axis points, and that identity is under negotiation across all sectorial environments. Nonetheless, it was anticipated that institutional prioritisations in terms of teaching and research were likely to determine responsibilities and affect roles and relationships, and thereby identity-making possibilities and realisations.

Rather than take a random, all-inclusive approach I decided to contact only two other organisations with the intention to compare like-with-like – ie: academics from the two post-92 institutions - and to incorporate cases from the potentially contrasting environment of the pre-92 institution. As the decision was to contain the number of contributing institutions there was one other practical criterion for inclusion - that an institution hosted *both* nursing and social work studies. It was not of concern as to whether the subject areas were co-located (for example, in a faculty, school or department). Although not used as inclusion-exclusion criteria there was an expectation that factors such as: multi-site campuses, classroom and/or virtual provision, and geographical reach would be of contextual relevance to the analysis of identity formation.

The three institutions included in the study are, as originally planned: two post-92 institutes, my own (UniversityWide) and another (UniversityAffiliate); and (UniversityCity), a pre-92 university. UniversityAffiliate was chosen as a study site because of some surface similarities with UniversityWide, such as: 1992 incorporation as a university; multiple campuses albeit within a contained geographical area; a primary focus on student learning and success in publicity material; formal inter-institutional partnerships, centred on course delivery, with other educational providers including those overseas; proximity to a major urban centre; some similarities in league table rankings both by institution and subject. UniversityCity was primarily approached on the basis of its exceptional league table ranking as an institution and in terms of the subject ratings for social work and nursing courses. Although rankings were broadly used to identify study sites it is of note that institutional fortunes do waver: during the course of this research all three universities have dropped their positioning in the leagues and – with the exception of social work at UniversityAffiliate - specific subject rankings.

UniversityWide accommodates the largest number of students overall but at the faculty level student numbers equalise – at c.5, 500 - across the three institutions. Staffing numbers are more difficult to ascertain (and such data gathering was not part of the research design) but it is clearly evident that the schools-departments of nursing employ significantly more academics than those of social work. All three institutions have made significant investments to upgrade and/or extend their campus environments.

Each of the universities are organised through a Faculty structure, however what constitutes a faculty varies from institution to institution. The configurations at UniversityWide and UniversityAffiliate co-locate social work and nurse education provision, at UniversityCity these professional-disciplines are situated in different faculties. Faculties are managed and organised around departments or schools, at UniversityAffiliate and UniversityCity these are based around cognate subject areas or professional-disciplinary communities – although school and departmental names are not always reflective of this. The faculties all provide undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing professional development (cpd) education for all of the professions within their portfolio, which is accredited by various professional and regulatory bodies. Each of the faculties host research centres and institutes separate from but alongside of their educational provision.

It transpired that the interviews were undertaken during periods of significant organisational change at all three study sites. At UniversityWide a prolonged Voluntary Severance Scheme (VSS) was underway with members of the faculty variously making decisions about future employment, contemplating the departure of colleagues and the potential consequences of significantly different working conditions. As an insider-researcher I was acutely aware of this organisational disturbance and within months of the interviews four participants, all women, left the university under the severance scheme. At the time of the interviews – with one exception – these departures were not anticipated, nor disclosed by the interviewees. Through discussions with the Head of Nursing, and from some of the material provided by the nurse academic interviewed, I became aware of a major organisational restructuring at UniversityAffiliate. The experience was

described as 'demoralising' and is thought to have affected participant recruitment at UniversityAffiliate. Part of the interview with one of the nurse educators at UniversityCity also implied recent organisational and personnel changes, as did the recent appointment of the three academics interviewed there.

As suggested in the preceding paragraph and as will be seen in the following section, at a practical level the very particularised nature of the participant sample group precluded the possibility of undertaking any form of valid institutional comparison. Effectively, there were not enough participants from each research site to draw any reliable comparisons *between institutions* that might illuminate the influence of strategic structural forms and practices on individual and collective identity-making. Also, as noted in chapter one and evident in the analytical chapters that follow, in the actual interviews participants did not focus on the specific affordances and constraints of their institutions in terms of institutional status or practices. Rather they discussed the enablements and constraints of their context in very local, personalised terms – even where the discussion centred on the pressure of workloads, the capacity for research, the anticipation of redundancy and the prospect of an academic career. Participants could and did position themselves in relation to the all-embracing concept of 'academia' but few specifically located themselves in relation to the macro-world of the employing university, even when invited to do so. Hence the data collected and available for analysis was about the individual rather than the institution, which became incidental to the focus on profession, practice and academia.

The Case Study : Participants

In order to create a comparative case study the intention was to conduct semi-structured interviews with up to 30 participants, with equal representation from among nurse and social worker educators. Stake (2008) is concerned with the purposiveness of a sample and its variety, rather than representativeness and so he does not make recommendations regarding preferred sample size. In contrast Yin (2009) advises collecting data from 20 – 30 study respondents or more. The difference arises from Yin's intention to replicate findings across cases whereas Stake's primary focus is on particularities and what can be learnt from cases irrespective of replicability or universalising analyses. In this study determining a preferred sample size was aimed at securing an equity of voice from among the two occupational groups and capturing a variety of voices within and across the two disciplinary groups. The intention was to enhance the variety of voice in the sample group further by recruiting participants from three different higher education institutions.

As the study arose specifically out of what appeared to be a conflicted relationship between the primary professional-practitioner identities of nurse and social worker educators and their academic identities it was deemed necessary to define the already purposive sample further. Given this, participation in the study was confined only to those who held a professional qualification that entitled them to register with a regulatory or professional body as a nurse or social worker. In the design of the study this was not thought to be a significant exclusion criteria among academics in schools or departments of nursing, as the majority were presumed

to be professionally qualified or eligible for registration. It was expected however, that this exclusionary criteria would make securing the social work sample more challenging as such academic teams are often small and include academics other than qualified social workers (Mills, 2010). From within nurse education teams the original plan was to secure equity of representation from what were the three specialist branches of nursing – mental health, child and adult nursing – to account for any particular nuances in identity projects. These were very demanding case criteria and it was expected that as the study evolved some of the strictures would have to be reconsidered.

A further sample filter or case boundary generated out of the research literature around social worker and nurse identities. This research has tended, for example, to focus on: more elite respondents such as professors (Lyons, 1999); the status of academics and the discipline within higher education institutions (Findlow, 2012; McNamara, 2009 & 2008; Carr 2007 & 2008; Rolfe and Gardiner, 2006; Green, 2006); the capacity of professional-educators to manage the competing demands of the academic and practice fields (Murray and Aymer, 2009). While all of these studies have variously positioned the academics and discipline within the academy and in relation to practice, few have engaged with *how* mainstream nurse and social worker educators negotiate their identities in this complex context. Hence this study determined to recruit respondents from the primary mass of the academic body - that is lecturers and senior lecturers - to explore how they negotiate their academic identities.

As illustrated in Table 1, ultimately nineteen participants were recruited to the study (n=9 nurse educators, n=10 social worker educators) from the three higher education institutions described previously. Although, as a case study, ‘representativeness’ is not a primary concern, the data is evenly balanced in terms of individual ‘cases’ – ie: the number of nurse and social worker academic participants. The degree of interpersonal knowledge brought into the interviews is also balanced in that whilst half of the respondents were known to me, half were not. However, (with the exception of UniversityWide) representation is imbalanced within and across institutions and so, as already noted, institutional context is a background rather than predominant feature of the study. Nonetheless, as the analysis makes clear, although the specificity of particular institutions *per se* is not foregrounded in individual’s identification processes and identity-making, local practices in faculties and schools do have a significant impact.

Table 1 : Case Study Participants by Institution and Professional-Discipline				
	UniversityWide	UniversityAffiliate	UniversityCity	Totals
Social worker Academics	5	5	0	10
Nurse Academics	5	1	3	9
				19

Before commencing the study ethical approval was secured from the sponsoring agency (ie: the Institute of Education) and the Research and Ethics Panels at each of the study sites. Once secured letters of invitation, information and consent

(appendices 1, 2 and 3) were sent to prospective participants via identified gatekeepers. I did not know the gatekeepers at UniversityAffiliate or UniversityCity and information about the study was initially forwarded to them through the respective ethics committees. At my own institution - UniversityWide - I had blanket permission from the Dean to interview academic personnel, I did not have to go through a secondary layer of permissions from Heads of Departments nor use them to access colleagues. These various access routes to potential participants – along with respective institutional circumstances - affected participation rates in the study and influenced who actually participated:

- **UniversityWide** : at my own institution I knew the social work team and as a colleague was familiar with many of the nurse academics. In wanting to include the social work team I could not avoid my organisational ‘insider’ status but in seeking participation I endeavoured to apply the broad criteria offered by Stake (2008; 1995) to identify specific cases: availability, typicality, uniqueness. Five members of the team participated: two well-established academics from a campus other than my own; two newcomers to the team, one of whom had been an academic elsewhere and the other, although employed in the university, only recently appointed as an academic; and one team member volunteered.

Again, by virtue of the fact that I was employed by the same organisation I was also – at a level - an ‘insider’ and generally known to the nurse educators at UniversityWide. However, there was far less degree of familiarity with these potential participants. With two exceptions the five

nurse educators included in the study all volunteered to participate, and this reflected their personal-professional interest in their own academic identities. Two participants were recruited towards the end of the fieldwork and were approached because they represented disciplinary branches of nursing not otherwise well-represented in the study. This was an effort to meet the parameters of the original research design.

Although there is often concern over ‘insider’ research and its validity, in this instance the power of being an insider – and so being known to people – made a significant, practical difference in actually securing participants. Colleagues were willing to participate and volunteered to do so. Recruiting participants at a distance and through the offices of gatekeepers was more problematic and this has affected the institutional balance of the study. Consequently, as noted, specific institutional contexts are background rather than a predominant feature of the research.

- **UniversityAffiliate** : I was unknown at this university and approval for the study was conferred through an institutional panel. I then approached the respective Heads of Nursing and Social Work who variously cascaded the Participant Information and Consent forms to their teams. Within the complex organisation of the nursing school there was a two tier process with the invitation to participate processed through a secondary level of management, and I did not have direct access to potential participants. Although very supportive and facilitative the Head of Nursing was not optimistic that I would secure the preferred sample due to recently implemented and far-reaching reorganisations. This had, apparently,

resulted in very poor levels of morale among the academics remaining in post, some of whom had been redeployed and demoted. This prediction proved to be the case and only one nurse academic responded to the invitation.

Recruitment of social work academics was significantly more successful and the study includes five such respondents from this school. Unlike their colleagues in nursing, the social work academics had not been similarly subject to reorganisation. Although speculative, it is also possible that the more successful recruitment of social work academics might be accounted for by: i) the faculty ethics panel being chaired by a member of the social work team; ii) the personal-professional engagement and commitment of the head of school as a social work academic; and iii) the smaller size of the social work team compared to the large and diverse body of the nursing school.

In total six participants were recruited from UniversityAffiliate: five social worker academics and one nurse academic. Having been made aware of the personnel situation in the school of nursing – post ethics approval - I was disinclined to engage in an aggressive pursuit of the research in this academic community. The Head of Nursing had invited me to make further contact if I had difficulties but I did not want participation under duress. Any such participation did not seem to me to be in the spirit of qualitative inquiry or informed consent.

➤ **UniversityCity** : again I was unknown at this university and formal approval was conferred through an institutional panel, subsequent to this I approached directly the respective Heads of Nursing and Social Work to access their staff teams. As at UniversityAffiliate, at this institution the Head of Nursing was very supportive and facilitative of the study to the extent that three members of relatively new staff were directly asked to respond to the invitation to participate. This process only became apparent to me as these three colleagues contacted me and put themselves forward for interview. At this stage it was too late for me to take issue with the process but I did ensure – by email and at the beginning of the interview process - that these respondents were willing to participate of their own volition. One other member of the school also came forward but the actual interview was never conducted.

No social worker participants were recruited from this institution. As this is an elite institution, and I personally have a professional reputation to protect, I contacted the Head of Social Work prior to submitting an ethics application to the governance panel. This was to screen the viability of undertaking the research at this site. The advice was to be aware of pressures on staff time due to teaching responsibilities in term time and research commitments in vacation periods. It was clear from later email correspondence that the Head of School did circulate the invitation and information. However, only one person – who did not think themselves eligible, given they were about to retire – responded.

The study includes the three nurse academics from UniversityCity, but no social worker respondents. Negotiating the gatekeepers at this institution became quite complex, colleagues were cooperative but the momentum of the engagement was slowed down as paperwork filtered through two levels of senior academic managers. I am also conscious that I became aware - as an 'insider' researcher in respect of being a social worker academic myself – that I was anxious of my own professional exposure in this particular environment. In terms of research process, where the literature usually locates power with the researcher (eg: Kvale and Brinkman, 2009) this was an unexpected revelation.

The Interviews

As planned the inquiry was undertaken through a series of semi-structured interviews in which, through an exploration of academic 'lifeworlds,' myself and interviewees did co-construct knowledge about being a social worker or nurse educator (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009). Although I wanted to ensure that the interviews were 'open' - and not *in situ* dominated by my subjectivity, assumptions and prejudices - I did need to focus them in accordance with purposes of the study. Hence I devised and used a general topic guide (appendix 4) to shape the conversation. The topic guide was designed around thematic features derived from the literature and is essentially an iteration of the original. The questions or topics were posed at a loose general level intended to invite participants to reflect upon and share their experience, rather than to interrogate them. Nonetheless, whilst also advocating their use, Scott (1996) and Kvale and Brinkman (2009)

describe such tools as symbolic of the asymmetrical distribution of power in the interview – where the interviewer sets the agenda, both in terms of content and time. However, as already noted, in accordance with Gibson (2010) this seems to me an ethical consideration: participants have to know what the interview is about in order to participate effectively and in their own best interests.

The efficacy and usability of the topic guide was established in the course of the first four interviews conducted at UniversityWide where, as part of the post-interview debrief, I asked participants for feedback on the ‘sense’ of the interview for themselves. I also asked them if there were any aspects of the inquiry theme that seemed to be missing. This can be seen as a first stage of an iterative interview practice in which, as Gibson (2010: 59) advises, “... *it should be expected that assumptions that inform the production of questions are themselves under investigation and may well turn out to require modification.*”. One of these participants suggested asking whether individuals would undertake the same career journey again - this was subsequently used to conclude all of the remaining interviews.

I did not directly ask any other respondents for feedback on the interview and its process, although I did, over time, become more conscious of those questions that worked well and those that did not. Kvale and Brinkman (2009) actually describe this as a potential dilemma in qualitative interviewing whereby “... *the questioning may continually improve.*” (2009: 112). This was not a dilemma I struggled with – each interview was so particular to itself that the topic guide had to be used intuitively and organically as I tried to be led by the participant’s contributions.

Consequently, although all of the items of the topic guide were addressed this was achieved differently across the interviews. I had sent the topic guide to all participants – along with the information and consent sheets – and at the outset of each interview it was apparent it had been read, particularly where one or two individuals were more concerned than me to adhere to the script of the guide. Effectively, participants had thought about their contribution to the study although generally the fluidity of the interview talk, which emerged as individuals expanded on their ideas and thoughts or as I asked clarifying and prompting questions, generated spontaneity and contradiction.

With regard to the topic guide one participant commented on how he thought the interview was going to be “*boring*” because the questions seemed repetitive. His experience of the actual interview however, as described after the event, was that it required him to think about himself and his positioning through a number of iterations. In this way it served its purpose as i) a reflective tool that, at different points in the interview, enabled individuals to confirm particular commitments and/or prevaricate over others; and ii) as a verification tool that allowed me – both in the interview and the later analysis – to clarify and check the seeming veracity and consistency of the interviewee’s account and equally to identify seeming contradictions and inconsistencies.

At the beginning of each interview, as previously discussed, I introduced the study and its rationale, confirmed consents and collected a biographical questionnaire (appendix 5) that I had requested be completed. The latter was simply to collect some basic demographic information along with some professional network data

that I hoped would inform the analysis - an overview of this data is presented in chapter four. With permission all of the interviews were digitally recorded and at the end of each interview participants were invited to debrief. As noted earlier, in a few instances this was quite important where participants became concerned about their presentation of self in the interviews and the degree of negativity they had expressed. Others used the debrief to engage me in a conversation - about the respective professions or academia – a degree of mutuality that had not been so available in the formality of the interview. The majority of participants commented on how much they had enjoyed talking to me about their academic life and reflected that they had found the interview personally enlightening. In this study there were no unexpected post-interview revelations.

The average length of each interview was an hour although a couple of them ran to an hour and a half, these were exceptions. Generally I tried not to interrupt interviewees except where narratives lost direction, and in these instances I intervened to recap and confirm or clarify content and then pose the next question. Marshalling the directional flow of the interview was more difficult than I had envisioned: it is difficult to privilege the voice of the participant whilst holding the specific demands of the research in mind and, at the same time, balancing the use of one's own knowledge and perspective to maintain interlocutory momentum without taking over control of the content of the interview.

The concept of asymmetrical power differentials in the interview assumes that the interviewee is a neutral, passive participant. While indeed the interviewer is the precipitating force behind the interview all participants have motivations for

voluntarily engaging in the inquiry. In choosing to participate respondents do exercise their own power. However manifested the interviewee's power – as expressed through their motivations – shapes the content and outcomes of an inquiry. Through the course of the interviews a variety of motivations became apparent among the participants:

- At UniversityWide some participated because they knew me and wanted to support the project. One respondent was personally interested in her own experience of professional identity-negotiation and the interview offered her the opportunity to share and explore that experience, this was a particularly pro-active engagement with the study;
- At UniversityAffiliate another of the participants was deeply engaged with her own identity-journey and that of her students, this generally made the study of interest to her. She had also just undertaken an extended dissertation and so was empathic to me as a fellow-researcher. A similar empathy was expressed by her colleague who had recently embarked on a doctoral study and was broadly interested in concepts of social identity in her own work. So a degree of mutuality and support – beyond the experience of being academics, or social workers, or nurses – was very generously brought into the interview by these respondents;
- In another instance, although not explicit at the outset, it became increasingly apparent that a respondent at UniversityAffiliate was – among other things - using the interview as reflective space to think about a pending life change. This individual was not necessarily alone. Given some aspects of the institutional contexts and knowing 'what happened next' for some of

the respondents, the interviews may well have been part of decision-making processes for a number of the participants. From my perspective this is an important observation, as there were points post-interview when – despite the espoused philosophical underpinnings discussed elsewhere in this chapter - I regarded some of the interviewees as ‘unreliable witnesses’ and questioned the ‘authenticity’ of their accounts. Describing and interpreting these particular interviews as possibly part of a ‘decision-making process’ is a more constructive framing of them;

- In two other interviews – at UniversityWide and UniversityAffiliate - respectively – it became evident that the respondents were more interested to discuss the identity and future of the profession than necessarily their own personal positioning and presentation. Both were departmental/school managers with – arguably – internally and externally directed strategic views of, and/or concerns for social work education. I had not originally planned to interview managers but was disinclined to exclude them, most particularly as the artificial constraints of the inclusion/exclusion criteria for participation did not easily overlay on different institutional organisational realities (ie: the way people were actually deployed in multiple roles).

It is the interview data in all of its complexity – as understood both within and outwith institutional contexts – that underpins the analytical chapters that follow.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the research design and methods used to inquire into the academic identity-making processes of educators in social work and nursing. In the interests of transparency participant and institutional sampling is discussed at some length, particularly with regard to the inclusion of my home institution – UniversityWide. The discussion of semi-structured interviews and their analysis emphasises the complex nature of qualitative interview inquiry and its attendant ethical concerns. The particularised insights of interpretive qualitative research, rather than generalisability, are foregrounded – although shared contexts and meaning structures are argued to afford some generalisability. Ethical considerations are seen to include ensuring the ‘worthwhileness’ of the study, being aware of one’s positionality in the research setting, and taking appropriate emotional care of interviewees. The exploration of ethics incorporates a focus on the range of power relations inherent in interview inquiries, as they arise in both the ‘home’ institution and in the external world. In this discussion research site *per se* and familiarity with research participants is less relevant than the biographies and motivations of individuals. The chapter concludes with an overview of the actual interview process undertaken in the study and highlights again the subjectivities and power dynamics at work in qualitative interviewing. This is deemed contextually important in understanding the analyses that follow.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Theorisation

Introduction

In the first instance, based on a descriptive analysis of the biographical questionnaire, this chapter provides a contextual overview of 'who' the research participants 'are'. This allows for a demographic framing of the participant group in terms of, for example: gender, age, length of academic career. It also explores the prevalence of academic practices among the participant group, such as: external examiner roles and engagement in scholarly activities. This presents an initial thumbnail sketch of the general academic characteristics of the participants. As will be seen, this biographical material primarily serves as the context rather than the substance of the study.

Having established the biographical detail the chapter describes the analysis of the nineteen qualitative interviews, illustrating how the data was coded, thematicised and the identity positions or types – discussed in chapter eight - derived. The challenge has been to maintain the integrity of the highly individual stories while at the same time determining what the stories highlight collectively about the experience of being a nurse and/or social worker academic in the university. Consequently – in re-visiting the interviews - the analysis draws on the identity literature that theorises the individual and the collective in a dynamic process of identity-making. In so doing, as Kole and de Ruyter (2009) posit, individual and

collective professional identities (albeit as nurse, social worker, and/or academic) are seen as implicated in each other and the challenge in the analytical process is mitigated.

Demographics and Academic Characteristics : The Participants Revisited

Who are the Participants? Demographics

The demographics presented in Table 2 are based on a simple numerical counting of information from the completed biographical questionnaire, supplemented with commentary taken from the actual interviews. Participant compliance with the request to complete the questionnaire was variable and it is also evident from the responses that information provided was partial as some information was incomplete. Nonetheless, at the first level of analysis – gender, ethnicity and age - the demographics of the participants remain relatively unchanged since Lyons' 1997 survey of social work academics: the majority are white and are predominantly between 40-60 years of age.

As, on the whole, participants volunteered themselves for the study no socio-structural filters (eg: gender, ethnicity, sexuality) were applied in the recruitment of respondents. In this sense the distribution of gender and ethnicity is random and Table 2 reinforces that both social work and nursing remain highly feminised occupational domains (Lyons, 1999; Simpson and Simpson, 1969). Among the five male respondents three were from the social work domain and two from the

nursing domain; the fourteen female respondents represent an even distribution between the fields of social work and nursing.

Table 2 : Participant Demographics						
Sex	Male NA	Male SWA	Female NA	Female SWA	Male Total	Female Total
	2	3	7	7	5	14
Ethnicity	White British	White Other	UK Black African Caribbean	Undisclosed		
	8	1	1	9		
Age	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Undisclosed	
	1	3	7	4	4	
Years Employed in HE	1-3yrs	4-5yrs	6-10yrs	11-15yrs	15yrs +	Undisclosed
	4	0	4	4	3	4
Length of time in current post	1-3yrs	4-5yrs	6-10yrs	11-15yrs	15yrs +	Undisclosed
No. of HEIs worked in	1	2	3	3 +	Undisclosed	
	15	0	1		3	

Key :

NA = Nurse Academic

SWA = Social Work Academic

As noted, the majority of respondents were aged 45+, only one respondent was under the age of 35. The nurse academics were younger than the social work academics with four of them being under the age of 45 and only one of them over 55 years of age. The majority of those interviewed were between the ages of 45-55 and they can be seen as the 'midlife career academics' described by Clarke et al (2013). Clarke and her colleagues argue that this age group constitutes the largest demographic in academia generally and, drawing on the work of Hall, suggest that it is a time of "...*career maintenance, growth or stagnation...*", where 'growth' is the least likely trajectory (2013: 14–17).

At least half of the respondents had been employed in Higher Education (HE) for six years or more, with the majority having been employed for over ten years. Again, three out of the four respondents who did not directly discuss the length of time they had been in higher education were actually long-established in the university setting (10+ years). Generally three data items come together: there is a congruity between length of time of general employment in HE, length of time in post and the number of universities in which individuals have worked. Essentially, the majority had been employed in HE for over ten years, had occupied their current post for a similar length of time and, with one exception, all respondents had worked in the same institution over that period of time. Overall, therefore, as well as possibly being understood as mid-career academics, the research participants might also be described as 'long-established' academics, and regarded as an ageing group. This description – mid-career, long-established, ageing - holds true for another of the participants who had a career that

accommodated a number of institutional, geographical and occupational moves – both lateral and vertical.

Only four of the respondents could truly be described as new recruits to HE; two of whom had just completed a full academic year in employment, and two who had completed two academic years in the university and recently secured further renewals of fixed-term contracts. All three new appointees at UniversityCity were on fixed-term contracts, one respondent at UniversityAffiliate was also on a fixed term contract - which was not to be renewed due to resourcing constraints. Finally, in terms of employment contracts, only two respondents were part-time faculty with one respondent preparing to move into part-time employment in the next academic year.

Respondents described their careers and the limitations and advantages of institutional longevity in a number of ways. The biographic data and interviews together indicate that the majority of interviewees held a range of academic duties and responsibilities (eg: as module leaders, educational link tutors/lecturers into practice settings, course leaders, subject specialists, personal tutors, board and committee members). The interviews indicated that such responsibilities and duties ebbed and flowed, with people losing as well as gaining status and expertise over time. In many instances status was linked to organisational priorities, workload configuration and allocation - rather than disciplinary status and expertise – and so can be seen as dependent on institutional vicissitudes. Four participants, for example, had actually lost roles and responsibilities as a consequence of organisational and curricula changes. In two instances organisational change had

relocated individuals in a departmental team that symbolically (ie: by name) did not reflect their disciplinary or practice expertise, this was coupled with a curriculum change that did not require them to teach from their disciplinary-practice expertise. Another of the interviewees seemed to suggest that he had almost been written-out of the curriculum. This professional diminution appeared to be consequent to the effect of wider structural forces, effectively local and regional market demand for particular graduate/postgraduate skills sets.

Nonetheless, there were also examples of those who, over the time of their employment and/or career in the same institution, had gone through significant transitions in terms of occupational role and status, moving into positions of local and institutional leadership. At the point of interview four respondents had recently and variously moved into: a faculty-wide role; a school-wide role; a deputy head of department position; and a headship. The study had originally only intended to include participants employed as senior lecturers but these four respondents were 'caught' at a moment of transition brought about by significant organisational change. In many respects their success appeared to be predicated on maximising moments of opportunity, their professional-bureaucratic-administrative skill set (acquired over time) and internal reputation rather than academic credentials and prowess, *per se*. In many respects, even in its disciplinary homogeneity and institutional stability, the participant group reflects the ladder career of academics as discussed by Strike (2010).

Who are the Participants? Academic Characteristics

Again, the information presented here is based on both the completed biographical questionnaires and the interviews. Only qualifications - as clearly measurable features - are presented in tabular form, while the outcomes from other questionnaire items are described and discussed. The relationship between professional-disciplinary knowledge and experience, teaching and research is not addressed in this section. The relationships between these factors emerge more clearly and discursively in chapters six and eight.

All of the interviewees were professionally qualified and registered with the respective regulatory or professional body. Given the relatively recent arrival of these professional-disciplines in the academy it cannot be assumed that professional qualifications necessarily correlate with higher academic qualifications. Table 3 illustrates the academic qualification array among the participants, the certification status of only two participants (n=1 nurse academic, n=1 social worker academic) was unknown. The table does not account for the seven participants undertaking further study, with four (n=3 nurse academics, n=1 social worker academic) enrolled on masters degrees and three (n=1 nurse academic, n=2 social worker academics) on doctoral programmes.

The Diplomas in Higher Education (DipHE) held by the nurse respondents do correspond to professional qualifications, only one of the social work respondents described her professional qualification in academic terms – as a postgraduate certificate. The majority of the participant group were degree-holders, from the

data collected it cannot be determined whether or not the remaining four participants have undergraduate degrees, although this might be assumed. Including those enrolled on masters programmes more than half of the participants held masters degrees; in nine instances these degrees were MA awards in 'teaching and learning' – that is, higher degrees with a pedagogical rather than disciplinary focus. This focus on pedagogy can be seen to reflect three aspects of the institutional project: i) to establish and improve the teaching quality of the academic body, in line with a general trend in UK HE to this effect (Fanghanel, 2013); ii) the socialisation of the professional HE educator (Bentall, 2014); iii) the academisation of the professional-educator. The apparent academisation of this group of educators -along with the low number of doctorate holders among the participants – reinforces the analysis, and concern, in the wider literature about the academic status of these professional educators and their disciplines. Where the postgraduate degree appears to serve as an academic training course, the interviews indicate that doctoral studies reconnect participants with their professional-disciplinary interests. Including the three doctoral students nearly half of the group (n=8) had engaged with this level of academic endeavour, and the majority of these were the social work academics. Consequently, few of the participants interviewed – as yet – reflect Eraut's (1994) modelling of the professional-educator emerging out of, and shaping the professional-discipline.

Table 3 : Academic Qualifications									
DipHE		BSc/BA		PGCHE		MA/MSc		PhD	
NA	SWA	NA	SWA	NA	SWA	NA	SWA	NA	SWA
3	-	8	7	3	-	2	7	2	3
3		15		3		9		5	

There was little evidence from the questionnaire that respondents were particularly engaged or involved in the wider institutional community or professional-disciplinary communities beyond the institution. Evidence of such engagements did, however, surface in the interviews. Overall, nine participants presented as being involved in academic or professional-disciplinary networks specifically. Of the six people who responded to the question about membership of internal groups only four were involved in institutional groups. For two participants these memberships were consequent to their role obligations. For the other two participants memberships were voluntary: one had joined a local research network that was clearly correspondent with her professional-disciplinary expertise; the memberships of the other participant could be seen as professionally strategic, concerned as they were with the broader business of the organisation rather than the pursuit of professional-disciplinary interests. In terms of external memberships respondents – in the questionnaire and in interviews – noted their memberships of professional and regulatory bodies such as the NMC, RCN, TCSW and the GSCC (at the time of the interviews social work registration was on the cusp of transferring

to the Health and Care Professions Council). Only three participants claimed affiliation and involvement with independent professional-disciplinary bodies concerned with knowledge creation, enhancement and dissemination. It may be particular to this group of participants but the seemingly general lack of internal and external memberships-engagements does position them as relatively isolated and/or very locally-focussed.

This sense of academic and professional-disciplinary isolation is reinforced where only four participants identified as being external examiners and three as peer reviewers for academic journals. There was no evident correlation between engagement in these activities, academic qualification, professional and/or institutional status. Hence engagement – or not – appears to be a matter of personal interest, choice and direction; it also appears to be random or circumstantial. That is, in only two biographies is there the trace of conscious, strategic academic identity-making in terms of, for example, the acquisition of a doctorate, involvement in institutional networks, external examiner roles and peer review. All other participants undertook one or more academic activities but few embraced a defining range of academic characteristics. In the course of the interviews there was little discussion as to how any of these academic activities expressed or enhanced individual's sense of academic identity. Generally, it seemed, where people did engage with them, they were regarded as functional role-driven activities or strategic engagements directed towards institutional role and position enhancement. As such they can be seen as means by which to establish and maintain occupational identity rather than academic identity *per se*.

The criticality of research, its matter and meaning are discussed in a range of papers edited by Barnett (2005). The papers illustrate that the relationship between research, individuals, their teaching and research practices and institutions are complex and variable. Nonetheless, however research is conceived, located and practised it is seen as central component of academic life both in the individual and institutional sphere. Yet as chapter one highlighted, and as Eraut (1994) discusses generally in terms of the professions, the place and practice of research is seen to be a vexed matter in the professional-disciplines of social work and nursing. These complications appear to be borne out in the questionnaire and interview data where four participants (n=1 nurse academic, n=3 social worker academics) identified that they had been included in their institutional Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) submissions, and where only one social work participant anticipated being included in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) submission for their institution. Brown (2014) identifies and questions the dominance, professional insularity and limitations of the REF – particularly with regard to professional-practice knowledge – noting as well that it may be antithetical to “...*individual expectations and aspirations.*” (2014: 17).

Although the questionnaire did not inquire into scholarship through publication six participants did discuss their published work or their writing-in-progress. Irrespective of its scholarly status – ie: publication in peer reviewed journal, professional periodical or book chapter – these participants saw their writing as a marker of their academic-being.

Understanding the Participants : The Interviews Revisited

As discussed in chapter three the qualitative interview is a complex engagement between interviewee and interviewer out of which an abstracted account of something – described by Kvale and Brinkman (2009) as ‘knowledge’ - is created. This account is not necessarily a reflection of reality as such (Bourdieu, 1992; Trowler, 2012) but, as Kvale and Brinkman (2009) discuss, more of a negotiated product. In an interview a respondent is already offering their own theorised view of themselves and their practices in the world, as they experience and/or comprehend it. This theory-making of the self continues through the *in situ* in-interview dynamic and in this study the interviewees brought at least four lifeworlds into play in their descriptions and positioning of themselves:

- i) the professional world;
- ii) the practice world;
- iii) the academic world;
- iv) the personal world.

In the interviews participants largely kept their personal worlds at the margins of what was shared, although when aspects of these worlds were directly revealed the force of their shaping power appeared evident (eg: as motivational drivers behind employment choices and trajectories, and in terms of how individuals viewed themselves in academia).

The primary focus of the interviews were the academic, practice and professional worlds of the respondents. In talking about these domains the participants were doing at least two things:

1. *making themselves and their identity through a general discourse about academic worlds:*

- practically in terms of everyday academic work (eg: teaching, research, administration);
- organisationally in terms of duties, responsibilities, teams, resources;
- ideologically in terms of the possible multiple purpose(s) of higher education;
- existentially in terms of their own being, positioning and action in academia;

2. *making themselves and their identity in a specific discourse about the domain of academic social work or nursing:*

- practically in terms of everyday academic work (eg: teaching, research, administration);
- relationally with colleagues in terms of negotiating personal and professional situational positions in teams, departments, and the university;
- relationally with students;
- relationally with the practice field mediated through: students; external professional colleagues; proximities and distances to the physical site of practice;
- politically in terms of perspectives held and intentions directed toward the practice field;

- ideologically in terms of disciplinary knowledge and its relation to the world of practice - and their position as owners, mediators and producers of this knowledge;
- ideologically with regard to the profession on whose behalf they were educating others.

As the literature theorises, it becomes apparent in the analysis that within the interviews individual identity is many things at once, it is not fixed but transient moment by moment in time, dependent – almost - on the context of the minute. The interview transcripts can be read through theoretical perspectives that allow the individual to become and change as they speak, recognising that the narrated moment of identity is transient in itself (Bucholtz & Hall, 2010). These authors take the view that “...*identity is a discursive construct that emerges in interaction.*” and that the participants occupy, abandon and adopt “...*ideological associations with both large-scale and local categories of identity.*”, and that “...*different kinds of positions typically occur simultaneously in a single interaction.*” (2010: 21). While Czarniawska (2004) also proposes that lives and identities are always in a state of making and that an interview can be a site of identity-making she nonetheless also advises that the stories we tell of ourselves are “...*well rehearsed and crafted in a legitimate logic.*” (2004: 49). Effectively, these processes operate simultaneously in an interview as participants negotiate the presentation of their coherent self.

In addition, as established in chapter three, the interview is a discursive and negotiated engagement with its enactment and outcomes shaped by the motivations, expectations, social positionings and protocols held by the interviewed

– and the interviewer. Hence respondents expressed multiple identities within the frame of the interview and their descriptions of self over time. These identities sit variously alongside each other and can be seen as the nexus of individual's identity-negotiation. It may be that the component parts of this negotiation become more explicit in narratives of the self, such as the accounts evoked through interviews.

Data Analysis

Given the situatedness and particularities of the interview process the resultant transcripts are illustrative of the inherent discrepancies and contradictions evident in qualitative interviewing noted by Braun & Clark (2006). Nonetheless, understanding the principle of contingency in identity-making and drawing on the literature that highlights multimemberships and the constant negotiation of concerns and commitments, it is possible to make sense of individual stories. These stories are told from out of the variously shared context of higher education (Trowler, 2012) and so – accepting that the individual and the collective are implicated within each other - it is possible to surface similarities, differences and thereby some degree of coherence. Coherence is also achieved through my interpretive frameworks and intentions as the researcher, that is through the “...*analytical objectives*.” (Guest et al., 2012: 65) of the study; this contains the analytical possibilities. In this instance, in accordance with the original research questions, the data was subject to an analysis concerned to:

- draw out something of both the individual and collective experience of being a social worker or nurse academic in the university;
- examine *how* and *where* in making their academic identities social worker and nurse educators located themselves within the university and *in relation* to their practice disciplines and profession;
- examine how experience, institutionally defined role-occupation and self-determined identity-positioning shaped individual and – possibly – collective academic identities.

The analysis was undertaken using a thematic approach. This is arguably the core analytical method within the field of qualitative research whereby the thematic meaning of, most usually, a data set (eg: a series of interviews) is built up through an interpretive coding of individual case items (eg: interviews) in relation to each other (Davies, 2007; Bryman, 2012; Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2012; Kvale and Brinkman, 2009; Ryan and Bernard, 2003). Boyzatis (1998) describes thematic analysis as looking for patterns “...*that at a minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon*” (1998: 4). However, this is not unproblematic, there is a concerned discourse within the literature as to what constitutes a theme and approaches to theme-making encompass the scientific orientations of Boyzatis and Guest et al., (2012) to the systematic but more flexible methods of Braun and Clark (2006). Although there seems to be a degree of apprehension in the discussions about defining what themes are, ultimately - through an interpretive engagement with the data - themes and their associated codes are constructed by the researcher, they are not embedded in the data waiting to be “*mined*” (Dowling and Brown, 2010;

Dowling, 2009; Kvale and Brinkman, 2009). That is not, as Braun and Clark (2006: 5) point out, to say that ‘anything goes’, rather identification and ‘keyness’ of a theme is significantly dependent on “... *whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question.*” (2006 : 10).

For Boyatzis (1998: 4) “*A theme maybe identified at the manifest level (directly observable in the information) or at the latent level (underlying the phenomenon).*” Similarly Braun & Clark (2006) discuss ‘semantic’ and ‘latent’ themes: semantic thematic analysis is argued to capture the surface level meaning of the data, latent thematic analysis examines the “...*underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations - ... that are theorised as shaping or informing the semantic content.*” (2006: 13). In this study the analysis discusses themes that appear evident at the manifest, observable or semantic level (for example, the prevalence of respondents’ orientations to teacher identities), and theorises the possible underlying assumptions and conceptualisations that inform this identity orientation. In this study latent analysis is the process through which the constructed individual (eg: teacher, researcher, academic, scholar) can be made evident; their agency in the constructing process examined (eg: compliance, resistance, distance, disengagement, iconoclasm, critical engagement); and the means of construction (eg: individual biography, concerns and commitments, identifications, institutional ethos and practices) theorised.

At whichever level of analysis the generation of themes may be either inductive – ie, sifted directly from the data – or deductive, ie: an interrogation of the data in terms of what is already known from theory and prior research in the field. The

analysis of the data in this study is located in the middle ground between the inductive and deductive because – as Boyatzis (1998) notes – as the researcher I cannot *make sense* of the data without reference to what I already know. My existing knowledge – whether conscious to me or not - influences the patterns and/or themes I see and the sense I make of them; as Braun & Clark (2006) comment data is never “...coded in an epistemological vacuum” (2006: 12). Ryan and Bernard (2003) discuss the interplay between inductive and *a priori* understanding in the generation of themes in qualitative data analysis and contend that the potential content of the data has to be met on its own terms, inductively. This makes sense, why otherwise conduct the investigation? Given this, from my perspective, three aspects of the analytic process become central to any claim of authority for this study:

- i) my intellectual, emotional and ethical ‘openness’ to and engagement with ‘uncomfortable’ data, for example: with information that does not ‘fit’ with existing theoretical presuppositions; respondent data that challenges my experiential and ethical expectations – for example - of ‘the good’ or ‘professional’ academic or clinical practitioner. This stance towards the data is important in counteracting the tendency to projection Boyatzis warns against (1998). Projection in this sense means hearing and reading the interview data primarily through the lens of one’s own world-view, frame of understanding or ethical stance, thereby imposing unreflexive meaning on the accounts of respondents. His warning is directed at both the novice analyst and the researcher who is overly-familiar with the phenomenon under

- inquiry (such as myself as an insider-researcher in academia). In an effort to heed his caution I worked to maintain an open orientation to the interviews, to stay as close to the original data as possible, and to include the 'expected' and the 'disruptive' in all initial coding and later thematising. In so doing I had to constantly check that both the 'expected' and the 'disruptive' were so in their own right and not merely an overlay of my interpretive shorthand or value judgements;
- ii) the explicitness of my own positioning as an insider-researcher – as a social worker academic and as a member of the same institution as half of the participant group - a position that *can only* influence my observation and identification of patterns/themes and the interpretive turn of my sense-making. This is the point that Bourdieu (1990) makes through his reflexive analysis of his own position as an insider-researcher in academia. Ultimately he argues the need for a constant alertness to this inherently subjective positioning which the researcher cannot transcend – but which can be made explicit;
 - iii) a consistent and transparent approach to interpretive decision-making within the data (ie: to coding and thematising the material), this is important in terms of the rigour of the final analysis and in order for an audience to determine the trustworthiness of the analysis (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). Maintaining consistency and transparency through an iterative process over time was a challenge as codes and themes expanded and contracted, and where descriptive language – such as 'resistance', 'distance', 'peripheral', 'academic' – was used to capture, classify and categorise meaning

units. Nonetheless, it was through the constant cross-case analysis that codes and meaning themes were fixed and the data came to make coherent sense.

Coding and Thematic Analysis

In terms of process, the analysis in this study was undertaken in accordance with the principles and practices described in Braun and Clark's (2006) 5 stage model of thematic analysis:

1. Familiarisation with the data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes

The analysis began with the very first interviews as a relatively 'free-form' coding for anything/everything within individual accounts and gradually across respondents. As the interviews were undertaken opportunistically there was not initially a systematic separation of nurse and social worker educator respondents. The data was analysed at a professional-discipline specific level at a later stage in the process. Ethically this made sense, given the study is about individuals negotiating their identities starting with the individual was deemed paramount.

Familiarisation with the Data

As recommended by the authors – and within the qualitative research literature generally - each interview was digitally recorded and transcribed. The first level of transcription was the interview in its entirety. In parallel with the transcription I made spontaneous notes on the material and, with the early interviews, I read through and made detailed meaning synopsis of them – these changed over time. As the body of interviews grew the transcription and meaning notes cross-referenced to earlier interviews, reflections and putative codes/themes. This process was informed by my experiential and professional knowledge of social work and nursing in higher education. At the same time potentially relevant literature was incorporated into the schema for reference purposes rather than definitional purposes. In this way the initial, open-coding of the data was already underway.

Generating Initial Codes and Searching for Themes

In turn each individual transcript was subject to a further detailed and active reading which formally generated the initial or 'open coding' (Braun & Clark, 2006; Ryan & Bernard, 2003) of the interview text. In this process, as advised by Braun & Clark (2003), as much of an individual interview as possible was coded and extracts of data were coded inclusively, ie: within the context of the surrounding data. So, at this point the narrative arc of the interview remained intact. Although Braun & Clark argue there is a differentiation between codes and themes in practice there is

significant overlap between these two analytic processes and it is difficult to maintain a clear distinction between them as noted by Boyatzis (1998) and Bryman (2012). It became apparent that the coding process – like the thematising process - was an interpretive, meaning-making exercise as illustrated in the query marks and tentative commentary.

As with the earlier transcript notes, the initial codes were drawn out of the data on the basis of their:

- general relevance to the study (eg: the nature of participant’s relationships with students);
- their inherent interest (eg: individual constructs of ‘the academic’);
- their prevalence (eg: teaching, legitimacies of the professional educator);
- their unexpectedness (eg: the language of love and commitment); or
- their disruptiveness (eg: conflict and/or marginalisation).

In the analysis of the later interviews I was coding within and against all that I thought to be existent within the entire data set, and this stage of the data analysis can be described in terms of Silverman’s (2010) ‘constant comparison’. As more interviews were completed and analysed codes across the entire sample increased, changed and the emphasis of some codes was reconsidered. For example, as the analysis progressed it became necessary to start to code for respondents who talked about aspects of their professional work and life in terms of ‘love’; half-way through the field work respondents started to talk very explicitly about ‘work-life balance’ and the pressures of academic time-management. A

small sub-sample of respondents were clearly disappointed, thwarted, and/or depressed with aspects of, or the entirety of their careers and it became necessary to code to accommodate their experience, views and responses.

In coding each individual interview potential cross-case (ie: interview) themes became discernible but undefined. Although many of the descriptive codes - eg: primacy of teaching, symbols of office, emotional engagement, authenticity – have remained robust through the course of the analysis, themes have been constructed through a number of nuanced iterations.

In the first iteration the individual interviews were collated within the two collective variables of occupational-identity/professional-discipline – nursing or social work. In this process singular interviews were atomised into meaning parts and similar units of meaning co-located in the effort to establish thematic categories. Emerging codes such as ‘serendipity and pragmatism’, ‘emotional engagement’, ‘reflexive life planning’ were coalesced under an overarching thematic of ‘Orientations to Academic Professional Identity’. This was one of six thematic groupings across which interviews were itemised into 38 codes. At this stage – there was still considerable ambiguity between codes and themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe this as the phase in which decisions still have to be made about the relationships between codes, themes and sub-themes, noting that items can change in status and relevance as the review of themes continues.

Reviewing Themes

This first coding and thematicisation of the data was subject to a further cycle of analysis – reviewing, as Braun and Clarke (2006) recommend, all of the coded data and attendant thematic possibilities. This produced a much more fine-grained rendition of codes (68) that had begun to coalesce into a number of (18) overlapping thematic possibilities, as illustrated in the penultimate coding-thematic map in Figure 4. Some of these themes are retained from the earlier analysis and/or have emerged reconfigured from that analysis. Although Braun & Clark (*ibid.*: 20) advise that “...*data within themes should cohere...meaningfully, while there should be clear and identifiable distinctions between themes.*”, this analysis is about a *process* and as such it is difficult to isolate data to one thematic, even for synoptic purposes. Hence, in Figure 4, the text highlighted in blue is indicative of significant sub-themes, as previously identified in the earlier configuration of the material that, at this stage, still had the potential to become substantial themes.

Given the review process, Figure 4 is designed not only to present the component parts of academic identity-making but to suggest *process*. The developing themes are grouped in a way that is suggestive of decision-making cycles over time and that surfaces the content involved in negotiating an academic identity. The first collection of codes and potential themes highlights the interplay between concerns and commitments, and reflexive life-planning in generating career trajectories - in this instance, the negotiation of an academic identity. The ‘what’ and ‘how’ of identity negotiation is represented in the accompanying collection of codes and potential themes. Bracketed here is the content of identity negotiation, with the

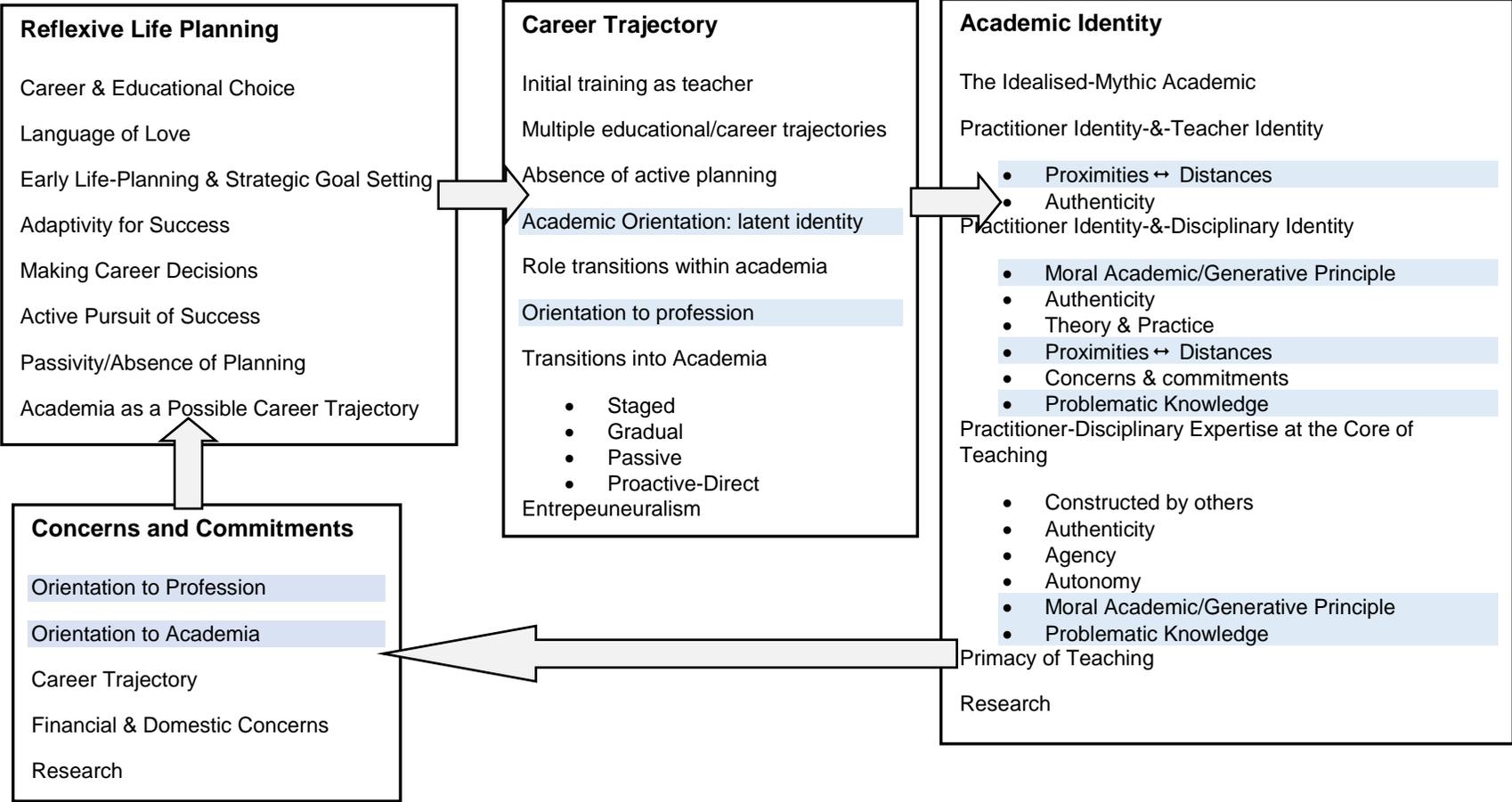
structuring properties of the university bundled into the thematic of 'constructed identities' and the agency of the individual (and collective) contained within the thematics of 'authenticity', 'negotiating identity' and 'agency'.

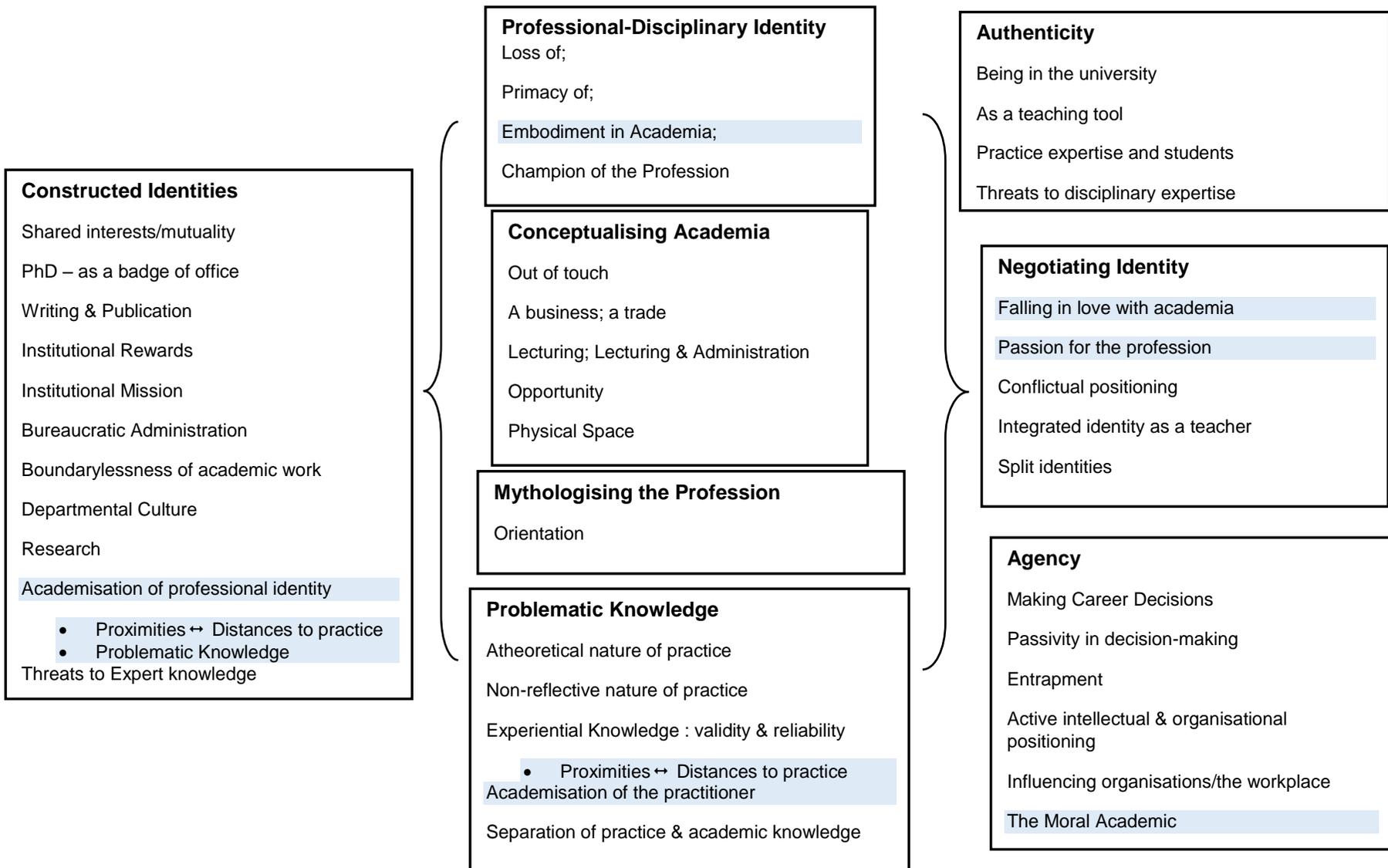
This initial formulation of the thematic map illustrates two aspects of the inductive-deductive analytical process in that:

- the major thematic categories at this point are clearly drawn from the literature that informs the study;
- most of the codes although interpretive have, as intended, remained close to the data; as such they retain a strong descriptive quality.

Although this mapping remained central to the final analysis it was reconfigured in the light of the previous less detailed iterations and on the basis of a further review of theoretical readings.

Figure 4 : Penultimate Coding-Thematic Map



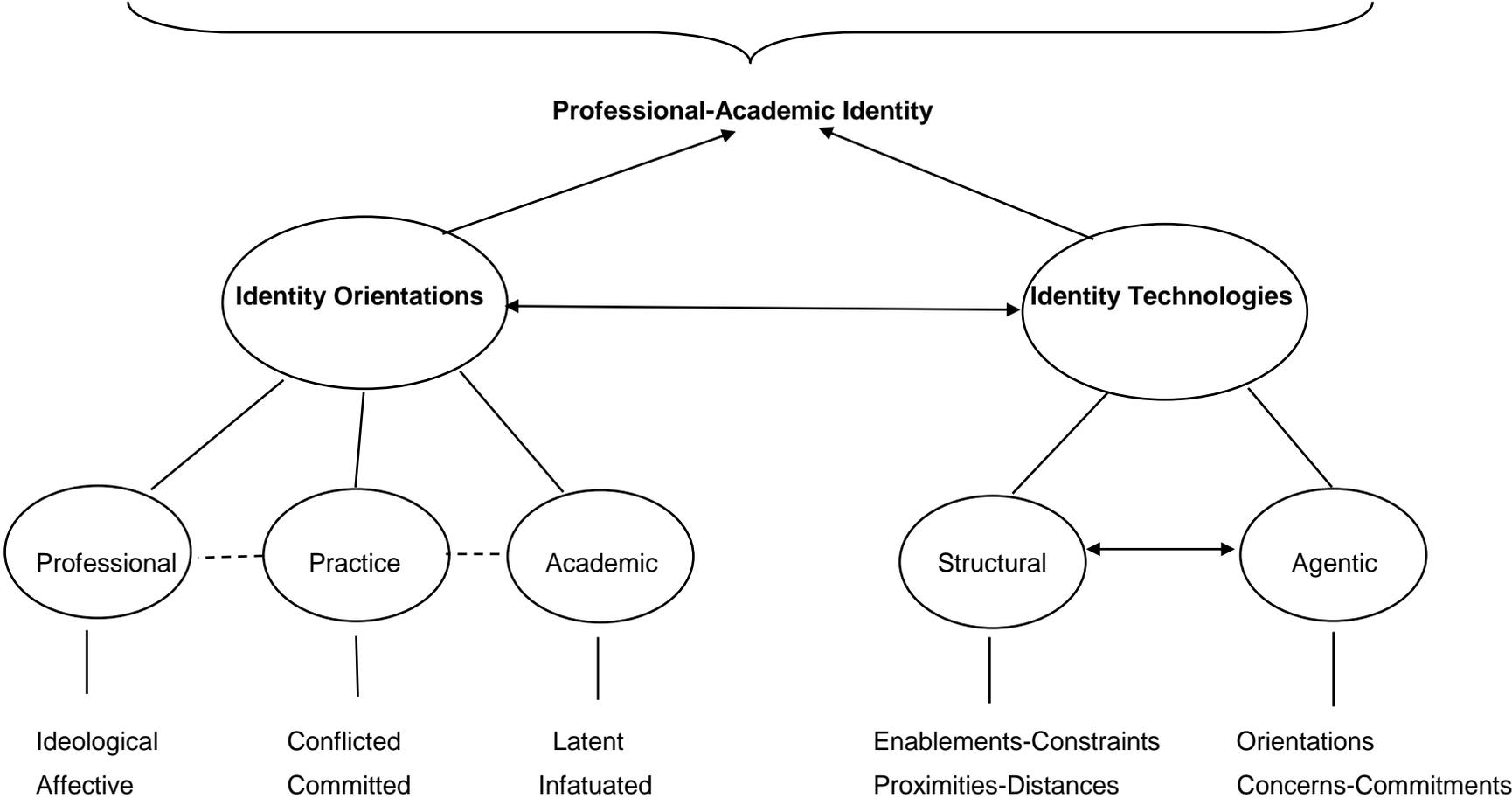


Defining and Naming Themes

The final iteration of the analysis rendered the codes and themes of identity-making into two major thematics: 'Identity Orientations' and 'Identity Technologies'. Each contain a number of sub-themes and, again, in terms of identity-making, the themes are seen as the component parts of a process, as illustrated in Figure 5. As derived from the literature, 'orientations' can be understood as the identification processes by which individuals align themselves with the three contextualising fields of practice, profession and academia. 'Technologies' can be understood as the processes through which individual's realise various identity projects from within the university. The terminology of 'technologies' is borrowed from Foucault's theorisations about 'subjectivication' and 'governmentality', as understood through the writings of Jenkins, 2008; Lawlor, 2008; and Rabinow, 1997. That is, we live within structures (such as the university, professional ideologies and/or academic disciplines) that coerce and hold us to account in various ways (for example, expecting us to comply with rule systems, role expectations and/or ideologies) through the dynamic of power (eg: through the distribution or withholding of resources, rewards, status). The degree to which we hold ourselves to such account or comply is a matter of volitional subjectivication. Effectively, if we want to belong to something we work upon ourselves – through reflexive practices – to establish and maintain our membership, thereby becoming a certain kind of person. Formulated as such in this work the thematic of identity technologies accommodates the structuring properties - ie: the 'enablements and constraints' (Archer, 2000) – of all three contextualising fields and the reflexive agency of the individual as expressed through their 'concerns and commitments' (Archer, 2000).

Figure 5 : Analytical Thematic Map – Identity Orientations and Identity Technologies

The Teacher The Integrated-Complete Academic The Moral Academic The Conflicted Academic The Disaffected Academic



The content of the thematic map – identity orientations and identity technologies – is discussed in chapters five, six and seven. The consequences of orientations and technologies are described in the five identity types or positions - the teacher, the integrated-complete academic, the moral academic, the conflicted academic and the disaffected academic – discussed in chapter eight.

As noted, Figure 5 also illustrates that *process* connects the themes in terms of identity-making. Within each domain negotiations are at work: in the domain of identity orientations individuals determine the balance of their identifications and allegiances between the professional, practice and academic fields. The interrupted line connecting these three fields indicates that there is not necessarily an easy relationship or accommodation between them. It is negotiating an alignment to the convergent but competing interests of these fields that becomes part of the individual's identity project. In contrast – within the domain of identity technologies – the structural field of the academy and the agentic interests of the individual are presented in a mutual engagement. However, this is not to suppose that the negotiation between structural and agentic interests is equally balanced.

The connection between identity orientations and identity technologies makes the thematic map a process map. The discussion in this thesis is that the two are deeply implicated in each other: the ways in which an individual balances their orientations in relation to the professional, practice and academic fields influences how they negotiate the balance between structural and agentic interests in making and living with their academic identity projects. The triple helix of identity orientations are transmuted into concerns and commitments in the specific domain

of the university where identities are negotiated in respect of institutional enablements and constraints, including the spatial and temporal proximities and distances between the academic and practice fields, and the ideological-sympathetic synergies between the profession and the academy. It is this negotiation that creates a professional-academic identity.

Conclusion

The chapter presents a demographic overview of the nurse and social worker academics who participated in the study. The data from the biographical questionnaire, as supplemented by information shared in the interviews, does not highlight any significant characteristic differences between the two professional-practice groupings, nor between institutions. The chapter details the thematic analysis conducted through a number of iterative interpretive readings of the interview material which culminated in the thematic and process map presented in Figure 5 where 'orientations' are seen to emerge that influence how individuals negotiate their positions in the academy. Once in the academy the interplay between the practical space of the university – with its attendant enablements and constraints – and the concerns and commitments of individuals further shapes identity possibilities and realisations. It is the detail of these orientations, enablements-constraints, and concerns and commitments that is explored in the following chapters.

Part III : BEING AN ACADEMIC

Chapter 5

Identity Orientations

Introduction

This chapter explores the orientations – or identifications (Jenkins, 2008; Lawlor, 2008) - that the study participants held in regard to the three fields of profession, practice and academia. In so doing it addresses the detail of the research questions concerned with how social worker and nurse educators negotiate the relationship between their primary professional identity and the development of an academic identity. The analysis and discussion here takes into account individuals' professional journey into academia and distinguishes the influences of the profession and practice experience in academic identity-making. In this way it surfaces the nuances suggested in the research questions as to how the individual sees the relationship between their social work/nurse identity and their academic identity, and how this relationship 'works'.

In the first instance the chapter considers orientations to the professional domain, then the practice domain and finally the academic field. It is purposefully structured in this way to suggest the trajectory of an identity-making process from professional allegiance and ideological motivation, to practical engagement in the workplace, to the reconfiguration and relocation of allegiance and motivation in the academic

field. Orientations towards a field - and attendant conceptualisations of the relations between the three fields - are in a state of constant negotiation as individuals evaluate the properties, affordances and constraints of each domain in making their identity claims, explaining their academic being and practice, and justifying their self-determined positioning in the academy. It is *how* individuals conceptualise relations between themselves and the three fields through time that – as illustrated in Figure 1, Chapter 1 (p.20) – forms the triple helix of their academic identity, and predisposes them to particular identity positionings or types within the academy.

Orientations

Orientations are the dispositions that individuals hold in regard to the three structural fields of profession, practice and academia informed by psychological, social, intellectual and affective engagements with the respective field. As such orientations are also an expression of the ‘concerns and commitments’ – or interests – an individual cultivates and pursues over time. Overall the thesis holds that how an individual orientates to each of the fields will shape the academic identities they cultivate and occupy. Each of the fields exist as physical, material places and also as intellectual and psycho-emotional spaces, as such each has different expectations of its inhabitants and each commands or inhibits ideological and emotional allegiance. Allegiance, or otherwise, is dependent on a number of potential factors, such as:

- the declared missions and intents of a domain that may or may not resonate with the concerns and commitments held by an individual;
- the practices of a field to which an individual may aspire, enact or resist;
- modes of personal entry and exit from the domain;
- an individual's ideological capacity to maintain commitment to a field or withdraw allegiance.

As such orientations can be seen to reflect individuals' sense of belonging and *identification with* a social project and/or community. Generally orientations are not fixed but fluid, or multi-perspectival, and these fluidities and perspectives operate differently in relation to each of the fields. It is, for example, most obviously the case that orientations concerned with practice and the academy are shaped by direct practical experience of the respective field, and that this experience is understood differently over time (temporal proximity to the field) and through location (material proximity to the field). The shaping effects of time and place are discussed in length in chapter seven. Orientations to the profession, as explored here, can be understood as ideological and/or symbolic (McIntyre, 2007; Freidson, 2001), expressive of adherence to or rejection of transcendent belief and value systems that are 'bigger' than the individual.

In terms of orientations to academia it is possible to trace a developmental trajectory that outlines individual's early orientations to academia as expressed in their learner-selves, and their pursuit and realisation – or otherwise – of academic interests. The orientation to practice is more problematic and operates in two dimensions: committed and conflicted. Individuals may hold these orientations

separately, in their own right, or in tandem. The majority of respondents held the two orientations simultaneously being both committed to practice - as expressed in their concerns to promote and uphold 'best practice', or indirectly serve the best interests of the service user/patient - whilst at the same time being critical of practice environments where career options are limited, or where there is of some form of ideological drift between the professional self and the operations of the practice field. The only 'fixed' point of orientation among the participants interviewed was their identification with the profession, this was the most strongly held orientation. For the majority orientation to the profession can be seen as the point of 'commitment' that, held together by ideology and affect, underpins both the practitioner and academic identity. A few, however, hold contentious orientations to the profession and their academic identities become more complex to negotiate.

Orientations to the Profession : Ideology and Affect

As noted, this is the most 'fixed', persistent, durable orientation that respondents held. It is an orientation held over time and is directly linked to the maintenance of a coherent personal-professional identity whereby being a nurse or a social worker is a constituent part of being a particular kind of individual. For half of the participants the social or nominal role – of nurse or social worker - had been interiorised and personalised transforming it from a matter of '*what I do*' to an assertion of '*who I am*'. Along with personal biography, it is also the orientation that primarily contains and reflects the respondents' concerns and commitments,

which underpin everything else. Adherence to, and assimilation of a professional-disciplinary identity was the defining orientation of half of the interviewees.

This deeply socialised identification was primarily a psycho-emotional positioning and way of being based in the idea and rhetoric of the profession. It was not dependent on the 'practice' or 'doing' of the profession *per se*, although the practice of the profession did appear to be immanent in a number of nurse or social work academic activities (eg: pastoral concern for students, adherence to the profession's codes of conduct, pedagogical emphasis). Fanghanel (2013, 2009) has similarly observed the powerful influence of professional/disciplinary ideology on academic practice. Only one participant felt unable to claim such an identity because she was no longer literally *in practice* and an abstracted identification with a profession was not sufficient for the making or sustaining of her identity claims. A small number of the participants – in accordance with the theorisations of du Gay (2007), Lawlor (2008) and Jenkins (2008) - defined themselves in terms of their philosophical and intellectual '*difference from*' the profession. This distancing from, or refutation of the profession also encompassed strong emotional affect which itself generated quite a powerful orientation to the profession, albeit one of negativity or hostility.

The strength of the orientation and its attendant commitments is not only expressed in terms of duties beholden on members of the profession, or in declarations of 'love' and 'loathing', but is also expressed through concerns and anxieties about the future of the profession. Such concerns, whilst not apparent among the nurse academics, arose in the interviews with the social worker academics.

Primacy and Durability of Professional Identity : Love and Loathing

Those participants who identified very strongly with their profession of origin, had begun and progressed careers in nursing and social work from early adulthood. This enabled some (n=2 nurse academics; n=2 social worker academics) to describe their socialisation into the profession as a process of *upbringing*. In a general discussion of her professional conduct, most particularly in terms of her relations with colleagues, Ellen a nurse academic at UniversityWide, for example, notes:

“... if I can do something to enhance my knowledge, my experience, ...I will do it, but I will not do it to the detriment of others. And I think that it is mostly down to the nurse in me because nurses... we're brought up, and I'm sure social workers are brought up the same. You are brought up to enhance people's experiences, not to push them down. And I, I am not competitive...”

The power of such professional socialising processes are echoed in the observations of two other academics at UniversityWide:

“... it is almost like you have to be indoctrinated, yeah? I'm not using that word in a bad sense necessarily, but it is ... you have to learn how to be, not learn how to nurse, you have to learn how to be a nurse, yeah? ... that's a process you have to go through and you sort become it, you become that thing. ...ultimately you are, you have to be a nurse, and you have to behave in a way that is

commensurate with nursing...”

Greg, Nurse Academic

“... So I think, as a social worker, whatever you do in social work... social work training above all gives you a certain set of values and a certain way of thinking. So I don't want to lose that, and hopefully I haven't lost that, ... that sort of guides everything that I do, the way that I think. And, sadly it kind of informs your private life as well – you can't let go of being a social worker, it's a 24/7 thing really, ... that underpins everything, I think.”

Vicky, Social Worker Academic

Although to different effect the notion of initiation into an identity, organised around a mission, expressive of a value base and with a preferred way of thinking and being in the world persists in all three commentaries. In these ways they echo the expectation that disciplinary interests and mind-sets are foregrounded in academic identities. The emphasis here is not learning how to *do* something or *about* something – nursing/social work – but how to *be* something, a nurse or social worker. There is a sense that having subscribed to this esoteric (in that it is difficult to articulate) but powerful (in that its outcomes are all encompassing) initiation process individuals have become certain kinds of people.

Etzioni (1969), discussing social work, suggests that orientation to a 'profession' rather than an 'agency' – ie: an employing organisation – is achieved where the training is lengthy and professionally orientated itself. Drawing broadly on the work of Eraut (1994), Macdonald (1995) and Freidson (2001) the professional orientation of an occupation can be understood in terms of its ideology, expert knowledge, claims and authority to exercise privileged power, codes of ethics and

conduct, and its self-governing status (as a community of interest and practice). It is this, arguably the content and procedure of a profession, that has to be understood, assimilated and upheld in order to *become* a member of the professional community. Among the participants cited here, and their peers, professional identity appeared to generate from and be embedded in most particularly ideology, ethics and conduct rather than expert knowledge *per se*. Participants' professional-disciplinary identity claims were predicated on their continued status as registrants and their adherence to the mission and values of the profession, that is their ideological identification with the profession. For some this identity remained core to their being:

"... that people feel I have integrity, that they can trust me, that I respect them, is absolutely part of who I am. And that is definitely shaped right back from being a nurse, through to being a nurse educator through to being who I am now. So they definitely all link together.

... Firstly from a nurse, 'cause you can't remove that, and then from being a nurse educator. So my code of being a nurse educator comes from my code of being nurse ...So you've got that fundamental code that I live by as a nurse, and I don't take that off ...so the nurse bit is in the middle, ...you've got the overlay of nurse educator, nurse researcher, all of that, that overlay the top but fundamentally, you probably peel it all away and you're going to come back to the code. The NMC code...."

Ellen, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

Where for this individual – and others - the codes and general ethos of the profession are foundational to her identity, for another they are the ties that have bound and constrained his practice as a professional practitioner, and that continue to do so in his academic role. Through a discussion of stricture and constraint

where the binding regulation of the profession is seen to leave little room for individual growth, autonomy or, it is inferred, principled accountability, this is the only nurse academic who expresses anything like hostility towards his profession, and ultimately questions whether it is a profession he should have pursued at all:

“... Um, I wouldn't choose it again I suppose is my answer ...absolutely not. Um, as a nurse or an academic strangely.”

Greg, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

Similar refutation of, or hostility towards the profession is only otherwise expressed by two of the social worker academics at UniversityAffiliate. Both are of the view that they would rather have not been social workers and seemingly regret this career choice. In the interviews they express little empathy with the profession and attempt to define and identify themselves by disowning – rather than by *differentiation from* – any allegiance to their professional-discipline. As one of them explains:

“... If you want the truth, and I guess you do, the social work bit of it is an irritation. ...I, I would much rather I was, er, a, another sort of branch of academia that didn't have social work attached to it. ...um, it's fuzzy and woolly... But um, I mean I don't shy away from saying I'm a social work academic, but um... I, I'd feel more content to be saying that I was in the school of psychology.”

Kevin, Social Worker Academic

Despite this rhetorical distancing from the discipline (and the departmental team) it transpired that this individual had been involved with social work – in one form or another – for his entire working life. On the one hand this in itself this seems to suggest an abiding concern and commitment to the profession in some way. On

the other, within the same declaration, he also acknowledged that he did not know what his alternative career options could have been. Consequently the participant relays a sense of professional trappedness similar to that of his social work contemporary at UniversityAffiliate and to that of Greg, the nurse academic at UniversityWide. These respondents seem to be at 'the mercy' of their employment circumstances. In terms of identity-making and positioning they all also appear to have lived and worked with this 'bad faith' for a long time; arguably a difficult identity position to occupy personally, professionally and organisationally. At UniversityAffiliate the other social worker academic, although conflating her concerns about practice and the profession, comments to this effect:

"... And I suppose if I'm really honest, um, I wouldn't want to be a social worker in this day and age. And I find that quite a conflict that I'm training people to be social workers where I have grave reservations about it as a profession."

Eleanor, Social Worker Academic

This is not just a dilemma for the individual, it is a dilemma for the academy. Although, historically, the literature is concerned that disciplinary interests outweigh and transcend academics' allegiances to 'the enterprise'. Love of the discipline – here understood as the profession - as Fanghanel (2013) comments *"...and the desire to share that passion with students are perceived as significant attributes of the successful academic."* (2013: 66). Bentall (2014) doubts that it is possible to do otherwise than love one's professional-discipline as love donates the personalised value of something and a commitment to that thing. Her analysis embodies the theorisations of identity offered by Jenkins and Archer – discussed in chapter two – where action and engagement in an enterprise are an expression

of, and intention to the realisation of a commitment. Love - of a subject - as commitment and the motivating force behind academic inquiry and teaching is also the argument put forward by Rowland (2005). This is love with a purpose, rather than a state of generalised emotional elation, that fuels both inquiry and teaching. Rowland acknowledges the challenges of realising this intellectual love in the clamorous world of modern HE but nonetheless promotes the concept of intellectual love of a subject as, at least, a way of *being* an academic.

Although the disavowal of the profession is in itself a powerful identity-positioning mechanism it would appear to potentially limit, if not undermine, well-established ways of being an academic. This begins to position these individuals problematically in terms of their academic identities.

Professional Legitimacy : A Matter of Concern

In discussing their relationship and identification with the profession, participants did not only draw on their direct experience of the field – for example as students, practitioners, educators, committee members, peer reviewers – but also reflected on the broader political context within which the professions operated.

In these reflections Greg at UniversityWide was, again, the only member of the nursing discipline to comment on the limitations of the profession. He questioned the status of nursing as a profession bound, as he saw it, by codes and regulations driven by governmental policy directives. He saw this lack of autonomy, intellectual

freedom and curiosity mirrored in the university curriculum. Fanghanel (2013), discussing the ways in which disciplines are undermined by 'production ideologies' (ie: learning for work), highlights from her own study a nurse lecturer who "...presented her curriculum mainly as a set of procedures and stated that she was not 'teaching' her students..." but preparing them for practice (2013: 77). Fanghanel observes that "One might argue that a discipline ceases to be a discipline when it is perceived simply as a utility." (2013: 77). For Greg the 'production ideology' of the profession, embedded in the curriculum, makes it difficult to realise what he thinks is his preferred academic identity. The situation is compounded where he further highlights discrepancies between the rhetoric and theory of the profession (as expressed through the NMC, and the nursing curriculum) and the reality of practice. As an academic he struggles, as do many of the study participants, with this so-called 'theory-practice gap'.

Such a visceral orientation to the profession, as held by Greg, was not typical of the nurse academic collective, where the general affective orientation was much more low key and where discord with the intent of the profession was minimal. By contrast among the social worker academics there was a strong affective orientation towards the profession, evoking – as has been seen - a spectrum of feelings and orientations encompassing both love and hostility. The interviews illustrate how individuals can hold onto a 'love' or passion for the profession whilst at the same time being critical of its perceived shortcomings and/or concerned for its imminent decline. The 'love' or passion appears to be driven by a continued adherence to the ideological mission – broadly understood as social justice - of the profession. The decline or shortcomings are intellectualised in terms of its status

and position in the wider political world. For those who expressed a strong adherence to the profession the prospect of its imminent decline impacts significantly on how identities are negotiated into the future.

Chris, a long-established social worker academic, recently appointed at UniversityWide, illustrates the identity tensions that arise in the dynamic of love-and-decline. In an early part of the interview he describes his relationship to the profession as a marriage saying: *"...it's for life, it's like a marriage, you sign-up for life. It isn't just a thing you do. Well, it could be, I just don't approach it like that."*

This is very distinctly a commentary of love and commitment and appears also to reflect a deep embodiment of professional identity, social work is not just something you happen to do. However, the positioning of the profession in the increasingly corporatised world of HE has endangered this love, as he says:

"... I worry about social work internationally, not just in England. I worry about the profession that I once loved, that it is, we're just dumbing it down because of market-relatedness; it's money, it's income, uncapped numbers. ... And I think I'll use the metaphor of the Titanic. I don't want to be on this ship when it goes down. And sadly, it breaks my heart to admit this, I think the ship is going down in this profession I once loved. And I think will always love..."

Where Greg felt his academic identity was compromised by the strictures of the nursing profession, this individual feels his professional commitment and identity is compromised by the market agendas of academic institutions. From this perspective the professional-discipline has been traduced by, effectively, market forces. The inference is that it is not possible to honour the commitment to the

profession, or uphold its principles where the quality of education is compromised by – he suggests – admissions, teaching and assessment practices that privilege the interests of students and institutions. This is very similar in nature to the thesis put forward by Slater et al (2008) in their discussion of the reshaping of professional education in the United States. Nonetheless, the participant's avowed love is for the abstraction of the profession while his pragmatic identity trajectory is to remain within the practical realm of academia.

Another member of the social work team at UniversityWide, Della, also thought the profession was under threat but perceived this to be a socio-political threat emerging from the practice field. From her perspective the “*disappearance*” of the professional-discipline in the university – subsumed as it is within an all-encompassing departmental title and hidden in a large health-focused faculty – mirrors the realities of the practice world:

“... I sense a huge ambivalence on the part of the government towards social work. ...I think the whole identity of social work is, is kind of, I don't know, it just feels that it's not very secure. And that's mirrored here too – well the course feels quite vulnerable.

... I'm sure, negative publicity and the whole fact that for many years, I think there was some discourse about changing the name of social workers. I mean that's when they became care managers and God knows what other euphemism. Well that's a pretty fragile identity, isn't it, where you actually have to change, change your name...”

In this analysis of the demise of the profession in the political and practice world – along with a commentary on the historic fragility of social work as a profession - the participant reflects as to whether a professional identity is even any longer available to her.

Orientations to Practice : Conflict and Commitment

While four participants discussed their practice experience in relatively neutral terms, without affording it any obvious emotional content or even abiding meaning, the remainder of the interviewees talked about practice in ways that surfaced the challenges and commitments they negotiated through their working lives. For two social worker academics at UniversityWide practice was a mythic touchstone by which they identified themselves and/or held others to account – both students and colleagues. The interviews and analysis suggest that among the other half of the participants (n=11) this was the most stressed orientation that they held. The stress of this orientation arises out of i) the disjuncture between the ideology, theory and practice of the profession and the realisation of this professional mission in the practice field; and/or ii) a tension in individual's departure from the practice field and their promotion of the profession in the academy. The disjuncture can be understood as 'Ideological Drift', and the tension as 'Occupational Plateauing'. Ideological drift was particularly apparent among the social worker academics while career plateauing was more evident among the nurse academics.

Ideological Drift

Both social work and nursing are practised – in various guises – out of the public service sector. As such they are located in Etzioni's (1969) administrative and supervisory agencies where, he notes, there is an inevitable tension between professional and organisational principles. This tension is argued to generate out of the differential authority – or relevance - of professional and administrative knowledge in the conduct of organisational business. Whilst not drawing directly on Bernstein's fields of production and reproduction (Bernstein, 2000; Atkinson, 1985) Freidson (2001) also comments on the inescapable gap between abstracted professional knowledge and the applied knowledge of practice. Where, in the studies presented by Etzioni, these knowledge tensions were argued to be resolved through a "...*disciplined conformity to authority...*" redolent of mature "...*disciplined professional behaviour...*" (Scott, 1969: 117), the participants of this study continued to reconcile - through their concerns and commitments - the differentials between the professional and practice domains. This negotiation positioned their orientations, to practice, as committed and/or conflicted. As noted earlier, most participants held these orientations in tandem: maintaining a professional commitment to the best service of the public whilst negotiating the various limitations of the practice arena. For some of the participants it became untenable to sustain this balancing act whilst actually in practice – hence their ultimate removal to the university. It is the challenge of the balancing act that surfaces and highlights the personal-professional concerns and commitments that drive career trajectories, and shape academic identities.

Ideological drift manifested itself in the dissonance between individual's ideals and beliefs about 'good'/'best' practice - as held by their professional selves - and the realities of the practice world – as experienced by their practitioner selves. These practice realities are understood by the interviewees as antithetical in philosophical or cultural terms and are seen to materialise as poor managerial and clinical practice. For example, two of the social worker academics at UniversityWide discussed the antipathy to organisational mores and restructurings that pushed them to leave practice and/or search for alternative employment:

“... Umm, well, ...I'd worked as practitioner since, um, '75 or so and mostly within local authorities and, er, as a practitioner and, more latterly as a trainer – ...and then ...I left training and went back into practice, but not direct practice. I took on a child – I think it was called then, a child protection coordinator role, chairing conferences and that sort of thing. And then there was a restructuring in the local authority and I just didn't want to be restructured. I didn't want, um, I didn't want to do it...”

Della, Social Worker Academic

In many respects this appears as an unproblematic and relatively ordinary response to organisational change except that, without immediate recourse to other employment, the participant decided to leave the organisation. Vicky, another social worker academic also ultimately left her local authority job because of organisational change, she observes:

“... When I first came here I – the jobs that I'd had before – um, - I'd moved out of field work social work because I didn't like the bureaucracy and I didn't like the having to fight for money for service users, and the rules changing every five minutes and the organisation's interpretation of law and policy...”

This is a more explicit indication of the disjunct between the individual's beliefs and practice reality, and clearly suggests that the participant could not realise her own professional mission or interests in the practice field. For one of the social work academics at UniversityAffiliate a similar drift had significant consequences, following a long career in childrens' services Eleanor moved into adult care services where, as she explains:

"... I was quite dissatisfied. ... very dissatisfied with the politics of where I worked and how decisions were made and, um, and how we, you know, appeared to ride roughshod over legislation, values, whatever.

... – it's a long story - but basically I went off sick and never returned. ."

Eleanor, Social Worker Academic

These accounts illustrate that for some the practice domain is a challenging environment in which to pursue professional concerns and commitments and thereby realise preferred professional identities. Where these individuals found themselves in conflict with organisational practices and priorities another of the social worker participants found himself in conflict with the actual practice of professional social work. That is, while maintaining an on-going commitment to *the idea* of social work the reality of day-to-day practice was personally restrictive and unproductive. This seeming exhaustion might be read as occupational plateauing – discussed below - but seems to reflect a more serious professional 'falling out' with the service user group:

"... after a few years, [I was] bogged down with some quite difficult child protection/children and families cases. And this may sound a bit sort of cowardly

but I thought 'I don't really, ... this is not working for me, I don't really want this sort of work.' ...dominated by some difficult cases which looked to be stretching ahead, intractable and, um, after about, say, I don't know, um, four or five years in this team I thought 'I've got to find something else'.

...Um, I'm not going to say I was burnt out I just knew that wasn't for me, and that there were other things you could be doing.

So, I was in that position 'Right, I don't want to give this up completely but I know don't want to be in this ...team, dominated with this style of work.'

Robert, Social Worker Academic

From these accounts emerge a group of practitioners for whom the *move out* of practice is predicated on a degree of disillusion rather than a positively oriented *move into* the academy. The social worker academics cited here – and their peers who made seemingly less dramatic, more serendipitous career moves into the university - appear to have adopted an approach similar to that promoted Giddens (1991) in strategically building on skills, knowledges and expertise to position themselves as successfully as possible in their own best interests in their relocation to the university. Although the move out of practice was driven by unrealised professional missions it was not on-going pursuit of the mission that precipitated their arrival in the university, rather the pragmatism of alternative available employment. As will be seen in chapter eight, any such missions were reclaimed once individuals were established in the academy.

In discussing their practice experience a number of the nurse academics reflect on the pressured practices of workplaces that do not live up to the ideals of the profession. However, it is not ideological drift that precipitates their move out of

practice and into the academy. Rather, for the majority of these interviewees it was the need to change or extend their career trajectory.

Occupational Plateauing

The sense of having reached an occupational impasse was mainly evident among the nurse academics and surfaces as a general weariness and the lack of career opportunities. Nonetheless, although superficially benign these factors created a practice environment which the nurse academics – while practitioners – found too confining for the realisation of their professional mission and/or too constraining of their own personal ambition. The impasse plays out across the interviews in terms of, for example:

- limited career options;
- weariness : consequent to limited resources, the relentless pace of practice and the routinisation it engenders;
- frustration : experienced as reaching the limits of one's influence as a clinical tutor, senior practitioner or manager.

The limited range of career options perceived to be available in the practice field were clearly expressed by two nurse academics at UniversityWide. As will be seen, limitations are not necessarily *de facto* but have to be understood in terms of the interplay between structural affordances (ie: the role array available within the practice domain) and agentic preferences and/or competences of the

individual. This is not to detract from an individual's perception that structural options shape their possible occupational positioning and identity projects. Whatever the permutation of factors, for all of those who commented directly on their practice experience, the practice domain was ultimately seen to be an environment of constraint, limiting of personal-professional development and growth.

This is clearly articulated by, Ellen, a nurse academic at UniversityWide who, after 10 years in frontline practice, reached a point where:

"... in my mind I knew that there was probably three different avenues I could go down. ...the nurse specialist route, and do more qualifications to become a nurse specialist/nurse consultant. ... the management route and end up being a ward manager/service manager. Or ...the education/research route and probably by the time I'd finished, um, my, er, first degree I was probably thinking education route or research. ... Even though in practice I enjoyed the experience I felt there was not much further I could grow in my own personal development unless I did management or nurse specialist and I didn't want to do that."

A resistance to undertaking management roles was apparent among the majority of participants with only six of those interviewed (n=3 social worker academics, n=3 nurse academics) claiming to have held such roles. Pursuing the continuance of a clinical role was also seen to limit 'growth' among those who had been in frontline practice for some time and can, in some instances, be seen as an expression of weariness and/or occupational boredom. This was the case for one of the nurse academics at UniversityCity who described losing interest in, and growing out of a

clinical role. However, where these academics generally express a relatively positive regard for the practice environment Greg is – again - less forgiving:

“... I spent some years working in practice,... And, um, I felt like I’d reached a point where it was either management, it was either staying where I am, ...or it was education. They were the only three routes I could find apart from leaving the profession completely, which was very tempting but you kind of get stuck into that nurse role ...and anything else would require me to retrain and start from the bottom again.

... Management was something that I was never interested in, um, and I couldn’t stay where I was because I was frustrated. Um, and then I came to XXXX as a student in 2001 and had a chat with one of the tutors on the course about how you get into being an academic...”

Greg, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

So too – with the exception of the possibility of ‘starting over’ - management, on-going clinical practice or education were the only trajectories possible for this individual. As outlined in chapter two, Archer (2000) argues ‘starting over’ can be a risky identity building strategy. Having invested so much (ie: time, intellect, affect) in a particular range of concerns and commitments the cost of relinquishing them can be very expensive in terms of maintaining a coherent sense of self – or identity integrity - over time. As with Ellen, Greg’s decision to explore an educational trajectory might be seen as a recognition of this potential cost and represent a transfer of deeply invested concerns and commitments into the university. It might also be seen as the search for a more liberating and empowering occupational and professional space.

Elsewhere in the same interview Greg, whilst not explicitly naming it as his frustration, talks at length about the organisational constraints in practice that inhibit the development of *professional-disciplinary* practice and professional identity. He rails against managerialist, audit-driven cultures in which professional accountability is about administrative compliance and sees such cultures as antithetical to:

“...developing practice, or moving it forward or challenging existing things. You have to stay within a very narrowly, narrowly defined, um, field, um that’s dictated ...and it confines you rather than allows you to grow I think.”

Similarly for Geoff, one of the relatively newly appointed nurse academics at UniversityCity, all of these limitations eventually surfaced in the practice field. Having started out ‘loving’ being a nurse he reached a point where the strain on resources, the endless busyness of practice, the lack of any professional reflective-dialogic space and few professional development options impelled him to look for employment and career opportunities outside of practice. Apart from his initial ‘love’ of nursing almost everything else about practice is described in relation to his recent experience of HE, so his commentary is a highly mediated representation of his orientation to practice:

“... doing your lesson prep., is bona fide work... ... within a university, but in the NHS sitting on a computer is not considered bona fide work... ...Unless you were beside a patient’s bed and actually physically doing, then it wasn’t working. Whereas here it is actually completely bona fide work, to actually be reading stuff, to be, to be, you know, preparing stuff, which is great. And I think that’s

something practice needs to learn about, needs to learn that keeping up to date actually takes time...”

It is his emphasis here – and elsewhere – on ‘doing’ that suggests the routinized reality of practice and which encapsulates the *job-ness* of practice compared to the idealism of evidence-led professionalism. This emphasis co-locates his experience of, and orientation to practice with his contemporaries at UniversityWide. The difference lies in his frustrated efforts to introduce reflective-educational spaces into the working day (ie: at lunchtimes) for which, his commentary suggests, there was little enthusiasm among his peers. It is an experience shared by another nurse academic at UniversityWide who – in her role as a clinical, hospital-based educator - lamented the lack of peer engagement in purposively devised educational sessions in the practice setting. For Geoff it is the reflective-dialogic space available at UniversityCity that has re-enthused his commitment to nursing:

“... Um, it’s been exciting,... it’s filled me full of enthusiasm again. And ..., although I don’t know whether I should say it out loud, but...”

...um, it’s given me a lot of my enthusiasm back for nursing that was probably starting to...

...get a little bit worn round the edges, shall I say? Um, from the problems that we both discussed about what’s going on in the world out there with financial issues and, and the morale generally within practice...

And that’s partly to do with the fact that I’m around people who are enthusiastic about it...

I don't think it ever went completely, I just think that... I just think that it gets tired, doesn't it? Yeah, um, and it's given me that back, which I am really grateful for."

For all three of these respondents the university was anticipated and/or experienced as a space in which they could be the nurses they wanted to be. A place where they expected to pursue their commitment to the professional mission of nursing and being a nurse, unencumbered by the realities of practice.

This was similarly the case for some others among the nurse academics who focused more on the quality of practice generally and were frustrated in their endeavours to improve what they perceived to be poor practice. Many had taken on educational roles in the clinical setting with the intention to shape future practitioners and influence practice. However, as described by Val, the nurse academic at UniversityAffiliate, there was a general sense of frustration at the limitations of their 'reach' or influence situated, as they were, in practice with – largely – responsibility for one or two students at a time over short periods of time. Hence there was a view that the university environment – simply by virtue of the sheer number of students – would extend their capacity to promote and effect change. As Elaine at UniversityWide explained, the campus-based student population is a "...*captive audience*...", in a learning-focussed environment. These perceived affordances of the university were echoed by another of the new appointments at UniversityCity:

"... it just felt that an education environment would give me more of that arena really, to work alongside students and do that bit of, do that bit of the job that I

really enjoyed doing, and having some sort of influence in shaping how that education went really. I know that sounds a little bit, um,...

... it was like, ...I thought 'if that's the bit of the job I'm really, really getting into, and enjoying and progressing in I will be able to more of that in a Uni., setting,..."

Vanessa, Nurse Academic, UniversityCity

Whilst interested in pursuing their own life plans – ie: moving out of constraining environments and moving into career and identity enhancing roles as university teachers – many among the nurse academics also appear engaged in an altruistic undertaking. Their concerns and commitments are focussed on the pursuit of socially-oriented interests and their relocation to the university can be understood as an attempt to influence and improve practice, albeit at a remove. These attempts, effectively to resolve practice experience with professional ideals, can be seen as an interplay of commitment-conflict orientations to the practice field.

It is important to note the reasons participants left the practice world - and/or decided to enter academia - as it seems that these personal experiences and perspectives continue to resonate through the identity positions they adopt once in the university. As much as conflicted or challenged orientations to practice propelled individuals out of the field, generally positive orientations - as well as pragmatics – steered them into the academic domain.

Orientations to Academia : Latency and Infatuation

Within this orientation it is possible to trace quite explicitly academic identity trajectories over time. Such trajectories are expressed in the participants' descriptions of their learner selves and their pursuit and realisation – or otherwise – of their academic interests. Perhaps because of both the duration and immediacy of the participants' experience of academic worlds, this orientation is particularly illustrative of how time, social relations and space (see Figure 2, Chapter two (p.51)) can influence individual identity projects where:

- Time operates in both its epochal and quotidian forms : the epochal is really expressed in the mythological affordances of the academy (eg: the expectation of intellectual acuity and excellence, sequestered and sacred knowledge, the 'life of the mind') to which respondents aspire or resist; the quotidian is realised in the practice time of being and becoming a certain kind of person through schooling, professional education and postgraduate studies;
- Social relations operate over quotidian time and facilitate or hinder identity projects as individuals respond to the identity permissions and ascriptions others confer upon them, as such personal biography significantly shapes the orientations individual's hold towards academic life and being;
- Space is particularly concerned with the affordances and constraints of institutions that sustain or undermine positive orientations to the academy and academic life (as discussed in chapters six and seven that follow).

As Figure 2 (p.51) intimates these elements function as a tripartite dynamic and, as explored here, two broad orientations emerge from the dynamic:

- Love and Self-Realisation - where the power of mythological academic space and relational space is negotiated;
- Resistance, Aspiration and Colonisation - where the power of mythological spaces of the academy and practice are negotiated.

Overall the majority of participants had a highly positive, engaged – and in some instances *infatuated* - orientation towards academia both in their anticipation of membership of the university and in their experience of being in the university. It is an orientation that has been cultivated over time and – although they may have been diverted along the way – many of the respondents can be understood as *latent academics* awaiting a propitious confluence of practical circumstances to realise their academic selves. There were two examples of ambivalence or resistance – among the nurse academics - this was significantly tied-up with the participants' adherence to their practitioner identity. This was manifested in the lengthy period of transition these individuals undertook into the university and in their efforts to domesticate or colonise the academic space. Negative orientations towards academia were expressed among those individuals for whom the mythology and promise of academic life was unrealised and/or thwarted – this is discussed at greater length in chapter eight.

Love and Self-Realisation

A love of academia expresses itself among the study participants in a number of interconnected ways: as an early ambition to be an academic, as an inherent love of learning for its own sake, as a highly positive regard for the physical and intellectual space that the academy affords its members, as an enjoyment and satisfaction with academic life. The love that some express also materialises out of a process of reparation and self-realisation wherein previously unavailable or disallowed academic identities are asserted and gradually assimilated.

Two of the male social worker academics talk in terms of ‘loving’ academia and having a strong orientation towards an academic life from early young adulthood. As the participant from UniversityWide comments: “...*literally, from the age of 18, I set two goals: i) I’ll get a PhD...; ii) I’ll work in academia.*”. In pursuit of his academic ambitions this participant secured a scholarship to study overseas where he:

“... fell in love with the need to work in academia ... If I hadn’t gone to X my career path may have changed quite distinctly, I may have stayed in practice. ... and I won a teaching award as a postgraduate student. So from that point onwards made a real commitment to then... leave behind the practice and go into full-time academia.”

Chris, Social Worker Academic

His contemporary at UniversityAffiliate was also inclined to an academic career and anticipated undertaking a doctorate subsequent to the completion of his undergraduate degree. The motivation was seemingly driven by a generic

intellectual curiosity and, by way of example, he describes the experience as follows:

*“...it was ... um, not driven by a goal. It was just I wanted to do one....
Yeah, I just wanted to do one when I was a student, just because I was interested in... and I’m just generally interested in reading, learning and nosing into everything that you can think of...”*

Kevin, Social Worker Academic

Although the immediate realisation of this ambition was postponed as personal life circumstances and practicalities intervened, once this participant embarked on his doctoral studies his ‘love’ for academia was re-established:

“...when I was doing my doctorate I... No, start again, I, I loved being a student, I loved being an undergraduate. ...doing my doctorate – ... – I used to go back... it was X... and I used to go back for research workshops. ...And wandering round, just going there and walking around was just like a fix, for me.

And it just gave me this renewed energy and interest and enthusiasm, and all the rest of it. And, being here, is like that for me every day...

*... I love it. I, I don’t love XX, but I love being at a university.
And I don’t know, it’s intangible. It’s, it’s, it doesn’t make any sense really.
Because it’s insubstantial but it’s just being here.”*

Kevin, Social Worker Academic

This love of being a student, of simply being in the university and of the intellectual space available in the university is a *love of the idea* of the university – its mythic affordances and spaces - rather than the practical reality of the university. The social worker academic at UniversityAffiliate keeps this love for academia alive

through his positive regard for students, he describes the pleasure and privilege of being “...surrounded by interested, lively people who challenge and ask questions, and debate,...”, this is the “stuff” that he likes. Similarly enjoyment in the quest for knowledge, “...being paid to learn...” and to ask questions, alongside the legitimacy of being able to just “...talk about stuff...” percolates through the nurse academic’s orientations to and identifications with academia. Describing her early experience of academia, studying for an undergraduate degree in education, the nurse academic at UniversityAffiliate says:

“... I just loved it. It was the first time I was in academia, and I just adored it. And I got a first. And, and I flew, I felt as if I’d found my wings. But I’d enjoyed clinical nursing, but academia was incredibly exciting. I loved it.”

Val, Nurse Academic

This is strong emotional language – again of love, and adoration - to describe the experience of being in academia. In part the participant attributes it to the excitement of engaging with *ideas* and the permission to question the given order of things. The discovery and availability of this intellectual space meant that “...all of a sudden...” she had “...found a home.”. In a similar vein another of the nurse academics, at UniversityWide, discussing her postgraduate learning experiences described the academic world as a place where she felt “...most comfortable...”. This ‘comfort’ is not a matter of complacency but, rather, a sense of belonging, being in a place where – compared to the limitations of the practice world as a learning space - there are possibilities to pursue personal-professional growth and development and to satiate innate curiosity, or nosiness as the interviewee described it.

This *orientation to-identification with* academia is aligned to its perceived affordances as a reflective, discursive, energised and energising space. One of the nurse academics at UniversityCity describes this energy and enthusiasm as “*infectious*”. It is these attributes in particular that participants from both professional-disciplines ‘*love*’, and that positively differentiate the academy from practice. Practice, in contrast, is seen as an a-theoretical, non-reflective, lack-lustre environment that contains and constrains the potentials of the professional-practitioner self.

For a number of the nurse academics the experience of post-registration learning (ie: cpd) - after some time in practice – coupled with intellectual inquisitiveness introduced them to their academic selves.

The language of ‘home’ and ‘comfort’ is suggestive of some degree of congruence between an individual’s inner sense of self and being and the places they actually occupy in the world. It is language that infers that individuals were not entirely at ease in the practice, that they had not yet found their preferred occupational or professional niche. It was notable among some of the nurse academics that their entry into nursing had been a default trajectory consequent to poor school achievement or the lowly expectations others held of them. The nurse academic at UniversityAffiliate, for example, who found her “*wings*” in academia had not previously realised her own intelligence; as she explains:

“... I mean when I’d been at school I’d wanted to become a doctor and I was told I wasn’t bright enough. ...So I became a nurse of course, and, and that’d been

satisfying up to a point but when I hit academia it was just 'wow', 'actually I might be reasonably bright', and I hadn't, I hadn't recognised that before."

Val, Nurse Academic

This realisation was accompanied and reinforced by her experience of the “*academic community*” in which she found herself, where – again - asking questions was a cultural expectation and where she no longer felt awkward or the member of a “*minority*”. Her reminiscences of undertaking a doctorate are entirely positive and it becomes apparent that education has been a vehicle of liberation and actualisation for this individual. Where Val has been able to embrace the academic world and redirect her commitments and concerns in pursuit of an academic identity others struggle to align the reality of their preferred occupational role – as academics – with deprecating self-concepts.

By his own account Geoff was not a natural student and did not excel in his nursing studies. Post-registration, however, he did want to pursue further study. The options available to extend his clinical education did not appeal to him so instead he undertook a self-funded Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education (PGCHE) and began teaching in universities. This latter process is reflective of a nascent or latent orientation to academia and in some respects is the recovery of an identity unrealised at an early life stage. Nonetheless, he is still engaged in a process of identification with and orientation to his academic self, as he explains:

“... part-way through my nursing career as a staff nurse someone said ‘oh, you’re very academic’ and I just, ... I just laughed, laughed out loud at him...”

But I think it's, it's just hilarious that, that I've got a job title of lecturer ... I think it's funny that I'm considered academic. ...I just think it's funny.

Geoff, Nurse Academic, UniversityCity

One of the nurses at UniversityWide also struggles to conceive of herself as academic and resists this labelling for a number of reasons, some of which are concerned with the myth of the academic, others of which are located in her upbringing. For this participant – and others – being an academic is to own and occupy a highly privileged social identity to which she does not feel entitled:

"... I think for me the word academic means somebody who's very well read and very, and is, you know, published and is respected in a slightly different way to somebody who's a nurse. It's just... I mean some of it is probably to do with my upbringing, in that my, I've got an older brother who was very academic and was always 'the clever one'... ... I still see him as somebody who is much more academic."

Elaine, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

Nevertheless, consequent to her employment in the university, she now has a master's degree and so – academically – has out-paced her brother. She explains that an academic identity is still something that she is growing into (as discussed below, this individual's transition into the university has been a lengthy process) but the unanticipated attainment of the degree has enabled her to "suddenly" realise "... that actually there are skills I've got that somebody else hasn't." The 'somebody else' in this instance is very specifically her brother. Elsewhere the ownership of these same (academic) skills and her occupational status are used

to resist the incredulity of friends who question her academic identity and legitimacy:

“...some of my friends ... - my best friend did say ‘I can’t believe you’re an academic’ – which I found a little bit insulting. But because their perception of academia is that gowned person who speaks in a certain way, who talks in a certain way, who is a little bit unattainable but because they know me as the nurse first I don’t think they perceive that I’ve made that transition.”

Elaine, Nurse Academic

Although this participant generally expresses more of a resistant than enamoured orientation towards university life, where she does identify with the academic project she does so to claim an academic identity that others might prefer to disallow or withhold.

Resistance, Aspiration and Colonisation

As these stories of self-realisation indicate the interviewees held a number of stereotypes about, or mythological constructs of academic identity and academic life. As Barnett observes (2012: loc., 6489): *“The description [of academic] comes with too much baggage...”* and some individuals may resist such categorisation and labelling. The myths include academia as a rarefied place of exceptional intellect and therefore potentially a frightening place that raises questions of personal legitimacy - does one actually belong in this place, how could/can one claim a place in this environment? For some, experience of the university has actually debunked the myth of exceptionality and they have been able to find a

place in which they can largely feel confident and legitimate. Others have internalised the myth of the Ivory Tower that locates the university as a place-space removed from the everyday world. Among some this trope serves a positive function, situating the university as a protected space - removed from the extremely pressured world of practice - that offers the promise to pursue self-directed personal-professional interests. It is the possibilities of the intellectual, contemplative academic world to which they aspire – albeit primarily as teachers rather than as researchers. For others it is the seeming separateness of the university that problematises the legitimacy and authenticity of their academic persona, calling into question their relevance and authority in a space outside of practice. However formulated these mythical ideations serve to reveal participant’s aspirational and resistant orientations towards academia, and the search for their own space – or ‘voice’ (Barnett & DiNapoli, 2008) - in the academy.

This section discusses some of the more resistant orientations that generate out of individual’s conceptualisations of the university whilst the discussion of aspirations – which are so closely associated with the experience of love and self-realisation explored earlier - is threaded through chapter six and the exploration of identity types in chapter eight.

While the majority of those interviewed expressed positive orientations to the academy a small number (n=2 nurse academics, n=1 social worker academic) – even though they aspired to and preferred an academic life – were nonetheless more resistant to its lures. Where they existed these resistances manifested in three inter-related ways:

- i) adherence to a strong practitioner identity;
- ii) a reluctance to claim an academic identity; in some instances associated with
- iii) an intent to colonise or domesticate the academic space.

Adherence to a strong practitioner identity emerges in two ways - a lengthy transition from practice into the university and/or engagement with the academic role curtailed to teaching. Where, in this instance, the emphasis on teaching can be seen as a domesticating strategy; the potential threat – rather than opportunity - of the academic space is contained in the exercise of a familiar role. One of the nurse academics at UniversityWide is a case in point: during the course of the interview she explains that it took her six years to finally commit to academic employment, and that she still cannot see herself as “*an academic*.” Throughout the transitional period she held practice-based and academic jobs, sometimes concurrently, and generally vacillated between the two domains. Despite the professional and intellectual limitations she experienced in the practice field and her “*passion*” for teaching she “*...didn't want to stop feeling like a nurse*.” Nonetheless, the effort to maintain a nurse identity “*...was a constant battle*...” that was exhausting and for a time kept her out of the academy. Once inside the university this individual did not seek to extend her academic repertoire beyond skills teaching, which she describes as “*...very practical, practically-based. And for me that's where I feel I can, I bring my expertise*...”. A similar emphasis on practical skills teaching and the reluctance to relinquish - albeit a mediated - practitioner identity is shared in particular by one of the social worker academics at UniversityAffiliate.

Although arguably central to the delivery of an authentic and credible curriculum, maintaining a strong practitioner identity and/or practice orientation can also be read as a strategy of colonisation, a means of domesticating the mythical space of the academy. The foregrounding of practice, both as a mode of knowledge expertise and a way of being (eg: as a professional, as a team member, and/or as a person), enables some individuals to construct and/or understand their engagement with the university significantly on their own terms. As such some describe their resistance to what they perceive as the individualising and competitive mores of the university - which are also viewed as antithetical to the value base of the respective professional-disciplines – preferring instead to try and recreate the mythologised collaborative team-working they valued in practice. Where it occurs this is not only a material endeavour it is also becomes a moral exercise intended to humanise and democratise the academy. For some the intention is an alternative distribution of academic resources and opportunity, for others a recalibration and normalisation of professional power relations. By way of example, one of the nurse academics at UniversityWide explains her personally non-competitive nature which, in the full interview, is powerfully reinforced by her nursehood. She acknowledges that a lack of competitive edge may be disadvantageous professionally but collaborative working with others still enables her to pursue academic and intellectual projects that suit *her* personal-professional interests:

“... And that’s intentional, that I do not compete. ...I am not competitive by nature. I am collaborative by nature. But I am personally ambitious.

... I have seen how people vie for power, for attention, for monies, for publicity, for self- publicity... but I can't play that game, because that doesn't come with my nature.... ...I am not going to play a game of 'you get it, or you get it'. So, to me, I like the collaborative idea... ... collaboratively if you say "let's do this together", I'll say "yes, what bits shall we do? and we'll pull it together", and that works much better for me...

... the faculty does have competitive elements, tasks, or whatever, but I try very hard to keep away from those."

Ellen, Nurse Academic

Where this respondent, a long-established academic, is concerned with finding alternative ways to express her academic voice in a competitive environment her recently appointed peer at UniversityCity has other preoccupations. Having made an entirely voluntary move into the university in pursuit of an academic teaching career this nurse educator nonetheless wants to reconfigure local customs to accommodate *her* world-view and preferred and familiar ways of working:

"... it's not meant to be, ...disrespectful, but just not having that deference for "oh, it's a professor", ...you hear the word professor and you think, you know, "god, you know, bow down at their feet as they're walking past!", that's the expectation really I think sometimes, being a traditional sort of institution in that way. Um, whereas if you're used to working in a team whereby there is equality, ...there is no sort of different levels of status,...

Um, but ... I suppose just being a human being around people and breaking down the sort of ...barrier about "oh, well, you can't just sit and have a laugh and a joke and talk about whatever, ... with somebody who is, you know, is head of, or director of professional education and things like that", ...

So ... it's not a ...disrespect to people who have worked extremely hard to get to where they're at in terms of their careers ..., but it's about just being normal and human at some part of the day,... ...You can still be professional, I guess, and human and still have a laugh and joke,... ...And I think within practice, clinical practice, your way of surviving is by having that sort of humour ...”

Vanessa, Nurse Academic

In order to realise these aims Vanessa has actively promoted the introduction of an informal common room lunch club that is, by her account, well-attended by a representative cross-section of the local academic community. In so doing she has created a familiar space in which she can build an academic identity from an already established professional persona and through preferred collaborative, team-centred working practices. Her understanding and approach reflect a resistance to the perceived norms of the academic establishment, which she is intent on normalising in order to make the academy a place in which she can function and contribute.

So, whilst not antagonistic towards academia the autonomous, self-determined positionings exercised by these individuals nonetheless reflect highly agentic and negotiated orientations towards academia. They regard it as a malleable space in which their aspirations can be achieved.

Conclusion

This chapter has detailed the predominant orientations held by the study participants in their negotiation of the triple helix of academic identity-making (as

illustrated in Figure 1, p.20). In so doing it has endeavoured to suggest a trajectory of identity negotiation through profession, practice, and in to academia. Academia is now the immediate space in which individuals continue to negotiate their identities and the time-space-relational matrix (Figure 2, p.51) has been used to outline some of the influencing factors and relationships in this process. The modelling is not exhaustive but illustrative. In principle the academy offers these respondents two affordances:

- i) the opportunity to realise previously unavailable or disallowed academic ambitions and identities;
- ii) a space for the potential resolution - personal and strategic-symbolic - of the tensions between professional ideals and practice realities : personal resolution whereby the individual can legitimately retain their professional identity within the academic domain; strategic-symbolic resolution through the production of a new, improved generation of practitioner.

Nonetheless, these affordances do not negate the influence of the power differentials (eg: in terms of material resources, theoretical and applied knowledges, competing political intent) between the fields of profession-practice-academia in shaping the 'enablements and constraints' available to the realisation of these professional-academics identity projects. Chapters six and seven that follow explore these enablements and constraints in some depth.

Chapter 6

Negotiating the Integrated Academic Self

Introduction

The previous chapter highlighted the predominant orientations – or identifications - held by the respondents in relation to the professional, practice and academic fields. This chapter draws on a number of theoretical resources – including Archer (2000, 2003), Giddens (1991) and Foucault (Rabinow, 1994; Foucault, 1987; Rabinow, 1984; Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982), as outlined in chapters two and four – to consider how two of the main structuring features of academic life, teaching and scholarship, foster and extend or constrain the development of academic identities among the study group. Although writing with different analytical intentions and constructions, each of these theorists are concerned with the relationship between the structured social world and the agentic world of the individual. Various each discusses how the ‘enablements and constraints’ (Archer, 2003) of social systems shape and are shaped by individuals. As such the chapter examines the detail of the research questions concerned with how the individual understands the workplace to have shaped their academic identity, alongside of how the individual understands and/or exercises personal agency in the formation of their academic identity.

The structural shaping technologies of higher education discussed in this chapter are teaching and scholarship (confined here to research and doctoral study).

These can be understood as the fundamental practice technologies of academia, those which make an academic an academic. They represent the structuring norms of the environment. However, the literature identifies a fraught relationship between the two in terms of epistemological synergies, funding streams, career reward schemes, and the time available to undertake these key academic tasks. Through a variety of manoeuvres mediated through agentic interests (formulated as their orientations, concerns and commitments) individuals variously negotiate their engagements with these two activities in the making their academic identities (see for example O’Byrne, 2013; Skelton, 2012; Calvert et al, 2011). This chapter explores some of those moves among the study group.

The identity outcomes derived in relation to structural forces, or technologies (such as teaching and scholarship) are different for each individual. As Archer (2000) originally theorised outcomes are dependent on the interplay between the respective ‘powers’ and ‘properties’ held by the structural field and the agent (or social actor, in her terms). Where opportunities and constraints are perceived differently among individuals with different life-identity projects the relationship between structure and agency is “...*not ‘given’ in any sense. Both the possibilities for agency and for the structures are different, even for ‘colleagues’ in the same department at the same university.*” (Barnett, 2013: loc.,6515).

Teaching : Volume and Time, Congruence and Competency, Academisation

In the interviews the foregrounding of teaching arises out of two particularities: i) the initial recruitment - with one exception among the social worker respondents - of all the participants as *teachers*, this immediately positions individuals personally and institutionally; ii) at all three sites institutional priorities - primarily manifested in the teaching mandate – determine the occupational role array available. For some this prioritisation enables them to realise or consolidate a preferred identity, for others such prioritisation is a constraint that limits the potential of their academic identity. Teaching itself is seen to shape identity in three ways:

- i. in terms of volume and time, where teaching is a workload requirement that appears to lock individuals into teaching roles;
- ii. in the relationship between the operational needs of the institution and the utilisation of the experience and/or expertise of the teacher, discussed here in terms of congruence and competence.
- iii. through its academising properties that initially colonise the identity of the practitioner.

Volume and Time

The volume of teaching was of a matter of some concern among half of the respondents, evenly distributed across the two professional-disciplines (n=4 nurse academics; n=5 social worker academics). There is a distinction however between

the respondent groups in terms of how volume is experienced: for the nurse academics it is matter of repeat course deliveries and associated student numbers; for the social worker academics it is a perceived shrinkage in personnel that accordingly increases their teaching responsibilities. Both groups constructed the consequences of volume in terms of the pressure it put on time affordances, that is the amount of work time available and what it was possible to do with available time. Among the nurse academics, with the slight exception of Geoff at UniversityWide, time was pressured as a consequence of teaching role constraints. The social worker interviewees tended to bundle together the demands of teaching with a range of other departmental duties and so constructed the problematic of volume *primarily* in terms of time affordances rather than teaching role constraint *per se*. Nonetheless, however constructed, the volume of teaching appeared to impact on how individual's understood and occupied their academic role and/or how they imagined their anticipated or preferred academic identity. As Kate observes:

"... because I'm just there to deliver courses. That's how I see myself. If I was a true academic and if I was truly valued as an academic my role would be much wider than what it is now. For example, doing research, for example moving the profession forward, moving the profession of social work forward and higher education and social work forward. In my current role I have no time to do that, so I don't really consider myself as an academic."

Kate, Social Worker Academic, UniversityWide

Course deliveries and student numbers were of significant import for the nurse academics at all three institutions where, under the pre-degree programmes (which

were only just being phased out at the time of the interviews), they had been recruiting students twice a year. The course website at UniversityWide indicates that, at the time of writing, this continues to be the case. Generally it might be inferred that student numbers would have an impact on the time available to academics – eg: to pursue scholarly work, to maintain consultancies - as they imply a host of tutorial, pastoral and assessment duties beyond the classroom – as is described in Findlow’s study (2012) of nurse academics and in Gornall et al’s (2013) edited collection of papers on academic work. However, in Linda’s account, critically it is the number of course deliveries which escalate the academic’s workload:

“...um, so probably each cohort would have 100, 150 students on average, but we always took bi-annually, so up until last year. Now we’re to have one intake a year so hopefully things will begin to settle, we’re all hoping that we’ll only be doing things once a year, but every module we’re running if you were leading on 2, 3 modules plus, you know, on a variety of other modular teams that would run every 6 months rather than every year so you don’t get the lulls...”

Linda, Nurse Academic, UniversityCity

Effectively, her description suggests that some academics could be teaching up to six modules in an academic year and, in order to accommodate this, the timetable extended into the “...academic holidays...”. Consequently, as Linda continued to explain:

“...So we haven’t got those long periods when we haven’t got the students on campus and that we’re not teaching to involve ourselves in those other kinds of academic activities. Um, it’s, you know, scrimping to find a bit or working in your own time.”

From Linda's perspective her peers in other parts of the university, in terms of teaching workload and student numbers, appeared to occupy "...another world..." in which there were opportunities to develop and extend personal-professional academic interests and commitments. Although very supportive of the work of the school and glad of the general encouragement colleagues offered, Linda was clearly conscious that the demands of the teaching role constrained the development of her nurse-academic persona:

"...People are very, very encouraging here so I'm looking towards doing some research or I'm looking towards, um, I don't know, writing a book, people would be 100 per cent behind you and supportive and they would help you in any way they could, but the workload remains the same and it's very heavy. And ...and such, um, that does constrain your time and your ability to go and do anything else, um, and that's what I do feel like I'm lacking,..."

Linda speaks as a relatively new academic - just entering a third year of employment - and as such regards her current experience as a stage in her career, she has expectations and ambitions for her academic future. However, her account reflects the quotidian time of Figure 2 (p.51) which has the potential to morph into a version of static time where she becomes 'fixed' in the role of teacher. Elaine, for example a longer established nurse educator having been in the university for six years, comments on how she thinks her identity has been shaped by the workplace:

"... I think the problem is, the tension is the demands of the training of nurses, the numbers, the numbers, the numbers, ... it seems that the drive for that teaching – get them out, get them qualified – has actually stunted the development of my academic role. ...I focus on teaching because... I've been

doing my workload balance today and that is it, that's what it all is. ...it's all very teaching and learning which I suppose has shaped the way I view the university, as a place of teaching and learning rather than as a place of, of my own – development...”

Elaine, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

As can be seen, even with some of the emphatic commentary redacted, Elaine's description of her experience is very emotive. It clearly conveys the sense of being overwhelmed by numbers - at UniversityWide the annual cohort size is five times greater than that at UniversityCity (HESA, 2014) - the relentlessness of teaching responsibilities and the potentially stultifying effect of time. In this instance the pre-eminence of the teaching role has both materially contained the content of her work and her vision of the identity options possibly available to her. Although Elaine came into the university to extend her identity as a teacher, rather than to become an academic as such, it would appear that the pressurised focus on teaching over a continuous period of time has actually been experienced as identity-limiting. In a stringent critique of American higher education Slater et al (2008) argue that, among other things, the commodification of education has reconfigured academic work as a job and in so doing has compromised the possibilities for individuals to adopt, grow and assimilate academic identities. In essence Elaine's experience reflects something of Slater's critique.

Whilst the construct is different – an intentional reduction in academic staffing rather than repetitive course delivery and overwhelming student numbers – some of the social worker educators nonetheless also experience the emphasis on course delivery as identity-limiting. Kate, as quoted earlier, thinks this emphasis has deprived her of the opportunities and time to develop a fuller, more realised

academic identity. Hence her resistance to considering herself as an academic, rather she sees herself as “...a pair of hands...”. While not seeming to take the circumstance as personally as Kate, nor being as resistant to the primacy of teaching, respondents at UniversityAffiliate also reflected on the impact of reduced resources, increased workloads and teaching-led roles. As Eleanor observes:

“...in terms of the role of an academic, um, increasingly, you know because of resources and cut-backs, we’re being asked to do more. ...I would say in three years my workload has doubled and I have felt completely overwhelmed with the expectations on me in terms of teaching and, um, meetings. ... And there’s a complete lack of comprehension of about how much time things take. And I think... that really is a dumbing down of the academic side. You know, that so long as you, you know you’re there and you’re teaching them, you’re standing in front of them – that’s important. But if you say “well, I can’t come to, you know, yet another meeting because I really want to up-date my knowledge on, um, you know older people’s legislation, or something”. Well, you know, that wouldn’t wash. So the space to be an academic is getting smaller and smaller...”

This is a sentiment redolent of those held by the respondents cited in Fanghanel and Trowler’s 2008 paper *Exploring Academic Identities and Practices in a Competitive Enhancement Context : a UK-based Case Study*. Generally overwhelmed by the workload, the volume of teaching and extra-curricular institutional demands this respondent also reflects the problematics of Barnett’s (2008) ‘time-impoverished’ academic. However, her concern is the consequential undermining of the integrity of her academic identity as manifested in the authenticity of her teacherhood. In this instance her integrity and authenticity are constituted through the authority of her academic knowledge. Without sufficient time to prepare for teaching her claims to knowledge are undermined and the ethic

of the educational contract with the students is breached. Albeit it metaphorically, teaching students appears to become a matter of “...*standing in front of them*...”. In her own final analysis Eleanor refutes Harris’ (2005) conjecture that ‘new’ universities might afford academics the intellectual and autonomous space that is in decline in the older academy. Eleanor cannot be seen to represent all social worker academics or all the academics in new universities but hers is a familiar tale in the literature concerned with academic working lives.

Nonetheless, despite the dearth of actual time, the frustrations of these two respondents have to be considered alongside of those who value the “...*freedom to think*...” – afforded by the university. An observation that is particular to those who are infatuated with the idea of the university and its mythic possibilities, as discussed in chapter five.

The closing note on volume-time comes from a more contrarian voice, Kevin, who is concerned with the disciplinary and institutional configuration of his time possibly at the expense of the student experience:

“... if my friends, not involved in higher education, knew how many hours a lecturer stood in front of a group of students lecturing they’d be so shocked. ...I don’t know about other disciplines... ...But the number of hours that you spend doing things that aren’t standing in front of groups of students is just extraordinary...”

Kevin, Social Worker Academic, UniversityAffiliate

His observation is about how *little time* is spent teaching is made in comparison to how much time he perceives is spent on other student and course support

activities, marking, and – again – meetings. In the course of the interview Kevin made clear distinctions between time spent in *direct* contact with students and backroom time. In contrast, where his colleague Eleanor bemoans an increased volume of work and an extension of academic responsibilities she does not, as Kevin seems to, call into question the actual need for such infrastructural work. MacFarlane's (2007) thesis promotes this kind of service work as constituent of academic citizenship and others among the respondents see this kind of work as integral to their competence as academics – serving the best interests, beyond the classroom, of their students. Here, as elsewhere, Kevin resists the structuring forces of the organisation and locates himself on the peripheries of the academic world. This is explored further in the case study material of chapter eight.

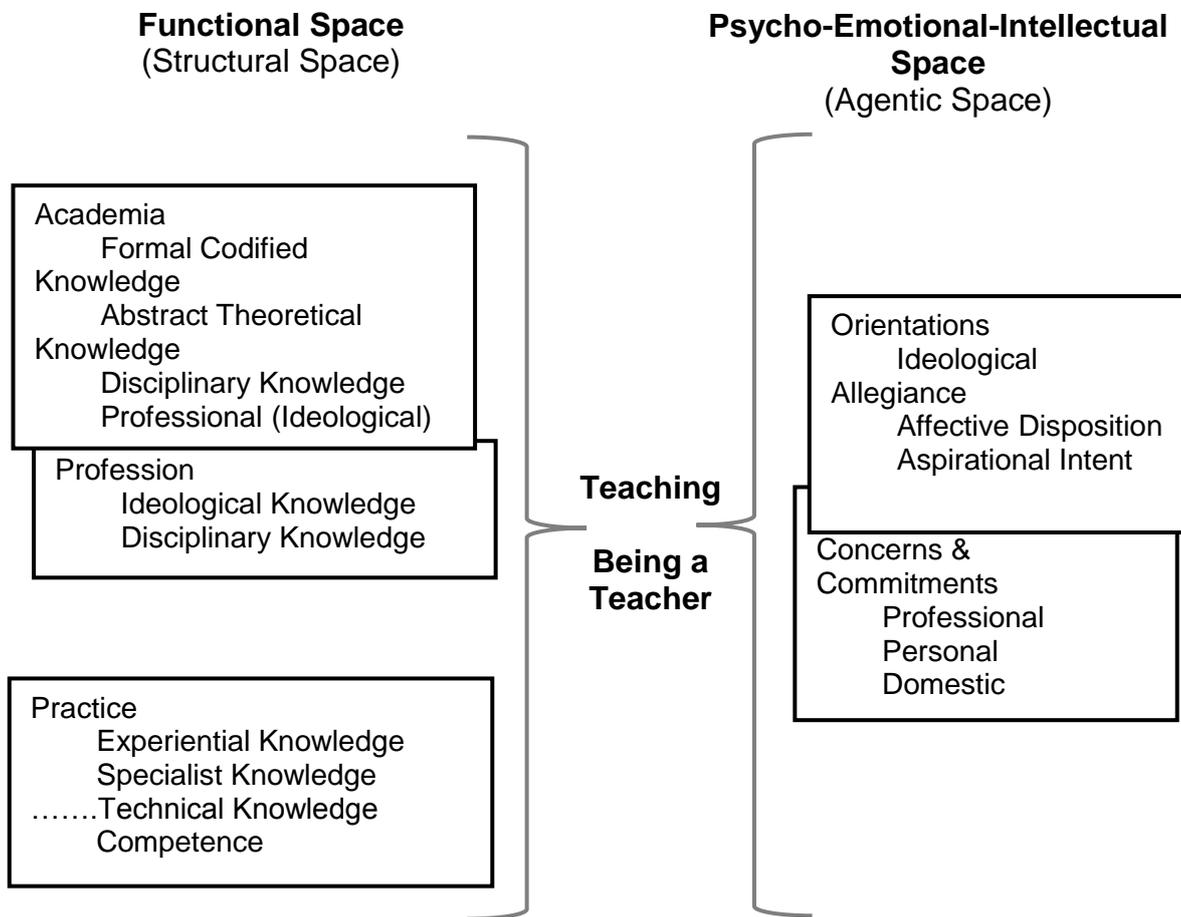
This section has sought to illustrate how the priorities of the workplace – constructed as time affordances - position these academics primarily as teachers, even where not contractually explicit they are employed as such and this is their principal role. The primacy of the role appears to make it difficult for some respondents to claim an academic identity, which is envisaged as something *more than* teaching alone. For others the demands of the role as measured by volume, compounded in some instances by an increase in service responsibilities, does in a very practical way appear to constrain their capacity to maintain an authentic or credible scholarly academic identity. The following discussion considers how the academic identity of the teacher is fostered, or otherwise, through the deployment of individual's practice-disciplinary experience and expertise.

Congruence and Competence

Generally the respondents expected to grow an academic identity out of their practice persona and experience, which for many is itself an expression of long-held (ie: pre-occupational) concerns and commitments – or biographical circumstances/situatedness. There were three exceptions to the realisation of this expectation among the participants and, consequently, two of the nurse academics at UniversityWide found themselves very explicitly engaged in identity-negotiations as they re-evaluated their place and purpose in the organisation. The general expectation of congruence between professional-disciplinary expertise and teaching responsibility reflects the arguments and exhortations in the literature that posit ‘love’ of a subject or discipline as central to effective teaching and the successful realization of academic identities.

Equally competence is discussed as necessary to the acquisition and assimilation of a personalised social identity, in that we can only claim to be what we can do. So, this expectation of congruence between the professional-practitioner self and the academic self effectively constructs the teaching role – along with research where it realized - as an axial point of negotiation between individuals’ multimembership of the three fields or communities of interest (Figure 6a). As such it serves as both a functional space, accommodating the relationship between the memberships (eg: through curriculum content in terms of knowledge, expertise, competence), and as a psycho-emotional-intellectual space of identity-negotiation where orientations to the three fields and ‘concerns and commitments’ shape *how* one is a teacher – *however* teaching is structured by the institution.

Figure 6a : Teaching – An Axial Point of Multimembership and Identity Negotiations



In Figure 6a ‘orientations’ and ‘concerns and commitments’ are purposefully represented as overlapping sets of dispositions as they are completely implicated in each other - one’s orientation to any given field will depend on one’s concerns and commitments. Similarly ‘academia’ and ‘profession’ are presented as interdependent entities. In the analyses offered by Freidson (2001) and Eraut (1994) university validation is central to the professionalising projects of occupations, they are the sites of knowledge codification, professional socialization

and credentialisation. The symbiotic nature of the relationship was inferred in the previous chapter where the nurse academics at UniversityWide reflected on the centrality of professional codes of ethics and conduct in their academic work and identity orientations. More generally the literature concerning academic identities and the being of the university variously asserts the boundaries between the academy and external stakeholders are increasingly diffuse and porous. Nonetheless, in this model 'practice' occupies a space apart from the academy and the profession. This reflects the way it is positioned by the analyses offered in the social work and nursing literature (as discussed in chapters one and two), and the way the relationship between the academy and 'the empirical world' (Freidson, 2001) is understood and experienced by nurse and social worker academics, as explored in the next chapter.

The anticipation of congruence between academic and professional-practitioner selves serves a number of purposes for the respondents:

- where so desired it enables individuals to build on existing expertise and knowledge to forge academic and institutional identities;
- it marks the boundaries beyond which some wish to extend their identities, providing a platform from which to scope the horizons of possibility;
- it also sets the limits at which others resist the resource pressures of the institution to teach beyond their competence.

The examples that follow illustrate the ways in which individuals negotiate the congruence of their multimemberships to variously comply with or resist the

structuring forces of teaching. Within this interplay - whether compliant or resistant these - individuals are forging the teacherhood of their academic identity.

Della is one of two respondents for whom developing an academic identity out of the substance of a practitioner identity has been a natural and unproblematic undertaking; as she explains:

“...my experience, my expertise was X work and I, um, when I was asked to come here, that was very much what I was asked to do, was to teach on three or four modules... So, yes, I suppose I did feel a bit of an expert in that. Um, and the fact is, on the undergraduate programme we have still retained a module that is called X and not some sort of vague thing about principles or skills, or you know, it is quite clear what it is about. So, I suppose the fact I am the module leader for that and I teach on ...the postqualifying X; yes, that probably is my, that’s probably what I’m known for.”

Della, Social Worker Academic, UniversityWide

This seemingly straightforward realisation of Della’s academic identity, although not discussed here, is carried through in her research interests and publications and so appears to reflect the successful pursuit of commitments and concerns over time. As her commentary intimates tenacious adherence to a professional-practice expertise, which can be read as a disciplinary specialism, can secure an academic status and identity that is not ascribed by others. In fact, Della’s observations make clear that it is the specificity of her contribution that determines how others know her, and how she knows herself as an academic persona. Robert, her colleague, has also forged an identity that is driven by interests and concerns that first arose in practice. It is his continued exploration of these concerns and the attendant expertise that his pursuit of them confers – as evident in his commentary on

conference attendance - that centres the identity he assumes and which others endorse:

“...Well, I think it is 100% constructed by me and I can shift my identity to some extent according to context. So there is some agency and, um, ... I think working here you are free to invent yourself fairly well actually. And if anything, as I was saying earlier, you tend to get constructed by other people as “Oh X, he is the expert on X.” and part of me, every time I hear some say that, thinks “...no, no I’m not, I might be the person here who is more interested in it maybe than most people but I’m not“. So, there’s part of me, there’s the malleability of identity... that if I go to – you know I mentioned earlier – if I go to a conference and I don’t want to let myself down professionally I’ll quite confidently say, you know act the expert on these areas. ...”

Robert, Social Worker Academic, UniversityWide

As well as highlighting the centrality of professional-disciplinary expertise – however it is claimed or exercised – Robert’s account also emphasises the shaping influence of others in identity-making. Elsewhere he comments at length on what or how others allow one to be, noting that the limits of a disciplinary identity are set in relation to the boundaries of others' identity claims. He cannot make arbitrary knowledge claims without challenge from others, and he resists efforts to engage him in work – teaching – he deems beyond his disciplinary interests and expertise where:

“...in which case you say “...well I don’t know anything about that...”

Resistance to institutional labelling – or identity ascriptions – arose in the accounts of two other respondents, Ellen a nurse academic at UniversityWide and Geraldine,

a social worker academic at UniversityAffiliate. At some point in her university career Ellen, on the basis of her experience as a children's nurse, became a designated 'safeguarding' (ie: child protection) authority. However, she resisted the organisation's attempts to *make* her an expert, and her resistance seems to arise out of the generality of her experience rather than the expertise of her practice – as she explains:

"...I was teaching safeguarding and people were trying to give you the title of safeguarding expert, which to me I will not take because I'm very good at teaching safeguarding and I'm very good at supporting a group who are discussing it but I haven't got expertise in safeguarding. ...to be labelled something, ...there's a conflict there, I can teach it, I can write about it, but don't label me an expert."

Ellen, Nurse Academic

In some respects this looks like a strange positioning, for a subject lead to abjure expertise. However it does begin to highlight the ways in which the interplay between academic and practice knowledge shapes the identity claims that individuals feel they can own or make. Ellen is prepared to transform and recontextualise knowledge from the practice field to recreate it as educational material (either in the classroom or in some kind of text). This, as Bernstein (2000) theorises, is a legitimised teaching and scholarly practice, something any teacher in the general field might do. It does not necessarily infer expertise. For Ellen – as with Della – it is the specifics of experience and/or the embeddedness of knowledge that generates claims to expertise. So, among these respondents, it is *expert knowledge* generated through practice (and/or research) that is the carrier of a congruent and competent academic identity.

Superficially this may seem obvious but, as Della reflects, there are pressures - as experienced by respondents - in the academy with the potential to dilute expertise and associated professional-disciplinary identities:

“... the problem is I think ... with a reducing number of staff and the ever-increasing number of students ...there’s some ideas abroad somehow that one can just step in and teach anything. And I think that is a debasement of, of one’s skills really. I mean just because you can teach one thing doesn’t mean you can teach another. So I think that is quite a threat actually to academic integrity and academic expertise. This notion that, um, you know, you can teach anything.”

Della, Social Worker Academic

Her concern for the academic integrity of the individual echoes the concerns in the literature that focus on the decoupling of the discipline, knowledge and the teacher consequent to the ‘industrialisation’ of HE (eg: Musselin, 2007; Marginson, 2000). A number of the respondents found it necessary to negotiate the limits of teaching ‘anything’ following organisational restructurings and expedient personnel deployments. In terms of expedient personnel deployment, Geraldine’s experience – at UniversityAffiliate - offers a clear albeit singular example of an individual asked to teach beyond their expertise or knowledge base.

At the time of the interview Geraldine had been recently recruited directly from practice and appointed on a very time-limited contract, which may partially account for her experience. On appointment she was surprised to find herself charged with responsibility for supporting one of the most academic modules in the curriculum:

“...but when I actually was given the full-time post like the first thing that happened was I was asked to teach something I knew nothing about... ..”can you just cover these six seminar groups on research?” And I don’t know anything about research... um, like the theory of, and all that, you know...

...I find it really stressful trying to prepare for and cover something I didn’t know enough about. And I felt a real charlatan. Um, a complete fraud. Which I didn’t, I felt the students deserved better than that. ...”

Geraldine, Social Worker Academic

As several of the respondents’ accounts reflect, ‘research’ is not a practice-discipline and research resources are rarely used in daily practice – so Geraldine’s (dis)-stress is understandable. Her account makes clear that the incongruity between her practice identity and ascribed academic responsibility challenged her integrity. This is expressed in her concern for the interests of the students, and her sense of self as a competent professional. Unable to resist the requirements put upon her Geraldine drew on her practice experience as a trainer and her recent studies for a postgraduate degree in education to position herself as a teacher – rather than as a social worker educator or academic, for example. She used the being of her teacherhood – essentially her relational skills - as the primary tool for working with students rather than any kind of professional-disciplinary knowledge as such.

Finally, the experience of Greg and Tyrell, nurse academics at UniversityWide, and Kevin a social worker academic at UniversityAffiliate highlights the fragilities of long-cultivated and established identities. The service user and patient groups with whom these respondents used to work remain constituent members of wider society, however the nature of their health and care needs has been redefined.

Consequent to this the distinct practice fields from which these academics originated have shrunk, along with the demand for professional training in these practice disciplines. This decline and disappearance arguably leaves these academics more readily exposed to the very pragmatic operational needs of the employer, as Tyrell observes:

“...well, I’ve gone through a major change really in my shaping because I was brought in or hired by the university because of my x expertise. Um, that period of my working experience it shaped me to deliver according to my strengths...

...Um, unfortunately we’ve lost that contract and I’m now subsumed into the xx department so to speak but I have a different, a different workload. Although my x expertise filters through in various topics it’s not a sole module any more.”

This experience leaves Tyrell questioning where and how it is she stands in the academy, as she says: *“...I know that I’ve got valuable skills and credibility and, um, and I can, you know, add to a lot of the courses that are being delivered. But I personally don’t know where I fit any more...”*. With the undoing of the congruence between her professional-practitioner self and her academic (teacher) self, Tyrell intends to transfer the pursuit of her disciplinary commitments into her doctoral studies. The implication is a separating out of her academic persona, the creation of a distinction between her teaching responsibilities and disciplinary interests. This is not uncommon but it is an institutional practice that underlines some of the critique raised in the literature concerning the deprofessionalisation of the academy and the reinvention of academics as ‘knowledge workers’.

This decoupling locates Tyrell as an academic labourer, literally valued for the practical labour of taking a class (as raised in the discussion concerning the social worker academics at UniversityAffiliate) rather than for the intellectual contribution or goods that might arise out of her professional-practitioner academic being. It is a positioning clearly described by her colleague, Greg, similarly divested of his disciplinary specialism and recast as a knowledge worker:

“... it’s somehow or other that at this institution it feels like I have to do, I have to be everything...”

...And not, not specialist, not have to be a specialist in my area, yeah? But I have to deliver everything and there’s expectations that somehow or other you can just turn up in class and deliver something, and somebody else has written the powerpoint ... so this, that’s it on the one hand you are an academic, meant to be thinking freely, developing your stuff, using your expertise, sharing that knowledge, um, there’s that expectation. And then on the other hand ...”

Greg, Nurse Academic

This discussion has considered how academic identities are fostered, compromised or realigned consequent to the institutional deployment of individual’s practice-disciplinary experience and expertise. It is clear that such experience and expertise is the foundation of respondents’ academic identities and that – over time - it is *expert knowledge* generated through practice (and/or research) that is the carrier of a congruent and competent academic identity. Where there is a mismatch or disruption between an individual’s practice-discipline and the pedagogic demands of the institution individuals are put under considerable role-strain both in practical terms (ie: to teach or facilitate the delivery

of unknown/unfamiliar content), and in psychological terms (eg: maintaining a sense of integrity and/or purpose). In response some resist and reframe institutional expectations whilst others – such as Geraldine – expend considerable personal investment to meet the expectations of the institution and the students. Although costly (Geraldine spoke at length of the tiredness associated with preparing unfamiliar subject material) this expenditure is necessary to holding a competent sense of self. In a few instances market contractions – along with individual's predisposing orientations to the fields of academia, practice and profession - leave some with few authentic identity options, as is explored in chapter eight.

The next section considers how teaching preparation is a mechanism for the academisation of the practitioner.

Academisation of the Practitioner

As a relatively newly appointed academic at UniversityCity, Vanessa's observations usefully summarise the way in which teaching preparation academises the practitioner:

“...I became involved with an assessment and planning module but looking at more of the evidence base and literature around assessment than you would do, than you would do when you're in practice, because in practice ...You're doing a lot more of the doing of it, um, as opposed to the theory aspects of it ...so it's just making that shift really from “I know what I know clinically” but actually moving into that area of “yes, I still know that but actually I need to know all the evidence base

around that to then to begin to challenge what it is that I already know about the skills bit of it.”

Vanessa, Nurse Academic

Among other things, teaching can be seen as a concept-led enterprise which requires a reflective engagement with practice knowledge and experience in order to transform and recontextualise it for teaching purposes. This is not an easy process, as Vanessa’s commentary makes clear. As explored by others (eg: Duffy, 2013; Austin, 2013; Boyd and Harris, 2010) it is, temporarily, destabilising with individuals experiencing a loss of competence and confidence in their professional knowledge. In an elaboration of her thinking Vanessa describes how the move to the university appeared to highlight the limits of her practice knowledge: “...
...*“thought I knew what I did but now I’m realising that I probably didn’t, and I need to know a lot more.”...*”. She reflects on feeling “...*very thick...*” as a consequence of the loss of competence and confidence in her professional knowledge. It is a sentiment shared by Geraldine who comments on how the move to the university has disturbed her sense of competence:

“...Feeling that even in my area I need to have much broader theoretical knowledge and try and remember it all. ... And so there’s all that uncertainty, that constant feeling that there’s this mass of stuff that I don’t know, that I should know. ...”

Geraldine, Social Worker Academic, UniversityAffiliate

In contrast Geoff is less undone by, and less anxious about the challenges posed by curriculum knowledge he did not acquire as student, or that has been forgotten

of over time. He accommodates teaching preparation as a means of relearning some of the academic discipline and building up a repertoire:

“...lots of stuff to build up your teaching repertoire you know, having a relatively limited teaching repertoire within xx, and broadening that repertoire more as I’ve got a lot of teaching prep., to do and, you know, there’s just lots of general learning, even if it’s just reading up stuff that you learnt 15 years ago that you just can’t quite remember, and you want to make sure that it’s right or get the most accurate data on it, or you know, so there’s lots of stuff to get your head around,... “

Geoff, Nurse Academic, UniversityCity

Although challenging he describes the experience as one of enjoyment that meets his expectations of the university as a place of intellectual engagement. As noted earlier, Geoff welcomes teaching preparation and all that it entails as “...*bona fide work*.”, he is clear it is the kind of work he did not have the opportunity to pursue in practice. For Geoff, unlike some of the other respondents, there is no tension here in needing to learn or work beyond the script of his immediate expertise - he regards this is an exciting prospect. Further to the previous discussion, Geoff is using his professional-practice as a platform from which to scope future possibilities. As a new recruit to the university he has the opportunity and time to develop his academic identity, he is not ‘fixed’ or limited by his professional-practice history.

However experienced by the individual, the relocation to the university does require some reconceptualisation of, or theorising of practice. Something of this process

is evident in Elaine's account of her pedagogic approach in which she alludes to differences between university and practice-based teaching:

"... I do heaps more reading because I have to, because I'm teaching it. So you have to be able to teach on a much greater depth in a classroom/clinical skills area than I do if I'm just on an ad hoc teaching session on a ward. So there's lots of ways I feel actually more, um, yeah more competent..."

Elaine, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

Elaine is the only representative from among the longer established academics who makes this observation, and it seems to reflect a recontextualisation and transformation of her practice knowledge and herself through academic scholarship. As such it is an example – through the technology or structuring force of teaching - of her becoming a 'certain kind of person', that is a nurse-academic. Other respondents' academisation is also driven primarily and specifically for teaching purposes, but there is less sense of transformation – of knowledge or the person – as the commentaries of Tyrell and Greg illustrate:

"...my own use of journals is more of a reactionary usage rather than a proactionary usage.

... so I tend to seek the information that I need rather than using the journals to influence me every week or every two weeks. And that I think is because of the, because of the speed of work, the rate of work that I'm doing..."

Tyrell, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

"... Um, scholarly activity doesn't feel like it's got a huge amount of structure to it, yeah? It only becomes focussed if I'm writing a paper ...Or even if I'm preparing

a lecture ... that's where you're suddenly off looking for something to support, or something to teach, you know,... ...It seems secondary,..."

Greg, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

There is a sense here that engagement with the disciplinary knowledge of the practice field is a much more technocratic-instrumental use of knowledge than that described by their colleague, Elaine. Nonetheless, the approach still seems to serve an educational purpose – generating teaching material - but locates the respondents as transmitters rather than, perhaps, recontextualisers and transformers of knowledge. The potential academising potential of teaching – as a structuring technology and as an identity-forming practice - appear to be constrained here by the volume of work constructed as a time constraint. It is also the case, however, that in the interview Tyrell privileges experiential knowledge garnered through professional-practice networks in preference to theorised academic knowledge. At a level this begins to reflect something of the concern a number of respondents express about their professional-practice currency and credibility rather than their academic authority *per se*.

Although the relocation to the university may be a little unnerving it is not surprising and the respondent's experiences point to a number of phenomena:

- i) disorientation : simply as a matter of transition from one field of practice to another;
- ii) as in Bernstein's theoretical framing, a transition from being knowledge producers to knowledge transformers and reproducers;

- iii) this transition renders the distinction between the theoretical, abstracted knowledge of the university and the experiential knowledge of the applied field, and the corresponding challenge for the academic in making useful sense of this relationship in the classroom;
- iv) a reflexive surfacing in the individual of the relationship between the technical-rational knowledge of the practitioner and the artistic indeterminate knowledge of the professional and (Hugman, 1998); ie: a differentiation between *doing* and *knowing*.

This discussion has explored how the responsibilities of the teaching role colonize the identity of the practitioner and inducts them into a university-based teacher identity. The relocation to the university requires a renegotiation of the relationship between generic professional and specialist practitioner identities to extend the reach of the professional-practitioner identity in becoming a nurse or social worker academic (ie: a professional-academic). This is a disruptive process, conducted over time and through quotidian time (the practice time of being and becoming, illustrated in chapter two) that:

- underlines the distinctions between practice and academic knowledge; and
- highlights that there is not a direct transfer of knowledge from the field of practice into the academic field, even where individuals have held educational roles in the practice field.

It is a process that configures the persona of the professional-academic (up to this point presented as ‘teacher’) as the bridge between academia, profession and practice, as illustrated in Figure 6a and explored in the next chapter. In some respects, through the process, individuals relearn their profession and in one instance this ‘retraining’ is an on-going feature of the academic experience, as Elaine says: “...for me, ...the knowledge base, I think that’s increased. ... Because as I described to somebody – it’s almost like I’m reliving my nurse training everyday...”. Effectively her academic work maintains the currency of her professional-practitioner identity.

Whereas relearning the academic knowledge of a profession is a pressing necessity for new appointments perhaps paradoxically, and with few exceptions, the momentum for sustained academic scholarship seems to be less evident among longer established academics. Where such scholarship pertains – through research and publication - it surfaces the fault-lines between the academic and practice worlds, as discussed in chapter seven. At this point, however, following through the theme of scholarship, the next section of the chapter examines how individuals engage with the academic technologies of research and doctoral studies.

Scholarship : Research and Doctoral Studies

Scholarship, most particularly as realized through research has been seen as a defining mark of ‘the academic’. More recently, however, it is argued that - given

the potential of its self-generating dynamic of income generation and reputational enhancement - research has become a strategic tool in the corporatization of the academy, (Fanghanel, 2012; Henkel, 2007a; Barnett, 2005). There is something of a paradoxical consequence in this for academics: while there is an increased pressure to be research active the time-affordances are somewhat limited (Fanghanel & Trowler, 2008; Gornall et al, 2013), and the 'penalties' (Henkel, 2007a) of non-engagement – or unsuccessful engagement – curtail career options, and hence ways of being an academic. Deem et al (2007), in a general analysis of the restructuring of university work, argue that such practices have generated a growing divide between “...academics who primarily think of themselves as teachers and those who regard themselves as researchers.”

The effects of increasing specialisation in research was evident among the interviewees. None experienced *direct* institutional pressures upon them to be research active, although there may have been a discourse of *expectation* within their local communities. Nonetheless 'research' was seen as a component part of the mythic academy identity and, for some, not doing research precluded any claims to an 'academic' identity. Where individuals did aspire to undertake research, 'research' was conceptualised as the pursuit of a personalised academic project – rather than the realisation of an institutional, managed objective. In reality the aspiration remained largely unfulfilled. This was attributed to some of the factors noted in the literature (eg: a lack of time due to the demands of teaching, distribution and availability of funding) but respondents also commented on limited access to stakeholder networks, and perceived access to research sites/participants as problematic. Limited access to stakeholder networks meant

they could not generate 'research interest' – either in terms of co-investigators or project funding - and this reflects something of the isolation of these academics in the university. Access to potential participants was seen (and experienced) as problematic because of the stringent ethics protocols in health and social care, and because of the gatekeeping practices of managers in external organisations. Research is not only a managed property in the university, it is also managed outwith and this structuring of research – as a tendered and commissioned property – has implications for the research identities that academics can achieve.

For most respondents primary exposure to research was through the pursuit of higher degrees, as evidenced by the eight of the sample group who were PhD holders or registrants. As is discussed, doctoral study is the principal vehicle for undertaking research and cultivating a researcher identity, and for some it is their only direct engagement with research in the course of their academic career.

Research

In summing-up her overall positioning in the university, Della's comment reflects something of the community discourse and expectations at UniversityWide where institutional academic identity is promoted through the classic tropes of research, teaching and administration, along with doctoral status:

“So, now I don't really feel like a social worker and because I'm not doing very much research at the moment and because I haven't done a PhD, I'm not feeling terribly academic either... so, yeah, being an academic does mean doing, certainly

in this university and in most, does mean teaching, research and administration. I feel I am not doing sufficient of the academic research stuff now, I'm mainly administering. You know, managing..."

Della, Social Work Academic, UniversityWide

It is primarily those participants at UniversityWide who have assimilated this expectation – which is embedded in the annual appraisal exercise - who seem to have a relatively unproblematic engagement with research. These respondents regard research as an integral part of their academic role and some, as Robert observes, see it as a marker of their academic identity:

"...But then I'm also aware that the criteria for academia are working towards things like PhDs, things like having research, things like working at a certain level of scholarship..."

Robert, Social Worker Academic

For Ellen, a nurse-academic, research is a mechanism by which she can claim and maintain academic authority as a teacher, in a discussion about the relationship between research and teaching she notes: *"...to me they just sit together, because if you're researching a subject you know that better than reading out of a book,..."*. It is the immersive properties of research – both in terms of knowledge acquisition and exposure to the practice field - that are of most interest and use to Ellen. As an academic practice research enables her to maintain the currency of both her disciplinary and practice knowledge, these are the foundations of her academic authority.

Her colleague, Elaine – as illustrated in the previous chapter – has a somewhat ambivalent, and at times resistant, relationship to academia. Having finally established herself as a teacher it is now taking some time, six years, to align herself with the scholarly underpinnings of academic life:

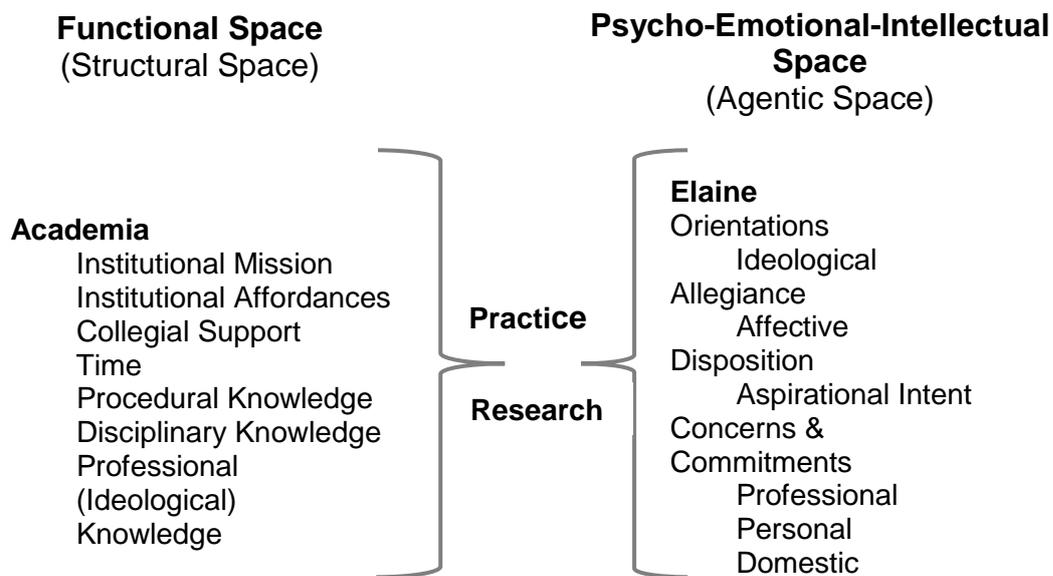
“...I think it’s taken a long time for me to accept that is part of my role – but I think it is across the whole university, that it’s taken quite a long time. Um, and that is growing. Because I am now thinking I’ve, even in, um, perhaps more in a professional way of how my role as an academic can still influence clinical, um, practice and how I can use where I am now to my advantage. So having that understanding about research, and having people in the Faculty that do, ...”

Elaine, Nurse Academic

In a simple way Elaine’s commentary reflects both the interplay of time-space-and-social relations in the forging of an identity and the potential of research – like teaching – to be an axial point of multimembership and identity negotiation (Figure 6b). Elaine’s identity potential has grown - beyond teaching - over the time that the expectations of the institution have evolved. It appears that she has decided to engage with (or subject herself) to these expectations rather than continuing to evade or resist them because – through the effect of time and supportive collegial relations - she can see how the functional interests (“mission”) of the institution can be aligned with her abiding professional concern to “*improve*” practice. This does not exactly ‘make’ Elaine an academic, rather she is using the resources of the university to pursue a personal project centred on her professional concerns. Arguably it is her professional identity that is to the fore and enhanced in the process, and that contains the interests of that membership, not otherwise featured here. Whilst remaining ambivalent about research Elaine’s intended approach

reflects the strategy adopted by those participants who had incorporated a researcher identity into their academic persona.

Figure 6b : Research – An Axial Point of Multimembership and Identity Negotiations



Nonetheless, like many of the respondents, Elaine’s engagement with research is intentional rather than actual at this point. The majority of participants had not pursued their avowed research interests and the mitigating factors seemed to be time and competence. Respondents claimed not to have time (as similarly reported by Gornall et al, 2013), chose to use time in pursuit of other interests (for example, purposefully directing energy at teaching and administration), and/or seemed not to know how to use the scholarly time available to them.

Greg, the nurse academic at UniversityWide is a case in point. He expresses an interest in doing research and claims it is something he anticipated on entering the university. It is evident however that he struggles with the affordances of scholarly time and the purpose and pursuit of scholarly work:

“...an idea ...I get interested in, then I go and read about it or find out about it or search for an article about and so the scholarly activity is sort of, almost a by-product of me rather than something that’s being enhanced by being an academic I think. ...Um, but it feels like it’s stolen time you know that, somehow or other there’s a batch of ...to do, um, I’m constantly in a state of anxiety about the things I haven’t done, yeah? Um, scholarly activity doesn’t feel like it’s got a huge amount of structure to it, yeah? It only becomes focussed if I’m writing a paper and knowing the angle, or knowing where I’m going with that, I need that structure.”

There is a seeming formlessness of scholarly intent in this account. Greg does not appear to know how to make something out of the time he has and hence, perhaps, describes it as “...stolen time...”. Elsewhere he feels guilty for taking scholarly time which he cannot legitimate as in his physical absence from the university he is “...terribly worried about what’s going on here, that something disastrous might happen and there’s no one to deal with it...”. His commentary may reflect the outcome of a socialisation process in which, as noted earlier, academic work is primarily conceptualised in terms of the doing of teaching and other student-focussed activities. Alternatively, it may reflect a strategy whereby Greg is evading or subverting the enablements available to him (O’Byrne, 2013 provides a similar description and analysis of academic working practices among Irish academics). Nonetheless, beyond the affordances of designated scholarly hours there appear to be few structural mechanisms that support the development of a scholarly

identity. Although the respondents are established as teachers and mentors in practice few are exposed to research and have not arrived in the university equipped to pursue scholarly activities. For some long-established members of faculty, such as Greg, the problematic of research may be compounded in the absence of doctoral experience.

The time that Greg takes is scholarly or self-directed time and is built into workload modelling at UniversityWide and UniversityAffiliate. The availability of similar time was not discussed at UniversityCity but is not uncommon across the sector. It is time that is often afforded for doctoral studies and writing for publication, this may be why Greg found the time is difficult to secure in the first instance. Others seeking “...*workload relief*...” – which is conflated with time availability - to pursue research and writing are equally unsuccessful in their attempts to secure institutional investment in their projects. Both Kate (social worker academic at UniversityWide) and Kevin (social worker academic at UniversityAffiliate) are disaffected by this experience. Consequently they are disinclined to invest any more of themselves, as they see it, on behalf of their respective institutions. Kevin, having entered the university with an expectation of being involved in research, reflects on three initiatives that did not materialise:

“...when I talked to my manager about the amount of effort I’d put in and how nothing had happened, um, I suppose ...I was actually asking for ... a bit of workload relief to actually put some work time into it... And the message was explicit and very clear “if you want to do research you have to use your own time for it.” ...”

Kate's account is a similar tale of refusal and, having just reduced her working hours, cites the experience as a significant reason for her gradual withdrawal from the university. Kate and Kevin begin to mirror the case examples in Colley et al's (2007) study of academic's 'unbecoming'. It is a replication of the ideological drift seen in the identity orientations to practice – where there is a disjuncture between personal-professional and institutional projects there are few trajectory options other than marginalisation and/or exit (Barnett, 2013).

This discussion highlights that although most respondents intend to be research active, few actually realise their intention. These academics do not come into the university as researchers but as practitioners from a field which, by their accounts, rarely explicitly uses research knowledge. This, along with the reported weight of teaching responsibilities and associated time affordances, a lack of familiarity with scholarship and individuals' untutored capacity to undertake research all impede the actualisation of the intention. Nonetheless, where participants do express an intention or actively pursue research interests the purpose is always to "*influence practice*". As such highly personalised professional-disciplinary interests (and thereby identities) are foregrounded rather than institutional interests.

Doctoral Studies

This section explores participants' engagement with doctoral work and the meaning this holds for them. As previously noted, doctoral work is the primary means by which individuals undertake research and for some it is the most

significant exposure they have to research. Among the respondents just under half (n=8) were PhD holders or registrants, which reflects the historical and changing nature of these professional-academics in the university. In the literature doctoral study is understood as the ‘apprenticeship’ of academia. As such it can be seen as an identity-shaping technology of the academy in that: functionally, it represents a norm by which academic identity can be claimed/conferred; practically, through engagement one *becomes* both generally an academic and specifically a certain kind of academic (as shaped by the disciplinary context, for example). Whether – once respondents are inside the university – doctoral studies are viewed as a potential enablement or constraint (or coercive institutional strategy) is a matter of individual perception. A perception which can again be traced back to the balance of orientations, concerns and commitments held by individuals.

There are differences of emphasis in how the respondents experienced and understood their doctoral work that reflect a mix of autonomy and compliance: for some it is a self-directed undertaking that presents as the most fulsome experience and expression of being an academic; for others it is a necessary but reluctant acquiescence to workplace expectations.

Where doctoral study was experienced as an embodiment of scholarliness it had the potential to make someone *feel* like an academic:

“The most, the most, um, influential time, where I actually felt like an academic was when I was on sabbatical, writing up my PhD.”

...That was the strongest time I felt like an academic,”

Kate, Social Worker Academic, UniversityWide

The process is constituted through of a number of scholarly practices (eg: reading, thinking, writing) in the pursuit of professional concerns (ie: the focus of inquiry) that generate a sense of expertise, and the affordance of time. This was a particular feature for those who had taken sabbatical leave where the quality and quantity of time was described as a ‘luxury’. Nonetheless, the unmanaged, uninterrupted, self-directed, autonomous time facilitated deep engagement with the subject matter and the acquisition of authentic expertise. Kate and Val’s reflections on experience express this enactment of their scholarly selves:

“...because I was on sabbatical, I could plan my work and how I did my work for myself. I didn’t have any admin., ...or any pressures that way, I could just focus on the work that I was doing –.And being able to, you know, really have the time to look at that in depth,...”

Kate, Social Worker Academic, UniversityWide

“... I loved doing it you know. ...I just loved reading, writing, I loved academic discourse, um, you know the setting-up of frameworks, the testing of ideas. And I, I chose the subject. ...”

Val, Nurse Academic, UniversityAffiliate

These identity-making properties of doctoral work are probably best summed-up by Eleanor (social worker academic, UniversityAffiliate):

“...I think it’s the, the active pursuit of, um, you know, knowledge and research which sort of gives you, um, a clearer academic identity.”

Eleanor also observes that her involvement in doctoral work – without reference to its content – attracts “...*kudos and importance.*” from others and sees this as a process of “...*setting apart...*” to what she calls another “...*level of academia.*” The implication is that the attribution of authority arises out of her visible concentrated engagement with scholarly work, her prioritisation and practice of scholarship (for example, resolutely taking scholarly leave) and the symbolic value ascribed to doctorates. Effectively, she is describing the technologising properties of the doctorate expressed through the validating regard of others, her volitional adherence (subjectification) to the demands and rituals of scholarly doctoral study, with the overall effect making her *feel* more academic.

Where Eleanor’s experience illustrates that the academic capital of doctoral studies – and status - can lend itself to identity enhancing make-over and/or reinvention, Robert’s experience illustrates the potential threat of such engagement. Located in UniversityWide – where the intention is to extend individual and institutional capital - Robert views the doctorate as the “...*notional gold standard for being an academic.*”. Nonetheless, his own journey highlights how the possibility of failure (as opposed to non-completion) destabilises existent identity claims and future projections of the self, he explains:

“... One of the agonies for me, is doing a PhD myself, and it’s not going particularly smoothly, ...I’ve come to terms with it a bit more now, ...that was really, and it still is, kind of bothering me about my identity. Because if my job is as an academic and there is a possibility of not meeting, you know, an academic box not being ticked, that would make me feel bad and it would make anyone feel bad. It’s a constant struggle of invention and reinvention I think, but... ...there are other things you can’t avoid like “have you got a PhD?” “No.” In which case,

how are you going to deal with that identity-wise? And one would have to find a narrative...

Robert, Social Worker Academic

In this account the doctorate becomes a high stakes qualification that, in the prospect of not making the grade, would require a narrative of identity reconstruction. In this study Robert's is a lone voice but worth noting. Where he has taken on this risk – perhaps coerced by institutional agendas and influenced by personal and domestic concerns and commitments – others have resisted and/or evaded the same (local) pressures.

Evasion here – as in the case of research – is manifested as time and focus: the length of time individuals have been in post without having pursued higher degrees; the inability to identify and commit to a project. This latter point may illustrate – again – the lack of infrastructure to support the generation and fruition of academic projects, an absence of collegiate support in the academic field. It may also reflect the lack of disciplinary history and culture argued to impede the development of these professional-disciplines. Although, commitment to practice-discipline interests can be used to serve as a mechanism of resistance. For example, for Greg and Tyrell - at UniversityWide – any anticipated doctoral study has to be of value to practice, not merely an academic exercise. Both express the intention to make 'a difference' to practice:

“... I mean I've got numerous ideas, they... I suppose there's that thing for me about practice, it has to be somehow or other directly related to practice. If you do a PhD it has to be something that makes a difference, yeah?”

Greg, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

While Greg seems to think that the university itself would be resistant to the utility of a practice-focussed project, seven of the eight doctoral studies reported – undertaken or in-hand – were directly practice-focussed. As such they represent a manifestation of McNamara’s (2008) ideal (nurse) research as the connective link between the academic and practice fields, thereby rendering the academy as relevant to practice. The relevance to practice both here, in terms of doctorates, and where professional-academic research interests intersect with the institutional interests of academe, is a moot point.

Nonetheless, in principle it would seem that doctoral studies – along with teaching and research – can be a site of professional and academic identity-making and integration. Similarly it is a site of a reflexive personalised academic identity-making in that the focus of individual’s engagement reflects their ‘commitments and concerns’ to themselves as persons and to a ‘cause’ (Archer, 2000), in these instances located in the wider professional or practice community.

Conclusion

This chapter has constructed the academic practices of teaching and scholarship as ‘technologies’ that shape the identities individuals’ cultivate. In so doing it highlighted how, for some people variously and simultaneously, the structural affordances and constraints of the university can promote and/or challenge and threaten the construction or maintenance of identities. In essence the chapter suggests that these affordances and constraints can be understood in terms of:

- Time, for example: availability to pursue academic interests; over which to build or lose an identity/identities;
- Academisation, for example:
 - where teaching requires a relearning of professional-disciplinary knowledge that recontextualises practice knowledge and experience, thereby reshaping the practitioner into the academic;
 - where research (doctoral study in particular) provides a space in which individuals can practice being ‘an academic’ (eg: thinking and writing)
- Space, for example: teaching and scholarship as sites of identity integration where a congruency between professional-practice and academic self can be negotiated.

These ‘technologies’ are not merely technical or totalising in effect. The academising processes are mediated through the concerns and commitments held by individual agents. It is in this mediating space that professional-practitioner and academic selves are integrated. Where individuals personalise occupational roles teaching and research can become practice spaces in which professional identity – as expressed in professional concerns such as the will to “*improve practice*” – is foregrounded. There is no tension here between the academic and professional self, in this space the interplay between the “*This is who I am*” of the professional self with the “*This is what I do*” of the academic self is a realisation of the autonomous professional-academic.

Nonetheless, such an integrated self is less easily obtained by those who perceive a lack of congruence between their professional-practice identity and the interests – or priorities - of the institution. Where individuals experience a mismatch between their teaching responsibilities and their professional-disciplinary expertise, and/or where personalised professional research interests and those of the institution do not coincide – the academising project can breakdown. In these instances professional identity may be foregrounded but it is held apart from – alienated and disaffected – its academic self.

Having explored identity-making through the mediating technologies of teaching and scholarship, the next chapter considers identity-negotiation in the interface between the academy and practice.

Chapter 7

Negotiating the Divided Academic Self

Introduction

The previous chapter considered how the structural technologies/affordances of the university shape academic identities among social worker and nurse academics. This chapter moves on to explore how – having relocated to the university – proximities and distances from the practice field influence the identities participants assume and cultivate. The discussion is primarily pursued through a focus on the personalised occupation of the teaching role, rather than scholarship *per se*. Where in the previous chapter both teaching and scholarship were constructed as sites of identity integration, here teaching (in particular) is reconstructed as a troublesome site of identity strain. This is a tension that emerges out of the ‘borderlands’ between academy and practice, between theory and practice (Ousey & Gallagher, 2010; Smith & Allan, 2010; Lyons, 1999), and it arises along two axis:

- i) the temporal and material proximities and distances between the professional-academic and the practice field;
- ii) the differential knowledges of the academic and practice fields (as illustrated in Figure 6a, p.206).

Effectively these axes hold the content of the triple-helix of identity negotiation illustrated in Figure 1, p.20. As such the discussion here addresses the areas of

the research concerned with how academic identities are shaped in the relationship between the academy, the profession and practice. This clearly influences how individuals' understand their personalised academic role and its associated responsibilities, including the ways in which they engage with professional-disciplinary and pedagogic knowledge.

Among the interviewees it is the relationships between these proximities and differential knowledges that generates a discourse focussed on currency, credibility and authenticity. These themes are framed as problematic and can be seen as a reflection of “...*an anxiety arising from the anomaly that they are not directly practising what they teach.*” (Smith & Allan, 2010 : 220). For some the anxiety may also be located – or emphasised – in their ambivalent or resistant orientations to the practice field and/or profession, which may challenge their integrity. Hence, in their roles as professional-academics and in the identity-making space created by teaching the participants are negotiating their divided self – as surfaced by the structural interests and tensions between the three fields of profession, practice and academia. Having defined its terms the chapter considers some examples of these identity negotiations.

Defining Terms : Proximities and Distances; Currency and Credibility; Authenticity

Proximities and Distances

- Temporal distances : are concerned with the length of time since a respondent was last directly involved in practice. In this study participants had been out of practice from between nine months to sixteen years or more;
- Material proximities : are concerned with the contact – albeit mediated –with the practice field. This varied across the study group with some claiming their only contact with practice was through their students, while others cited link tutor roles or entrepreneurial roles, and others trusteeships. Only two participants appeared to work directly with service users.

Distance from the field over time and closeness to the field through role responsibilities, professional and personal relationships effect how individuals understand their currency and credibility, as teachers in particular. The greater the temporal distance from the field the less current and credible an individual *feels*. Material engagement with the field – based around the work role or through voluntary work – enables individuals to *feel* credible, it may also enhance their sense of currency. Smith and Allan (2010) whilst recognising the challenges for full-time faculty to maintain clinical work discuss the strategies some nurse educators use to try and be *present* in practice. The discourse of currency and credibility highlights the complex relationship between academic and practice knowledge – and is a focus of concern among longer established nurse academics.

Currency and Credibility

For the purposes of the discussion in this chapter 'currency' is a property of the temporal distance from the practice field and is concerned with the *immediacy* of an individual's *experiential* knowledge of the field. In terms of the academic's relations with the field of practice currency is not about up-to-date disciplinary knowledge *per se* which, even where it exists, does not necessarily compensate for the perceived diminution of currency and credibility over time. Where currency is discussed, it is the authority of their *practice knowledges* (including the political-economic context) and skills that is of most concern among the respondents. This is where currency transmutes into credibility.

Ousey and Gallagher (2010) discuss the emphasis on credibility among nurse academics but argue that the meaning of the concept is ill-defined, and – unlike Carr (2008 & 2007) – they are concerned to bring closure to the discussion of credibility in nurse education. Nonetheless, it did arise in the interviews where, without formally defining their terminology, participants discuss credibility as both a personal internalised good, secured and shaped variously through their engagements with the practice field; and as an externally conferred legitimacy, manifested through relations with students and practitioners. The interviews suggest that credibility can broadly be understood to mean two things: i) on-going practice competence, that is the *doing* of practice – particularly in nursing; ii) familiarity with “...*the realities of practice...*”, that is an experiential empathic knowledge & understanding of the workplace (Smith & Allan, 2010), the *being* or *living* of practice. This latter understanding of credibility was shared across both

practice-disciplines. In this formulation the *doing* of practice is, for example, assessing health or social care needs and recommending or undertaking interventions; and the *being* of practice is proximal familiarity with the context of practice, for example: resource constraints, the refiguring of practice as administration, and/or the physio-emotional content of practice.

Authenticity

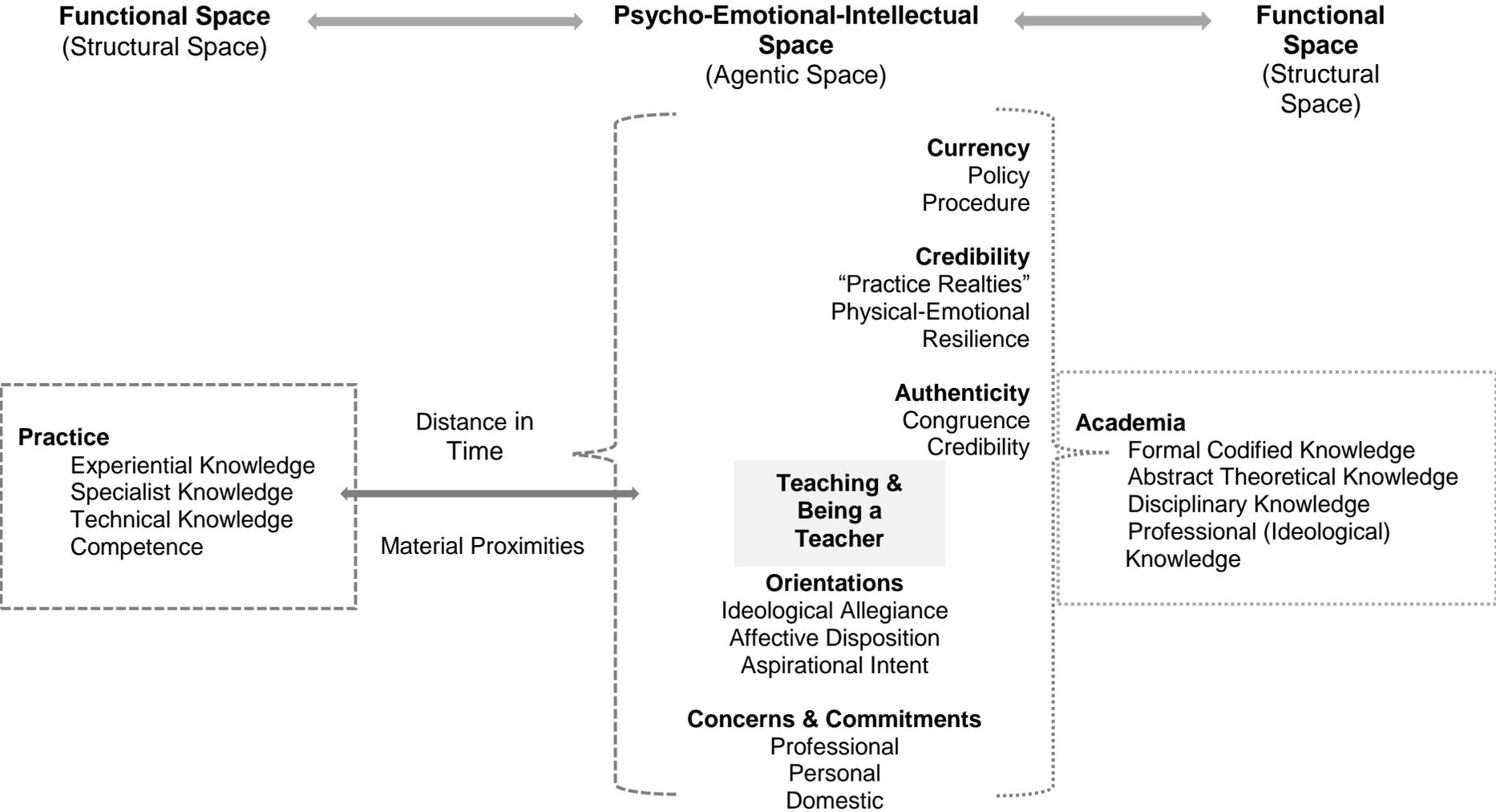
In this chapter and those that follow authenticity is understood as similarly outlined by Kreber (2010) - as an internalised psychological state of equilibrium that arises out of an individual's negotiation of the congruence between the values and beliefs they hold, and their mode of living (eg: the actions they take, the life-planning decisions they make) – and so is synonymous with a more general idea of credibility. As an internalised state, albeit enacted and seen by others, authenticity is held beyond the evaluation of others.

Authenticity negotiations are inferred in the interviews where – for example - individuals evaluate the value and purposefulness of the work they undertake; and/or where there is accord or dissonance in their orientation to practice and/or academia, the responsibilities of their occupational role in the university and the expression of their academic persona. Such negotiations are also evident where there is a calculation in the relationship between means and ends, as highlighted in the previous chapter's exploration of scholarship. Effectively authenticity is dependent upon an individual's intent/purpose and is therefore contingent, as such

it is a property that is cultivated as part of the identity-building project. Situating authenticity as contingently and temporally negotiated rather than as an essentialist property may make seemingly uncomfortable organisational places/practices/experiences tolerable in the pursuit of alternative ends. As Archer (2000), Wenger (1998) and Giddens (1991) theorise, the emphasis of individual's interests or motivations fluctuate over time, this would suggest that authenticity also has a similar fluidity as it is shaped in relation to the focus of an individual's interests and motivations.

As Figure 7 illustrates, it is the relationship between distances and proximities, the attendant discourses of currency, credibility and authenticity, alongside personal orientations and 'concerns' that encapsulates the constant negotiation between respondents' academic and practice identities – here instituted in their teacherhood. In Figure 7 the weight of the containing lines – diffuse between the academy and the teacher, dense and blocked between practice and the teacher - represents the material degrees of distance and proximity (and hence permeability) between the individual and the respective fields, both of which are seen to be structural spaces exercising interests and claims on the agentic negotiating space of the individual. For the purposes of the discussion - in Figure 7 - the practitioner attributes of currency, credibility and authenticity are held by the individual at some distance from the practice field, on the edge of the academic space. These attributes cannot easily be relinquished (although in some cases they may be) but rather are renegotiated and reframed in their distance from practice and proximity to academia. In Figure 7 'orientations' and 'concerns and commitments' are centrally aligned with the individual as they are understood to be in a state of

Figure 7 : The Divided Academic Self – Teaching, An Axial Point of Multimembership and Identity Negotiations



constant internalised negotiation. The various iterations of this negotiation will influence how each individual reframes currency, credibility and authenticity in the ever-extending temporal distance from the practice field.

Temporal Distance

Teacherhood : Currency and Credibility

This part of the chapter considers the ways in which distance from the practice field, as articulated through the passage of time, affects how individuals understand their practitioner capital in terms of their currency and credibility as a teacher. The interviewees foreground the criticality of practitioner knowledge and experience (practice-discipline) and in many respects - in contrast to Fanghanel's analysis (2009) - 'backstage' the primacy of pedagogical technique (ie: professional academic teacherliness). In doing so the study highlights how the integrated space of academic autonomy can also be a space of academic tension and/or vulnerability.

Having been in academia for ten years Della is representative of the majority of participants. The temporal distance from practice means different things and has differential effects for people. For some, like Della, it can have an adverse impact on classroom confidence where teachers have lost access to their practitioner experience and direct practice knowledge:

“...you would think you’d get more confident with teaching, but quite honestly I think I had more confidence ... in those first few years after I’d left practice. I don’t recall angsty at all about teaching. I mean, I think there is a combination of circumstances, partly, partly it’s having less recall about my practice days and perhaps also being aware that my practice days were, go back a decade or more. .. I’m not saying I’m a complete gibbering wreck, ... but I don’t feel, I haven’t got that sort of, what I think the students like, what is, good case examples from last week and things, and I can kind of dredge them up, but only just...”

Della, Social Worker Academic, UniversityWide

The experience Della describes reflects the lost immediacy of her ‘practice stories’, and the waning presence in the classroom of her practitioner self. To compensate for the deficiency of her narrative stock Della wrote fictional case studies or took such examples from books. Although she was the author of this case material, it still did not satisfactorily foreshorten the distance between the field and her teaching, these fabrications of practice lacked the vibrancy that her personal experience had brought to the classroom: *“...I do use practice examples but they are not quite as sort of vivid, they’re not my own...”*. The lack of ownership is a reiteration of the distance between Della’s practitioner self and her academic self, where she has turned to abstracted and theorised knowledge in the classroom. For Della, as an ex-practitioner, her recourse to *“...theory...”*, as she describes it - the generalised and mediated knowledge of the case study - seems to challenge her confidence in her professional-academic persona. The seeming significance of the *“...live...”* case study in social work education is reinforced in Chris’ observations:

“...Students are very astute, ... If you are just referencing a case scenario from a text book they seem less interested. If you do, as I did ..., ‘I did, I experienced, something like this’, it triggers, I see a spark in their eyes,...

“...it builds the relationships, absolutely. At the core of my relationships with students is, I think, the strength of my expertise in the field of practice.”

Chris, Social Worker Academic, UniversityWide

The inference here is that practice narratives are a site and mechanism of teacher authority and credibility, not only useful as illustrative material. Carr (2007) makes similar observations from his studies of nurse educators and highlights the significance of ‘practice stories’ in teaching. However, where Carr (2007) observes that the ‘stock’ of stories needs to remain fresh, Chris is less concerned with the passage of time. By his own account he continues to draw on practice experience from over ten years ago.

In contrast to the specificity of Della’s teaching – created within the axial affordances of teaching (Figure 6a, p.206) – Chris’ reflections suggest that his stories are used to draw out generic professional learning (eg: respect, valuing diversity) rather than ‘how to be a mental health social worker’, for example. This is not an evaluative judgement but an observation on how the differential use or experience of time between Della and Chris implies that distance from the field can be more problematic – in terms of currency and credibility – where the academic holds or cultivates through their orientations, concerns and commitments practice-discipline expertise. Effectively, temporal distance from the field may be less problematic when teaching to the principles or ideology of the profession, rather than the specifics of a practice domain.

Like her social worker peers, Erin acknowledges that her direct practice knowledge has reached a limit in the classroom:

“...I think what you have to be careful of is, you know, you’re not always relying on, not always relying on ...experience from the 1990s...”

... because actually the world of social work has changed quite a lot. ...But I think there is a challenge for us to keep ourselves kind of relevant and, you know, to make sure we know what the reality of practice is like...”

Erin, Social Worker Academic, UniversityAffiliate

Where Della resorted to academic theory to address the vacuum created by her distance from practice, Erin cites the recruitment of service users and practitioners into the classroom as a means of compensating for her out-of-date experience. Although social work, like nursing, is a story-fuelled practice it seems that Erin’s narrative stock is of less value than that of those still embroiled in the professional world. Again, Carr (2007), who is critical of the split between practice and the academy in nurse education, argues that over a short time “...*previous practice expertise quickly becomes basic competence and then merely a memory of lost skills.*” (2007: 898) This seems a harsh assessment, assuming a decline in skill and knowledge rather than any possibility of enhancement. Both Erin and Carr appear to infer that ‘relevance’ and ‘competence’ are the privilege of the practice field; this poses the question as to what change in this domain is being privileged.

In the reference to “...*the world of social work...*” it is not clear where Erin’s attention is focussed – the psycho-sociological experiences and needs of service users, the bureaucratic practice of social work, and/or the administrative practice

of the profession itself. Linda, even given her recent appointment as a nurse academic, shares similar concerns and connects the challenge of remaining current and credible with the pace of change in the practice domain:

“...in nursing things change so quickly, um, not necessarily with the patients or the clients that we see, um, but with the structures and the paperwork and those kinds of things, you quickly feel that you’re being, that you’re, you know, a little bit out of it. And that your clinical integrity isn’t what it is, what it was. And, you know, I wonder a lot whether I ...if I can really have academic integrity in nursing if I’m not a practitioner anymore? ...”

Linda, Nurse Academic, UniversityCity

Here the emphasis is on the changing context and practices of the bureaucratic workplace – procedural infrastructure, the administration of health and the patient – rather than, for example, the direct ‘hands-on’ care of the patient. At the moment, Linda’s access to her practitioner self is still immediate and she is confident that she carries currency and credibility into the classroom. This is a currency and credibility that is about both the working practices of the field and direct care practices.

As a long-established nurse academic, however, Ellen reflects on the impossibility of the currency mission: having been out of practice for over seventeen years she can no longer use her own practice in the classroom and, although up-to-date with disciplinary knowledge is not *“...up-to-date necessarily with all the practice knowledge.”* In the circumstances she positions herself as a facilitator of student learning rather than a direct transmitter of practice knowledge, her role is to help the students think about *their* experience. This construction of the academic self

represents a pro-active and agentic delineation of the parameters of her practice self in the academy, she is determining the range of her practice authority and thereby maintaining her own integrity. As she says: “...*you cannot try to fool a student to thinking you are current when you are not.*”.

In some ways the anxiety about practice currency – as reflected in contemporaneity, or otherwise, of classroom stories – can seem a little misplaced. For example, fifty percent of student learning on nursing and social work courses is actually located in the practice field where, as Ellen’s approach reinforces, students will have their own direct exposure to practice, their own stories and access to the clinical practice expertise of their mentors/practice educators (Ousey & Gallagher, .2010). Equally, even though there is a national legislative framework underpinning health and social care provision, policy implementation guidance for every sector of the arena, and various professional body codes of conduct (eg: via the NMC and HCPC) ‘practice’ is not homogenous across hospitals, departments, trusts, local authorities or regions. Such a heterogeneity of practice should, arguably, counterbalance concerns about the historicity of individual experience.

As a new appointment, however, Linda’s observations suggest that it is not so much the *doing* of practice as *being* a practitioner, or having a proximal empathic knowledge & understanding of the practice context that instils student confidence and confers credibility upon the teacher:

“... I guess relative to many of the other lecturers here I’m pretty new out of practice, ...I’ve got lots of social networks at the hospital so I’m quite visible to the students, I’m there often and they like that, um, they like it very much and,

*um, ...it excites them, you know, um, not only to have anecdotes ... anybody can do that but I guess it's fresher ... and it rings true, ... with the students if you sound current, if you know the kinds of things they are going to experience,...
Um, you are a real link for them and they've got more confidence in you...
... they know when you, um, have some clinical integrity I guess and it makes them feel safer with you I think."*

Linda, Nurse Academic, UniversityCity

Linda's observations underline the arguments made by Ousey & Gallagher (2010), Smith & Allan (2010) and Carr (2007) - that understanding the student experience, being in touch with their experience of the stresses and strains of the practice world is central to academic credibility and, by inference, authenticity. From her own perspective, Linda's recent experience and knowledge of the realities of the clinical context builds and sustains her confidence as a teacher. For the time being, unlike Della perhaps, she can be sure she knows what she is talking about. The attendant worry is that this a practitioner capital she will lose over time.

The diminution of practice capital and the renegotiation or reassertion of a professional-academic identity is illustrated in the experiences of Elaine at UniversityWide. At the time of the interview Elaine had been full-time in the university for six years and, whilst arguing for the continuing relevance of her experience, is concerned that its temporal distance renders it redundant in the estimation of students and practitioners. In the university students appear to call into question her current knowledge claims and her credibility:

"... Occasionally, when a student says 'when did you last do a shift?',... raises very uncomfortable questions for me, a little bit..."

And, in the practice arena, it seems that similar questions arise. She reports a conversation with a colleague in which a practitioner asked and observed:

“... ‘...you lot, um, when have you last worked in a clinical area?’... ‘...X, I mean she used to do some, but she hasn’t done any for years now... so that just goes to show you have no idea what it’s like to work in a clinical environment.’ ... I found that stirred up a lot of, um, feelings of, of anger really – that they would presume that just because I’m here, I’m in some sort of ivory tower and that I have absolutely no idea of what it is like for them.”

In both instances the questions cause a degree of emotional disturbance for Elaine, which ultimately is an annoyance – or anger – that she is not valued by students or practitioners, and that in their eyes she has lost her legitimacy as a nurse. At an intellectual level she goes on to reflect that she *does know* what practice – framed as ‘shifts’ – is like given her time in the field and, unlike other respondents, she is not so convinced that she has forgotten about practice reality. In her final analysis Elaine observes that whereas she does know about the practice world, it is the practitioners who do not know about her “...*ivory tower*...”. This observation highlights two particular things: i) an empathy gap between the academy and practice; ii) the assumed privilege of the practice field – predominantly the NHS hospital - as the primary legitimating site of nursing identity and nursing authority. Both of these problematics surface in the nurse academic literature and seem to reflect the continuing legacy of the foundational fault-lines of nurse education (as discussed in chapters one and eight).

In a sense, the students and practitioners are not as concerned as to whether or not Elaine can administer specific interventions as to whether she could withstand

the physical and psycho-emotional pressure of the practice field. As with Linda's students, they want to know that she knows "...*what it's like*..." but her situatedness in the university distances her from their lived experience. So, even though intellectually and experientially Elaine knows "...*what it's like*", her *affective* knowledge of practice is not current. It is on account of this perceived emotional distance from "...*the realities of practice*..." that others call into question her authority to speak to the practice world. Although occasionally perturbed by the lack of regard in which she is held and with little recourse to solving the dilemma of not being in practice, personally Elaine retains a professional-academic identity as a nurse teacher; an identity endorsed through her nurse teacher registration with the NMC. Her stance resonates with the exhortations of Ousey & Gallagher (2010) who promote the authority of the registering bodies to legitimate nominal identities.

Ultimately Elaine also holds onto the motivation that brought her into the university to teach, one that - based on her experiential knowledge of "...*what it's like*..." - further complicates her relations with the practice field but reinstates the authority of her nurse identity:

"...in some respects, I feel more credible ...but it is about that perception of 'can you do it?' It's that awful thing of 'those who can't teach', ...I find that very annoying. Because, because I think at least I've moved on and tried to develop things that I think I'm good at, and I'm passionate about. Because I ...always have to remind myself 'why you're doing this', because sometimes when it is difficult, I'm doing it because I want those nurses who go out to be good. And not to be lazy and lapse, and have poor practice. ..."

Where the preceding accounts have been tales of loss of, threat to and reclamation of practitioner identities in negotiating the integrity of the professional-academic, by contrast Robert has embraced the academicness of his academic role. As for others, Robert's distance from the field has meant "...*losing touch*..." with his personal identity as a social worker and losing touch with "...*the lived experience of being a social worker*...". However, he is not concerned with losing or maintaining the credibility of his own social work persona but with the potential his distance from "...*the realities of practice*..." has to undermine his empathic knowledge & understanding of the workplace. His awareness of this keeps the theoretical and critical gaze of his academic persona in check and actually *accentuates* his empathic engagement with students. Even so his experience, as a teacher involved in continuing professional development, draws his attention to some of the difficulties of the practice field so requiring him to manage some of the ambivalences of his orientation towards the practice field. This is a negotiation between his academic-self and his lost (forsaken) practitioner-self:

"...I kind of even find myself being a little bit critical of social workers... they're doing the job and I'm, I'm sort of thinking, "well hold on a minute", and from my academic position I might be a bit critical of how unreflective they are or what might be described as 'corner cutting' there might be or sort of atheoretical. And those things on reflection, I sort of think "how fair is that?", 'cause I know that – ... if I was back working day-to-day in the full-on grind of a social work job, you know, I'd be like them, at least I think I'd be like them."

Robert, Social Worker Academic

Robert's temporal distance from the field is not just about 'time out of practice' and credibility, "...*losing touch*..." also infers a process of forgetting and remembering. His empathic understanding of the social work learners – and of the practitioners

and practices into which he researches – requires him to remember ‘...*what it’s like...*’ to be a social worker. It reminds and reinforces for him that he does not want to be in practice and that any return to the world of practice “...*would require one hell of an adjustment,...*”. The memory and the empathy keep him ‘in touch’ but also create a tension in both his teaching and his research through which he tries to manage the knowledge relationship between the academy and practice. This becomes a discourse of authenticity as well as credibility.

Whilst expressing some concern at *not* being in practice, the commentaries offered by Elaine and Robert reflect something of the conflicted-committed orientations towards the field – explored in chapter five - that drove individuals out of practice and into the university. In their different ways they point up the tensions at the heart of the identity-negotiations experienced by some of these respondents. They reveal the cleavages individuals navigate between their commitments to the mission of the profession, the tiredness – physical, emotional, intellectual – of their practitioner-selves, and the demand to forge and present a credible, authentic professional-practitioner academic identity.

Material Proximities

This section of the chapter considers the ways in which temporal distance from the practice field is ameliorated through individuals’ physical proximities to the field; that is, their on-going contact and means of contact with the practice arena. As

noted elsewhere, some form of contact with the field is the way in which individuals endeavor to stay current and credible; as Ellen explains:

“... if you talk to colleagues... – ...we do something extra. And for me, I’m already doing one thing, I’m already a respite carer... ...so I get a bit of broader caring, and I’ve just signed-up to be a volunteer at a young people’s X. So, that for me, that gives me something outside the university, for me and my credibility, for my dilemma, not to do with the students, it’s about me feeling that I can satisfy my need to be credible.

...Because your credibility isn’t necessarily what you say in the classroom, it is how you feel yourself and I have to be personally credible.”

Ellen, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

Ellen’s observation really underlines the crisis of credibility discourse among nurse academics. She explains that such contact and involvement enables her to speak from her general on-going experience of the health and care world, and the lives of service users. Her participation affords her a degree of the lived experience already discussed. For others continuing relationships with colleagues in the practice field helps maintain a sense of professional identity, as Vicky says *“...I think it’s about proximity to social workers and social work and social work practice, I suspect.”*. With a seemingly more integrated approach Leslie regards her continuing involvement with practice as constituent element of her wholly realized professional self:

“...that model of professional behaviour is one that I like. I like the idea of doing research, teaching, helping other people learn, your responsibility to the profession ...academic practice that keeps you thinking about how you do your practice and actually doing your practice so you’re not just sitting aside...”

... *that to me is about being a professional.*”

Leslie, Social Worker Academic, UniversityAffiliate

However, as continued direct engagement with practice is not a role requirement for any of the academics interviewed, maintaining a proximity to the field is time-expensive. This is particularly where Murray and Aymer (2009) identify the personal costs and professional identity strains for social worker academics and other professional-academics, noting the literal pressure on their time maintaining commitments to the academy and the field. Given the extension of the academic role, as asserted across the literature, many observers now reflect on multiple, stretched and unboundaried professional time (Gornall et al, 2013; Barnett, 2008). Leslie’s realisation of her professional self is a manifestation of all of these different kinds of time. It is for example achieved outwith the bounds of the university and reflects a significant time investment – Ellen’s “...*something extra...*” - in her personalised professional identity.

To varying degrees similar kinds of investment were made among a number of the participants. Six of the respondents (n=2 nurse academics, n=4 social worker academics) continue to be involved in the practice field. Only two (social worker academics) can be said to have a direct relationship with practice in that: i) they continue to be employed by social work or social care agencies outside of the university; ii) that they work directly with service users. Otherwise for the remaining respondents proximity to practice is a mediated relation through:

- students and *their* experience;
- university placement and/or link tutor roles;

- professional and informal contact with practitioner-colleagues;
- strategic partnerships with the practice field (eg: working parties/workstreams, projects, regional networks);
- doctorates and research;
- trustee and governance roles;
- membership of professional or academic bodies.
- informal personal networks.

For those less able or less willing to invest personal time in maintaining links with the practice world, they achieve some degree of proximity through informal networks and/or involving themselves with low-key Trust based activities. Respondents discussed how having family and friends in the field kept them up-to-date with “*practice realities*” so they were current with local organizational politics (eg: restructurings, resource allocations). Whilst, arguably, a means of maintaining currency for one interviewee this form of updating only served to reinforce a range of negative orientations (to practice and profession) thereby making his identity-negotiations quite challenging. The example of participation in a Trust training event was a singular ritual engagement that – temporarily - served to promote relationships with students through a shared familiarity with the Trust as a workplace. In terms of low-key engagements the majority of respondents – both nurse and social worker academics - had an academic or link tutor role which required them to visit students, mentors and practice educators in placement areas but this was not discussed at any length in the interviews. Only Greg (nurse academic, UniversityWide) talked about this role and the ways in which it seemed to undermine his nurse-academic identity. Again, both Ousey & Gallagher (2010)

and Smith & Allan (2010) reflect similarly on the problematics of the link tutor role where, they argue, the academic has virtually become redundant in the practice arena. For Greg the focus on the completion of student-led paperwork in the placement setting, rather than on educational support to the clinical area, actually distanced him further from practice.

Nonetheless, for the remainder of the respondents, mediated relations with the practice field contribute to the on-going negotiation of their professional-academic identity. It is a negotiation constructed specifically in terms of currency – keeping up-to-date with developments and issues in the field, *knowing* the field; and credibility, an evidential and/or empathic engagement (*doing or living*) with the field. As ‘hands-on’ shift work is unrealizable for the nurse academics some have taken-up strategic roles within the field, as illustrated in Tyrell’s account:

“...I’ve always seen myself as a practitioner. And I still practice, ...I’m the co-manager of a X ...So I do that ...in my own time. And, um, I think for the first three to four years of my role here I struggled quite a lot because ...it was about credibility. ...with me, with me, that was with me. I think I had, I had done enough practice and I had worked in enough places to have credibility with colleagues, ex-colleagues, but I think from my own personal perspective I felt I could have been losing key practice skills because I was removed from the practice area.

Now I, taking a step back, I think that my practice is still quite current because I maintain the links that I have with practice colleagues. Um, by the nature of managing X I still have to be au fait with the things, the current issues that are happening out there for the client group.”

Tyrell, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

As with other respondents, Tyrell invests personal time in the maintenance of her internalised practitioner through her involvement in a charity and other professional-practice networks. This does not involve her in direct work with the client group and so her emphasis on the specificity of skills is absorbed into the wider experience of being in practice. This close proximity to the field affords her both real-world exposure of the sociological and political context of clients' lives and an experiential empathic knowledge of the field that enhances her relationship with students:

“...because we can take a very realistic stance of what’s happening and relate to a student to what they’re experiencing out there. ... and I think that gives them the confidence in what I am trying to impart or the discussions that I’m trying to raise with them.”

Her involvement with the practice allows Tyrell to lessen the distance between her academic and practitioner-self and so present a coherent and credible self to herself and others. Tyrell – like her colleague Ellen and the social worker academic Leslie at UniversityCity – is not so concerned with how *others* regard her as much as the (professional) integrity of her entire person, not just occupational role-credibility. In these ways – pursuing concerns and commitments within and through the three domains of academia, practice and profession – Tyrell, Ellen and Leslie reflect the mechanics of the triple helix of academic identity-making illustrated in Figure 1, p.20.

As can be seen, Tyrell's story situates some of the nurses' concern with 'credibility' as a matter of *practitioner* identity rather than *professional* identity (as a nurse).

This suggests a number of interpretations:

- A concern to maintain membership of the practitioner tribe through mediated, engagement with the field highlights again the assumed privilege of the practice field as the primary legitimating site of nursing identity and nursing authority;
- A struggle to resolve the congruence or coherence of academic role and professional identity - that is, *being a nurse* teaching in the university;
- An embodiment in the nurse-academic of the unresolved political tussle over the collective identity of nurses - as traced in the debate over its status as a profession or vocation (McNamara, 2009; Abbot and Meerabeau, 1998).

Whilst social worker academics might also be seen to contain unresolved political power struggles over the collective identity of social workers (as inferred in chapter 1), a similar 'crisis' of currency and credibility is less evident. With the exception of Della (at UniversityWide) - who refuted being a social worker because she was no longer a practitioner - the discussion of currency, *per se* was not as explicit among the social worker academics and nor did they express concerns about the credibility of their social work identities. It seemed sufficient that proximity to the field mediated primarily through their support of student placements and cpd teaching informed their general knowledge of the practice environment. Empathic knowledge of practice – encompassing its stresses and strains – was, as illustrated through Robert earlier, a matter of visceral recall. More specifically however,

where the discussion arose, actual proximity simply reinforced individuals' personal sense of 'professional identity' as a social worker. Material proximity itself was not a means of expressing or maintaining credibility.

For some of the social worker respondents (Kate at UniversityWide and Leslie at UniversityAffiliate) proximity, in fact, presents the potential to influence practice. This infers they felt they could speak with some *professional authority* to the field. Leslie, employed in practice as well as the university, noted the advantages of this dual positioning:

"...um, you have a lot of luxuries in the university ...you have..., ...academic practices that help actually form social work practice,... Um, I, so when I work [as a practitioner] it is easier for me to work because I have these other practices going on alongside...

..., that's why I write the X [in practice] and change them. And now, so I've been getting involved in changing things in practice because I have the opportunity to be in both, straddle both worlds, it works quite well."

Leslie, Social Worker Academic

For Leslie the university affords her goods that she can share in the practice environment. These goods or 'luxuries' include access to research, time to read, and conference attendance, which keep her abreast of the macro-level collective discourse in the practice field. She uses her national or regional knowledge to shape local operational practice (eg: guidance documents).

The affordances of having "*a foot in both camps*" was equally but differently appreciated by Robert (social worker academic, UniversityWide); a similar dual

positioning contributed to a prolific academic writing period and established his personal and public persona as an academic. Although, as has been seen, he has no desire or intention to return to practice he still does not think that the fecundity of ideas that emerged from (direct) practice can be replicated through the mediating practice of research. He says: “...*I speak to practitioners, I read about practice, I do bits of research that involves talking to practitioners. Um, but that isn't the same as having a foot in that camp really, to be honest...*”. Unlike the nurse academics, for Robert, the distance from practice does not raise a concern about his practitioner or professional credibility and identity – rather it raises a question about his academic identity. The concern surfaces his claims to academic authority, including his right to cast a distant, critical academic gaze into a world from which he is personally removed but which is the focus of his intellectual and empathic interest.

As among the nurse educators, the social worker academics' proximities to practice enable them to maintain a 'light touch' real-world currency with practice but – in this instance – it does not obviously serve to uphold their professional credibility. Where it was claimed the social worker academics' *professional* identity appeared to be held by the individual as a relatively abstract property, endorsed through professional registration. This framing is interpreted in Meadian (Morris, 1967) terms as *an identification with the profession*, being a *member of the profession*; with the profession in all its forms rather than the practice *per se* being the superordinate organizing point for identity claims and positioning. Wiles (2013) discusses this kind of identification with the profession among social work students. Jenkins (2008: 99-101) elaborates on how such *nominal* identification becomes a

virtual (in these terms a real or actualized) identity through a process that combines the collective and the individual both “...*experientially and practically*...” over time. In so doing he acknowledges, as does Wiles, that there are many ways to be a certain kind of person.

It is not the intention of this thesis to make evaluative judgements about how individuals or collectives negotiate and claim identities and identity positions. Nonetheless, it may be that the nurse academics’ attempts to maintain the credibility of their practitioner-selves is misplaced given – as they note – the pace of change in the clinical world. For some of the respondents it is the pace and nature of change in practice that calls into question *not* their credibility but their authenticity as professional-academics. This is most clearly surfaced in the discussion concerning the relationships between academic knowledge and practice knowledge.

Divergent Knowledges, Divided Selves : The Theory-Practice Boundary

Eleanor’s commentary illustrates that there are some incongruities in the relationship between academic and practice knowledge; in so doing it also surfaces attendant incompatibilities between the profession (as represented in the disciplinary knowledge held in the university) and the practice world:

“...But, you know, they’re [students] not actually practising it [skills], they’re just learning the theory. And, of course, what employers want is people that have got some knowledge of court skills, who know how to communicate with children. And

that bit is lacking, really. But then, on the other hand, we're not teaching them to, you know, fill in forms, are we?

... what depresses me when I go out on placement visits is you walk through these open plan offices and it's absolute silence, ... they're all on the computer. No-one's on the phone. ... so they went into the job because they want to communicate and work with people, so they've got interpersonal skills. But most of it is a faceless, sticking stuff on a screen, isn't it?

... so, in a way, although I'm saying we probably don't teach the right things, I think the whole concept of social work is at odds with what it really is – you know, in the field. ...”

Eleanor, Social Worker Academic, UniversityAffiliate

Although academia and the field of practice appear to share the same interest – the professional being of the social worker or the nurse – the construction of that being is understood very differently in the academy and in practice. As chapter five suggested, evidence of such differences emerges in the respondents' personal accounts of their experience as practitioners and, as this chapter discusses, these differences are foregrounded in the university teaching. From both perspectives the narratives suggest that there are few points of contact between the two worlds (as illustrated in Figure 6a, p.206) but rather – as Eleanor reflects – evidence of a degree of intellectual and ideological drift. Effectively this means that individual academics may not only be at a temporal and material remove from practice, but can also experience being at an intellectual and ideological remove from the field. Whilst, at the same time - as illustrated in Figures 6b (p.208) and 7 (p.225) – embodying the point of negotiation between the two fields.

Where temporal and material distance can fuel academics' concerns regarding their currency and credibility here, it is suggested, that for some their professional and personal authenticity and integrity is put under strain in their attempts to hold and resolve the problematic relationship between academic, professional and practice knowledges. As the respondents' descriptions indicate, they primarily encounter the tensions of this relationship in their classroom teaching role.

Where Robert (social work academic, UniversityWide) tries to mediate the challenging relationship between the academy and practice:

"... There are tensions to try and equip social work students with theory which at one level, you know, they are not going to use, if you know what I mean. ...So, from a ... teaching point of view I am sort of conscious of the fact that there is a need to keep it real but also to ground it in its academic and theoretical context. And that's not always easy... What's perturbing to me, either speaking to qualifying social work students or postqualifying, more particularly the post-qualifying, is that if they don't recognise their job in what you are talking about. ..."

Eleanor is less able to reconcile these dissonances, as she notes: *"...I don't know how you get round it..."*. She thinks that the practice field is unconducive to autonomous professional practice, requiring practitioners only to comply with its bureaucratic interests. Alongside her critique of the field she also thinks that, as a practical enterprise, social work is over-theorised and has lost sight of its core constituents (ie: service users) and their needs. A view shared by Robert who thinks that *"... Sometimes academic social work can just become completely decoupled from the job."* Their critique that echoes much of the analysis in the social work focussed literature (eg: Narey; 2014; Orme & Powell, 2007; Lovelock

et al, 2004). Ultimately, Eleanor's perspective leaves her feeling like "... *a bit of a traitor really*". Such appears her disaffection for the professional discipline and practice that questions arise as to how she can authentically or purposefully situate herself as a teacher of social work, if authenticity is understood as an internalised state based on congruities between values, beliefs and actions. This positioning very clearly locates Eleanor as a Conflicted Academic, a positioning that is examined in more depth in chapter eight.

There are similar challenges and questions for Greg for whom the practice environment is inimical – he describes talking with student groups about "...*their terrible experiences of care...*" – and, as noted in chapter five, regards the university education of nurses as limited and limiting. From his perspective there is an intellectual and ideological drift between academia and practice and inherently within both domains:

"And I imagined at the time that coming into a university would be more education rather than training? But I think I've been sadly mistaken, really.

... I feel like the, I feel like the drive is towards training, and the inconsistency between what we try and do in the university and what the expectations are in practice. I think the expectations in practice are that we train nurses, and somehow training implies, ...'now you know what to do, you'll do it', and I suppose I'm interested in 'can you think about why you're doing what you're doing? Do you understand the reasons why you're doing what you're doing? Can you do something different?' You know, if you think about it, rather than doing the same thing because you are trained to do it."

His account also describes a bureaucratised, technocratic workplace that does not want or require autonomous professional-practitioners. For Greg, as for Carr

(2007), 'nursing' as manifest in the working regimes of the NHS, configures the educational mission of the university as training. Greg emphasises the limitations of training, which he regards as holding less social capital than education *per se*, again reflecting his general discord with the education, philosophy and practice of nursing. Potentially this situates Greg as one of Beck & Young's (2005) alienated academics; with the profession's (and hence university's) dependence "...on the requirements of the external fields of practice...". (2005: 189) his personal constructs of professional disciplinary knowledge have been deconstructed by forces external to him. This problematizes his personal academic identity - and stretches the "*beneficial tension*" (2005: 190) between theory-and-practice.

These disaffections are obviously held within deeper personal contexts. Nonetheless, in many respects these personal tensions – and those of others described here - do reflect an embodiment of the complex structural dynamic between the academy, profession and practice. A complexity highlighted and problematized in the social work and nurse identity literature and theorised in Bernstein's (2000) discourse on pedagogy, knowledge jurisdictions and (teacher) identities. So, the problem is systemic and collective, nevertheless individually these academics need to resolve their personalised experience if they are – on their own terms - to authentically or purposefully situate themselves as teachers. Rather than attempting to reconcile the problematic knowledge relationship between the fields (which fuels the currency and credibility crises) some seem to transcend it by positioning themselves as 'generic' (Beck & Young, 2005) educators. Here the focus of their attention is on the general (professional/life-

skills) education of students. This the case for both Greg and Eleanor, among others, and is explored further in the constructions of the academic in chapter eight.

Conclusion

This discussion has endeavoured to highlight how the removal to the university situates individuals in a space which, for some, requires significant and on-going reconciliations of the relationship between their professional-practitioner and academic selves. Consequently, whereas in the previous chapter teaching and scholarship became sites of professional- academic identity integration, in the dynamic explored here the academic teaching role is a site of professional identity crisis. It is also a site of intellectual and emotional dissonance between the academy and practice, as embodied by the individual academic. As noted the literature highlights these are long-standing tensions. With perhaps the exception of Carr (2008 & 2007), the analysis of the tension is at a political, ideological and observational level with little focus on the lived experience of the academic in the classroom. The intention here has been to illuminate something of that lived experience, thereby exposing aspects of the mechanics in the identity-negotiating space of teaching and teacherhood.

In a final analysis the following chapter endeavours to explore how the dynamics between 'orientations', 'concerns and commitments' and the enablements and constraints of the university (ie: the integrating technologies of scholarship and research; the dividing properties of distance and proximity) contribute to the

generation of identifiable academic identity-positionings or types among the study group.

Chapter 8

The Professional-Academic, Identity Positioning

Introduction

This chapter explores how the dynamic between 'orientations' – that is, an individual's predisposing intellectual and affective regard towards the three domains of academia, practice and profession – and the institutional affordances and constraints of the university (ie: its identity-shaping technologies), generates identifiable academic identity-positionings or types among the study group. As a further iteration of the concepts presented in chapters five, six its purpose is to highlight and underline the nuanced complexity of individuals' academic identities and identity projects. These are explored through a series of individual illustrative sketches.

The typology is generated from commonalities among the *individual respondents* rather than from commonalities which arise within the particularities of practice-disciplines or institutional settings. Having said that, a degree of disciplinary – or collective - differentiation does appear to emerge in the categorisations of 'Moral' and 'Conflicted' academic, where the features of the moral academic are more obviously apparent among the nurse-academic respondents and those of the conflicted academic more evident among the social worker academics. Nonetheless, the analysis suggests that it is primarily personal agency – as driven by individualised orientations and commitments and concerns – that determines

identity-positions and presentations. However, as became apparent in chapter six, the identity potentials for all of the respondents are shaped by the primacy of the teaching role in this sector of the academy.

A Typology of Identity-Positionings

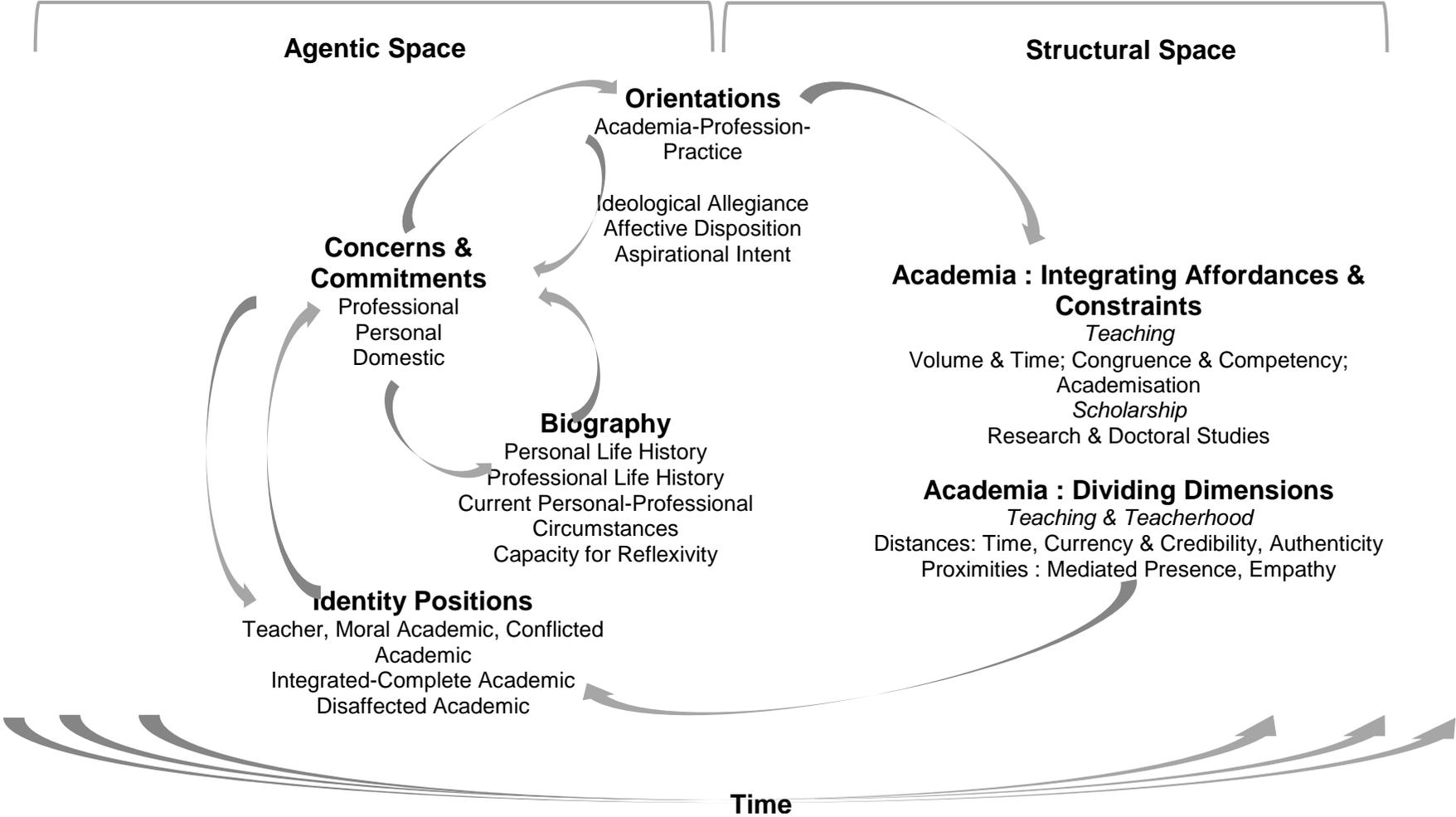
As chapter five indicates, the majority of respondents already – whilst in practice – held strong positive orientations to academia and could be described as ‘latent academics’. They can also be understood as nascent teachers as they had all held educational roles in the practice field - some as practice teachers, some as trainers or with strong training elements within their roles. Effectively, they entered the university with emergent or predominant teacher identities. This chapter now goes on to explore the types of identities individuals cultivate or negotiate once they have relocated to the academy and continues to argue that the five typological positionings are defined in terms of the interplay between:

- individual orientations to the fields of academia, the profession and practice;
- the structural technologies or affordances and constraints of the academy;
- individual motivations (or concerns and commitments), and the negotiation of their credibility and authenticity.

Figure 8 is a further dynamic iteration of this interplay and endeavours to extend the thematic map presented in chapter four. The practice field is not directly represented in the diagram but is ‘held’ in the orientations of individuals and in the

professional-disciplinary knowledge of the academy. The arrows indicate the cycle of negotiations, with orientations driving engagements with affordances and constraints of the university thus generating identity-positions. Biography, concerns and commitments, orientations and identity-positions are bound together in a subsystem of mutual feedback, and are the motivating force of any individual identity project. While the university shapes functional identity-making through the affordances of role array and working practices, it is each individual who negotiates those affordances and constraints – through the prism of their concerns and commitments. Here concerns and commitments are locked into a mutually evolutionary negotiation with biography. In a sense this subsystem is a material manifestation of the internalised 'I'-'You'-'Me' dialogue discussed in chapter two and illustrated in Figure 3, p.66. Indeed, the entire negotiating project is progressed through time, as referenced in the diagram. This is a symbolic representation of time, as has been discussed it operates differentially for individuals, collectives and organisations – both over time and in moments of time.

Figure 8 : Negotiating Professional-Academic Identities



It is proposed that the identity-types – Teacher, Moral Academic, Integrated-Complete Academic, Conflicted Academic, Disaffected Academic - are expressions of the ways in which respondents primarily manage the tensions and interests that bind-and-separate the academic, professional and practice worlds. In this process the individual academic is, literally, the site of the complex structural dynamic between the academy and practice as expressed in the dissonances between the knowledges and practices (ie: ways of being a nurse or social worker) of the university and those of the practice field. As explored in chapter seven, it is a dynamic that individuals have to mediate to forge personally credible and authentic identities as professional-academics. The typologies presented here further illustrate this dynamic and highlight the strategies individuals adopt to try and transcend, resolve, ameliorate or obscure the ideological and intellectual relationship between the academy, profession and practice. They are also a further iteration of how individuals manage the affordances and constraints of the university, or are shaped by the structural features of the institution. All of the identity positions – including the conflicted and disaffected positioning - offer their incumbents ways of being authentic and credible within their personal constructions of their academic and professional selves. Hence the descriptor 'professional-academic' encompasses all of the positions explored. In one iteration of the analysis the emergence of a 'practitioner-academic' category was anticipated but not realised. As highlighted in the previous chapter and in the commentary on research in chapter six, respondents' contact with practice is both constrained and mediated, this creates a tension at the heart of all of the identity types and positionings described.

In most respects the Integrated-Complete Academic identity type is the least problematic, most successful trope within the categorisations and is argued to be a positioning achieved over time, as evidenced among the longer-established respondents. At first consideration the Teacher categorisation also appears unproblematic and so it is, where it represents the embryonic academisation of new appointments from practice. However, as is discussed, continued maintenance of a teacher identity can be understood also as a positioning that is used either to withstand academic acculturation or as a means of abjuring what might be seen as full academic responsibility. That is, for some, being a teacher precludes them from involvement with research and extended academic roles.

Equally, the construction of the Moral Academic – where individuals are concerned with the credibility, authenticity and being of themselves and their students, alongside the (re)production/maintenance of the profession – can appear as an idealised type. It does, nonetheless, carry with it some of the contradictions that are foregrounded by the Conflicted Academic. At a level, it is argued – with few exceptions - all of the respondents encompass aspects of the Conflicted Academic given the nature of their exit from practice, their consequent orientation towards it, and their entry into the academy. Among some respondents, however, the element of conflict is amplified in their personal experience and overt recognition of the challenging realities of the practice field and the incongruities or limitations of the theorised knowledge professed in, and disseminated through the academy. The conflict of this identity position is located in the academic's perception of a gap between theory and practice and/or academia and practice – a standard framing of the relationship between the academy and practice in nursing and social work

education - and their attempts to manage or reconcile this in their work and relationship with students. This reconciliation brings into some question and fine negotiation their own praxis in the academy, as inferred in chapter seven. The 'moral' and 'conflicted' identity positionings are not as time-dependent as any of the other positions but emerge more critically out of individual orientations, concerns and commitments. This makes them more ideological positionings.

The final consideration is given to the Disaffected Academic where the source of disaffection for some, it is argued, resides in an adverse orientation to the profession and/or in thwarted academic ambitions. In this instance possibilities for constructive renegotiations or re-orderings of the professional-academic self appear limited with identity-reparation directed at what appear as fantasised futures.

Identity-Positioning through Time

Although it is possible to categorise some individuals as predominantly or solely accommodating or representing an identity-type – as presented in a number of the illustrative sketches – these cannot be regarded as bounded categorisations. They are rather a spectrum of finely nuanced identity positions that are not necessarily fixed and that might be occupied both:

- over time, where different positions or identities might be held over the course of a career. With the exception of the anticipated trajectory from

Teacher to Integrated-Complete academic, which is not always successfully realised, there is not necessarily an expectation of linear progression in identity development or the occupation of identity positions. The Disaffected Academic discussed here, for example, illustrates both thwarted identity realisation, lost identity and volitional identity positioning in response to structural circumstances; and

- in-time, where – as is the case among most of the respondents – individuals hold more than one identity position at any one time. Although concerned with functional, occupational role identity – rather than the more psycho-social identity-making explored in this thesis – Swennen et al (2010) similarly discuss multiple identities as held by the teacher-educators in their study. So if, as is discussed throughout this study, it is accepted that modern and post-modern identity-making is a project of the self, a process of internalised negotiation whereby motivations and concerns, or a nexus of interests are ordered and prioritised – as described by authors such as Taylor (1989), Wenger (1998) and Archer (2003) - then individuals may indeed be described simultaneously in these typological terms. Effectively, as implied fluidity of Figure 8 illustrates, the identity types explored here reflect the mesh of interests and concerns that position individuals in the pursuit of their professional-academic projects at moments in time.

As noted, it is possible, over time, to trace and anticipate identity-trajectories among the respondents. Among all of the respondents a teaching identity is the predominant identity available to them and – notwithstanding the tensions of this and the resistant positionings it can induce – it is one which all of them carry over

time. Nonetheless, it is evident that some of the respondents have managed to personalise the fundamental shell of the teaching role to become Integrated-Complete academics. This is most obviously realised where an individual is able to establish and maintain teaching responsibilities that are congruent with their practice experience and discipline expertise, and where such congruency is equally reflected in their scholarly work (ie: research and publication). Among these respondents such identity formation is time-dependent and only five of them – from among the longer-established academics - can be categorised in such a way. Nonetheless, it is an identity type or position to which new recruits aspire; for example, two of the recent appointments at UniversityAffiliate anticipate building academic careers that reflect their disciplinary and practice expertise, that incorporate research and involve them as active participants in the wider community of the university and/or disciplinary field. Hence they are arguably on a trajectory to becoming Integrated-Complete academics. It is where, over time, such an identity positioning is not realised that trajectories are disrupted and disaffection becomes a predominant feature of an individual's personalised academic identity. In this instance, in-time, the Disaffected academic also holds the occupational identity of Teacher – and has to find a narrative or strategies to reconcile their personal disaffection with their role occupation.

The Teacher

For a number of the respondents being a teacher is the bedrock of their academic identity and their preferred way of describing themselves. This identity is shaped

and reinforced by a number of factors including individual's conceptual or ideological orientations to their profession and academia – as illustrated in Ellen's declamation:

“... I still think of myself mostly as, when somebody asks me what I do, I say ‘I’m a nurse by profession and I teach in the university.’ ...I teach nurses. I never describe myself as an academic.”

Elaine, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

This primary positioning as a teacher is amplified (in the particularities of the Moral Academic) where students are the concentrated focus of academic and professional concerns; the affordances and constraints of HE that either enable or hinder individuals in their pursuit of other academic interests – most particularly the institutional priority for teaching, as discussed in chapter six.

Whatever their personal experience of academia, with one exception, all of the respondents view teaching as their primary role in the academy. The role is seen as a relatively uncomplicated vehicle for transmitting professional knowledge and skills, acquired primarily through practice experience. It is their professional identity and status as a social worker or nurse that is the basis of their teaching identity and authority, and it is their professional practice experience that primarily secures them a place in the university rather than the strength of an academic profile. For the newly recruited embryonic teacher their temporal and material proximity to the practice field is an immediate source of currency and credibility in the classroom. Although, to a degree, all are motivated to contribute to the production of good practitioners – and thereby vicariously contribute to the improvement/enhancement of practice – the primary motivation for relocating

teaching interests and nascent identity into the university is self-interested and concerned with personal development, as discussed in chapter five. Self-interest is manifested in three ways in the pursuit of employment that:

- i) is satisfying or fulfilling, unlike the work of the practice field; and/or
- ii) extends and enhances the personal and professional capabilities of the individual, primarily through the academising properties of the teaching role; and/or
- iii) enables the individual to realise an academic identity/persona previously unavailable, consequent to an internalisation of the constraining expectations of others.

The teacher identity can also be understood in a number of ways: as the fundamental position/identity of all of the respondents held through time; as an embryonic positioning that underpins the early academisation of the practitioner; over time as a position of retreat and/or resistance. As established, Geoff is a new recruit to the academy and his experience illustrates how the relocation to the university has enabled him to accomplish all three of the self-interested, self-actualising aspirations noted above through the properties of the teaching role:

Being a Teacher - the embryonic academic

Geoff, Nurse Academic, UniversityCity

*“...when you say ‘academic’ it almost still makes me smile inside...
...I could see myself perhaps saying that one day, but I feel like it’s a nice
process and I can imagine this process taking many years to accomplish.”*

Geoff left school without formal qualifications and “...fell into...” work as a healthcare assistant for want of anything else to do. He “...loved...” the job and the start of his nursing career. He qualified with a Diploma in Nursing and describes himself as a very average student, never seeing himself as ‘academic’. As a practitioner he focussed on the practicalities of nursing and claims to have been poor at the written side of the work, and was amused and surprised that others described him as “...academic...”, which he understands as a description of his reflective curiosity – wanting to know everything about the needs of the patients in his charge. This need to know “...how everything worked, and why it worked, and what we were doing.”, fuelled his motivation to pursue his nursing studies to degree level.

In practice Geoff had a formal role as a preceptor for new recruits which he greatly enjoyed, he thought it was “...cool...” to see “...the penny drop...” and was gratified when colleagues said that his teaching had enabled them to manage difficult clinical situations successfully. He undertook a PGCertHE and extended his educational skills by doing some ad hoc teaching at a local university. This teaching - as in his current post - was based on his clinical expertise, not his academic knowledge or credentials. Geoff cannot believe his fortune and thinks he now occupies a privileged position.

In relocating to the university Geoff finds himself surrounded by interested and enthusiastic colleagues who are passionate about nursing and he finds the environment both stimulating and challenging. This in some contrast to his most recent experience in the practice world – described as atheoretical, unreflective and routinized. Being in the university has rekindled Geoff’s commitments and concerns and enabled him to refocus them as a nurse-educator.

A recent recruit Geoff draws on his well-established professional knowledge and skills to teach, this reinforces his expertise and underlines his "...clinical credibility...". However, his academic novicehood requires him to relearn lost knowledge and/or acquire new knowledge and he knows he is expected to extend his repertoire. He welcomes this. Geoff anticipates a long academic journey ahead, in the meantime being a teacher enables him to maintain his professional commitments as a nurse and realise his preferred identity as an educator.

So, Geoff is still acquiring an academic identity and, although at the moment he primarily self-describes as an educator (teacher), he recognises that there is much more potential in the academic role – and aspires to this. As illustrated in chapters six and seven teaching in itself – without recourse to scholarly work (eg: research) and at some distance from the practice field of the discipline – can limit the identity possibilities available to an individual and also has the potential to divest individuals of their expertise. Nonetheless, maintenance of the Teacher identity position is reinforced where the institutional structuring of time – as manifested in the dominance and volume of teaching, the demands of student and curriculum administration, investment in research dedicated teams – practically shapes academic role expectations and can constrain individuals' capacity to invest in their own personalised occupation of a role.

Such institutional structuring can also reinforce resistant positioning where the apparent constraints of the university are used to maintain a teacher positioning. As was seen in chapter six Elaine, the nurse academic from UniversityWide and quoted above, had spent six full-time years teaching students. From her perspective the volume of work locks her into a teaching role, psychologically and

emotionally she is resistant to adopting any kind of academic identity – ‘academic’ is not how she sees herself. Chapter five illustrated that her personal resistances are located in her early experience of education, family expectations and the ongoing expectations of her friendship network. This experience makes it difficult for her to assimilate and own an *academic* identity. Consequently she cannot value the intrinsic goods, academic rewards, of the identity; in turn rejection of these rewards, which reinforce identity, further denies her the capacity to adopt or embrace an academic identity of her own. In fact, although there is some ambivalence in her final comment, symbolically she disowns any such identity: This refutation extends to not attending her own postgraduate degree ceremony, as she says:

“... it doesn’t, doesn’t do anything for me to keep getting the academic qualifications. I don’t feel it does anything for me, personally, as in a sense of achievement, which is terrible really. Well, it does, it does, but I don’t put a lot of value on that.”

There is a major paradox here: if you cannot ‘value’ education and academic achievement for yourself, how do you manage to promote academic engagement and reward among students? Elaine would reassert her nurse-teacher identity here with its focus on practical skills and the technicalities of how to do things, with the academic content of higher education belonging to others, be they colleagues or graduating students. Nonetheless, Elaine has constructed and occupies a strong, purposeful – congruent - Teacher identity-position which is, at the same time, a conflicted positioning. Despite her resistances she fully expects to continue her career in academia.

In its basic incarnation the Teacher positioning/identity holds no other motivation than to teach students, to equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to practice. Geoff has an agenda as a teacher to: “...*enthuse people. I want to, I want to be like all those great teachers that I had...*”. Whilst his intent reflects a desire to inspire other people it is, at this stage of his trajectory, primarily self-focussed and concerned with what sort of teacher he wants to be. His conscious becoming a teacher is the focus of his concerns rather than primarily the education of students. As Geoff’s comment reflects there is a strong emotional engagement and satisfaction in being a teacher that is located in the potential to influence others for the good. Whilst not necessarily seeking personal satisfaction as a teacher, the Moral Academic is intent on influencing others for the good.

The Moral Academic

Notwithstanding a number of resistances and ambivalences that potentially position Elaine as a Conflicted Academic – most particularly her struggle to own an academic identity at all - her explanation of her motivation and intent as a nurse educator really encapsulates the soul of the Moral Academic:

“... I want them to go out knowing more than me in some respects...

...I’m doing it because I want those nurses who go out to be good. And not to be lazy and lapse, and have poor practice. ... And when I was in clinical practice I saw so many trained nurses that I felt were so lacking in those things that if I can influence that at any stage that must be better for ... the child, the patient or whatever...

I still care about very much about the end product of this, otherwise I don't think I could do it. To me it is all about patient care – whether I'm directly giving the care or indirectly through the students that I teach..."

Elaine, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

Overall Elaine is one of a group of front-line educational practitioners driven by a constellation of long-standing, values-based moral commitments and concerns that are fostered by individuals' well-established and abiding identification with the *profession*. It is the strength of this commitment and identity that enables them to personalise the fundamental shell of the Teacher positioning and explicitly transform it into a moral enterprise. In so doing a congruence between professional and academic interests are realised and this is reflected in *the mission* such individuals bring to their work. The mission is manifested in:

- the academic's concern with their own credibility in terms of their knowledge and expertise as a teacher;
- a concern with occupational competency, beyond the classroom, with regard to the workings of institutional procedures and administrative processes in order to be able to do one's best on behalf of students;
- a strong orientation to, and promotion of the ideology of the profession that drives the need to influence practice through the generation of the best students/graduates that can be produced;
- a focussed concern with the professional *being* of the student as a nurse/social worker that is beyond academic prowess and/or the acquisition of technical competence; Rafferty (1996) similarly describes how, historically, moral character has been a central feature of nursing education

since its inception and, as Freidson (2001) more broadly asserts, an aspect of professional schooling – other than educating and licensing - is to inculcate a particular form of identity which understands work (ie: the being something) as an end in itself;

- in principle, a primary concern for the interests and well-being of the ultimate end-user, the patient or the service-user over and above the interests of all other stakeholders.

These features of the Moral Academic's mission are reminiscent of Kreber's (2013) conceptualisations of the authentic teacher and authentic pedagogy. At the outset of her thesis she defines authenticity in higher education as a:

"...focus on the *being* of the students and the *being* of the person engaged in (the scholarship of) teaching, and also have a moral dimension,..." (2013: 12)

Kreber's pedagogic authenticity is concerned with generating a learning experience (for both teachers and learners) that extends beyond the acquisition of disciplinary knowledge and academic skills sets. She argues that through an authentic engagement with teaching and learning individuals express an interest in who they and their students "... are *becoming*..." and a concern for their mutual contribution to "...the common good." (2013: 13). For Kreber the ultimate aim is the general betterment of the world through the practice and promotion of authenticity locally, in this first instance in the field of higher education.

The component parts of the Moral Academic's mission are held variously and with different emphasis by individuals but it is this particular combination of concerns that frames this identity type; as illustrated in the case of Vanessa:

Being a Moral Academic

Vanessa, Nurse Academic, UniversityCity

Vanessa had been a clinical practitioner for over 20 years when she moved into the university. Her move was precipitated by a growing interest and enjoyment in mentoring students in the practice setting. Whilst a risky move in terms of surrendering the accrued benefits of NHS employment, relocation to the university offers her the opportunity to extend her knowledge and skills as an educator.

In all incarnations of her professional self (ie: practitioner, manager, mentor, university teacher) Vanessa has been concerned to challenge poor clinical practice and to promote evidence-based best practice approaches in nursing. From her perspective the university affords her more opportunity to shape future practitioners just by sheer virtue of the number of students she can reach from inside the university. She is also of the view that being in the university positions her to influence them from the outset of their careers, rather than "...at the end of a career, or when there's lots of entrenched ways of working and views about clients, or whatever..."

However, in the initial transition Vanessa's generative motivations and ambitions have been side-lined as she concentrates on becoming a functioning member of the academic community. This means two things: acquiring a range and depth of professional-discipline knowledge to teach "...really well."; and securing sufficient organisational knowledge of university procedures and systems to support students effectively. She prides herself on her professional competence but this transitional phase has undone her expectations of her professional self as knowing "...how it all works..." and she struggles "...all the time..." just to get "...that level of, um, knowledge to just function...". Vanessa wants to move through this period

as quickly as possible so that she can get on with her work and be seen to do it well.

Once comfortable in the academic role Vanessa envisages a future in which she can have "...some sort of influence in terms of shaping what is being delivered to students and in practice and things like that,..."

Although Vanessa discusses how she feels she has to relinquish her nurse identity in the process of becoming an academic and, although physically located in the university, it is evident that her professional commitments and concerns remain embedded in the practice world. For Vanessa and a number of other respondents education generally is a mechanism through which to influence and shape practice, and high calibre graduates in particular are potentially the principle transforming force on practice. Her view that she can extend the reach of her influence in the relocation to the university is shared by others who anticipate shaping undergraduate identities – ways of being – before they are corrupted by the contingencies of practice cultures. So, among these teachers, concern is not only focussed on academic success and/or skills acquisition (important though these are) but, it would seem, they are also concerned with the very *being* of their students as expressed through their professionalism. This is inferred in the ways in which the respondents talk about the students as future practitioners, they are aspiring and ambitious for them to be: "...*the best practitioners..*"; to be "...*good nurses...*", "...*good, confident, competent practitioners.*"; for them not to be the lazy, complacent practitioner witnessed in the field but to be independent, critical thinkers who uphold professional standards and interests. It is the qualitative distinction of being 'good' or the 'best', not just a nurse or social worker, that infers a moral mission in these academics' educational project. In a sense this appears

to position these academics as an idealistic group of educators with considerable faith in the power of education. Nonetheless, this character-forming feature of education has been seen as a founding principle of university education (Collini, 2012), and these academics' educational ambitions are also reminiscent of the generative principle described by Fanghanel (2013) and reflect the will to 'subject loyalty' in professional education described by O'Connor (2007).

However, in nursing a concern with the quality and character of the practitioner does have a distinct historical antecedent; in discussing 'The character of training and training of character', Rafferty (1996: 23-42) describes Florence Nightingale's intention for nurse training:

"...not as an 'educational' but as a 'moral' process involving the development of character and self-control rather than 'mere' academic training." (1996: 26-27)

As Macdonald (1995), Rafferty (1996), and Abbott and Meerabeau (1998) all recount, Nightingale's focus on character and moral efficacy was in stark contrast to the professionalising interests of her contemporaries concerned to establish nursing as an occupation based on technical and scientific expertise. Rafferty's (1996) account presents Nightingale as in particular concerned with constructing a profession that would:

- rehabilitate a public image of nurses as lazy, incompetent and often drunk;
- hold and model moral authority as expressed, for example, in: stoicism and resilience in the face of pain, adversity and mortality; cleanliness and

hygiene in the promotion of good health; sexual continence in the management and ministrations of patients' bodies, and in relations with colleagues (ie: male doctors);

- gentrify the working class women recruited as nurses and thereby render the profession as acceptable/respectable to the public.

Macdonald (1995: 143-144) notes that in foregrounding “...*the character and qualities of members... rather than their qualifications.*”, Nightingale was successful in creating a distinctive, *respectable* nursing profession. Nonetheless, whilst respectability is a fundamental concern of professionalising projects generally (Freidson, 2001), all of the authorities cited are critical of Nightingale's emphasis on character at the expense of theorised professional knowledge and skill. Macdonald (1995) argues that until the advent of Project 2000 her legacy – as reflected in the character-led, hospital-based training that dominated the twentieth century - had constrained the strategic realisation of the professional project of nursing. Nonetheless, it would appear that the moral being (ie: the good conduct) and rectitude (ie: the influence of their good practices) of twenty-first century nurses are properties their teachers remain concerned to cultivate. This may reflect a trace history of the original reforming agenda of nurse training in which “...*nurses became the objects as well as the subjects of reform.*” (Rafferty, 1996: 4); that is, the reform of nursing was concerned with the propriety of nurses' personal professional conduct as well as with their capacity to “...*influence the moral welfare of those in her care:...*” (Rafferty, 1996: 30). Given the historical context, a focus on 'character' and the *quality* of the practitioner may also be an expression of the respondents' own professional socialisation in a pre- or nascent

Project 2000 world and hence – ideologically – an expectation they hold of their own students.

As noted, the production of ‘good’, ‘competent’ practitioners can be seen as a manifestation of the generative intent among some educators which Fanghanel (2013) explores. The notion of ‘generation’ is important as, presumably, these academics are intent on *producing* new cohorts of practitioners rather than simply *reproducing* nursing and social work workforces. Given their concerns about the shortfalls in practice or their commitment to good practice, a merely reproductive intention would not break the cycle of poor practice some of these academics have charged themselves with disrupting. In positioning students as the embodiment of best practice or as a vehicle for the improvement of practice, these academics are embarked upon a *regeneration* of the professional project; this begins to become a political mission.

There are, however, some tensions in the ideological mission these academics have embarked upon in preparing their students as the vanguard of a new practice. In the first instance through this process the profession, as manifest in the nurse/social worker academic and the theorised knowledge of the academy, brings into question the *authority* of the field of knowledge production – ie: the field of practice – which otherwise, particularly among the nurse respondents, is also the primary site of identity-building and privileged as a site of identity legitimisation. This is described in chapter six and is explored at length in Rafferty’s (1996) historical account of the nursing profession. The same tension arises for the Conflicted Academic but the resolution is not managed in a transference of commitments and

concerns into the university realised in the production of a new, different, better generation of practitioners.

Although a standard mode of professional socialisation (Friedson, 2001) the generative approach adopted by the Moral Academic is problematic in that it *exceptionalises* the student. This may, arguably, put far more pressure and expectation upon the student/student body than can be managed or absorbed in a customer-oriented higher education environment. The challenges of promoting and maintaining student adherence to the expectations of professional nurse education generally are discussed by Carr (2008), who observes that nursing students want to experience university in the same way as their contemporaries on other, non-professional courses.

Despite the anticipated affordances of audience reach, in order to realise the ambition invested in students on behalf of the profession and practice the Moral Academic remains reliant on the commitments, concerns and personal properties of individual students. Arguably, the approach is underpinned by a strong teacher identity reinforced by the institutional structuring of the teacher role which affords few other modes of influence, as highlighted in chapter six. Even so, where discussed, three of the respondents were of the view that their teaching was of more effect on the character and practice of students and graduates than publications and research. Students in the classroom are described as a “...*captive audience*...” whereas student consumption of published material is optional and, it is inferred, limited. For one of these respondents the calibre of graduate practitioners is of more value and worth to practice than “...*great*...”

research, hence his investment in the production of the social work graduate. This is his contribution to the practice world, and the high calibre graduate is also serves as a vindication and embodiment of his credibility and authority as an academic.

The generative ambition is held at the same time as these teachers recognise they are working in a very pressured academic environment that may have different ultimate aims and not share their concerns and commitments in quite the same way. This is highlighted in chapter six in the respondents' accounts of how, for example, the volume of teaching (and assessment) compromise the scholarly work required to deliver a quality curriculum; of how workforce management pressures can require individuals to teach and assess beyond their subject expertise; how the time demands of the academy actually preclude their engagements with the practice field. The tension is also often expressed in terms of student numbers and the quality of the student learning experience, a point highlighted in the interview with Vanessa. Although she welcomed the numerical 'reach' afforded by the university there is, nonetheless, a concern at the relational distance between teachers and students where there are large cohorts. As O'Byrne (2013) also observes, too many students diminish the influence of the academic who cannot know the learning or pastoral needs of all those in their charge. Carr (2008) is of the view that the growth in student numbers will precipitate the loss of humanistic philosophy in health education and thereby undermine the historical mission of nurse education.

Carr (2008) further points out that curriculum design also has an impact on the relationship between teachers and students and Vanessa's experience again

illustrates how this can undermine the moral mission. She teaches free-standing classes on a range of modules and does not herself understand what sense her contribution makes to student groups she does not know. In this example the moral mission is upheld in that Vanessa is teaching from the strength of her professional and practice expertise, and so her credibility is held intact. The mission is compromised however in that the content is rendered context-free or neutral – it could be delivered to any group of students - without redress to the existent individual and collective knowledges and capacities of the classroom, consequently Vanessa questions the value of her contribution. From her perspective, without knowing the student group she cannot tailor her input to their needs and she cannot evaluate the difference it makes to them, she has no sense of how it informs their professional understanding and competence. This technical lack of knowledge on her part means that the opportunity for her to consciously or strategically influence individuals and the group is diminished. Equally, episodic contact with a group is not conducive to building relational knowledge through which moral influence can be exercised.

The Moral Academic's commitment to the personally-held professionalism – ie: ways of being a nurse or social worker - of their students and graduates is a reflection of their concern to promote the interests of the profession and end-users (ie: patients, service users). It is directed at an ideologically held greater good that transcends the interests of their immediate stakeholders, specifically those of the students themselves and the university. As such these academics are concerned that the academy itself holds onto its own principles in the exercise of academic rigour and/or that it does not compromise academic (and by association

professional) standards in the effort to secure graduate success. The Moral Academic's commitment is described as an obligation and contribution to the "...community..." of practitioners, and to the protection, safety and well-being of patients and service users. This is the fundamental commitment and motivation of those respondents who can be categorised as 'moral'. As similarly described by Freidson (2001), in terms of orientation and practice, they hold themselves primarily accountable to the transcendent and abstract ideals, values, principles held by the profession – nursing or social work.

The Moral Academic a significant categorisation, or identity-positioning, because it encompasses the motivational intent of the majority of respondents, both nurses and social workers.

The Integrated-Complete Academic

In some aspects this categorisation is closely aligned with the defining principles of the moral academic, hence some respondents' present features of both categorisations. Generally, however, although the Integrated-Complete academic is also intent on serving the interests of practice, the drive to influence and shape *individual* students and practice is not as pronounced. It is possible to trace a more pragmatic concern to prepare students for practice, and to undertake research and publish with clear reference to the practice community (ie: practitioners and service users). This category is a matter of achievement – rather than the embodiment of an ideological orientation, as more explicitly expressed in the moral academic

typology – and is realised through the active exercise of agency and autonomy. Such achievement infers a process over time and, indeed, those respondents who can be most readily categorised as ‘integrated’ and ‘complete’ are the longer-established academics in the study group.

This categorisation operates in four ways:

- i) Integration : where professional, practice and academic identities coalesce, in that there is a strong complementarity and congruency between the individual’s practice identity (either current or historical) or expertise and – primarily - their teaching responsibilities; as has been discussed, this is not a taken-for-granted or a matter-of-course state of affairs;
- ii) Completeness : where the congruency of a teaching identity is augmented by the realisation of equally congruent research interests, effectively generating an expert positioning;
- iii) Externality : consequent to an expert positioning that may be expressed through publication and/or the exercise of professional authority beyond the immediate domains of the academic and practice worlds; for example, as in active engagement with professional body regulatory and committee functions, or active involvement with professional specialist interest groups;
- iv) Pragmatism : a balanced orientation and engagement with the interests of the university, practice and the profession; these respondents recognise the stresses and strains existent both in the institutional and practice environments and in the relationship between the academy and practice. They are, however, able to manage these tensions in their identity negotiations.

The congruency of professional experience, professional interests and academic responsibilities in this category enables individuals to establish resilient and, in this manifestation, credible and authentic academic identities. Equally, with a less compelling ideological imperative than the Moral Academic, and with a pragmatic capacity to manage both the affordances and constraints of the university and the relationship with the practice world, those who achieve this identity position appear to experience little tension and role strain. Located in the university – compared favourably, in some instances, to their experience in practice - they seem able to manage the push and pull of competing organisational and ideological claims. In the university environment these stresses do not distress them.

At least half of the participants can be described as integrated academics, in that their teaching role and responsibilities are congruent with their professional-practice expertise. However, only five of the respondents can be typified as Integrated-Complete academics and these are all established academics with 10 years or more in higher education. With one exception, they are all based at UniversityWide and – with one exception – they are all social worker academics. Nonetheless, it is the nurse academic who provides the clearest case example or ideal type of the Integrated-Complete academic in that psychologically and practically she holds her moral interest in the quality of students/graduates, her moral/ideological obligation to the profession and practice, and the structural conditions of the university in a pragmatic balance:

Being an Integrated-Complete Academic

Ellen, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

Within ten years of embarking on her nursing career Ellen knew that she wanted to move into the field of education and academia. Like others she claims to have enjoyed practice but feels she reached the limits of the profession in terms of her own development and potential. The final relocation to academia – nearly 20 years ago – has provided a space in which she has been able to satisfy her intellectual curiosity, her “...thirst for knowledge...” and so build her personal and professional self. Ellen holds a strong identity as a nurse, and is registered on several parts of the professional register, but she is clear she is now a nurse-academic rather than a practitioner.

From the point of initial qualification Ellen pursued an academic trajectory, culminating in the acquisition of two masters degrees. One of these, a masters in learning and teaching, was finally completed during the course of a half-time secondment into the university. For Ellen this was a professional “...win...” because it enabled her to evolve and meld a practice and educational persona in tandem, whereby there was complete complementarity between her practice and academic self. Over time she has managed to sustain this congruence, resisting operational pressures to cultivate expertise that was beyond her experience and not of personal intellectual interest.

Driven by her intellectual interest and practice background Ellen pursued a doctorate that was again congruent with her professional experience. In terms of knowledge this is the site of her academic expertise. Currently she is involved in a research project which again reflects her practice-disciplinary expertise and interests, it also enables her to maintain a mediated contact with practice. Hence, like her teaching, Ellen’s research is a site of identity integration; as such it is also a space in which, and from which she can cultivate and articulate her credibility and authenticity.

Ellen is a published academic but her externality is more evident in her extra-university work for the professional body. This is where she primarily exercises her moral mission as a Fitness for Practice panel member, and participation in this forum is one of the ways in which she remains “...current...” with practice issues.

In this role she exercises her interest in the quality and character of nurses (generally), she upholds the respectability and public trust of the profession, and she safeguards the best interests of patients.

During the course of her academic career the university assessment procedures and processes have gradually been systematised and bureaucratised. Individuals and academic teams no longer have the autonomy or authority to make unilateral assessment decisions about individual students. Ellen perceives this as a "...challenge..."; on the one hand her professional voice has been muted, on the other hand assessment decisions are more equitable and objective. However, where she feels necessary, she will pursue the interests of the profession – as codified in its commitment to patient safety - over and above those of the student or the university.

As an established academic Ellen sees it as her responsibility to grow the next generation of nurse educators and so mentors and supports colleagues on their own academic journeys. In this she has extended the reach of the generative principle.

Both philosophically and practically Ellen subscribes to the university policy that academics should be researchers and teachers, and she sees them – along with consultancy - as "...soul-mates...".

There have been few tensions between her personalised professional interests and those of the organisation and, in fact, she describes the relationship as "...complementary...". In conclusion Ellen¹ is clear that she wants to "...stay in academia...", as it is where she gets "...the most satisfaction..." and where she can best use her skills.

In many respects the Integrated-Complete Academic looks like the standardised, ideal-type of academic – seen to be under threat - as variously described in the literature. It is also a manifestation of the ideal-type both promoted and lamented in the professional literature. As discussed in chapters one and two, this literature highlights that neither profession has realised its academic ambition either in terms of research profile, or in terms of status and credibility in the academy, and that

professional-academics struggle to maintain currency and credibility. Hence, in principle the Integrated-Complete Academic is a consummate manifestation of the mythologised academic persona. The interest lies in the fact that although it barely seems realisable, it has been realised by some individual academics.

The Conflicted Academic

As chapter five illustrates, by virtue of their trajectories into the university, to varying degrees half of the respondents (n=9: 4 nurse academics, 5 social worker academics) occupy what might be described as a 'conflicted' position as social worker and nurse academics. In this typology conflict is defined in terms of dissonances between an individual's orientation to the practice, professional and/or academic world and the responsibilities of their academic role. These discordances manifest themselves in a variety of ways, for example:

- an ideological or political drift from practice, expressed as "...*grave reservations...*", born out of personal professional experience;
- an ideological or political concern for the future of the profession generally;
- in one instance, a rejection of the concept of the profession;
- in two instances, an unrealisable preference for not having been a nurse or a social worker;
- an ambivalent relocation in the university and resistant ownership of an *academic* identity.

These disconnects occur as singulars for some individuals, whilst for others they manifest as a constellation of discordances. Such a conflictual or conflicted orientation to the profession, practice or academia – rather than a critical engagement, as such – amplifies a potentially troublesome academic positioning and identity. As touched upon in chapter seven, however the dissonance is experienced its existence suggests that individuals need to negotiate the incongruities between their experience, their affective and intellectual dispositions, and their responsibilities primarily as teachers to realise personally credible and authentic identities in the academy. Viable resolutions can appear particularly problematic where individuals call into question the validity of their respective profession, or where they do not value the rewards of academia for themselves. It is these particular dissonances that are explored in the case examples that follow.

The Conflicted Academic

Eleanor, Social Worker Academic, University Affiliate

Eleanor entered the university following a long career in front line social care services. Her departure from practice was contentious and arose out of a professional dispute with her employer over the provision and management of services. Although she was legally vindicated this was achieved at significant personal cost, and the experience has left her intellectually and emotionally 'at odds' with the practice field. Eleanor remains sympathetic to the needs and interests of social care service users – as is evident in the focus of her research - but is very critical and dismissive of the actual practice of social work and claims, if she were to have her time again, she would not become a social worker.

Eleanor was initially employed as a research assistant and gradually acquired teaching responsibilities until she was working four days a week. At first this was

just a matter of expediency but student feedback was positive and, in contrast to her recent experience in practice, Eleanor found this very validating. Success as a teacher made her "... more passionate about, you know, the academic side and sort of supporting people to, um, what I would hope be good social workers.". She holds this motivation whilst remaining hyper-critical of the practice field which she views as unprincipled, non-reflective and rigid. While wanting to generate "...good social workers." who are able to maintain the "...strong value base..." of the profession and make strategic decisions about challenging practice shortfalls, Eleanor herself would not "...want to be a social worker in this day and age.". Consequently she finds herself in a conflictual space that is compounded by "...grave reservations..." about the profession generally.

The conflictual space that has to be negotiated is the dissonance between:

- *her experiential knowledge and the knowledge of the classroom;*
- *the professional knowledge of the classroom and the realities of practice;*
- *her experiential knowledge and the ideology and purpose of social work education.*

To address these problems Ellen adopts a mentoring role in her work with students so that "... they go away slightly more energised, if nothing else, you know, to sort of stay on the front line."

A conflicted positioning arising out of a disenchantment with practice and/or the profession was particularly evident among the social worker academic respondents. As Eleanor's story illustrates, the Conflicted Academic has to work very hard to reconcile their personal-professional views of practice and profession with their work in the classroom and/or among students. At a level Eleanor's positioning appears duplicitous raising questions of integrity and credibility such as how it is possible to promote an occupation that one has rejected, or to encourage others to maintain a position from which one has personally defected. Archer (2000) argues, for example, that such role dissonance can engender psychological

and emotional stress that requires some form of personal reconciliation – ie: a reordering of commitments and concerns – for an individual to re-position themselves to/within a role, or negotiate the exit, shedding or transformation of a role. McIntyre (2007) also distinguishes between the individual and their roles but, where Archer talks about the personalisation and transformation of roles, McIntyre – like Goffman and du Gay - presents roles as ‘offices’ that can be enacted, as social spaces aside from the individual. For McIntyre (2007) it is this distinction itself that allows for a seemingly unperturbed ‘variance’ in the relationship between inner convictions and the external contingencies required of social roles. He asserts that :

“There are...many cases where there is a certain distance between role and individual and where consequently a variety of degrees of doubt, compromise, interpretation or cynicism may mediate the relationship of individual to role.” (2007: 34)

McIntyre’s analysis of the relationship between roles and individuals provides an accommodation of the tension expressed in Eleanor’s positioning. It does not, however, obviously allow for a negotiation between the individual and the role, and both entities are presented as having fixed properties in respect to each other. In effect, the content and purpose of the role can be made subordinate to the interests of the occupant but not transformed by them (as suggested by Archer’s personalisation of roles). Although Jenkins (2008: 84) also discusses the tolerance for *“...inconsistency or contradiction.”* in identity-making, the tolerance is not duplicitous or cynical. Rather inconsistencies and contradictions are seen to reflect

the contingent nature of identity as a fluid process and negotiation of being and becoming, of *identification* (my emphasis), that is “...*never wholly closed. ...*” (2008: 84).

In Jenkins' (2008) analysis identification is not only, or primarily with a social role (that may symbolically hold a set of beliefs and practices) but may also be with groups and with rarefied beliefs, principles and practices (such as those symbolically held by a profession, a public service, or a cultural community as illustrated in Figure 2, p.51). Jenkins' concept of identification with beliefs, principles and practices can be read as synonymous with Archer's 'concerns and commitments', and are the same as those held by McIntyre's individual. However, Jenkin's identity-making processes there seems to be more possibility and tolerance of fluidity, contradiction and inconsistency. Archer's individual is more susceptible to psycho-emotional and ultimately social disruption in response to incongruities between their personal ideals, commitments and lived realities than Jenkins' individual, who is argued to be tolerant of identity-inconsistencies generated through responses to the external world. In Archer's work social disruption can be understood on a continuum that at one extreme may precipitate a state of personal vulnerability – eg: the loss of a role, ill-health, unemployment – and at the other precipitate social change, for example where incongruities between rhetoric and practice are called to account. Archer's identity-modelling articulates a clear cycle of identity-resolution and fixing, Jenkins' analysis is less concerned with points of disruption and resolution than living with the unresolved tensions of a process. Whichever perspective is adopted the subsystem of

biography-‘concerns & commitments’-identity positions illustrated in Figure 8, p.272 works to accommodate both processes.

So, in some respects, Eleanor can be seen as negotiating identity from out of all three of these theoretical frames: she is doubting and cynical, inconsistent and contradictory in her identification with social work in all its domains (ie: practice, profession and education) and yet appears to continue to adhere to abiding commitments to principles of social justice and transformation. Despite her disdain for the profession and practice, her continuing commitment to long-established concerns is expressed through her research, her recent exposure to social work overseas, and her fantasised other preferred life as a lawyer. In this sense it is her adherence to these principles that co-locates her as a moral academic, expressed again in the drive to produce “...*good social workers...*” and her intention to enable people to “...*stay on the frontline.*”. What can be read as a positioning of bad faith is effectively transcended through a set of personalised commitments that prevail over the compromises of the institutional worlds in which she operates. In effect, she might be seen to be constructing and operating in accordance with a self-determined moral or ethical code, such as that described but rejected by McIntyre (2007).

However Eleanor constructs and performs her identity, she does nonetheless articulate and occupy a conflicted space, and – to some degree – it is one shared by the Moral Academic. Both positionings, the Moral and the Conflicted, emanate from a dialectic tension born out of an adherence to, and the promotion of an ideological good in and through contexts in which the protagonist has lost faith.

The Moral academic overcomes the tension in the aspiration to effect change, make practice better, through the generation of a new breed of practitioners who will in turn transform systems. In contrast the Conflicted academic is more concerned with producing practitioners who individually can work well with service users, the primary *raison d'être* for the professional-academic, *and survive* the current systems in which they work rather than necessarily transform them. A hyper-critical orientation to the contexts of practice and their seemingly concrete realities dominates the conflicted academic's viewpoint and they adopt pragmatic expectations of their students and promote pragmatic practice. This is reflected, for example, in an approach to teaching that is sympathetic to, and tolerant of the expediency of the student-practitioner.

In adopting such a pragmatic educational approach the role of the profession's higher order principles and societal ambitions, as incorporated in part in the ideological rhetoric of the professional body, are domesticated rather than "...*elaborated...*", as argued by Friedson (2001: 123). Relocation to the university has not freed the Conflicted academic from "...*the market and the polity.*" Friedson, 2001: 123). Rather it is the 'the market' experience, witnessed as a significant dislocation between the ideology and ambition of the profession and the realities of practice, that is the generating site of the personal-professional conflict they carry into the university. Such conflict positions the academic in two particular and contrasting ways:

- i) as a reluctant proselytiser in the classroom: circumspect in the promotion of value-based ideology and focussed on the practicalities of practice

(eg: the actual, quotidian job of social work and/or the skills required to do the job);

- ii) as a public champion of a denigrated ideology: expressed through publications and research commitments. It is in this more public sphere that there is a Freidsonian elaboration and clarification of disciplinary values. It is also in this public space that the dialectic tension in and between the Moral and Conflicted positionings is ameliorated, as the conflicted academic transmutes into an amplification of the moral academic. Through research (and publication) the conflicted – and arguably morally compromised – academic takes their professional mission beyond the confines of the classroom, does not delegate a better future to a new generation, but takes their continuing professional challenge directly to ‘the market’, constructed as the deficient policy, practice and/or professional arena(s) as they perceive them.

So far the exploration of the Conflicted Academic has focussed on individuals trying to manage the tension and perceived dislocation between their personal-professional ideology, that of the profession, the contingencies of practice and the abstracted context of academia. Although conflicted about the professional discipline – of social work or nursing – these respondents were generally positively oriented to the academy. As has been seen, academia and academic work provided a physical place and a means by which they could continue to pursue their professional and intellectual interests. Over time, for some, the potentials of this affordance diminished or were unrealised – this is a defining feature of those who become disaffected.

The Disaffected Academic

The sentiments expressed by Greg are probably an example of the greatest disaffection and disappointment in the study:

“Um, I have to say it’s just to survive. I don’t mean that in any catastrophic way but actually just to survive and, um, that’s my aspiration. I’m not, I’m not terribly ambitious anyway so I’m not looking for great things and I’m not motivated by money so, um, it is just about surviving and feeling that somehow or other...

...To look back and think ‘well you did make a difference somewhere’...

Greg, Nurse Academic, UniversityWide

Although a little extreme, they do nonetheless convey something of the disheartedness apparent among a small handful of the respondents. The defining features among these disaffected academics include:

- a focus on the shortfalls or disappointments of academic life: most evident where academic ambitions are perceived to have been thwarted, and/or where the psycho-emotional contract with the employer is perceived to have been breached, and/or where the institution has failed to meet the individual’s idealised expectations of academic life;
- an apparent lack of agency in the individual’s engagement with, or responses to the machinations of the institution: expressed as a lack of resistance and passivity, “things” seem to happen to these individuals (eg: courses are ‘axed’, they are divested of expertise and/or responsibility, contributions are felt to go unrecognised or unacknowledged);

- a significant divergence between personal-intellectual/academic concerns, the priorities of the higher education institution and the concerns of the practice field;
- a peripheral, marginalised, disengaged positioning of the individual in relation to the team or department;
- withdrawal : a literal withdrawal from the university evidenced in reduced working hours; psychological and emotional withdrawal in which creative energy is directed at freelance academic projects outside of the university, which may be actual or imagined.

The telling of these experiences and perceptions generates a presentation of victimhood and despondency. Even where the content of the account does not directly suggest this or is contradictory in its emphases, as in the illustrative sketch that follows, in the language used there is a surrendering of autonomy and resigned 'acceptance' of circumstances.

The Disaffected Academic

Kevin, Social Worker Academic, UniversityAffiliate

Kevin had a long and successful career in local authority social services. After the best part of 20 years in the practice field he made a gradual transition into the university and is now in his 16th year of employment as a social worker academic. Although Kevin had a delayed start to his undergraduate degree, having failed A Level exams, he "...loved..." his undergraduate life and considered pursuing his studies at doctoral level. However, a metaphorical shake of the dice saw him take up a social work career.

Kevin completed his doctorate as a part-time student. He "...loved..." being a student in terms of the intellectual engagement and challenge it afforded him, and in terms of physically being on a campus. He continues to carry this love of learning, intellectuality and being in university spaces.

Kevin does not regard himself as a social worker and disclaims the ownership of any professional-disciplinary knowledge although, despite his resistances, he accepts that he is a social worker academic. He describes both the profession and its knowledge as "...fuzzy and woolly...", and he is not interested in teaching the social work content of courses, historically he has led the research and dissertation modules which he sees as being "...the academic stuff...". He does not teach any profession-specific modules and over the years courses that directly reflected his expertise have been discontinued as have those he led. Kevin describes the demise of these courses as a process of 'axing' and 'peeling' and 'whittling away'. More recently he has also lost responsibility for "...the academic stuff...". He claims to be unperturbed by these events - "...But that's fine, it doesn't bother me..." – as he has a full life outside of the university, work-life is not the primary site of his concerns.

On entering the university Kevin had expected to be involved in research. However, he found that it can be an expensive investment for very little return. Given a lack of formal support from the department – ie: workload relief - he has decided not to continue initiating research tenders and projects. He is irritated that he was not able to do more research and – whilst claiming no public ambitions - is "...marginally disappointed..." that he is unpublished. However, he can accommodate or tolerate these lacunae in his career because although achievement of these things would have been "...nice...", he also describes such academic rewards as "...flotsam and jetsam.".

Although throughout his career Kevin has purposefully managed a distinct work-life balance, as he enters a period of phased retirement he thinks that he will be able to afford more time to pursue and be involved in research opportunities.

Aspects of Kevin's experience have been discussed elsewhere in chapters five and six, nonetheless he does provide an illustration of the identity-negotiations that

can arise where there is a divergence between personal-academic concerns, the priorities of the organisation and the concerns of the practice field. Kevin's orientations – his love of the academy and his disaffection of his own professional-practice discipline - also co-locates him as a Conflicted Academic. However, where others typified as 'conflicted' have strategies that ameliorate tendencies to the duplicitous and/or cynical – that might be seen to arise out of the tension between the rejection of a primary professional identity and the professing role of the disciplinary academic - there are fewer options available to Kevin. He does not express a concern to produce high quality practitioners, nor particularly to ensure that graduates are competent in the professional task. He enjoys the intellectual energy of the student body but this seems to be for its own sake, it is not explicitly framed in terms of individual and/or collective improvement. Kevin is exceptional in this regard, for others who present characteristically as disaffected and/or conflicted it is a concern for the *being* of students – in their own right as persons, not only as nascent professionals – that redresses the disaffections and/or conflicts they carry with them. By way of contrast Geoff, as established, an academic 'at odds' with the nursing profession, the limitations of the practice world and the corporatisation of the university, nonetheless reflects of the graduating students: "...*There's a different quality to them very often at the end, which is very satisfying. ... Surely if the university has a product that's it?*" Effectively, Kevin's self-determined positioning appears to locate him in the physical and intellectual space of the university but on the edges of the disciplinary school/department. Arguably it is a positioning that makes it difficult for him to *belong*, it is difficult to be an academic without a disciplinary interest and/or purpose.

Although Kevin chooses not to identify as a social worker *per se*, he was recruited into the university on the basis of his practice knowledge and expertise (reinforced through the content of his doctorate). Over time this knowledge and expertise has been excavated out of the curriculum and the business of the school and while he claims to not be bothered by this experience the visceral language of ‘whittling’ and ‘axing’ perhaps suggests otherwise. Conversely, there is little sense that he actively sought to secure any particular personal academic interests in the course of these processes, rather that he seemed to accept this decline in the academic space available to him. His detached acceptance of his circumstances, in which he deflects the potential consequences of marginalisation further locates him at the peripheries of the disciplinary and academic world.

Like Kevin, both Kate (social worker academic, UniversityWide) and Geoff experience the demise of their professional-disciplinary expertise in the curriculum and are disaffected by the experience. Neither are as marginalised as Kevin as they continue to hold course and module responsibilities, but they feel they go unrecognised by an organisation that does not ‘value’ their current contribution nor realise their potential. Arguably – from their perspectives - expertise, contribution and potential are undermined where educational content is perceived to be increasingly subject to standardisation, where the primary academic task is teaching and where research is seen as an unattainable or controlled privileged good.

In response these academics take up defensive positions and project their disappointment through varying forms of passive-discursive resistance aligned

with pragmatism. That is, they focus a deeply critical lens on the conditions of their employment that generates a narrative of disappointment, thwarted ambition and disengagement. However, despite this discourse of disaffection, in practical or action terms they nonetheless seem to 'accept' these conditions in that there is seemingly little effort to effect a change of conditions or circumstances. Unable or unwilling to expend (any further) energy on trying to effect change, these respondents have an ultimate strategy of flight and withdrawal. They imagine that their more complete academic self – or other, more fulfilled self – can be accomplished outwith the university. For example:

- Kevin does not appear to develop or pursue alternatives to the decline and closure of his assigned commitments; their fate – and his – is determined by other forces. The circumstances of his piecemeal demotion enable to him to retreat to the edges and utilise the flexibilities of higher education employment to establish and maintain a work-life balance that privileges 'life' over 'work'. This appears as a way of positioning himself in the university on his own terms but it is a strategy that in itself reinforces his material, psychological and intellectual distance. Hence there is an interplay of marginalisation between his self-determined positioning on the peripheries of the professional-academic discipline and the increasingly exclusionary responses of the organisation. As he begins a phased retirement Kevin anticipates creating space for research he never previously had the opportunity to pursue. In principle this would be a realisation of an aspect of his ideal academic self.

- Kate's response is one of psychological and emotional distancing, the anger and disappointment of her unfulfilled ambition is directed at the perceived fault-lines of the institution and the power of a particular manager. This allows Kate to frame the university as a place of bad faith with which she does not want to associate herself. This disassociation further allows her to claim her social work identity as an ideal identity, the principles of which cannot be realised in the university. Her overall solution is to disengage, she has reduced her working hours and this has confined her academic role to teaching. Kate anticipates that her *real* academic identity, as a researcher and as a champion of the profession, will be realised outwith the university in her own time. She describes this a personal investment and as a "...*sacrifice*..." and, although she has chosen this path of her own volition, remains concerned that the university does not recognise and "...*value*..." this sacrifice that she is making. So, even in her personally created academic space there remains an element of disaffection.

- Similarly, Greg, is disappointed that the promise of the university (ie: intellectual engagement and challenge, academic autonomy, the realisation of academic aspiration in the form of a doctorate) have not been fulfilled. For Greg there seem to be too many structural barriers to his own actualisation: barriers within the university, within the profession, in practice, and within the broader political landscape. He cannot overcome all of these and seems defeated by his circumstances: "...*You're just constrained like every other wage slave you know, and it is too big a risk to start off in a different career somewhere else or find something that you're truly happy*"

with, or take the risk...”. In his passivity he has surrendered his freedom to the degree that even his withdrawal fantasy – running a small cafe – has become unattainable. Hence his ambition to “...*survive...*”, as cited in the earlier quotation; the “...*difference...*” he can make is to the *being*, the personhood of the students with whom he works, his purpose is realised in their generalised success. As noted, Greg is exceptional in his degree of despondency.

It is clear that these individuals pursue agentic strategies that realise instrumental interests, primarily continuing paid employment. However, the interviews suggest they are not strategies that enable the respondents to pursue what appear to be some of their underlying commitments and concerns, for example: the cultivation of a research profile, the promotion of the profession, *being* an academic as represented in the achievement of a doctoral title. They are rather strategies that reinforce the individual’s disaffected positionings, and that are directed at, as yet, unrealised imagined futures.

Conclusion

This chapter draws on the theorisations of chapters five, six and seven to represent the negotiations individuals make between their orientations, concerns and commitments (their agency) and the structural enablements and constraints (ie: teaching and scholarship, proximities and distances from practice) of the university in negotiating a professional-academic identity (Figure 8, p. 272). It illustrates that

five academic identity positions generate from these negotiations: teacher, the moral academic, the integrated-complete academic, the conflicted academic and the disaffected academic.

The identities of teacher and integrated-complete academic are identity-positions and identities accomplished over time. The teacher can be seen as an embryonic positioning but it can become an entrenched or evasive position where it is not extended through scholarship and/or externality. Whilst at core the moral and conflicted academics are teachers – by virtue of role responsibilities - the incumbents have extended and personalised the teaching role through their scholarship and/or ideological commitments. This is not so much the effect of time as a manifestation of orientations. Both of these positionings are also explicitly imbued with ideology and affect. The positioning of the disaffected academic is also constructed through ideology and affect but in this formulation hostile orientations (to the academy, or profession) generate negative or hostile emotions. It is a thwarted positioning realised through time as personal-professional ambitions remain unrealised consequent to the interplay between the structuring manoeuvres of the institution and the – largely – passive manoeuvrings of the individual. None of these are fixed positionings as both structural and agentic forces morph through time, and individuals can occupy more than one position in and through time, and whether structural forces are ‘enabling’ or ‘constraining’ is – to a degree – a matter of perception, linked to individual orientations, concerns and commitments. Consequently, even the seemingly problematic positionings of an entrenched teacher or a disaffected academic are, for those concerned, strategic identity positionings.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

The Professional-Academic - This is who I am, this is what I do

Introduction

As discussed in chapter one, a number of factors precipitated the undertaking of this study, most particularly my role as a director of learning and teaching which – at a time of major institutional transition - exposed me to a previously unappreciated struggle over academic identities. Initially I thought the struggle was about the intellectual capacities of nurse and social worker educators to be academics – which to some extent may have been the case; and the resistances of these educators to the colonisation of their academic identities by the technologies of bureaucratisation and performance management (Ball, 2008) – which was the case. I now understand that the struggle that initiated this study was about ‘the soul’ (Ball, 2003) of the academic, and that the construction of ‘academic’ has become a complex and contested project, with the term and its attendant role expectations used differentially among interested parties. Nonetheless, the original seed of interest – the exercise of a professional-disciplinary identity to trump and resist the imposition of a corporatized identity – prompted the questions ‘who are these academics?’, and ‘how are they academics?’

This chapter provides a final evaluation of the theoretical framework that informed the data analysis and a synopsis of the processes that propel identity-making

among the interviewees who contributed to this study. In so doing, it reiterates the individuality of identity-projects and the identity-positionings that generate out of them. The chapter goes on to consider the possibilities for bridging ‘the divided self’ presented as credibility among the nurse academics and authenticity among the social worker academics – by reframing the practice-academy/theory-practice ‘gap’. This attempt to reconcile a ‘divided self’ picks-up the nascent discussion threaded through the thesis, which is concerned with the different kinds of knowledge in the fields of nursing and social work. The final word is left to one of the participants.

Evaluation and Synopsis

Evaluation of the Analytical Framework

The theoretical framework that informed the data analysis was established in the literature review of chapter two which examined the key theorisations of identity-making put forward by Giddens (1991), Wenger (1998), and Archer (2000, 2003, 2012). Chapter two also drew on the work of others such Jenkins (2008), Lawlor (2008), Bourdieu (1988, 1992) and Foucault (1987) in order to illustrate the confluence of modern thinking concerning identity-making. With varying degrees of emphasis and detail all of these authors examine the interplay between the autonomy of the agent and the structural circumstances of their situatedness. All of them locate individuals in social, practical and natural worlds and the debate among them is concerned with which of these fields exercises the greater of degree

of influence in the shaping of individuals. The authors examine the ways in which individuals transcend their situatedness, even where they appear compliant, in pursuit of their own interests and consider how individual commitments and acts shape and transform - or not - the structural context. The agent's influence over context is highly nuanced and this literature, generally, foregrounds the making, maintenance and transformation of individual identities.

Adopting the concept of identity as a self-led project and synthesising the key generators of identity formation discussed in the literature – *multimembership, identification and allegiance, structural-agentive enablements and constraints, the continual calibration of concerns and commitments in any given context to negotiate a personalised identity-positioning(s), and the contingencies of identity negotiations through time and space* – has facilitated a multi-perspectival or holistic analysis of the data. The different frames of the analysis and the overlapping identity positionings that emerge from it presents kaleidoscopic rather than partialised individuals who can be seen in their personal and contextual complexity.

This analytical frame generally avoids presenting individual academics and the professional collective as types. Although at a pragmatic level their interests in the professional world, their experience of practice and their situatedness in the academy bind them together, the nuance of individual multimemberships, orientations, commitments and concerns begins to respond to Barnett's call (2013: loc., 6520) for a more detailed exploration of "...*agency and structure in academic life...*".

The only type that has been generated out of the data is the ‘Professional-Academic’. It is a type that, however complex the identity negotiation and construction, enables the individual to legitimate and maintain a position in the university. The only exception to this type is, perhaps the positioning of the disaffected academic. In all other cases this ultimate identity position manifests as an interplay of “This is who I am” - expressed in a strong identification with, and commitment to an idealised professional mission and professional self - and “This is what I do”, realised in the teaching of students and production of professional-practitioners. The abiding intent of the professional-academic is to transcend the practice field and hold it – and in some instances policy-makers - and the practitioner-self to account.”

The theoretical-analytical framework – as fully expressed in Figure 8 (p.275) - allows the academics in the study to hold *multimembership* of the three domains of profession, practice and academia. Multimembership is useful as it allows the participants to have concurrent and varying degrees of loyalty and interest toward the three domains without requiring any artificial theoretical splitting of an individual’s interests or ranking of loyalties. So, whilst the boundaries between the domains are maintained and, in some parts, reinforced (ie: in chapters six and seven) the concept of multimembership enables these participants to express nuanced and complex relations to these domains which go beyond the more sectarian divisions of loyalty – to practice *or* to academia – found elsewhere in the literature.

The multimemberships that the participants hold are both practical (as in the direct situatedness of being in the university, and/or the circumstantial situatedness of being a nurse/social worker) and abstracted as, for example, in their *orientations* to the domains. It is argued that individuals' membership of the domains is mediated through the orientations they hold - that is their intellectual and affective and dispositions - towards the three fields. These orientations are a fine-grained expression of individuals' identification processes, and describe the ways in which they choose to belong/not belong to communities of which they are members, or in which they have an interest (by circumstance or choice). They tell something of the why and wherefore of how individuals hold allegiances to the domains and extend the discussion of allegiance beyond the standard dichotomies, for example, of 'discipline *or* enterprise'/'practice *or* academia'. In this conceptualisation orientations are not merely an attitudinal stance but are closely associated with motivation. As Figure 8 illustrates, a wide-range of factors contribute to the forging of individual identities. However, in terms of a professional-academic identity, orientations to the three domains are the most significant shapers of individuals' 'concerns and commitments' and in consequence the ways in which they occupy the social role of academic. The interviews clearly indicate that these orientations, mediated through personal experience and reflection, are relatively fixed dispositions that greatly influence how individuals' engage with the structural affordances and constraints of the university.

In this thesis the structured world of the university is discussed in terms of its technologising powers, that is the ways in which its practices shape individuals. In the analysis the practices of the university are configured as affordances and

constraints and, in this way, the technologising processes lose their potentially totalising effect. Although the technologies of academia – primarily teaching and research – are universal and non-negotiable, whether they are viewed as affordances or constraints in the individualised academic identity project is dependent on the motivations – or concerns and commitments – of any given individual. Equally, their structural effect is mitigated as an individual negotiates what sort of academic they are going to be, as they determine their own degree of subjectivication, compliance and/or resistance. As argued in chapter two (p.85), in terms of individualised identity projects, herein lies the crux of the agency-structure dialectic. It is the point of agency, the point through which individuals negotiate their academic identities.

Identity literature encompasses the effects of time and space and, as chapter eight argued, the academic identities of these participants are not necessarily fixed. They are shaped by circumstance and motivation at any point in time and, as in the final representation of the theoretical-analytical framework in Figure 8, identity-making is a matter of *continual process* – not only the process of relocation from practice to the academy. The figure illustrates and implies that individuals bring the complexity of their identity processes into the university, that the transition from practice nurse to academic nurse is nuanced in myriad ways, and that the underplay of ‘this is who I am’ strongly determines ‘this is what I do’. However, as also discussed in chapter seven, there are some very practical time-and-space distances for these academics as realised in their proximities and distances to the practice field, and with these come an attendant and anxious discourse focussed on knowledge and personal academic legitimacy. As discussed elsewhere – in

over twenty years of research – this remains a significant cleavage and an attempt at reconciliation is made in the latter part of this chapter.

Overall the theoretical framework has facilitated an in-depth analysis of identity-making as pursued by a small group of social worker and nurse academics and produced a multi-dimensional representation of the academic identities cultivated by them over time and space. At this stage the final representation - again as illustrated in Figure 8 - is one of *process and form*.

Synopsis of the Study

Through a detailed sift of the interview data chapter five argued and illustrated that all nascent academic identities generate out of individuals' experience of the three structuring fields of the profession, practice and the academy – the sites of their multimembership. This experience, informed by biographical background and ideological interests (ie: concerns and commitments), shapes the *orientations* – or dispositions - that individuals come to have towards the three fields (as illustrated in Figure 1, Chapter one, p.20). Across the interview group a range of orientations were identified. Interviewees were seen to variously 'love' and 'loathe' the profession (nursing/social work) to which they had all, at some point, subscribed. As the discussion concerning orientations to academia indicated, some participants became adherents of their respective profession by default rather than conscious intent; individual biographies and psychologies influenced how individuals then engaged with these professions. Circumstantial/accidental

membership did not necessarily generate 'loathing' and could indeed engender 'love'. 'Loathing' actually seemed to emerge out of dissatisfactions arising from experience of the practice field. However disposed 'the profession' was the most significant point of orientation in the participants' identity-making. It is argued that the mission of the profession – difficult to articulate but usually framed in terms of social justice, humanism and maintaining and upholding the rights and well-being of the end user as the paramount interest – is the anchoring point of all the respondents' career identities and trajectories. Adherence to the ideals and mores of the profession shapes the orientations held towards the fields of practice and academia. Having made such life-time commitments some participants were concerned for the future prospects of their profession; the social work profession in particular was seen to be 'at risk'. Consequently, participants anticipated a (re)negotiation of their occupational and/or professional-disciplinary identity in the university.

Orientations to practice were described in terms of 'conflict' and 'commitment'. It is argued that for the majority of participants the exit from practice into the academy arose out of a conflict between their professional selves and the realities of the practice field. The conflict arises in two ways: i) subsequent to a fissure between professional ideals and operational realities; and ii) from the limitations in realising a fully-fledged professional self in practice. For some this ideological drift is barely perceptible and/or easily reconciled (eg: in their mission as a 'moral academic') where for others it is a less easily repaired major fracture in their identity project. Nonetheless, however it is experienced it is argued that this fault-line between the professional and practitioner self positions *all of the participants* in a conflictual

relation to practice. This conflict is remade and absorbed into the nexus of the concerns and commitments that individuals pursue on their relocation to the academy.

The majority of interviewees held a positive orientation to academia which was experienced and anticipated as a place of reparation, reflection and self-realisation. Few respondents were resistant to the potentials and affordances of academic life. Where such resistances were evident they emerged from: unfinished negotiations with family scripts (Byng-Hall, 1985; Skynner & Cleese, 1983) that cast individuals as certain kinds of people with certain kinds of attributes; the anxiety of transition from a familiar to unfamiliar environment; and/or disenchantment at the unfulfilled promise of the academy, where academic ambitions were not realised.

The data analysis indicates that participants entered the university with a balance of orientations that inform their engagements with the academy in the pursuit of their attendant concerns and commitments. Once in the university ambitions - and hence identities - are shaped by the affordances and constraints, or 'technologies', of the academic world. The most significant of these were seen to be teaching and scholarship and in chapter six whilst both technologies are seen as mechanisms by which practitioners are academised, as practices they are also seen as sites of identity-integration and realisation (Figures 6a, p.188 & 6b, p.208).

Where the prevailing literature concerning academic identities laments the advent of the managed academic and the demise of academic freedom and autonomy, it would seem that the majority of those interviewed nonetheless – through teaching,

and research where it is realised – exercise and retain a degree of academic autonomy. This autonomy is centred on the congruence between their professional-disciplinary expertise and interests; as is discussed, teaching roles and scholarly undertakings are ultimately personalised professional projects. Whilst academic identities are generally seen to be ‘under threat’ (Clegg, 2008) these personalised projects – where they are successful – are a manifestation of academic identity that is in itself an expression of a professional identity (nursing/social work) and the pursuit of professional-disciplinary interests. Although described as such by some of the participants, this academic work is not just ‘a job’, it can be seen as the expression of a life’s work. So, in a part of their occupational world this frames the participants as manifestations of the mythic academic. On a more pragmatic note, in contrast to much of the profession-specific literature, this interpretation clearly co-locates nurse and social worker academics alongside colleagues in other disciplines and – collectively - positions them as legitimate members of the academy.

The problematic of disciplinary knowledge, however, still pertains given how few are actively engaged in research and knowledge production. As noted in chapter six this is consequent to: i) the dominance of the teaching role as constituted in volume-time; and ii) the structuring of research both inside and outside of the university. In many respects these constraints on the academic identity project compound the temporal and material distances from practice which – potentially – undermine the participants’ capacity to maintain a scholarship of practice (Adams, 2011). Chapter seven examined the distances and proximities between individuals and the practice field, where distance was formulated as *time out of practice* and

proximity as *mediated relations with practice*. This removal from the practice field produced two effects: i) a crisis of credibility among the nurse academics that clearly mirrors, and may well be an internalisation of, a historical discourse in the literature concerning the schism between the academy and practice; ii) a disruption of authenticity among some of the social worker academics, where the perceived drift between professional-disciplinary knowledge and practice in the field compromised teaching identities. Where in chapter six teaching was a vehicle for identity integration in chapter seven it became the site of a divided self. The knowledge problematic is acknowledged and threaded throughout this thesis but it is beyond the scope of the thesis to deal with the problematic in depth. It would seem evident that further research into the between professional, practitioner and academic knowledge and the teacher identity of social worker and nurse academics would be fruitful line of inquiry. In the meantime the following section makes a preliminary attempt to reconcile the divided self of the professional-academic.

Reconciling The Divided Self

The unresolved problematic for these academics is their distance from 'the field of production' (Ivinson et al, 2011; Bernstein, 2000; Atkinson, 1985), that is practice. To continue the language from chapter seven, this distance is both temporal and material for both nurse and social worker academics but, as has been established, the problematic materialises a little differently between the two collectives. There is a personalised 'crisis of credibility' among the nurse academics – that through

publication and public discourse has become a collective crisis - and a disruption of authenticity among the social worker academics.

Certainly in terms of credibility Ousey & Gallagher (2010) observe that nurse academics appear to have adopted a very particular preoccupation that is not similarly evident among other health-related professional educators. They make the case – as does most of the literature - that the focus on credibility arises out of the knowledge-practice gap, which may variously be so, but this study has identified and emphasised a psycho-emotional dislocation that arises in the removal to the university (see chapter seven). This dislocation – among the nurse academics – is not about the authority or relevance of recontextualised disciplinary knowledge but is about actual material and affective distance from the *realities of practice*: ie, shift work, physical work, caring for a patient, skeleton staff and resource constraints. Intellectually the respondents *know about* these things *but they no longer live these things*, and the capital of their personal practitioner experience diminishes over time. The currency or otherwise of experiential knowledge in and of the practice field is a significant constituent part of individual anxieties over credibility. The crisis of credibility may be exacerbated in the unacknowledged tension that these academics *chose* to leave practice; essentially they did not want to continue living in practice. They are caught in the tension of their *flight from* and their *move to* the university. They are also caught in the tension that while committed to the profession and practice development there is no desire among them to actually *return to* practice. This is compounded by the predominance of their teacherhood and the deficiency of their research undertakings.

As discussed in chapter seven, while the social worker academics share some of these characteristics - most particularly the flight from practice in the move to the university, and the primacy of the teaching role - they do not generally labour under the same crisis as the nurse academics. Where the dilemma of authenticity arises it emerges from a theory-practice gap. The gap is not, in this instance, about an individual's own credibility and scholarship but rather about the discrepancy between disciplinary curriculum knowledge and practice knowledge, where practice knowledge is understood both as procedural knowledge and personal experiential knowledge. Here there is a struggle to reconcile the irreconcilable where theory is understood in scientific predictive terms and so conflated with intervention (ways of doing things); the *application* of theory is foregrounded and the contingent *explanatory* power of theory seemingly marginalised. In effect some of these academics remain caught in the tension between the functional-technical world of practice and the esoteric-abstract world of academia (where professional knowledge is embedded), the same tension that propelled them out of practice. Hugman (1998) argues that the tension has ever been thus and that negotiating the tension is itself an aspect of professional practice, a strategy similarly promoted by Longhofer & Froesch (2012). However, for some the tension in practice was unnegotiable and that unnegotiability is carried over into the university where the theorisations of disciplinary knowledge reinforce the practice-theory gap. For these individuals the connection between 'the world' and 'the word' (Beck & Young, 2005: 190) is severed. Nonetheless, it is in this irresolvable space that individuals have to construct and sustain their authenticity.

It is an expectation of synergy – or replication - between the academic and practice fields that seems to undo the social worker academics and an expectation of experiential and phenomenological proximity (Longhofer & Froesch, 2012) that seems to undo the nurse academics. In both instances these unrealistic and unrealisable expectations pitch the individual academic against themselves. The analyses of theorists and observers such as Longhofer & Froesch (2012), Kole & de Ruyter (2009), Freidson (2001) and Bernstein (2000) suggest ways in which the problematics might be repackaged into less strained and stressful relations.

Longhofer & Froesch (2012) frame practice as a multiple and complex entity and – beyond its systematised procedures – as something that is made and remade differently by each social worker (and team) in each interaction. They discuss the open ways in which practice is undertaken and understood by those involved in it, and so their discussion of open practice and knowledge systems disrupts the totalising effect of talking about practice as a monolithic enterprise. Decoupling the direct relationship between knowledge and reality - which is also discussed at length - enables the authors to set-up the relationship as “...*always and necessarily in creative tension...*” (2012: 511). Effectively the problematised space between theory and practice can be reformulated into an exploratory *educative space*, once the quest for answers and resolution is suspended. Outside of skills labs and the didactic lecture theatre, in the discursive and reflective classroom, such a structuring of the relationship between theory-and-practice has the potential to accommodate everyone’s knowledge and understanding – albeit generated from practice or the academic field. Within such an approach the classroom – as well

as the individual teacher – becomes a site of recontextualisation, reshaping both practice and theoretical disciplinary knowledge.

Although Andrews & Robb (2011: 431) assert that determining how to maintain “...*education at the interface between theory and practice...*” is still a work in development, in many respects the educational practice of the discursive, reflexive, recontextualising classroom is common-place. However, where individuals – and collectives (as represented in the published literature) – become fixated on ‘credibility’ and ‘gaps’ there may be some value in (re)articulating the recontextualising potential and purpose of the classroom. Equally the notion of purpose (whilst arguably challenged by the market economics of HE and the perceived trainability agenda put upon the respective professions) becomes critical to a reiteration of what university-based social work or nursing education is about and who the proselytisers are. As much of the nursing literature acknowledges – while also understandably promoting closer liaisons between the academic and practice worlds – educators are not clinicians, and nor are they necessarily meant to be.

Professions generally comprise a range of practitioners, specialisms, occupational roles and modes of employment. Freidson (2001: 143-144) observes that professions are internally differentiated “...*along several dimensions.*” that may serve to enhance and promote the profession, to develop its professional habitus, as much as they may reflect heterogeneity and/or contribute to fragmentation. This framing, along with Bernstein’s differentiated fields of production, recontextualisation and reproduction, underlines the separation of the academic

and practice worlds. Currently the two worlds and their practitioners clearly serve different material purposes, the point made both by Freidson and Bernstein. Among some of the academics interviewed, the two worlds are seen to hold different ideological intentions (eg: the professionalising intent of professional-disciplinary academics and the training intent of workforce planners and regulatory bodies (for example, see Andrews & Robb, 2011) – as reflected in aspects of Bernstein’s analysis *Pedagogising Knowledge: Studies in Recontextualising* (2000: 41-61). Acknowledging the differentiations between the fields of academia and practice helps to contextualise the tensions experienced by the interviewees and to normalise their positioning in the university as members of a professional-practice community, not as second-order practitioners (Murray & Aymer, 2009).

Given the primacy of their teaching role, these social work and nurse academics may be more ‘comfortable’ and less conflicted if they reframed themselves as Bernstein’s ‘transformers’ of knowledge. This could relieve the self-inflicted (Ousey & Gallagher, 2010) crisis of credibility and reduce the tension in the knowledge-practice ‘gap’. Nonetheless, the focus on teaching, the tenure of preferred occupational identities, and the structuring of research inside and outside of the academy (as discussed in chapter six) does leave these academics as somewhat isolated from the practice field. This remains a potential problem for them both as recontextualisers/transformers of knowledge and/or as producers/co-producers of knowledge, as practice is always seen to precede theory. However well individuals negotiate their personal professional-academic identity, without access to the practice field -- beyond mediated relations (through students, family and friends),

strategic working groups or trusteeships -- their academic worth and credibility can be called into question. This is a matter for the academy and the profession.

The academic legitimacy of these individuals and professions is a matter for the academy (ie: at faculty and departmental level), in partnership with the profession, to address. As yet it remains an unresolved problematic that has been documented in the education-focussed literatures of both professions over the last twenty years. In many respects much of this dissertation is a further iteration of the same unresolved discourse. Throughout, the thesis has made reference to the ever-evolving state of British Higher Education, with an emphasis on marketization, corporatisation and an increasingly managed academic workspace. This workspace may or may not be inimical to the professionalising projects of these newly arrived disciplines, over and above their income-generation properties via student enrolments. At the time of writing *The Royal College of Nursing* appears to have maintained a robust, campaigning voice on behalf of the profession. At the time of writing *The College of Social Work* – the newly instituted voice of the profession independently founded in 2012 - had announced its closure (25th June, 2015) and a transfer of responsibilities to the British Association of Social Workers (BASW), established in 1970.

A Final Word : The Professional-Academic

For the majority of participants in this study the professional-academic identity is an interplay of ‘This is who I am’, as realised in the strength of identification with

the profession, *whatever* the individual orientation; and 'This is what I do', as realised primarily in the teaching of students and the production of professional practitioners. In this construction being an academic is primarily being a teacher, and is just another/other way of practising a profession, and academia – like the practice field – is a contextualising variable.

Professional identity, like any other disciplinary identity, is the anchoring identity among these academics. Kole and de Ruyter (2009) argue that it is professional identity that holds individuals together as members of practice/disciplinary/ideological groups, much as Becher & Trowler (2001) and Henkel (2000) established the primacy of disciplinary identities in academia. In all these accounts identity-making is a journey of allegiance to a community of membership over time. Kole and De Ruyter (2009), writing from a practice perspective, argue that it is an adherence to a professional (disciplinary/ideological) identity that can provide a personal 'anchoring' point for the individual, and a foil in response to a neo-technocratic, managerial world. In the rapidly changing world of health and social care education and practice, where the structural frames are shifting faster than it may be possible to accommodate, such a positioning makes considerable sense. Their analysis is an intellectualisation of the *cri de coeur* expressed by colleagues at the outset of this dissertation: "*I am a social worker; We are nurses.*", and might be seen as the rallying cry of academics from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds feeling under threat in the modernising academy. As such rather than locating them as "...*only nurses, what do you expect?*", the statement that triggered this thesis, it locates them firmly as members also of an academic community. Comparative studies are

often constructed to look for the *difference* between entities; but they do not exist here: it is the challenges of the professional-academic role that binds the interviewees of this study together, the point of differentiation is merely the discipline.

Throughout the dissertation, despite my best efforts to reflect the range of participants' voices, it is apparent that some dominate and others remain more subdued. This reflects the complexity of the interview process, the complexities of individuals' stories, and my inherent 'scholastic fallacy' (Bourdieu, 1988) – ie: my inescapable subject positioning. Nonetheless, barring a few exceptions, those interviewed would choose again to relocate from practice and pursue their concerns and commitments – hence their careers - in the academy. Most of the respondents viewed academic employment as fulfilling and enjoyable and – despite the quotidian stresses and strains - considered themselves privileged. As Della observes:

“...I think its been fascinating, absolutely fascinating ...when I think what other people’s lives are like I think we have a marvellous time here really. I know it’s difficult ...and there are plenty of things to criticise, but on the other hand you know, it is, it is a really interesting job, isn’t it? Being a lecturer, andis a lot more difficult than I think it was. But as jobs go I think its a pretty good job to have, isn’t it? And, you know, even though one doesn’t have that much time, there is some time to do your own thing and pursue your own interests, isn’t there?”

Della, Social Worker Academic, UniversityWide

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Appendix 1 : Letter to Gatekeepers



Paula Sobiechowska

c/o Faculty of Health & Social Care

Full Address

paula.sobiechowska@xxxx.ac.uk

Telephone Number

Dear

Following our recent discussions thank you for agreeing in principle to participate in my doctoral study.

As you will see from the enclosed documents, I am a part-time doctoral student at the Institute of Education under the supervision of Dr. Celia Whitchurch and Dr. Bryan Cunningham. The aim of the study is to examine how social work and nurse educators create their academic identities through a negotiation between their identities as professional practitioners and academics. The literature indicates that there are few studies that have explored how educators in professional disciplines develop their academic identities. The study seems to be timely when social work education is again under review because of its perceived short-comings (Social Work Taskforce, 2009), and as nursing is about to become an all graduate profession.

The Participant Information Sheet explains that the study is based on semi-structured interviews among a representative sample of social work and nurse educators from three HEIs. The sample universities have been approached simply because they host both social work and nursing pre-registration courses. As I want to have some representation across the sector two of the universities are post-92 institutions and the other a pre-92 institution.

For the purposes of my study I would like to interview 5 social work educators and 5 nurse educators, all of whom will need to hold a professional qualification in social work or nursing. If possible, among the nursing participants, I would like to talk to colleagues from each of the professional areas: child, mental health and adult. The interviews will last no longer than 60 minutes and will be conducted around the enclosed topic guide. As is usual

practice, the interviews will be tape-recorded, these recordings and subsequent transcripts will be secured in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Throughout the study and its dissemination institutions and individuals will remain anonymous. My hope is that the completed work will inform developing practice in higher education and the educational work of professional bodies. Electronic copies of the thesis will be made available to participants upon request.

As a gatekeeper, I am hoping that you will be able to facilitate contact between myself and members of your team(s). I think, where potential participants are agreeable, it would be less onerous (for you) if I could be provided with contact details of individuals and then I can arrange interviews directly.

I realise that you must have many similar requests but your support and assistance in this study is very much appreciated.

Regards

Appendix 2 : Participant Information Sheet



Leading education
and social research
Institute of Education
University of London

Research Project for the Degree of PhD

Institute of Education, London

Dear Colleague

Thankyou for your interest in contributing to this PhD study. This information sheet should provide you with all the information you need to make an informed decision to participate.

Section A: The Research Project

1. Title of the project : Becoming an Academic : Negotiating the Boundaries between Academic and Professional Identities in Social Work and Nursing
2. Purpose and value of the study : The aim of this study is to examine how social work and nurse educators create their academic identities through a negotiation between their identities as professional practitioners and academics. Authors (such as Rolfe and Gardiner, 2006; Lyons, 1990) have highlighted identity or role confusion and conflicting loyalties among nurse and social work academics. Others (Boyd, 2010) have noted that there are few studies that have explored how educators in professional disciplines develop their academic identities.
Such an exploration is the focus of this study: how individuals negotiate the relationship between their practitioner identities and their academic identities. This study is particularly pertinent at a time when nursing is about to become an all graduate profession and when social work education is again under review because of its perceived short-comings (Social Work Taskforce, 2009). The study is also undertaken at a time of significant political change during which policy and practice both in higher education and the professions is changing rapidly.
3. Invitation to participate : The invitation to participate is being extended to social work and nurse academics working in three Higher Education Institutions from across the country. The institutions asked to participate are those that host both social work and nursing pre-registration courses, and the universities included are representative of the sector.
4. Researcher : I am undertaking this research as a part-time doctoral student at the Institute of Education in London.
I am a social work academic of 20 years experience. The study is motivated by my own experiences as a 'becoming' academic as well as my more recent experience as a Faculty Director of Learning and Teaching.
5. What will happen to the results of the study? The results of the study will be written as a doctoral thesis. The study will also be presented at academic and professional conferences and it is anticipated that aspects of the work will be published more widely.
6. Funding : This is an independent study and is not funded by any organisation.

7. Contact for further information : Participants can contact me at any point in the study, my details are:
Paula Sobiechowska - Faculty of Health and Social Care
paula.sobiechowska@xxxx.ac.uk Telephone Number

Section B: Your Participation in the Research Project

1. Why you have been invited to take part : you have been invited to take part in the study because you are a social work or nurse educator with a background in professional practice.
2. Whether you can refuse to take part : participation in the study is entirely voluntary and there is no requirement upon you to agree to participate.
3. Whether you can withdraw at any time, and how : you can withdraw from the study at any point – before the interview, during the course of the interview and/or once the interview has been recorded.
Formal withdrawal from the study is through the withdrawal notification included in the participant consent form.
4. What will happen if you agree to take part :
 - you will be asked to complete a short biographical questionnaire which I will collect from you on the day of the agreed interview;
 - you will be interviewed about your experience and practice as a social work or nurse academic. The interview will be semi-structured and based around a topic guide that will be sent to you in advance. The interview will last no longer than 60 minutes and will be tape-recorded to ensure that your contribution can be properly represented within the study;
 - the tape-recording of the interview will be transcribed and analysed along with the interviews of other participants; the findings from the analysis will be published in a doctoral thesis, presented at conferences and may be published as journal articles and in books.
5. Risks and personal well-being : the study should not pose any risks to yourself or others. However, discussing professional-personal experience can be sensitive, if the interview were to become difficult or distressing we would stop the discussion. In such circumstances we would agree the next best course of action for yourself as a participant.
Should you have any concerns or questions about the study I can always be contacted.
6. Managing information and data : all information and data will be treated in the strictest confidence. All transcripts of interviews and consent forms will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. Tape recordings will be stored in a password protected file on a password protected personal computer. Paper documents and digital recordings will be destroyed on successful completion of the Doctorate.
7. Electronic copies of the transcripts will be destroyed after a period of 5 years, unless it is decided to archive them for future analysis.
8. Confidentiality : in all aspects of the study places and people will remain anonymous : institutions will be coded (eg: U1, U2, etc); individuals will only be differentiated by role (eg: 'ne' – nurse educator; 'swe' – social work educator).
9. Benefits of taking part : it is anticipated that your participation will contribute to a more significant understanding of 'who' social work and nurse educators 'are', how they practice their work and how and why this practice influences the academy and the profession.
10. Agreement to participate in this research should not compromise your legal rights should something go wrong

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP, TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF YOUR CONSENT FORM

Appendix 3 : Participant Consent Form



Leading education
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Institute of Education
University of London

Research Project for the Degree of PhD Institute of Education, London

Name of Participant :

Title of the Project

Becoming an Academic : Negotiating the Boundaries between Academic and Professional Identities in Social Work and Nursing

Researcher Contact Details

Paula Sobiechowska

c/o Faculty of Health and Social Care

paula.sobiechowska@xxxx.ac.uk

Telephone Number

Consent

1. I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet and I understand my participation in this research. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason and without prejudice.

3. I have been informed that the confidentiality and anonymity of the information I provide will be safeguarded.
4. I understand that I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.
5. I have been provided with a copy of this form and the Participant Information Sheet.

Data Protection: I agree to the processing personal data which I have supplied for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me*

Name of Participant

(print).....Signed.....Date.....

YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP

If you wish to withdraw from the research, please complete the form overleaf and return to the researcher named above.

Title of the Project

Becoming an Academic : Negotiating the Boundaries between Academic and Professional Identities in Social Work and Nursing

I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY

Name of Participant

(print).....Signed.....Date.....

Appendix 4 : Topic Guide

The focus of this study is to;

- Explore how social work and nurse educators negotiate the relationship between their primary professional identity and the development of an academic identity. It therefore seeks to understand:
 - Your individual journey into academia : how did you 'get here', what were the stages/triggers/attractions/push factors?
 - What does being an academic mean to you and how does this relate/interact with your identity as a social worker/nurse?
 - The relationship between your social work/nurse and academic identity; how does this relationship work in terms of relationships with colleagues, students, how you practice as an academic?
 - Do you maintain any sense of your social work/nurse identity and, if so, how is this expressed (eg: through scholarship, external formal/informal networks, working arrangements, direct practice or research)?
 - Do your professional identities complement or contrast with each other and what does this mean to you/how do you manage the relationship?

 - How has your academic identity been shaped by the workplace (department/faculty/university)?
 - How has your academic identity been shaped by the social work/nursing profession?
 - How much you are able to shape your own academic identity (eg; through adaptation to outside influences/forces; through proactive engagement with issues/matters arising in the workplace; through adopting leadership or pioneering roles; by pursuing your own research or teaching interests; through the relationships you foster and maintain; associations/networks to which you belong)?

- How do you prioritise/invest in your roles and work – is this self-managed and/or directed?

- How does your identity influence your research interests, your work with students, your teaching, your presentation of self, your future aspirations?

- What does being a social work/nurse educator mean to you?

Appendix 5 : Biographical Questionnaire



Leading education
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Institute of Education
University of London

Being an Academic : Negotiating the Boundaries between Academic and Professional Identities in Social Work and Nursing

All of the information in this questionnaire will remain confidential and be anonymised.

For the purposes of analysis I will code your name with the same tag as I use to code the interview.

I am asking for this information in order to contextualise your interview and to collect information that might contribute to generalisations and categorisations of the sample group.

Thankyou for your time and contribution.

Paula Sobiechowska : PhD Student, Institute of Education

Name :

1. Age Group : please circle

25 – 34

35 – 44

45 – 54

55 – 64

65+

2. Ethnicity : please describe in your own terms

3. **Length of time employed in Higher Education** : please circle

1 – 3yrs 4 - 5yrs 6 – 10yrs 11 – 15yrs 15yrs+

4. **How many Higher Education Institutions have you worked in as an academic** : please circle

1 2 3 3+

5. **Length of time in Current Post** : please circle

1 – 3yrs 4 - 5yrs 6 – 10yrs 11 – 15yrs 15yrs+

6. **Title and brief description of your Current Post** : please describe in your own terms

7. **Brief description of Current Roles (eg: CPD Lead/Research Link/Schools Liaison/Admissions Tutor)** : please describe in your own terms

8. Employment Status : please circle

F/T

P/T

Sessional

Hourly Paid

9. Current membership of internal academic committees, working or interest groups (eg: Senate/Faculty Board/Research Degrees Committee/Ethics Panel/Admissions/Chaplaincy/International Students/Other) : please describe in your own terms

10. Current membership of disciplinary or professional Networks, associations or working Groups (eg: GSCC/NMC/HEA/SWRB/Other) : please describe in your own terms

11a. Are you an External Examiner? : please circle

Yes

No

11b. If 'Yes', how many Universities do you examine for? : please circle

1

2

3

3+

12. If you are on the Editorial Board of any Academic Journals please note them below:



13. Are you currently a reviewer of articles for peer-reviewed journals : please circle

Yes No

14a. Do you anticipate being entered for the HEFCE Research Excellence Framework (previously RAE) exercise in 2014? : please circle

Yes No Do Not Know

14b. Have you previously been an entry for the HEFCE Research Assessment Exercises (RAE) : please circle

Yes No

15a. What is/are your disciplinary strengths/expertise (eg: child development, communication studies, family therapy, organisation and context, physiology, disability, mental health, learning and teaching, assessment) : please describe in your own terms

15b. How well-aligned are your disciplinary strengths/expertise to your teaching responsibilities : please circle

(1 = least well-aligned; 5 = completely aligned)

1 2 3 4 5

15c. How well-aligned are your disciplinary strengths/expertise to your research/publication outputs : please circle

(1 = least well-aligned; 5 = completely aligned)

1 2 3 4 5

16. Please note the titles of the professional press (eg: Community Care, Social Work Matters, you read on a regular (eg: 1/week) basis:

➤
➤
➤

17. Please note the titles of the academic journals you read on a regular (eg: 1/quarter) basis:

➤
➤
➤

18. How many years did you/have you spent in direct practice as a social worker/nurse : please circle

1 – 3yrs 3yrs – 5yrs 5yrs – 10yrs 10yrs+

19. Please list your professional qualifications (eg: CQSW, CSS, SEN, SRN, DipSW, RN. Other(s))

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20. Please list your higher academic qualifications and titles (eg: DipHE, BA, MA, Postgraduate Cert/Dip in Advanced Practice, PhD):

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